

DROP THE DEBT

NEWS and ACTION from Jubilee USA Network, Washington, DC

Jubilee on the Jumbotron

By Bill Leshner, Berkeley, CA

SEVENTY THOUSAND LOYAL football fans will hear the message, "Kick the Debt" when the San Francisco 49er football team honors the Jubilee USA



Network at half-time ceremonies on December 16, 2001.

How did it happen? 49er Director of Marketing and Business Development, Stew Heathcote, a devoted follower of U2, saw Bono speak about debt on CNN. The 49ers have a tradition of honoring local community service groups at their home games and Stew thought, "Perhaps it's time to go international with these recognitions." The 49er management heartily supported the idea. Stew contacted Jubilee UK, who contacted Jubilee USA Network, who contacted the Bay Area Drop the Debt Coalition and the rest is history.

The centerpiece of the day will be the half-time ceremony when a video clip of Bono will be shown on huge screens called the "Jumbotron", talking about debt and highlighting the work of Jubilee USA Network.

A committee of five Bay Area Coalition members is hard at work preparing text for radio spots, messages to be flashed across the Jumbotron and Matrix Board at 3 Com Park, and Jubilee handouts that will be distributed to fans as they leave the stadium.

A Jubilee booth will be set up in "The Gold Mine," an open area where fans mingle before and during the game. The theme of the Jubilee booth will be "Kick the Debt." Former 49er players will be at the Jubilee booth to give autographs and attract fans. Jubilee volunteers will urge fans to take handouts, sign a petition form and write post cards on the spot to the president. Fans who make a donation to Jubilee will participate in a raffle to win an autographed San Francisco 49er football Jersey.

Jubilee Day at the 49ers represents a significant and unique opportunity to move the Jubilee message into a new field of supporters. Who knows, this could be the start of whole new phase of the movement, "Sports fans for Debt Cancellation?" *

Now, More than Ever!

A Report from the Fall Jubilee Network Council Meeting

By Rev. Robert Johnson, Detroit MI

NOW, MORE THAN EVER!

That was the spirit of the Jubilee USA Network Council meeting September 26-28, 2001.

Now, more than ever, we must fight for global economic justice. Now, more than ever, we must see poverty eradicated. Now, more than ever, we must continue the talking, the teaching, and the triumphant success of definitive debt cancellation.



Tim Atwater and Patrick Twomey present the budget at Network Council Meeting

This spirit of urgency was at work in the number of participants: all 75 prepared packets were given out before lunch on the first day, and more packets were created on the second day. Representatives of local debt campaigns from the Philippines, India and Haiti, to San Francisco, Missoula, Chicago and NY and points in between filled our meeting space to overflowing.

This spirit of urgency was at work in raising \$2,210 of individual contributions among our co-conspirators towards the victory of the campaign.

This spirit of urgency is at work in the hundreds of thousands of letters, post-cards and phone calls from around the world to key decision-makers in Washington to get the debt canceled.

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Jubilee USA Network has a new look!

Check out our new logo. Order our new brochure. We also have a new, easy to navigate, web site. Take a peek! www.jubileeusa.org



Many thanks to the Center for Educational Design and Communication who designed our new look, logo, brochure and even this newsletter! Not only have they created beautiful products, they were a joy to work with.

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"...proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants; it shall be a jubilee for you..."
— Leviticus 25:10

Jubilee USA Network began as Jubilee 2000/USA in 1997 when a diverse gathering of people and organizations came together in response to the international call for Jubilee debt cancellation. Now over 60 organizations including labor, churches, religious communities and institutions, AIDS activists, trade campaigners and over 9,000 individuals are active members of the Jubilee USA Network. Together we are a strong, diverse and growing network dedicated to working for a world free of debt for billions of people.

In the Jubilee Year as quoted above in Leviticus, those enslaved because of debts are freed, lands lost because of debt are returned, and community torn by inequality is restored. Today international debt has become a new form of slavery. Debt slavery means poor people working harder and harder in a vain effort to keep up with the interest payments on debts owed to rich countries including the US and international financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. Jubilee USA Network brings together people to turn this reality around by active solidarity with partners worldwide, targeted and timely advocacy strategies and educational outreach. Please join us in working for Jubilee justice.

222 East Capitol Street, NE
Washington DC 20003

www.jubileeusa.org
coord@j2000usa.org

(202) 783-3566 tel
(202) 546-4468 fax

Newsletter development and editing:
Jubilee Staff Team

Design:
Beth Ponticello, Center for Educational Design and Communication, Washington DC

Photographs:
Jim Russo, pg 1,8
Witness for Peace, pg 2
Jim Stipe, pg 6

Joining Hands Worldwide

By Marie Clarke

South

Jubilee South and other International Jubilee groups are holding an International People's Tribunal on Debt during the World Social Forum on February 1-2 in Puerto Alegre, Brazil. The people's tribunal will summon banks, corporations, Northern and Southern governments, the IMF and other International Financial Institutions to stand trial for the illegitimate debts of the Global South.

Charges will be pressed based on diverse aspects of the debt problem, including:

- the illegal and/or illegitimate nature of contracting parties, terms of contract and the uses of debts;
- the use of debt as leverage to impose conditionalities, sometimes called structural adjustment programs, which put in place macroeconomic policies that trap Southern countries in a cycle of debt dependence.

The Tribunal will invoke principles of law including, international humanitarian law and solemn Declarations of the United Nations as the basis for their pronouncements. Testimonies will be summoned from representatives of those who suffer the consequences of debt domination including, but not limited to, indigenous peoples, workers and the unemployed, women, children, and migrants.

The goals of the tribunal include popularizing the origins and consequences of eternal debt on a global scale, coalition building, and launching a global campaign against illegitimate debt. Jubilee USA Network has been invited to co-organize the tribunals. For more details, and a full list of charges, see our web site.

North

The Debt and Development Coalition/Jubilee Ireland recently completed a survey of 15 Jubilee groups around the world, including Jubilee USA Network, to inform the direction that the Irish campaign will take in the upcoming months and years. The results of their survey are on our web page.

The Jubilee Plus team, one of the manifestations of Jubilee 2000 UK, was dissolved by agreement with the New Economics Foundation (NEF). The Jubilee Debt Research Programme in the New Economics Foundation will undertake research led by Ann Pettifor, monitoring and reports on international debt. Two of the former staff team of Jubilee Plus, Liana Cisneros and Kwesi Owusu, plan to continue their southern link work outside the NEF. *



Pumping Up Policy

By Bob Naiman, Washington DC

Appropriations – The U.S. Fulfills Commitment on Debt Relief

Thanks to the great work of Jubilee USA Network members, Congress passed the second installment of the U.S. commitment to funding the initial debt relief promised by President Clinton in Cologne. Congress passed \$220 million to add to the \$435 million passed the year before. Now all that is left is a final \$135 million for bilateral relief for the Congo.

User Fees Victory!

In tandem with our direct efforts on debt cancellation, many Jubilee Network members took advantage of an appropriation for the Asian Development Fund to push the issues of user fees on health and education and transparency in decision-making at the regional development banks. Working with Rep. Doug Bereuter of Nebraska and Rep. Bernie Sanders of Vermont, we succeeded in moving a bill through the House Committee on Financial Services. This bill requires the U.S. to push for open Board meetings, to demand release of many now-secret documents at the regional development banks, to oppose user fees on health and education, and to oppose policies that reduce wages below \$2/day.

Drop the Debt – Get Ready for 2002!

At the February 2001 meeting in Denver, the Jubilee USA Network adopted the “Drop the Debt” campaign, which we defined as “100% cancellation of impoverished country debts, delinked from IMF-World Bank ‘structural adjustment’ policies,” especially school fees, clinic fees for primary health services, and privatization policies that increase the cost to poor people of accessing clean drinking water.

Working with the Episcopal Church, the AFL-CIO, and many other groups, we pushed this agenda last year with Congress and the Administration. However, these efforts were significantly hampered by the events of September 11. Not only was it difficult to move any agenda other than the response to 9-11, but anthrax scares diverted House and Senate mail, further complicating contact with congressional offices.

The good work that had been done before the terrorist attacks to lobby for 100% debt cancellation by the IMF and World Bank was not lost. They were in part a dress rehearsal for the incredible advocacy opportunity we will have next year when the World Bank approaches Congress for more money. This is called IDA013, or the “13th replenishment” of the International Development Authority part of the World Bank. This is one of the most promising opportunities to include our demand for debt cancellation in 2002.

We are now beginning to organize for next year’s effort. You can get involved in creating action plans in the Grassroots working group and developing political strategy in the Policy working group (contact Jubilee office to sign up.) Overlap between the working groups will strengthen our work overall. With a strong and unified Network, we can create the push needed to cancel the debts of impoverished countries and ensure the rights to education, health, and clean drinking water. ✱

Tabling the U2 Concerts Part 2 The Goal is Elevation

By Abbey Fisher, York, PA

We had a little surprise at the end of what we thought was the end of U2’s hugely successful Elevation Tour in June: they were returning to the United States in the fall! We’ve tabled at almost every one of the 80 shows in North America this year, reaching over a million people.

The tables offered a chance to reeducate myself on many of the issues, because concert goers asked all kinds of questions, from “Didn’t they already cancel the debts?” to “How do we make sure these countries don’t fall into the cycle again?” I found myself wanting more information and learning to present the issue in story form, with up-to-date facts and statistics, so that those coming to the table can better understand and evaluate the situation.

We also promoted the What’s Going On Town Hall Tour. U2 plays a tremendously emotional version of “What’s Going On” in concert, encouraging people to think about things we all can do to improve our world after September 11th. And the cheers that come when Bono talks about Jubilee and Drop the Debt in concert are enough to do even the weariest campaigner’s heart good.

Many thanks to U2 and their management and to all those who coordinated tables locally: we could never have done this without you! The tour has been exhausting and exhilarating; I know we all look forward to the next tour and the many other opportunities to educate the public about debt cancellation and to ELEVATE hearts and minds about the most important movement of our time. ✱

**Wondering how your faith-community
can proclaim jubilee?
Become a Jubilee Congregation.**

Jubilee congregations give ONE dollar and ONE letter per member, per year to sustain the work for jubilee justice. Please contact the Jubilee office for more information on how your church, temple or mosque can become a Jubilee Congregation at 202-783-3566 or mara@j2000usa.org

Because we are all ONE.

JUBILEE ROOTS

All Star Tribute Song Inspires What's Going On? Town Hall Tour

By Mara Vanderslice

*Tell me what's going on in the world today
I'd rather be dead than turn my head away
We got this first world vision, too comfy to lift our
Hands in the air and cry for a switch.*

- Nelly Furtado, lyrics from *What's Going On*

MARVIN GAYE'S 1971 HIT *What's Going On?*, a song popular 30 years ago, still has the power to inspire about issues facing humanity today. Artists Against AIDS Worldwide, a group led by U2's Bono, Britney Spears, Destiny's Child, NSYNC, Jennifer Lopez and others, has remade Gaye's classic to draw attention to the global AIDS crisis.

The mantra of Artists Against AIDS is that in order to stop global AIDS, we must: Drop the Debt, Donate the Dollars and Treat the People. Their inspiring MTV video shows the artists holding up painted sheets with these messages.

An estimated 8,000 people die from AIDS every day, most of them in impoverished countries. The AIDS crisis in Africa has already taken 25 million lives and left over 13 million children orphaned. Global health experts and the United Nations estimate that in order to curb the AIDS crisis in Africa, \$7-10 billion must be invested annually. However, Africa pays out \$13.5 billion in debt service every year.

Jubilee USA Network along with AIDS activists groups around the country planned Town Hall meetings, inspired by the artists' message, to educate and organize around the drop the debt to fight AIDS theme. What's Going On Town Halls were held in Providence, Philadelphia, Denver, New York City, Austin, San Francisco and Los Angeles.

Jubilee recognized that Americans are asking the very question, "What's Going On?" as they are forced to search for meaning in the current national crisis. The Town Halls were designed to help focus the heightened sense of compassion and questioning towards a humane response to AIDS and the overwhelming debt burden of the most impoverished countries.

The Town Halls highlighted a behind-the-scenes video of the artists talking about why they cared enough to get involved, as well as the groundbreaking MTV video. At the conclusion of each meeting, participants were encouraged to write letters to President Bush and members of Congress, as well as consider other ways to get involved. Hundreds of people across the country were drawn in to take action and join local Jubilee groups.

Bono and Artists Against AIDS Worldwide agreed to promote the community forums from the concert stages and online. Please see: www.aaaw.org under Take Action or www.u2.com under Hearts and Minds. The Town Halls were scheduled after U2 concerts in each of the cities, where Jubilee supporters passed out flyers and invited music fans to come learn more about the issues the artists are advocating for.

Each Town Hall had its own local flavor. In Denver, the Dean of the University of Denver Law School spoke at the gathering. In Los Angeles, USC students invited a local band to play as part of the evening and held the event in the campus coffeeshop. In New York City the diverse crowd was inspired by a Ugandan doctor, who told how she was never able to find work after graduating from medical school because of World Bank and IMF policies that required cutbacks on hiring medical staff in her country.

Many thanks to these organizations around the country who did the work to draw people out and ask "What's Going On?": ACT-UP Philadelphia, African Services Committee, American Jewish World Service, Bay Area Debt Cancellation Coalition, Global AIDS Alliance, Global Justice, Global Student AIDS Campaign, Health GAP Coalition, Jubilee Colorado, Jubilee USC, RESULTS, Save the Children, and University of Texas STATIC.

The proceeds of the All Star Tribute CD will be dedicated HIV/AIDS programs on the ground in Africa, Jubilee Network member the Global AIDS Alliance, as well as the United Way's September 11th Fund. Please support this effort by purchasing the *What's Going On* CD in your local music store. ✨



Top: Participants watch the stars at Town Hall in Denver

Bottom: Graphic from the *What's Going On* cd

Who's Who?

It has been a year of transition as Jubilee 2000/USA morphed into Jubilee USA Network. Now that the transition is complete, Jubilee is pleased to introduce, or re-introduce, our staff and Coordinating Committee. For bios of the staff and coordinating committee and a full list of Network Council members, check out our newly designed web site.

Staff

Marie Clarke, *National Coordinator*
Mara Vanderslice, *Outreach Coordinator*
Tim Atwater, *Special Projects Coordinator*
Jonas Bunte, *Intern/Outreach Assistant*

New Members of the Coordinating Committee

Darlene Gramigna, *AFSC and Jubilee Chicago*
Nunu Kidane, *Bay Area Debt Cancellation Coalition*
Melinda Miles, *Haiti Reborn*
Robert Naiman, *Center for Economic and Policy Research*



Working Groups

Our new working group structure is comprised of three working groups, Policy, Grassroots, Global South. These three working groups are open to any Jubilee supporter. They each meet once a month via conference call to guide the Network on their respective issues. There is overlap in membership to ensure coordinated strategies. These working groups enable any Jubilee supporter to have an equal voice in determining the program of the Jubilee USA Network. To join a working group, email coord@jubileeusa.org.

Grassroots

The Grassroots working group plans the outreach work of the Network, and creates and implements monthly actions.

Global South

The Global South working group fosters dialogue between U.S. citizens and partners worldwide, and ensures that all actions of the Network are in solidarity with the Global South.

Policy

The Policy working group creates the legislative plan for the Network, creating and analyzing legislation and strategizing ways to push the Jubilee agenda on Capitol Hill.

Holiday Cards for Congress!

While you are writing your holiday cards, don't forget to include your Senators and Representative. Thank them for working for debt cancellation and let them know that you will be in touch with them next year to achieve deeper and broader debt cancellation.

NEWS FLASH

September – Building Foundations

The protests and rallies scheduled to coincide with the fall meetings of the IMF and World Bank were canceled to honor the state of mourning that this nation was in after September 11. Instead of being a time of visible action, it was a time to rebuild our community and cement the foundation we need to continue our work for debt cancellation in this new context.



Sikh musical presentation at Interfaith Service

The Network Council brought us together to mourn this new context and also to celebrate the marvelous work happening all over the country to create a world free of debt. The teach-in tour “Ending Global Apartheid” that went to over 22 cities reminded us of our purpose – as we heard voices from all over the world speaking about the terror of debt. The Religious Working Group and Jubilee Interfaith Service for Restoration and Global Justice opened our hearts to mourn and to celebrate. The overflowing-with-people service brought together Jews, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Taoists, and more voices of our Southern partners to honor the victims of September 11, the victims of debt, and to blow the shofar to usher in new hope and energy in the continued call for Jubilee.

IMF/WB Fall Meetings – Keeping their Eyes Shut from DC to Ottawa

The IMF and World Bank rescheduled their annual meetings that were to take place in Washington DC at the end of September. Instead the international financial institutions met in Ottawa, Canada in mid November. We hoped that the two months since the attacks on September 11 would provide space for these institutions to re-evaluate their resistance to definitive debt cancellation, as the links between poverty and indebtedness and exporting terror grew brighter. Instead, the institutions turned their eyes, once again, from the global call for debt cancellation and came out of their meetings with no mention of further action on debt.

O’Neill Wading Through “Thousands” of Postcards

While the IMF and World Bank were silent, Secretary of Treasury, Paul O’Neill, mentioned in a speech on October 29, 2001 that the administration has gotten the message, or the postcard, on debt. His frustration was visible when he complained about the steady flow of “several thousand” letters he receives each week on the subject of debt, including postcards from U2 tables. “I don’t need to be lobbied about the importance of debt relief, and debt relief is going to be done, but that’s not economic development.” While he would like respite from this onslaught, we are pleased to continue sending our message via postcards, calls and letters, until Bush tells the IMF to, “drop the debt – 100%, without structural adjustment.”

IMF Announces International Bankruptcy Procedure

On November 26, 2001, the International Monetary Fund announced a radical plan for an international bankruptcy procedure, allowing indebted governments to seek legal protection from their private sector creditors. According to the proposed plan, the IMF would have the power to impose temporary standstills on debt payments while countries worked out restructuring deals with their creditors. Although the IMF would not directly take part in negotiations between debtors and creditors, the new scheme would stop bondholders from taking countries to court during the standstill. The most radical aspect of the new proposal is that it would allow the debtor country to temporarily reimpose capital controls to prevent money fleeing the country, signaling a ideological reversal of the long-standing IMF position on capital control liberalization. The IMF’s management will put the proposal before the IMF’s governing board of shareholder countries in January 2002. Jubilee USA Network will continue to follow this issue. For more information and to get involved in follow up work on this issue, go to www.jubileeusa.org or contact the Policy working group.

Church Women United Celebrate Jubilee

“Sound the Shofar: Jubilee! Forgive All Debts, Set People Free!” was the theme for World Community Day, the annual series of celebrations and worship services put on by Church Women United. In early November this year,

an estimated 1,400 groups around the country planned events, worship services and heard speakers on debt cancellation. The Jubilee office was deluged with requests for speakers, information and updates on the campaign. We hope that all the woman that gathered to celebrated Jubilee on World Community Day will to continue to stay involved in the ongoing call for Jubilee justice. If you would like to order their bible studies and worship bulletin on jubilee and debt cancellation, please call: 1-800-CWU-5551.

Debt Relief for Pakistan – Where there is a will, there is a way!

Despite Congressional arguments to the contrary, Jubilee maintains that all it takes is political will, and Congress can find the financing for debt cancellation. Debt relief for Pakistan is a case in point.

Pakistan has not been considered by the IMF and World Bank as a Heavily Indebted Poor Country, and thus they have not previously qualified for debt relief. Jubilee USA has long argued the so-called HIPC list arbitrarily divides countries that all experience equally the pain of watching health care and education grow dim as debts gain weight. Now Pakistan has suddenly, if not surprisingly risen to the top of the list of countries to receive relief.

Our Jubilee partners in Pakistan welcome the cancellation, and we are pleased to see that Congress will take this step. We plan to use this opportunity to highlight other countries, like Haiti, Bangladesh, Nigeria and the Philippines who also are in crucial need of debt cancellation. At the same time, this action makes clear that debt cancellation and fighting poverty are integral and alternative strategies to “fighting terrorism.”

Prayers for Partners in Pakistan

While the Jubilee group in Pakistan is heartened by the prospect of debt cancellation, they have also come under threat of attack by militant countrymen. The Jubilee office was threatened just after a brutal assault in a Catholic Church where men opened fire on the worshipping community. Please keep our Pakistani partners in your thoughts and prayers at this uncertain time.

Ethiopia and Tanzania – Reaching “Completion Point”

In November Ethiopia reached the “decision point” –becoming the 24th country to do so, and Tanzania reached the so-called “completion point” in the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC) process. This means that Ethiopia should begin to receive debt relief.

Tanzania will receive its full measure of debt relief under HIPC, leaving it with still \$116 million a year to pay yearly in debt service. While debt relief is crucial to the lives of the people in these countries, the HIPC/structural adjustment process continues to exact a high toll in terms of mandatory user fees on education and health, privatization of essential public services, and reduced social spending. Jubilee USA Network will continue to partner with our Jubilee colleagues around the world and call for full debt cancellation without structural adjustment programs designed by external institutions.

Meanwhile, two other countries, Nicaragua and Sao Tome have had debt relief under HIPC suspended because of alleged failure to carry out IMF and World Bank instructions to the letter. And Uganda, the first country to reach HIPC completion point, recently said that steep declines in coffee prices have wiped out most of the savings from debt relief. Declining coffee prices have also been a major factor in Nicaragua’s failure to comply with HIPC directives, according to many reports.*

Unfortunately, we have found that even after reaching the HIPC decision point, at least 15 countries are paying more in debt service than health care. The debt relief that Tanzania and Ethiopia will receive will bring these countries to the point of “debt sustainability” according to the IMF and World Bank. These institutions believe that countries can carry a debt burden of 150% debt/exports ratio. But this arbitrary line still permits countries to be forced to borrow more to pay their continuing debts, pushing money back and forth without being able to fully invest in their futures. The HIPC process, dominated by the very institutions that have led the Global South into debt with decades of bad economic advice and mandates, ignores the harsh realities of declining terms of trade, and puts all of the burden of adjustment on the South, none on the North. A new process that gives fair voice and vote to the South is urgently needed.

*For a full analysis on Nicaragua’s HIPC situation, check out our web site at: www.jubileeusa.org



Top Left: Seamus Finn, OMI (left) and Neil Watkins discuss the Network Platform at the Network Council



Top Right: Molly Dhlamini from the Student Union for Christian Action in South Africa shares her perspective at Network Council



Bottom Left: Marie Clarke (left) and Melinda Miles engage in lunch debate at Network Council

Now More Than Ever continued from p 1

Now, more than ever, labor unions, pastors, global AIDS awareness organizations, Roman Catholic orders, political lobbyists, environmentalists, and people who simply want the world to be treated with more respect and dignity came together to meet other partners from around the world who fight the good fight.

As a powerful network inspired by justice, we gave ourselves focus.

- We approved a platform that calls for definitive debt cancellation that meets the basic needs of the world's most impoverished countries; removes illegitimate and odious debt; gives authentic participation in economic and social decision-making to the impoverished masses; removes IMF-style structural adjustment; acknowledges the responsibility of lenders and borrowers in the debt crisis; and promotes global economic trade policies that reduce poverty and stop recurring, destructive cycles of indebtedness;
- We condensed the working groups into three: Policy, Grassroots, and Global South;
- We agreed to endorse the World Bank Bonds Boycott;
- We elected four new members to the national Network Coordinating Committee.

As a powerful network inspired by solidarity, we gave ourselves more room to strengthen the network.

- We empowered the platform committee to draft an introduction and explanation piece to the platform that clearly explains the position of Jubilee USA Network to people who are new to the issue;
- We empowered the Network Council to make four kinds of decisions: approving the operating budget; amending and finalizing the platform; creating the basic structure of the Network on the broadest level; and formalizing broad, programmatic goals;
- We discussed a draft statement on illegitimate debt and empowered a committee to draft the statement which can be agreed upon by consensus by Network members;
- We agreed to come together again in spring 2002 to finish business and come to consensus on the platform introduction and statement on illegitimate debt.

As coalitions for war keep building, we proved that powerful coalitions are building for just economics and just peace. Beyond mere flag-waving, there is a deeper patriotism that sees the 6,000 deaths to AIDS each day in Africa as a threat to our moral and global security. Beyond the desire for retaliation, there is a deeper desire for restoration of families and communities devastated by the thousands of deaths of children worldwide, every day, due to inadequate health care and education.

Now, more than ever, we must proclaim with our partners in the Global South: Se muerta de deuda... Death to unpayable debt! ✨

We need your help!

By making a tax-deductible contribution to Jubilee USA Network today, you will help ensure that we can continue the work that you helped start. Now is the time to show the world that Jubilee justice did not end with the year 2000. Please send your contribution to:

Jubilee USA Network
222 East Capitol St., NE
Washington DC 20003

Thank you for your continued support!