

Town & Country Democrat



The Town and Country Democratic Club is affiliated with the California Democratic Council and the Coalition of Democratic Clubs

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Officers

Kevin Murphy
President
(916) 536-4212

Arnie Godmintz
Vice President
(916) 332-5980

Barbara Krings
Secretary
(916) 488-2410

James Nakata
Treasurer
(916) 768-9938

Joan Higgins
Immediate Past President
(916) 745-0198

Kevin Murphy
Newsletter Editor
(916) 536-4212
Fax: (916) 944-4027
E-Mail:
skamurphy@hotmail.com

Let's Do Lunch—T&C Annual Awards Luncheon Scheduled for June 25th, 11:30am!!!

Where will you be on Saturday, June 25th? With any luck you will join the more than 150 lucky folks expected to turn out for Town & Country's 11th Annual Awards Luncheon at the Eskaton Village Ballroom in Carmichael.

The featured speaker will be California State Treasurer and Democratic Candidate for Governor, Phil Angelides. Even though the election is still a year and a half away, Phil has been campaigning hard since March to convince Californians that he alone holds the key to our state's bright future.

Also on the agenda for the afternoon,



Phil Angelides

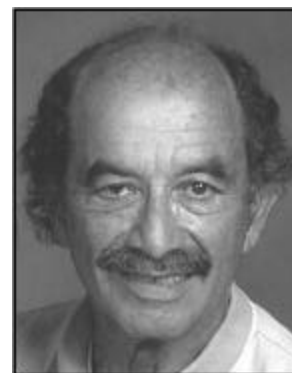
recognition of two special people in our local party and community. Former Sacramento Mayor Anne Rudin will receive Town & Country's first Robert T. Matsui Award for Public Service for her unwavering commitment to progressive causes. Town & Country's own Vice President, Arnie Godmintz, will receive the club's Great Grassroots Award for all he has done and continues to do for the club and the party.

There will also be a silent auction, raffle and some great entertainment! Please plan on joining us on June 25th! Register using the form on page 3. We look

forward to a great event!



Anne Rudin



Arnie Godmintz

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How Democrats can win in CA: A 58-County Strategy from Mary Longmore on June 8th

Many of us have heard her name and many of us have heard her speak either during committee meetings at California Democratic Party Conventions or at roundtable discussions at California Democratic Council meetings. If you haven't heard her or caught her infectious energy and commitment to the principles of the

Democratic Party here is your chance!

Mary Longmore has worn many hats but recently she helped to organize the California Democratic Visibility Committee and presented a 58-county plan to state party chairman Art Torres on how Democrats can win anywhere in California.

Continued to page—6

From the President...

I had something different to talk about this month, but instead I want to share a phone conversation I was involved in just last week.

I got a call from the general manager of Sacramento's Air America station, TalkCity 1240AM. She left a voicemail message asking for me to return her call.

Obviously I was very excited to receive her message. Air America was the best thing to happen to Sacramento in the past year and myself and several other club members had been trying to get the station more involved in local political events, particularly Democratic Party events.

I thought maybe she was responding to my written request to have the station participate somehow in our Annual Awards Luncheon featuring Phil Angelides next month. I had been hoping for an appearance by Christine Craft at the luncheon or, at the very least, some items with the station's logo for the silent auction and raffle we always have. I sent off the written request a month ago, as I was instructed to do by the woman who answered the phone, but still hadn't heard anything.

I thought also that she was calling to apologize for not responding sooner to an email request I had made for group tickets, on behalf of Town & Country members, to attend the Al Franken Show at the Crest Theater a couple of weeks ago. I never received a response from that either. Nor did I get any information about paying to have a club information booth in the lobby during the show. That was another email I was instructed to send.

There was also a mention from a club member who had talked to Christine Craft personally about me being a guest on her show on TalkCity. The idea was to talk about local Democratic Clubs and what we are doing to turn back the

"red" tide. I was definitely excited about this possibility!

I called her back right away ready to gush accolades of thanks for TalkCity being on the air and for bringing Al Franken to town and what a terrible amount of work it must have been to host his show on the road.

But before I had the chance to say anything other than, "Hi. This is Kevin Murphy from Town & Country Democratic Club returning your call," she asked, quite matter-of-factly, if I was aware that Town & Country had a link to TalkCity's website on its own website. I replied that while I was not directly in charge of the content on the club's website, it certainly wouldn't surprise me if there was a link between the club's website and TalkCity's.

She then proceeded to tell me that Town & Country was in violation of the law for placing the link to the radio station's website on our website without permission.

When I asked how a small Democratic Club could violate the law by putting TalkCity's website address on our own site, she curtly told me that it was copyright infringement and said I would have to submit a request in writing for permission.

That was it. No apologies of phone calls, letters and emails gone unreturned. No mention of any future collaboration on events and certainly no mention of a guest appearance on Christine Craft's show! Just a verbal cease and desist warning.

Needless to say, the call left me shaking my head. While I am not a lawyer I certainly am aware that the creation of the internet has led to a plethora of new laws designed to protect the rights of users as well as to prosecute those who violate the laws. But in so much as Town and Country is concerned, here was a small local Democratic club doing what it thought was a good thing by trying to assist a

start-up radio station in getting new listeners only to be told we were, more or less, criminals.

While I have become more flippant about the law in Bush's America, I know I should still have some respect for the law.

I also know radio is a business. I know things are tough for new businesses, especially stations that undergo format changes and have to fight for new sponsors and advertisers. But I further know you catch more flies with honey than you do vinegar. There was a much nicer way to call Town & Country a "copyright infringer," a more constructive way that showed some appreciation for our efforts. But that way simply didn't happen.

Maybe the general manager was just exhausted from her station's first full year on the radio. Maybe she was still recovering from all the work of the Al Franken event. Maybe she had another 100 phone calls to make to other local clubs and organizations who thought they too were only trying to help the station get more listeners.

I have the utmost respect for Air America and the people that work at its affiliate stations. I'm sure they are overworked and underpaid. But they are not underappreciated by those who listen to their stations. Everyone of us that tunes into 1240 AM thanks their lucky stars that we have the option. And that is what I care about.

Do I care that Town & Country didn't get tickets to Al Franken and we weren't offered an opportunity to pay for a table to promote the club? No. Do I care if TalkCity sends a coffee mug with a logo to our silent auction? Not really. Do I care the club was apparently in violation of some copyright law for including "www.1240talkcity.com" on our website? Maybe. Do I care that so far the staff of TalkCity is giving myself and other club members a negative image of Air America in Sacramento? Absolutely.

Town & Country Democratic Club Proudly Presents Its 11th Annual Awards Luncheon

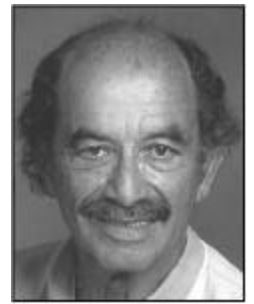


**Keynote Address by
California State Treasurer & Democratic
Candidate for Governor
Phil Angelides**

**Saturday, June 25th, 2005, 11:30am to 2:00pm
Eskaton Village Ballroom
3939 Walnut Avenue, Carmichael**



**Town & Country's Robert T. Matsui Award
for Public Service to be presented to
former Sacramento Mayor Anne Rudin**



**Town & Country's Great Grass Roots Award
to be presented to Arnold Godmintz**

Tickets: \$35 per person. Sponsorships available for \$1,000, \$500, \$250 & \$100. All levels include tickets. The top three levels include marketing/program ads.

**For more information please contact Kevin Murphy
Phone: (916) 536-4212, Email: skamurphy@hotmail.com**

Town & Country 11th Annual Awards Luncheon Registration Form

NAME(S) _____ EMAIL _____

ORGANIZATION _____ PAC# _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ST _____ ZIP _____ TELEPHONE _____

Please indicate the sponsorship level or the number of individual tickets:

____ Platinum - 10 Tickets (\$1,000) ____ Silver - 3 Tickets (\$250) ____ Gold - 5 Tickets (\$500)
____ Bronze - 2 Tickets (\$100) ____ Number of Individual Tickets (\$35 per person)

Please indicate the meal choice(s) for you/your party

____ Roast Sirloin of Beef • ____ Chicken & Mushroom Crepes • ____ Vegetarian Lasagna

Please make your check payable to "Town & Country Democratic Club" and mail to.....
Town & Country Democratic Club, PO Box 1286, Citrus Heights, CA 95611-1286.

Town & Country Democratic Club—PAC#: 981637 On the web: www.tandconline.org. Contributions are not deductible for tax purposes.

In The News

Proposed CDP By-Laws Will Change Relationship with AD Committees

The Co-Chairs of the California Democratic Party Rules Committee, working with the two Lead Chairs of the CDP Credentials Committee met earlier this year and thoroughly reviewed the State Party By-Laws. They submitted a list of recommendations, and after CDP Chairman Art Torres' review, the recommendations were sent to the full Rules Committee at the recent State Convention. At that meeting, the Rules Committee reviewed the document as well as heard testimony.

The document, which can be found at the state party's website at www.ca-dem.org, outlines several proposed changes in the state party's bylaws. The most significant changes will occur with the structure of assembly district Democratic committees (ADD's).

Due to the changes in campaign finance laws, ADD's would cease to exist under the proposed changes due to possible legal issues. The party is proposing "caucuses" that would take the place of the ADD's and have different structures.

In the coming weeks, there will be a number of "Listening Tour" opportunities for Democrats to give testimony. Testimony can be sent in directly as well. The Rules

Committee will be meeting in Oakland on June 25th so any testimony must be submitted no later than June 19.

The best way to submit testimony is to email robert@cadem.org with "Rules Testimony" as your subject. You can also send email/faxes to:
CDP Rules Committee
1401 21st Street, Suite 200
Sacramento, CA 95814
Fax: 916-442-5715

Dates to consider: June 25, 2005, the Rules Committee will meet in Oakland to deliberate and take additional testimony on the proposed language and plan.

No later than July 20, 2005, proposed amendments will be mailed to the Executive Board.

July 29-31, 2005, the Rules Committee will meet and take further testimony and the Executive Board will meet and consider proposed amendments.

Any items not considered at the July Meeting will be held over to the Next Executive Board Meeting.

Additional Rules Committee meetings may be necessary.

As there are a number of items being considered, it is likely that this process will continue to the fall Executive Board meeting.

Coordinated Campaign HQ Update

Want to do something other than complain? Well, here is what the new Sacramento County Democratic Coordinated Campaign is doing and where you can help:

Voter Registration and Messaging: In the month of June we are doing voter registration training on Saturday June 11th, 18th and 25th. The training starts at 9 am on Saturday morning at our office at 1331 21st Street. The training lasts for an hour and then you can go out to one of the sites that our voter registration coordinator has so diligently secured for us normally from 11 am to 3 pm. If you have had the training, just come on down between 9 am and 10:30 and get the packet and you're on your way

Neighborhood Leader Training: We are looking for folks who would be willing to adopt their neighborhood to help Democrats get to meet each other as well as educate and engage them in Democratic values and work. Neighborhood Leader Training is held on Saturday June 4th and 18th at 10 am at 1331 21st Street. Training lasts for about an hour. You can then pick up your precinct voter list and begin the process.

Office Work: The office is open 1 pm to 4 pm Monday to Friday. We are looking for volunteers to help during that time. There are always things to do.

Let's make a difference!!!!!!

Sam Catalano, Executive Director
1331 21st Street, Sacramento, CA 95814 – Phone: (916) 443-4923
Fax (916) 359-0182
Email: SacDemsCC@aol.com
www.saccountydems.org



Welcome New Members!

Ralph Cyfers Warren Harding
Jane O'Donnell Vaughn Hopkins
Laure Olson Nancy Tronaas
Richard & Louise Einspahr

Meeting Minutes from May 11th, 2005

President Kevin Murphy opened the meeting by leading the pledge of allegiance and asking for the acceptance of the previous meeting's minutes as written and approval of the evening's agenda. Accepted.

Treasurer Jim Nakata stated that \$3,551.26 remained in the treasury.

VP Arnie Godmintz gave a Central Committee meeting report: Nothing worth reporting.

President Murphy gave a 5th AD Democratic Committee report: The committee is forming subcommittees to move forward into various areas: strategy, fund raising (Jerry Brown is a possible speaker for a fall fundraiser), etc. Membership numbers are up possibly due to last year's campaign.

President Murphy also gave a report on the California Democratic Party Convention last month: 10 T&C members attended the very informative event in Los Angeles. It was the largest attended convention in CDP history with over 2,500 people.

Annual Awards Luncheon update: 2,000 sponsorship letters were mailed for the June 25th event. Invitations will go out in two

weeks. Also numerous flyers and e-mails have been sent. So far, \$2,500 in sponsorships has been received. All clubs are checking their bylaws for compliance with McCain/Feingold. A problem with fundraising so far, as reported by V.P. Godmintz, is that clubs are protecting their turf (donors). Coordinating with other clubs is planned for future fundraisers.

T&C member Ralph Cyfers has been working at the downtown campaign office and announced training programs for walking precincts, voter registration and becoming a precinct captain. Questions for Ralph included, "How can we be of service to everyone?"

T&C member Margie Metzger talked about changes in T&C's website to send out positive messages. President Murphy recognized Margie for all the hard work she has done on the website.

V.P Godmintz introduced Devara Berger speaking on the California Compassionate Choices Act, AB 654. Devara encouraged all to contact Assemblymembers Berg and Levine to indicate their approval of this important legislation regarding end of life issues.

Marty Maskall was introduced. Marty spoke on a new "Cohousing" project envisioned in the Fair Oaks-Orangevale-Citrus Heights area. To find out more there will be a meeting on May 25 at the Fair Oaks Community Library from 7:00 to 8:00 PM.

Joan Lee reported on legislative issues: Latino Conference (LULA) at the Radisson, May 13, giving scholarships; Senior Rally, May 18, on the Capitol steps.

New Business: Delegates needed for the Congress of California Seniors and California Democratic Council events in May & June.

Announcements: Wednesday, May 25, 4:30 PM—support nurses, teachers and police officers at a rally at the capitol: May 19, 9:00 AM, Secretary of State's Auditorium— Get Rid of Diebold; 10th AD Democratic Committee poker fundraiser June 2; May 31, Citrus Heights City Hall, rally against Dan Lundgren.

A short video was shown on Gov. Schwarzenegger.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Krings
Secretary

Join the Town & Country Democratic Club!!!

Name _____ Phone _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 E-Mail Address _____
 Strengths/Experience _____

**The Town & Country
Democratic Club
encourages the
participation of
young members.**

Please check one box and circle the correct membership below: ? NEW ? RENEWAL

Annual Dues: \$20.00 Individual	\$25.00 Family	\$12.00 Full-Time Student/Unemployed
\$12.00 Senior Individual	\$16.00 Senior Family	\$12.00 Newsletter Only

Signature _____

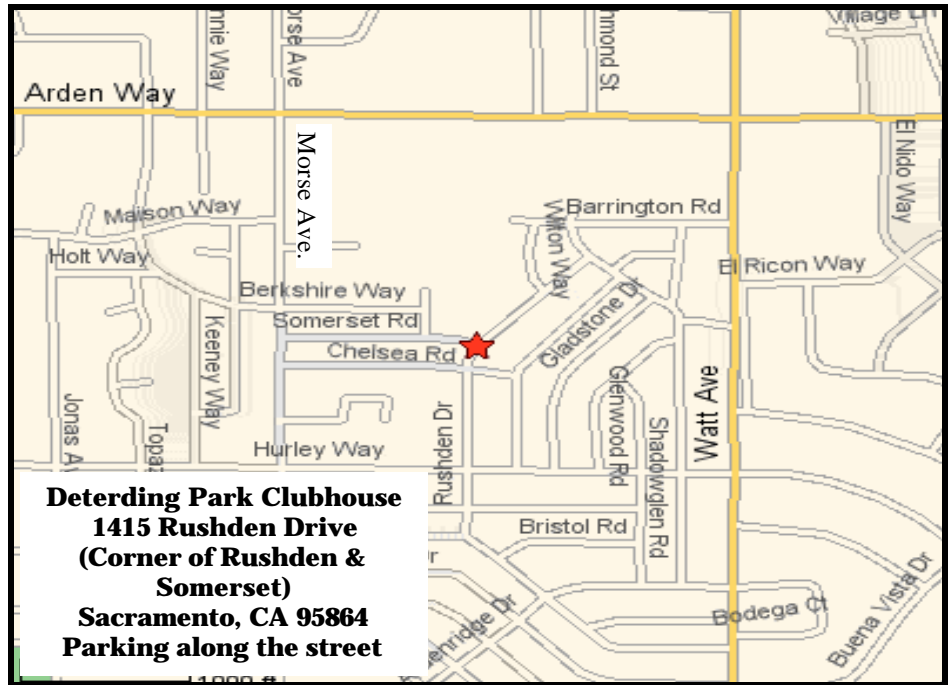
Please mail to: Town & Country Democratic Club
P.O. Box 1286
Citrus Heights, CA 95611-1286

Date _____

T&C Welcomes Mary Longmore to its June 8th meeting con't...

The report presented by Mary's committee outlines the current state of the Democratic Party in California and serves as a guidebook on how the state party, county central committees, assembly committees and clubs can work together to win back areas of the state that have been perceived as "unwinable" for the Democrats. Mary will summarize the committee's work thus far and update us on its efforts to prove to the state party the plan's potential success.

At the meeting we will also be tying up loose ends for our luncheon. Please plan on joining us on June 8th at 7:00pm for this very informative meeting!



Dean Brings New Style to DNC

by Scott Shepard

Subway-riding, penny-pinching Howard Dean has brought a new style to the Democratic National Committee since taking over from the high-rolling Terry McAuliffe.

The changes at the top of the Democratic Party are more than cosmetic, however. Dean, the political outsider in last year's field of Democratic White House hopefuls, is loosening the Beltway's noose on the Democratic Party to a degree that is surprising activists and party officials out in the states.

"They're saying this is the first time someone in his position seems more interested in really winning elections, instead of courting rich donors and protecting the party's Washington players," said Craig Crawford, a political analyst for MSNBC and CBS and a columnist for Congressional Quarterly.

McAuliffe was a smooth operator, even by Washington standards. Often with an entourage and a limousine, he moved naturally through the capital, from the salons of Georgetown to the lunch crowd at the Palm. And with his unusual fund-

raiser skills, he restored the party to fiscal soundness and brought it into the computer age with expanded voter and donor lists, even as he built a new party headquarters.

Dean, on the other hand, is more likely to be found eating lunch at his desk at the DNC on those rare days that he is in Washington. Twenty days out of the month, he is on the road, his "Red, White and Blue" tour aimed at resurrecting party organizations in Republican strongholds.

Dean, though, faces a very different challenge than McAuliffe did in 2000.

Having reached financial parity with the GOP, the Democratic Party now faces the hurdle of restoring state parties in the South and the West, regions that are increasingly Republican.

Just as he promised in his campaign for the DNC chairmanship, Dean has focused most of his attention on raising money for cash-strapped state parties and in recruiting candidates to challenge Republicans, even in

GOP strongholds.

"It was the right hand-off at the right time," Jennifer Palmieri, a former DNC press secretary, said of the transition from McAuliffe to Dean. McAuliffe rebuilt the national party infrastructure, and Dean is using that infra-structure to rebuild state parties.

Moreover, Palmieri said, in Dean, the party has "someone who is ready to kick the table over and doesn't accept the premise that we have to play on the Republicans' turf."

Pollster John Zogby cautioned, however, that the occasional flaring of Dean's partisanship in recent weeks - he has described Republicans as "evil," "corrupt" and "brain dead" - could undermine his efforts at restoring the Democratic Party's fortunes.

"Democrats can get only so far by being not the Republicans," Zogby said. "A populist, highly partisan message guarantees 48 percent of the vote. To win, one of the parties is going to have to find and recreate the middle in American politics. For the Democrats, that means new ideas."

Editorial: Backing Away from the Nuclear Option by Ralph G. Neas

Ralph G. Neas is President of People for the American Way.

Many of you fought long and hard with us to stop the "nuclear option," giving your time, energy and financial resources to turn a planned right-wing/White House sneak attack on checks and balances into a publicly embarrassing and unsuccessful quest for single-party rule. I firmly believe that it was only through our combined efforts that the nuclear option was defused and the filibuster preserved for upcoming Supreme Court nominations. This is a real accomplishment.

But I also know that the agreement that prevented the nuclear option from being deployed was far less satisfying than outright victory on the vote would have been. I know it was difficult to see the Senate's confirmation of Priscilla Owen to the federal appeals court. She doesn't belong there and she's probably not the last bad Bush nominee to get on the courts. We all understand that this is a bitter pill for everyone who has fought long and hard against these nominees.

But the deal that gave Owen the vote is still a resounding defeat for the radical right. Let me explain why I am convinced that is the case.

First, Republican leaders, with 55 Senate votes and the White House, had their most urgent desire – a complete end to the filibuster before a Supreme Court fight – denied them. Their base is furious and engaging in rabid infighting.

Even if Senate Majority Frist tries to bring back the nuclear option during a Supreme Court fight, as he is threatening to do, he will be on much weaker ground – one of the reasons the far right is so angry. The American public, thanks to our efforts and those of our allies,

is strongly opposed to getting rid of the filibuster. There will be even more overwhelming opposition to doing away with checks and balances in the context of a Supreme Court nomination. It will be impossible for right-wing leaders to make a credible claim that they are defending "majority rule."

Not only that, but Americans have now heard a bipartisan group of senators talking about how destructive the nuclear option would be. And many of the "principles" that Senator Frist claimed to be protecting – like the ridiculous claim that the Constitution requires an up-or-down vote on every nominee – have been publicly repudiated.

So has the president's deliberately confrontational approach to nominating judges. Senators from both parties have insisted that the White House acknowledge that the Constitution makes the Senate the president's partner in appointing judges. The agreement announced recently called on President Bush to speak with senators from both parties to seek consensus nominees for the Supreme Court. That puts the pressure on the White House not to go for broke with another Robert Bork.

If, on the other hand, Frist's nuclear power play had been successful, the political momentum and demands of the triumphant far right would all have pushed Bush to go for the most extreme nominee possible. The political environment has been changed for the better.

Keep in mind that "the Democrats" didn't cut this deal. Neither did Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid, who has led a passionate campaign to keep the worst Bush judges off the bench. And neither did PFAW or other progressive organizations that

have worked so hard to save the Constitution from the power-at-all-costs tactics of the White House and Senate Republican leaders. The compromise was struck by seven Republicans and seven Democrats. And while it has a high cost in terms of seeing some more unfit and dangerous judges on the appeals courts, it may have prevented far worse damage – catastrophic, long-term damage – on the Supreme Court.

Of course, the sting of giving up the filibuster on Owen, Brown and Pryor is real – and our inability to see progressives unequivocally stomp out the "nuclear option" on a floor vote reminds us of the unfavorable balance of power in the Senate. But together we held up the principles of compromise and consensus as a reason to preserve the filibuster, so if we are honest about our goals, then this outcome is a victory. The compromise also underlines the importance of our efforts to reach out effectively to senators of both parties – especially the 14 signers of the agreement – on the principles at stake with judicial nominations.

Contribution Policy

The opinions expressed in editorials or other contributions do not necessarily reflect those of the membership of the Town & Country Democratic Club. Contributions may be edited due to space or content, are due by the 25th of each month for the coming issue, and can be sent to.....

Kevin Murphy, Editor
Town & Country Democrat
4211 Paradise Drive
Carmichael, CA 95608
Fax: (916) 944-4027
E-Mail: skamurphy@hotmail.com

Contribution: Bush's Policies Are Squeezing the Middle Class by Jim Wright

One recent morning, two headlines leapt out at me from the front page of the newspaper's business section. Taken together, they fairly symbolize the economic pincer movement that, for millions of middle-income Americans, is choking off hopes of a dignified, worry-free retirement.

One story revealed United Airlines' abandonment of pension promises to retirees, raising the specter of similar breaches of faith by other airlines as well as steel and auto manufacturing companies.

The other headline trumpeted the latest 9.9 percent consumer rate increase granted to TXU Electric by the Texas Public Utilities Commission, the sixth successive rate hike awarded to that corporation in the past three years.

A combination of harsh factors bears down simultaneously upon average-income families, threatening their living standards. What profoundly disturbs an increasing number of these people is that agencies of their own government seem to be facilitating, or going along with, these assaults on their economic well-being.

From the 1930s through the 1960s, America built a dynamic engine of economic growth, protected by a sturdy bastion of inclusive upward mobility and a strong safety net to protect the most vulnerable.

Today, a powerful cabal seems determined to shred that net, destroy that infrastructure and ... well, repeal the New Deal, the Fair Deal, the New Frontier and the Great Society.

Through outsourcing, domestic layoffs, trade deficits and uncontrolled immigration, the American work force suffers downward pressures on wages that actually buy less today than

they did in 1973.

Just as big corporations are finding ways, through mergers and bankruptcy proceedings, to escape their health insurance and employee pension obligations, our president and GOP congressional leaders are trying to force partial privatization upon Social Security.

Meanwhile, the annual federal budget, as recently passed by the House, makes sharp cuts in Medicaid. States, their matching funds slashed, must either cut services drastically or raise state taxes. State legislatures throughout America are wrestling with this reality right now.

In a recent news conference on Social Security, President Bush indicated that he'd like to protect the poorest people in our country from losing their automatic Social Security cost-of-living adjustment.

That sounded fine until we realize that, under current law, "everybody" in the Social Security system is entitled to an annual cost-of-living adjustment. Nobody, prior to Bush's statement, had recommended eliminating it for anyone.

Looking carefully at the president's proposal, we discover that he offers to protect cost-of-living parity for only the bottom 30 percentile. In other words, people making as little as \$25,000 or \$30,000 a year could see their Social Security entitlements actually reduced in buying power.

Here is the single most significant fundamental distinction: Social Security and Medicare are entitlements - they're not welfare.

Not only is there individual dignity in an entitlement, as something someone has earned and gets as a matter of right, but it's paid from a trust fund into which recipients have contributed, throughout their working lives. It is not subject to being arbitrarily reduced, as Medicaid has been cut this year.

If we were to subject Social Security to means testing - in other words, require recipients to prove that they have no income or resources above a specified amount - it would no longer be an entitlement. Instead, it would become welfare and vulnerable annually to the whims of each succeeding Congress.

For 70 years, Social Security has been an underlying bedrock of our economy. It can remain exactly that for the next 70 years and beyond if we will address only the question of trust fund solvency - buttressing it with adequate revenues, or perhaps phasing in more realistic out-year retirement age eligibilities.

There is no need for us to tamper with its fundamental character. A promise, after all, is a promise. And this has been a good one.

There are other things that conspire against the success and retirement prospects of middle-income American families today: the rising cost of fuel, and of necessary medical care, of college tuition and of debt service; the thousand or so large companies that have outsourced and laid off more than a million American workers, exporting their jobs to low-wage countries; the quick responsiveness of government agencies to big campaign contributors and seeming unresponsiveness to average people.

We must never lose hope. The American people have the means, if we have the will, to turn this around. Our country can do better. And it should.

About the writer:

Jim Wright is a former speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives. Reach him at P.O. Box 1413 Fort Worth, TX 76101.

The Final Word: Don't Blame Newsweek

by Molly Ivins

As Riley used to say on an ancient television sitcom, "This is a revoltin' development." There seems to be a bit of a campaign on the right to blame Newsweek for the anti-American riots in Afghanistan, Pakistan and other Islamic countries.

Uh, people, I hate to tell you this, but the story about Americans abusing the Koran in order to enrage prisoners has been out there for quite some time. The first mention I found of it is March 17, 2004, when the Independent of London interviewed the first British citizen released from Guantanamo Bay. The prisoner said he had been physically beaten but did not consider that as bad as the psychological torture, which he described extensively. Jamal al-Harith, a computer programmer from Manchester, said 70 percent of the inmates had gone on a hunger strike after a guard kicked a copy of the Koran. The strike was ended by force-feeding.

Then came the report, widely covered in American media last December, by the International Red Cross concerning torture at Gitmo. I wrote at the time: "In the name of Jesus Christ Almighty, why are people representing our government, paid by us, writing filth on the Korans of helpless prisoners? Is this American? Is this Christian? What are our moral values? Where are the clergymen on this? Speak up, speak out."

The reports kept coming: Dec. 30, 2004, "Released Moroccan Guantanamo Detainee Tells Islamist Paper of His Ordeal," reported the Financial Times. "They watched you each time you went to the toilet; the American soldiers used to tear up copies of Koran and throw them in the toilet. ..." said the released prisoner.

On Jan. 9, 2005, Andrew

Sullivan, writing in The Sunday Times of London, said: "We now know a great deal about what has gone on in U.S. detention facilities under the Bush administration. Several government and Red Cross reports detail the way many detainees have been treated. We know for certain that the United States has tortured five inmates to death. We know that 23 others have died in U.S. custody under suspicious circumstances. We know that torture has been practiced by almost every branch of the U.S. military in sites all over the world -- from Abu Ghraib to Tikrit, Mosul, Basra, Afghanistan and Guantanamo Bay.

"We know that no incidents of abuse have been reported in regular internment facilities and that hundreds have occurred in prisons geared to getting intelligence. We know that thousands of men, women and children were grabbed almost at random from their homes in Baghdad, taken to Saddam's former torture palace and subjected to abuse, murder, beatings, semi-crucifixions and rape.

"All of this is detailed in the official reports. What has been perpetrated in secret prisons to 'ghost detainees' hidden from Red Cross inspection, we do not know. We may never know.

"This is America? While White House lawyers were arguing about what separates torture from legitimate 'coercive interrogation techniques,' the following was taking place: Prisoners were hanged for hours or days from bars or doors in semi-crucifixions; they were repeatedly beaten unconscious, woken and then beaten again for days on end; they were sodomized; they were urinated on, kicked in the head, had their ribs broken, and were subjected to electric shocks.

"Some Muslims had pork or alcohol forced down their throats; they had tape placed over their mouths for reciting the Koran; many Muslims were forced to be naked in front of

each other, members of the opposite sex and sometimes their own families. It was routine for the abuses to be photographed in order to threaten the showing of the humiliating footage to family members."

The New York Times reported on May 1 on the same investigation Newsweek was writing about and interviewed a released Kuwaiti, who spoke of three major hunger strikes, one of them touched off by "guards' handling copies of the Koran, which had been tossed into a pile and stomped on. A senior officer delivered an apology over the camp's loudspeaker system, pledging that such abuses would stop. Interpreters, standing outside each prison block, translated the officer's apology. A former interrogator at Guantanamo, in an interview with the Times, confirmed the accounts of the hunger strikes, including the public expression of regret over the treatment of the Korans."

So where does all this leave us? With a story that is not only true, but previously reported numerous times. So let's drop the "Lynch Newsweek" bull. Seventeen people have died in these riots. They didn't die because of anything Newsweek did -- the riots were caused by what our government has done.

Get your minds around it. Our country is guilty of torture. To quote myself once more: "What are you going to do about this? It's your country, your money, your government. You own this country, you run it, you are the board of directors. They are doing this in your name. The people we elected to public office do what you want them to. Perhaps you should get in touch with them."





The Calendar



Town & Country Democratic Club

Wednesday, June 8th, 7:00pm
Deterding Park Clubhouse
1415 Rushden Way, Sacramento
Corner of Rushden/Somerset
Contact: Kevin Murphy, President
(916) 944-0669
www.tandconline.org

5th AD Democratic Committee

Monday, June 13th, 7:00pm
Contact: Ann Wangberg
(916) 966-3590

Gray Panthers

Tuesday, June 14th, 1:00pm
Hart Senior Center
27th & I Streets, Sacramento
Contact: Joan Lee
(916) 332-5980
www.graypanthersacramento.org

Sacramento County Democratic Central Committee

Tuesday, June 14th, 6:00pm
State Capitol Room 127
Contact: Rick Wathen, Chairman
(916) 442-0264
www.sacdems.org

Phil Angelides BBQ Fundraiser

Tuesday, June 14th, 6pm-8pm
Fairytale Town in Wm. Land Park
Sacramento
Tickets: \$100
RSVP: www.angelides.com/rsvp-sac
or call 916-448-2881

Town & Country's 11th Annual Awards Luncheon with Phil Angelides

Saturday, June 25th, 11:30am-2pm
Eskaton Village Ballroom
3939 Walnut Avenue, Carmichael
Tickets: \$35 per person
Contact: Kevin Murphy
(916) 944-0669 or
skamurphy@hotmail.com

Town & Country Steering Committee Meeting

Wednesday, June 29th, 7:00pm
Location: Kevin Murphy's Home
4211 Paradise Drive, Carmichael
Contact: Kevin, (916) 944-0669
All Members Welcome!
www.tandconline.org

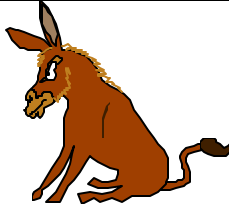
Sacramento County Democratic Central Committee Annual Dinner & Awards Honoring Dave Jones & Deborah Ortiz

Thursday, June 30th, 5:30-8:00pm
Location: Firehouse Restaurant
1112 2nd Street 95814, Sacramento
Contact: Owen Jackman at
(916) 419-4484 or obruin@aol.com

Sacramento For Democracy

Wednesday, July 6th, 7:00pm
SEIU Local 250
1911 F St, Sacramento
Contact: (916) 326-5850
www.SacramentoForDemocracy.org

**Town & Country
Democratic Club
P.O. Box 1286
Citrus Heights, CA 95611-1286**



Time Value Mail
Address Correction Requested



**Reminder: 11th Annual
Awards Luncheon is
Sat., June 25th at
11:30am. See page - 3 for
details and order form!**