

# Schwarzenegger Gears Up To Impose Fascist Populism on Californians

by Harley Schlanger

The booing in response to President Bush's lies about Social Security during his State of the Union address, combined with the sharp grilling of Condoleezza Rice by Senate Democrats during her confirmation hearing, demonstrate that blatant dishonesty to promote disastrous Bush Administration policies will no longer receive a free pass in the U.S. Congress. This growing feistiness of Democrats in Washington, in defense of Constitutional principles, raises a compelling question for Democrats in California: How much longer can Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger expect a free ride, as he continues to use lies and bully-boy tactics to push through the fascist agenda given him by his controller, George Shultz?

While Arnie continues to get rave "celebrity" reviews from most of the state's still star-struck press, a recent poll indicates that his alleged luster is beginning to dim. The poll, released by the Public Policy Institute, shows that while 60% of those polled approve Schwarzenegger's overall performance, there is obvious fraying at the edges. In particular, Schwarzenegger's budget, which includes killer cuts in health care, human services, and education, is highly unpopular. When asked if there is more trust for Schwarzenegger or the legislature in managing the budget, only 29% supported Schwarzenegger, while 35% backed the legislature. Further, the approval rating for the former bodybuilder has dropped to 34% on education, with 51% oppose his efforts to stiff teachers and the children in the state.

## Corporate Cartels Are for Arnie

This precipitous drop in support on several specific budget issues may explain why Schwarzenegger launched a nasty, aggressive attack on opponents at the end of January. Baring his teeth, he growled to the editors of the *Los Angeles Times* about the "punks" who would dare block him, while accusing Democrats of obstructing his "reform" agenda.

To counter this potentially growing opposition, Arnie announced plans to raise \$100 million—\$50 million to put a series of referendums on the ballot, to "go to the people," over the heads of the legislative punks, if they refused to knuckle under to him; and another \$50 million towards his 2006 re-election fight. These funds will come from corporate interests nationally which are counting on Shultz's puppet to make the state more "business-friendly": insurance companies, for-

profit health companies, telecommunications firms, and real estate and banking interests. All lobby heavily in Sacramento.

With money from these interests already rolling in at record levels, Schwarzenegger repeated his claim that opposition to him is coming from "special interests," while asserting, "I cannot be bought." But in fact, a review of the initiatives he is trying to ram through makes it clear that the only beneficiaries of his "reforms" would be these corporate interests.

Schwarzenegger's agenda includes the following "reforms," all of which bear the paw-prints of George Shultz. Besides having been the major force behind the fascist privatization of pension funds in Chile under military dictator Pinochet, Shultz has been the principal pusher of the "Chile model" for privatizing the U.S. Social Security system adopted by Bush.

First, Schwarzenegger is moving to turn the well-managed public employee retirement funds in California, CalPERS and CalSTRS, into risky, private 401(k) plans, by 2007. In its coverage of the current Schwarzenegger offensive, the *L.A. Times* reported that, by transforming the nearly \$300 billion state pension funds into private accounts, the "windfall could be huge" for Wall Street investment houses.

Secondly, in addition to budget cuts already announced in an address to the legislature—Arnie admitted they would be draconian—he would impose an automatic mechanism that would cut spending across the board when the budget is in deficit. With the state facing a deficit of more than \$8 billion for 2005-06, and overall debt at record levels since the Governor floated \$15 billion in new debt at very high interest rates, an automatic system of slashing expenditures poses an existential risk to health care and human service programs, and would sound a death knell for future, necessary infrastructure projects.

Third, Schwarzenegger plans to shut down allegedly redundant regulatory agencies. While the agency set up to oversee this restructuring claims it would save the state \$32 billion over the next four years, officials in the nonpartisan budgetary review office deny this, saying savings would be minimal, but damage could be massive.

If the legislature does not accept these "reforms," the Governor has threatened to initiate petition drives, backed by \$50 million, to put referenda on the ballot in November.

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## The Return of the Beast

I admired Hitler. . . because he came from being a little man with almost no formal education, up to power. And I admire him for being such a good public speaker and for his way of getting to the people and so on. . . We can't live without authority. Because I feel that a certain amount of people who were meant to do this and control and larger amount. Like 99% of the people, who we have to tell what to do and how to keep order. That is why I am all for it. . . I feel if you want to create a strong nation and a strong country you cannot let everybody be an individual, because everybody has his own opinions and you can't just stick together as a strong nation. Then you have to tell people what to do and you can't just let them float away. In Germany there was a lot of unity. The German soldiers were the best, and with the police force and everything. . .

America. . . There is one thing I don't like here and that people go on their own little trips too much. The unity isn't there anymore. And I don't think it's too much the people's fault. I think it's because we don't have a strong leader here. . .

To speak to maybe 50,000 people at one time and have them cheer, or like Hitler in the Nuremberg Stadium, and have all those people scream at you and just being in total agreement with whatever you say.

—Arnold Schwarzenegger, from 1977 transcript of interview with George Butler.

*This leaflet was circulated by the LaRouche campaign during the fight against the Recall of Democratic Gov. Gray Davis in 2003. Those who thought LaRouche was exaggerating about Arnie Schwarzenegger's fascism, now have reason to think twice.*

### Fascist Roots

While many Democrats still shy away from accepting the judgment of Lyndon LaRouche that Shultz's policies are fascist, and that Schwarzenegger is the perfect instrument through which to destroy the political process in California in order to impose fascism, a serious evaluation of his character and rise to power, leave's little room for doubt that LaRouche is right.

Schwarzenegger's childhood fascination with Adolf Hitler cannot be dismissed as mere fancies of an immature youth. His father was a member of the Nazi Party in Austria, who served in the SA, the notoriously brutal Brownshirts. No amount of tribute poured by Schwarzenegger into the coffers of Rabbi Hier of the Wiesenthal Center can clear his father. As for the Governorator personally, he admitted that he identified with Hitler in his interview with George Butler in 1977. "I admired Hitler," he told Butler, "because he came from being a little man with almost no formal education, up to power. And I admire him for being such a good public speaker and for his way of getting to the people and so on."

This infatuation with Hitler included his identification with the "leadership principle" (*Führerprinzip*) that the Nazis touted as the basis for Hitler's alleged ability to unify and move the Germans. Arnie sees himself as bringing this princi-

ple to the United States. In that same interview, he said, "America. . . There is one thing I don't like here and that [is] people go on their own little trips too much. The unity isn't there anymore. And I don't think it's too much the people's fault. I think it's because we don't have a strong leader here."

Schwarzenegger clearly associates the obsession with power, being the strong leader, with the rush one gets from controlling a crowd, as Hitler did at Nuremberg. "To speak to maybe 50,000 people at one time and have them cheer," he said to Butler, "or like Hitler in the Nuremberg Stadium, and have all those people scream at you, and just being in total agreement with whatever you say." This has been his experience, since he first announced that he would run for Governor in the 2003 Recall campaign. Further, the self-image he projects, of a populist battling against powerful interests, is something else shared with Hitler. He must know, as did Hitler, that his rise to power has been paved by wealthy oligarchical interests typified by Shultz, which are ultimately responsible for his policies.

To argue that Schwarzenegger is unaware of the consequences of his brutal policies, is to ignore his own words. "I am well aware there are lives behind these numbers," he said, when presenting a budget which will lead to a dramatic increase in premature deaths of the elderly, the poor, the chronically ill, and the disabled.

As with Hitler, Arnie's victims—those least able to defend themselves—are belittled by him as underachieving parasites, while elected officials who would defend them are smeared as acting on behalf of "special interests." He appeals to the Hobbesian "self-interest" of the millions of formerly middle-class Californians who are frantically trying to keep a roof over their heads and food on the table. "Give me your support," he thunders, at Hollywood-scripted, Nuremberg-style rallies, "and I will protect you from the 'girlie-men' of the legislature."

And the frightened suburbanites—their job security and financial stability threatened by the policies drafted by Arnie's controllers such as Shultz—scream approval, as he threatens to "Terminate Davis" and "kick the butts" of nurses, whom he calls a "special interest."

Arnie's smirk is the face of fascism in the United States, and California its testing ground. Will the citizens of this state become "good Germans" of the 21st Century, or will they act to end his career, before he gets the chance to bring his version of "leadership" to the Oval Office?