

Energy Insider by William Engdahl

The environmentalist bilks the taxpayer

Environmentalists in government are using tax dollars to pay for environmentalists out of government—it's an outrage; it's also illegal.

My April 28 column reported on the remarkable fact that \$140,000 in outright grants was going from the Department of Energy to gaggles of environmentalists, including one group that was planning a one-day "civil disobedience" occupation of the Washington offices of the DOE itself. The obvious conclusion: there is little difference between the DOE at the top, and the unwashed environmentalists at the bottom, whose leaders have been taken into the Carter administration.

My investigation has now established that the \$140,000 "Earth Day" grants were only one instance of government funding for organizations whose objective is to stop American economic growth. Moreover, the funding is all strictly illegal, and involves such exemplary conflicts of interest as environmentalist leaders now employed in one or another government agency funneling federal tax dollars back to their former environmentalist organizations.

For instance, we would assume that, upon learning of the contents of the official Contracts/Grants Summary of Fiscal Year 1979 put out by the DOE's Office of Consumer Affairs, several "budget conscious" Congressmen will want to have a look at this document.

The second largest area of Consumer Affairs expenditures is categorized "Citizen Participation." The major category is referred to as

"Community Self-Help." To translate: millions of taxpayer dollars are going to the various front-groups of Mr. Nader.

Among the recipients are the following projects:

1) The Council on Environmental Alternatives of the Consumer Action Now organization received almost \$10,000 to stage a "National Energy Education Program for Women," subtitled "Brainstorming Conference, Harper's Ferry, West Virginia." Presumably, the conference organizers have found that energy is a gender-specific issue.

2) The Center for Renewable Resources of Washington, D.C. received a comparable sum for a "Project to increase minority involvement in renewable energy technologies." Solar-heated swimming pools for the ghetto?

3) The National Land for People organization of Fresno, California—its principal objective is to break up agribusiness acreage in favor of "20 acres and a mule" farming—received thousands of dollars for the following lolapalooza: "Report on the role of centralized data systems in the advancement of people-to-people energy technology transfer." Computerized sodomy?

4) The Center for Renewable Resources got \$20,000 for "Outreach support to consumer/public environmental interest groups."

The Office of Consumer Affairs has also issued grants to create likenesses of itself in each state government, with the task of impeding utility rate increases, primarily in order to inhibit nuclear and other power plant construction. Those offices are staffed by members of Nader fronts. Hobson's office also created a Consumer Affairs Advisory Committee, whose recommendations to the Secretary of Energy last May were provided almost word for word by a private agency called COIN—headed by Gar Alperowitz and Ralph Nader. The recommendations call for a Mussolini-type corporatist reorganization of electrical utilities and nationalization of the oil industry.

What's so illegal in the funding process? In the case of *Alaska Pipeline Service Co. vs. Wilderness Society*, the Supreme Court denied three environmentalist groups federal reimbursement for their legal fees because such "fee shifting" is a "policy matter that Congress has reserved for itself." Congress, moreover, has explicitly prohibited funding of the Center for Renewable Resources variety in previous appropriations battles with the Department of Energy.

But at COIN's insistence, President Carter signed a directive permitting executive agencies to create "floating money"—which is where the funds for environmentalists come from. Not only the DOE, but the White House Office of Consumer Affairs, HUD, the Department of Agriculture, and the Federal Trade Commission—all infested with "former" colleagues of Nader—donate their "floating money" to the environmentalists.