

November 29, 2003

Dear George:

It has been a while since I have been in contact with the members of the Media Education Foundation advisory board, but I wanted to update you on some new developments and to ask for your assistance regarding a new film project that we are currently producing.

The last year has been truly transformative for MEF. Most importantly, after purchasing and completely renovating the old fire station in downtown Northampton, we moved our 13 full-time staff into the new premises in February of this year. You can get more information at our revamped state-of-the-art web site – www.mediaed.org - where you can also access information about all of our new projects, including streaming video previews. I hope you will check out this resource, and I am also enclosing our latest catalog to give you fuller information.

I am writing to you at this time, especially, to ask for your advice and help regarding funding of an important new film we are working on. It is entitled *Hijacking Catastrophe: 9/11, Fear and the Selling of American Empire* and examines how Americans have been emotionally manipulated by the neo-conservatives of the Bush administration to support a disastrous domestic and foreign policy. **The film is envisaged as an intervention into the Presidential political cycle**, and our very ambitious timetable requires a February completion. I have enclosed a one-page flyer describing the project.

Julian Bond (the voice of *Eyes on the Prize*) has agreed to narrate the film, and we have already conducted interviews with Norman Mailer, Daniel Ellsberg, Benjamin Barber, Scott Ritter, Vandana Shiva, Norman Solomon, Zia Mian, Tariq Ali, William Hartung, Mark Crispin Miller, Michael Franti, Kevin Ramirez, Cindy Williams and Immanuel Wallerstein. Over the next three weeks, we will be shooting additional interviews with Shadia Drury, Chalmers Johnson, Lt. Col. Karen Kwiatkowski, and representatives of Military Families for Peace. We are also hoping to schedule interviews with Sean Penn, Steve Earle and Bruce Springsteen.

I am enclosing a DVD with an 8-minute preview to give you some idea of what the final product will look like. (You can also see this on-line at: <http://216.110.167.30:8090/ramgen/Previews/hjweb2.rm> using RealPlayer. Please play it at full screen, the resolution is excellent.) We are collaborating on the film with the National Priorities Project, who for 20 years have documented the distortion of our domestic policies and values as a result of the tax dollars that have been pumped into the military-industrial sector of the economy. You can find out more information on NPP at www.nationalpriorities.org.

I am sure that you already know what is at stake in the next election. If the neo-conservatives of the Bush administration win another term, the changes they have already wrought will become permanent. America stands to be transformed in the neo-conservative image, its domestic and international policies and priorities radically reshaped to advance the neo-con vision of American Empire.

Because of the urgent nature of the current situation, MEF decided to embark on this project before we had secured funding for it. As a result, we have devoted scarce resources to it – a leap of faith that we could raise the funds as we were working on the film. We are now in the situation where that need has become urgent.

I am writing to you because your presence as an advisory board member supports our vision at MEF. Your assistance and advice at this crucial juncture is important to us as we aim to complete this film in time for its full impact to be felt. **Please let me know if there are individuals or foundation officers who you believe might be sympathetic to this project and who might be willing to support it.**

I would be happy to talk to you to answer any questions you may have around the production and distribution of the film. Please, as always, feel free to call. My colleague, Adi Bemack, Director of Development, will be in touch soon to follow up.

Thanks for any help you might be able to offer.

Best Wishes



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George:
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