



**THE REVOLUTION  
WILL NOT BE FUNDED**  
BEYOND THE NON-PROFIT  
INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX



EDITED BY  
**INCITE! WOMEN OF COLOR AGAINST VIOLENCE**

»»Andrea Smith

## introduction

---

### *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded*

IN 2004, INCITE! WOMEN OF COLOR AGAINST VIOLENCE LEARNED the hard way that the revolution will not be funded. INCITE! began in 2000, with the purpose of supporting a movement of feminists of color organizing against all forms of violence—from interpersonal to state violence. When we first organized, we were generally funded through individual donations. However, by 2002, we found ourselves increasingly more successful in securing foundation grants to support our work. We took a stand against state funding since we perceived that antiviolence organizations who had state funding had been co-opted. It never occurred to us to look at foundation funding in the same way. However, in a trip to India (funded, ironically, by the Ford Foundation), we met with many non-funded organizations that criticized us for receiving foundation grants. When we saw that groups with much less access to resources were able to do amazing work without funding, we began to question our reliance on foundation grants.

Our growing suspicions about foundation grants were confirmed when, in February 2004, INCITE! received an e-mail from the Ford Foundation with the subject line “Congratulations!” and an offer of “a one-year or two-year grant of \$100,000” to cover our general operating expenses in response to a grant proposal the Ford Foundation had solicited from us. Excited about the news, we committed to two major projects: the Sisterfire multimedia tour, which was organized for 2004, and the third Color of Violence conference, to be held in New Orleans in 2005. Then, unexpectedly on July 30, 2004, the Ford Foundation sent another letter, explaining that it had reversed its decision because of our organization’s statement of support for the Palestinian liberation struggle. Apparently, during the board approval process, a board member decided to investigate INCITE! further and disapproved of what s/he found on our website. INCITE! quickly learned from firsthand experience the deleterious effects foundations can have on radical social justice movements. However, we also learned that social jus-

tice organizations do not always need the foundation support they think they do. Strapped with this sudden loss of funding but committed to organizing two major projects, INCITE! members started raising money through grassroots fundraising—house parties, individual calls, T-shirt sales, and so on—and we were able to quickly raise the money we lost when the Ford Foundation rescinded their grant offer.

This story is not an isolated incident of a social justice organization finding itself in a precarious state as a result of foundation funding (specifically, a lack thereof). Since the late 1970s, social justice organizations within the US have operated largely within the 501(c)(3) non-profit model, in which donations made to an organization are tax deductible, in order to avail themselves of foundation grants. Despite the legacy of grassroots, mass-movement building we have inherited from the 1960s and 70s, contemporary activists often experience difficulty developing, or even imagining, structures for organizing outside this model. At the same time, however, social justice organizations across the country are critically rethinking their investment in the 501(c)(3) system. Funding cuts from foundations affected by the current economic crisis and increased surveillance by the Department of Homeland Security have encouraged social justice organizations to assess opportunities for funding social change that do not rely so heavily upon state structures. *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex* represents a collaborative effort to address these issues and envision new possibilities and models for future organizing. Several key issues are explored:

- ▶ *How did the 501(c)(3), or non-profit, model develop, and for what reasons? How did this model impact the direction of social justice organizing?*
- ▶ *How has funding from foundations impacted the course of social justice movements?*
- ▶ *How does 501(c)(3) status impact the relationship of social justice organizations to the state and give it opportunities to co-opt movements?*
- ▶ *Are there ways the non-profit model can be used to support more radical visions for social change?*
- ▶ *What alternatives to 501(c)(3) are there for building viable social justice movements in the US?*
- ▶ *What models for organizing outside the non-profit/NGO (nongovernmental organization) model exist outside the US that may help us?*

This anthology is not primarily concerned with particular types of non-profits or foundations, but the non-profit industrial complex (or the NPIC, to be defined later in the introduction) as a whole and the way in which capitalist interests and the state use non-profits to

- *monitor and control social justice movements;*
- *divert public monies into private hands through foundations;*
- *manage and control dissent in order to make the world safe for capitalism;*
- *redirect activist energies into career-based modes of organizing instead of mass-based organizing capable of actually transforming society;*
- *allow corporations to mask their exploitative and colonial work practices through “philanthropic” work;*
- *encourage social movements to model themselves after capitalist structures rather than to challenge them*

*The Revolution Will Not Be Funded* offers no simple answers to these questions, but hopes to continue a conversation about how to think beyond state-proctored models like the non-profit system for organizing political projects for social change. The contributors are a multigenerational assembly of organizers working inside and outside the NPIC from a variety of—even conflicting—perspectives. Before assessing these issues, however, we need to understand how the non-profit system became the predominant model within social movements today.

## history of the non-profit system

Prior to the Civil War, individuals, not organizations, did most charity work. However, in the face of accelerating industrialization and accompanying social ills, such as increased poverty, community breakdown to facilitate the flow of labor, and violence, local organizations (generally headed by community elites) developed to assist those seen to be “deserving” of assistance, such as widows and children. These charities focused on individual poverty rather than poverty on the systemic level. Charities did not campaign for higher wages, for instance, but worked to ameliorate the impact of low wages on communities. As this charity movement spread, local charity organizations began to organize on the national level. In 1874, members of private charity organizations, religious agencies, and public officials from several northeastern states established the National Conference of Charities and Corrections to discuss mutual concerns (later renamed the National Conference on Social Welfare).<sup>1</sup>

This system of charitable giving increased exponentially during the early 1900s when the first multimillionaire robber barons, such as John D. Rockefeller, Andrew Carnegie, and Russell Sage, created new institutions that would exist in perpetuity and support charitable giving in order to shield their earnings from taxation.<sup>2</sup> Before the 1950s, charities were generally unregulated because few states imposed taxes on corporations; only the largest foundations with the wealthiest donors required charitable deductions. The first such foundation was organized by Margaret Olivia Slocum Sage, who, using the \$70 million left to her by railroad giant Russell Sage started the Russell Sage Foundation in 1907. She was followed by Rockefeller in 1910 and Carnegie in 1911. By 1955, donations from individuals, foundations, and corporations totaled \$7.7 billion, according to the American Association of Fundraising Counsel Trust for Philanthropy. By 1978, that total had grown to \$39 billion. In 1998, the last year of available data, total giving had risen to \$175 billion.<sup>3</sup>

Along with the growth in donations came a huge swell in the number of non-profit organizations. In many cases, these foundations served as tax shelters so that corporations could avoid taxes and descendants could receive their inheritance without paying estate taxes. Early on, many of these organizations employed those who had been part of the charity movement, but, unlike their charity movement predecessors, these foundations' purviews would be general, rather than specific, and their governance would rely on private, self-perpetuating boards of trustees or directors. From their inception, foundations focused on research and dissemination of information designed ostensibly to ameliorate social issues—in a manner, however, that did not challenge capitalism. For instance, in 1913, Colorado miners went on strike against Colorado Fuel and Iron, an enterprise of which 40 percent was owned by Rockefeller. Eventually, this strike erupted into open warfare, with the Colorado militia murdering several strikers during the Ludlow Massacre of April 20, 1914. During that same time, Jerome Greene, the Rockefeller Foundation secretary, identified research and information to quiet social and political unrest as a foundation priority. The rationale behind this strategy was that while individual workers deserved social relief, organized workers in the form of unions were a threat to society. So the Rockefeller Foundation heavily advertised its relief work for individual workers while at the same time promoting a pro-Rockefeller spin to the massacre. For instance, it sponsored speakers to claim that no massacre had happened and tried to block the publication of reports that were critical of Rockefeller.<sup>4</sup> According to Frederick Gates, who helped run the Rockefeller Foundation, the “danger is not the combination of capital, it is not the Mexican situation, it is the labor monopoly; and the danger of the labor monopoly lies in its use of armed force, its organized and deliberate war on society.”<sup>5</sup>

Even in this earliest stage of foundation development, critics noted the potential danger of large private foundations. In 1916, the US Commission on Industrial Rela-

tions (also known as the Walsh Commission) filed a report on labor issues with Congress warning that foundations were a “grave menace”<sup>6</sup> because they concentrated wealth and power in the service of ideology which supported the interests of their capitalist benefactors. According to Samuel Gompers’s testimony in the commission’s report, “In the effort to undertake to be an all-pervading machinery for the molding of the minds of the people...in the constant industrial struggle for human betterment...[foundations] should be prohibited from exercising their functions, either by law or regulation.”<sup>7</sup>

The Walsh report called on Congress to more strictly regulate foundations, which it did not do, given the state’s historic relationship with capital. However, the resulting negative publicity encouraged foundations to fund intermediaries, such as universities, rather than doing research themselves, so that the results of such research would be more convincingly objective.<sup>8</sup>

During the Great Depression, the societal influence of foundations was curtailed by economic crisis. However, after World War II, particularly with the emergence of the Ford Foundation (founded in 1936), foundations regained prominence, and focused on how they could further the interests of US-style democracy domestically and abroad.<sup>9</sup> The Ford Foundation became particularly prominent, not only for philanthropic giving, but for its active involvement in trying to engineer social change and shape the development of social justice movements. For instance, foundations, particularly Ford, became involved in the civil rights movement, often steering it into more conservative directions, as the essay from Robert L. Allen in this collection demonstrates. At the same time, however, this civil rights involvement also aroused the ire of the Right, particularly in the South, who then called on Congress to more strictly regulate foundations. Right-wing organizations such as the Heritage Foundation claimed that tax dollars were going to subsidize left-wing causes, while on the left, progressives such as Allen were arguing that foundations were pushing social justice movements into more conservative directions.<sup>10</sup> Thus foundations earned critics from all sides.

Leading the Right’s assault on liberal foundations was Congressman Wright Patman of Texas, who conducted a study of foundations, beginning in 1962. In reports he sent to the House of Representatives, Patman contended that economic power was consolidating in the hands of foundations; foundations were being used to escape estate taxes, compensate relatives, and pay annuities to themselves; the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) lacked proper oversight over foundations; foundations were controlling business to give them a competitive advantage over small businesses; and foundations were spending too much of their money overseas.<sup>11</sup> In the early 1960s, foundations were growing at a rate of 1,200 per year, and financial magazines routinely promoted foundations as tax-shelter tools.<sup>12</sup> In response,

Congress passed the Tax Reform Act of 1969, which reversed the previous state policy of only minimally regulating foundations. This act imposed a 4 percent excise tax on foundations' net investment income, put restrictions on the ability of foundations to engage in business operations (thus curtailing the abilities of corporations to operate tax-free as ostensible foundations), and required foundations to annually spend at least 6 percent of net investment income (reduced to 5 percent in 1988) to prevent them from growing without serving their ostensible charitable purposes. Additionally, the act required foundations to provide more comprehensive information disclosures on their operations in annual reports to be filed with the IRS and made available to citizens at foundation offices.<sup>13</sup>

Notwithstanding its attack on foundations, the Right also developed its own foundations. As Michael Shuman of the Institute of Policy Studies notes, while right-wing foundations actually give away *less* money than liberal foundations, the former use their funds more effectively. Progressive funders generally give money to specific issue-oriented campaigns, whereas right-wing foundations see the need to fund the intellectual projects that enable the Right to develop a comprehensive framework for presenting its issues to the public. These think tanks, research projects, journals, etcetera, may not have had an immediate short-term impact, but, in the long run, they altered the public consciousness.

This kind of investment by the Right in public policy has paid off handsomely. Its long-term support of conservative public scholars enables them to develop and promote numerous "new Ideas."...With ample funding, they have successfully pounded their message into heads of millions, sowing confusion, apathy, and opposition to public regulation of private corporations.<sup>14</sup>

Right-wing foundations pour millions of dollars into funding think tanks such as the Heritage Foundation to help craft an ideological package that has fundamentally reshaped the consciousness of the public. Heritage Foundation president Edwin Feulner talks about the foresight of right-wing funders such as Richard Scaife, who saw the importance of political education. "Right-wing victories," he notes, "started more than twenty years ago when Dick Scaife had the vision to see the need for a conservative intellectual movement in America...These organizations built the intellectual case that was necessary before political leaders like Newt Gingrich could translate their ideas into practical political alternatives."<sup>15</sup>

The rise of foundation support accompanied the rise of groups that organized as formal 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations, because foundations could make tax-deductible donations to non-profits, particularly after the federal government began to regulate foundation giving more strictly in 1969. According to the IRS, non-profits are "religious, charitable, scientific, or educational" organizations whose receipts are tax-exempt, and whose contributions are tax deductible

for the donors. This tax-exempt status was created by Congress as part of the Revenue Act of 1913, passed after ratification of the 16th Amendment, which instituted the income tax. Generally, organizations must secure 501(c)(3) status to receive foundation grants, and they are prohibited from direct involvement in political advocacy. In 1953, the IRS estimated that about 50,000 organizations had received charity status. By 1978, that number had risen nearly sixfold. Today, charities number more than 730,000, according to the latest IRS count. As of 1998, there were 734,000 501(c)(3) organizations in the United States alone.<sup>16</sup> Today, foundations have assets of \$500 billion and give around \$33.6 billion annually,<sup>17</sup> and there are 837,027 non-profits, excluding religious organizations.<sup>18</sup>

During the late 1960s, radical movements for social change were transforming the shape of the United States while Third World liberation movements were challenging Western imperialism. Foundations began to take a role in shaping this organizing so that social protest would not challenge the capitalist status quo. Robert L. Allen, as early as 1969, warned of the co-optation of the Black Power movement by foundations. In his germinal work, *Black Awakening in Capitalist America*, reprinted in part in this anthology, Allen documents how the Ford Foundation's support of certain Black civil rights and Black Power organizations such as CORE (Congress of Racial Equality) actually helped shift the movement's emphasis—through the recruitment of key movement leaders—from liberation to Black capitalism. Similarly, Madonna Thunder Hawk describes how the offer of well-paying jobs in the non-profit sector seduced many Native activists into diverting their energy from organizing to social service delivery and program development. As Joan Roefels notes in *Foundations and Public Policy* (2003), large private foundations tended to fund racial justice organizations that focused on policy and legal reform, a strategy that effectively redirected activist efforts from radical change to social reform. It also helped to professionalize these movements, since only those with advanced degrees could do this kind of work, thus minimizing the importance of mass-based grassroots organizing. Waldemar Nielsen, in his 1972 study of the big foundations at the time, noted that funding patterns indicated that “philanthropic interest in the black [*sic*] derives from the long tradition of humanitarian concern for his [*sic*] ‘plight’ rather than from an ideological comment to the principle of racial equality.”<sup>19</sup> Observing that the majority of foundation funding for racial issues went into higher education, Nielsen notes,

Reminiscent of the ideas of Booker T. Washington, it is commonly believed that the most fruitful way to solve the problems of the blacks is to open educational opportunities to them; by climbing the rungs of the educational and occupational ladder, they will eventually achieve full economic, political, and social equality within the system. Moreover, once educational opportunities



have been opened, the primary responsibility for his advancement rests upon the black man—on his own ambition, determination, and effort.<sup>20</sup>

So, essentially, foundations provide a cover for white supremacy. Reminiscent of Rockefeller's strategy, people of color deserve individual relief but people of color organized to end white supremacy become a menace to society.

Another strategy developed to sublimate revolutionary movements into reformist ones was "leadership training" both domestically and internationally, whereby potential organizers were recruited to develop the skills to become policy-makers and bureaucrats instead of organizers.<sup>21</sup> As the essay on the NGOization of the Palestinian liberation movement in this volume shows, this strategy of "leadership development" is still being used to transform liberation struggles. As Howard Dressner, secretary of the Ford Foundation, stated in 1969,

American society is being strained at one extreme by those who would destroy what they oppose or do not understand, and at the other by forces that would repress variety and punish dissent. We are in great need of more—not fewer—instruments for *necessary social change under law, for ready, informed response to deep-seated problems without chaos, for accommodation of a variety of views without deafening anarchy* [emphasis added]. Foundations have served as such an instrument.<sup>22</sup>

Meanwhile, Robert Arnove's edited volume, *Philanthropy and Cultural Imperialism*, charged that foundations

have a corrosive influence on a democratic society; they represent relatively unregulated and unaccountable concentrations of power and wealth which buy talent, promote causes, and in effect, establish an agenda of what merits society's attention. They serve as "cooling-out" agencies, delaying and preventing more radical, structural change. They help maintain an economic and political order, international in scope, which benefits the ruling-class interests of philanthropists.<sup>23</sup>

As the essays in this volume will demonstrate, these critiques of foundations and non-profits still ring true today.

### what is the non-profit industrial complex?

Dylan Rodríguez defines the non-profit industrial complex as "a set of symbiotic relationships that link political and financial technologies of state and owning class control with surveillance over public political ideology, including and especially emergent progressive and leftist social movements." He and Ruth Wilson Gilmore argue that the NPIC is the natural corollary to the prison industrial complex (PIC). While the PIC overtly represses dissent the NPIC manages and controls dissent by incorporating it into the state apparatus, functioning as a

“shadow state” constituted by a network of institutions that do much of what government agencies are supposed to do with tax money in the areas of education and social services. The NPIC functions as an alibi that allows government to make war, expand punishment, and proliferate market economies under the veil of partnership between the public and private sectors.

Christine E. Ahn looks more closely at the role of foundations in particular. She argues that foundations are *theoretically* a correction for the ills of capitalism. However, if we look at where the actual funding goes (including who governs these institutions), we can see that most of this country’s “charity”—whether individual, corporate, or foundation—is not directed toward programs, services, and institutions that benefit the poor or disenfranchised, and certainly not toward effecting social change. When wealthy people create foundations, they’re exempt from paying taxes on their wealth. Thus foundations essentially rob the public of monies that should be owed to them and give back very little of what is taken in lost taxes. In addition, their funds are derived from profits resulting from the exploitation of labor. That is, corporations become rich by exploiting their workers. Corporate profits are then put into foundations in order to provide “relief” to workers that are the result of corporate practices in the first place. Rather than thinking of foundations as a source of income for which we should be grateful, Ahn suggests we reimagine them as a target for accountability, just as we might organize to hold corporations or the state accountable to the public good.

## how the npic impacts movements

It is easy to critique the larger foundations, but what about smaller foundations without large endowments? Are large foundations the only problem? This question is addressed by Tiffany Lethabo King and Ewuare Osayande’s work. While Ahn discusses strategies for holding foundations accountable, King and Osayande contend that this effort to reform foundations basically serves to protect elitism within social justice movements. They further argue that even self-described “alternatives” to foundation funding (such as individual giving through major donors) are still based on the same logic—that wealthy people should be the donors, and thus, inevitably, the controllers of social justice struggles. Ultimately, even these funding strategies disadvantage people-of-color organizations which do not have the same access to wealthy donors as do white-dominated organizations.

Thus, regardless of the intentions of particular foundations, the framework of funding, in which organizations expect to be funded by benefactors rather than by their constituents, negatively impacts social movements as well. Sista II Sista and Sisters in Action for Power describe how their respective initial efforts to

become a non-profit ultimately shifted their focus from organizing to corporate management. When Sisters in Action for Power realized the detrimental impact the NPIC had on its work, it began to explore how its organization could reject this corporate model and instead develop structures that more closely model the vision of the society it is trying to build. This step necessitated the development of organizing strategies within an integrated mind-body-spirit framework that respects organizing processes as much as outcomes. Aware that such approaches are often antithetical to foundations' requirements that focus on short-term campaign outcomes, Sisters in Action for Power explains why it nonetheless chose to engage in campaigns to develop leadership in young women of color through a holistic framework.

Madonna Thunder Hawk reminds us that many radical movements for change are able to accomplish much—if not more—outside the non-profit system. Her essay discusses her involvement with Women of All Red Nations (formed in connection with the American Indian Movement), which did incredible work without a single foundation grant. Mindful that many contemporary activists feel they cannot do their work without starting a non-profit first, Thunder Hawk also observes that foundations only give money to more well-established NGOs who have the “expertise.” But, more often than not, she warns, these purported experts are generally not part of the communities they advocate for and hence do not contribute to building grassroots leadership, particularly in indigenous communities.

In this way, the NPIC contributes to a mode of organizing that is ultimately unsustainable. To radically change society, we must build mass movements that can topple systems of domination, such as capitalism. However, the NPIC encourages us to think of social justice organizing as a career; that is, you do the work if you can get paid for it. However, a mass movement requires the involvement of millions of people, most of whom cannot get paid. By trying to do grassroots organizing through this careerist model, we are essentially asking a few people to work more than full-time to make up for the work that needs to be done by millions.

In addition, the NPIC promotes a social movement culture that is non-collaborative, narrowly focused, and competitive. To retain the support of benefactors, groups must compete with each other for funding by promoting only their own work, whether or not their organizing strategies are successful. This culture prevents activists from having collaborative dialogues where we can honestly share our failures as well as our successes. In addition, after being forced to frame everything we do as a “success,” we become stuck in having to repeat the same strategies because we insisted to funders they were successful, even if they were not. Consequently, we become inflexible rather than fluid and ever changing in our strategies, which is what a movement for social transformation really requires. And as we become more concerned with attracting funders than with organizing mass-based movements, we start niche marketing the work of our organizations. Framing our organizations

as working on a particular issue or a particular strategy, we lose perspective on the larger goals of our work. Thus, niche marketing encourages us to build a fractured movement rather than mass-based movements for social change.

Project South suggests that a fatal error made by many activists is presuming that one needs money to organize. While fundraising is part of organizing, fundraising is not a precondition for organizing. Project South describes how they integrate fundraising into organizing so that those who fulfill fundraising positions in Project South are trained organizers, not fundraisers.

Ana Clarissa Rojas Durazo, Alisa Bierrria, and Paul Kivel trace the impact of the NPIC on the antiviolence movement. Rojas notes that the antiviolence movement became co-opted by the state through federal and state funding. Her work builds on the analysis of Suzanne Pharr, who notes that the move toward developing antiviolence organizations through the non-profit system coincided with Reaganomics. At the same time that Reagan was slashing government services, the women's movement organized itself into non-profits to provide the services the government was no longer providing. Consequently, the antiviolence movement essentially became a surrogate for the state.<sup>24</sup> Likewise, Bierrria observes an antiviolence movement focused less on grassroots organizing and more on professionalization and social service delivery as a direct result of increased government and foundation funding. Instead of imagining domestic violence survivors who could organize on their own behalf, antiviolence organizations viewed them only as clients in need of services. Kivel argues that the NPIC assigns social service professionals a particular function within the capitalist system of managing dissent. Still, he does not suggest that there should be no social services agencies at all—rather, that social service agencies should also engage social justice organizing or must be accountable to social movements if they are to further, rather than impede, social justice.

The impact of the NPIC on the antiviolence movement has been particularly disastrous because most of the government funding it receives has been through the Department of Justice, especially with the advent of the Violence Against Women Act. As a result, antiviolence organizations have focused primarily on criminal justice solutions to ending violence that reinforce the prison industrial complex; in fact, many antiviolence organizations are now located within police departments. Women of color, who must address both gender violence within their communities and state violence against their communities, have been particularly impacted by the direction the mainstream antiviolence movement has taken. This NGOization of the antiviolence movement is also actively exported to other countries, following a model Gayatri Spivak calls “saving brown women from brown men”<sup>25</sup> which tends to pathologize communities in the Third World for their “backward” attitudes toward women. The goal becomes to “save” Third

World women from the extreme patriarchy in their community without looking at how patriarchy is connected to white supremacy and colonialism. Thus, for instance, mainstream feminist groups will support the bombing in Afghanistan to save Afghan women from the Taliban as if US empire actually liberates women. (In addition to the essays in this volume, further analysis of the co-optation of the antiviolence movement can be found in INCITE!'s previous book, *Color of Violence: The INCITE! Anthology* [2006]).

Women of color have also been particularly impacted by the role of foundations in the women's health and reproductive justice movements. Foundations have been active in supporting the population control movement, which blames the reproductive capabilities of women of color and Third World women for almost all social ills, including poverty, war, and environmental destruction. For instance, John D. Rockefeller III founded the Population Council in 1952 to foster international population control policies under the notion that overpopulation causes unrest, and hence, revolution.<sup>26</sup> The Population Council supported mass population control efforts in Latin America during the 1960s and 1970s.<sup>27</sup> And in the last six months of 1976, the Population Council supported the sterilization of 6.5 million people in India through the use of police raids to round up men and women, with thousands dying from infections caused by the unsanitary conditions under which the sterilizations were performed. In one village alone, all the young men were sterilized.<sup>28</sup>

Today, what Betsy Hartmann terms the "population establishment"<sup>29</sup> spends billions of dollars each year on population programs, policy setting, and (mis)education. Certainly, Third World/women of color want family planning services, but many of the programs foisted upon them have been implemented without concern for their health. For instance, before Norplant (a long-acting hormonal contraceptive) was introduced in the US, the Population Council inserted it into nearly half a million women in Indonesia, often without providing counseling on side effects (which include menstrual irregularity, nausea, and anxiety) and without telling them that there had been no long-term studies on the drug's effects. Many were not told that it needed to be removed after five years to avoid an increased risk of ectopic pregnancy.<sup>30</sup> Thirty-five hundred women in India were implanted with Norplant 2 in trials that began in the 1980s, without being warned about possible side effects or screened to determine if they were suitable candidates. These programs were finally discontinued due to concerns about "teratogenicity and carcinogenicity." In both cases, women who wanted the implant removed had great difficulty finding doctors who could do so.<sup>31</sup> (Similarly, in the US, many doctors can insert Norplant, but not so many know how to remove it).

The Pew Foundation, the largest environmental grantmaker in the United States, spent over \$13 million to increase public support for population control at

the 1994 Cairo Conference on Population and Development.<sup>32</sup> Population control is one of Pew's top priorities; organized through the Global Stewardship Initiative, it targets are environmental organizations, domestic affairs and foreign policy initiatives, and religious organizations.<sup>33</sup> In conjunction with the Park Ridge Center, in February 1994, Pew organized a forum in Chicago on religious perspectives on population, consumption, and the environment. In May 1994, it hosted a consultation that brought together thinkers from major world religions to deliberate on population issues,<sup>34</sup> issuing a statement to contradict the Vatican's antichoice position.<sup>35</sup> As a lead-in to the Cairo conference, Pew targeted churches to support a Cairo consensus on population by organizing focus groups with different constituencies, including various religious groups. It identified the "problem" constituencies as those who "accept overpopulation as a problem in terms of unequal distribution of resources and mismanagement of resources—not numbers of people."<sup>36</sup> Pew then targeted the "elites" of religious communities who would understand its construction of the problems of overpopulation.<sup>37</sup> Its efforts met with success; in 1993, a Pew survey of 30 US denominations found that 43 percent had an official statement on population.<sup>38</sup> Church leaders in both evangelical and liberal denominations came out in support of the Cairo conference, lauding its steps forward on women's reproductive health issues. Through this work, Pew had, in the words of Hartmann, managed to "manufacture consensus" over the Cairo conference.<sup>39</sup> Through its vast financial resources, Pew has been able to change the agenda of environmental organizations and programs in order to suit its own vision for the world.<sup>40</sup>

## non-profits and global organizing

Globally, both foundations and non-profits/NGOs have received widespread criticism for their implicit or explicit support of First World interests and free-market capitalism. Numerous foundations and non-profits have directly colluded with the Central Intelligence Agency. For instance, foundations have supported and continue to support CIA programs in educational exchanges with east Africa and Eastern Europe to maintain a US presence in these areas without the consent of Congress.<sup>41</sup> The CIA also employs political scientists and collaborates with professors in sponsoring university institutes. These institutes were created on the advice of foundations that assumed scholars would be more likely to cooperate with intelligence work if it were done in an academic location. These scholars also helped recruit potential allies among foreign students.<sup>42</sup> Additionally, the CIA directed funding through foundations to support cultural arts to recruit leftist cultural workers, and showcase US cultural achievements globally. Since the State Department could not fund such activities directly, they

had to be funneled through foundations.<sup>43</sup> Gerald Colby and Charlotte Dennett's book *Thy Will Be Done* also charges that John D. Rockefeller III funded missionary agencies that collaborated with the CIA for several decades in Latin America. These missionaries/agents would befriend indigenous peoples in Latin America, collaborate with them to translate the Bible into indigenous languages, and then use these intermediaries to funnel intelligence information to the CIA to facilitate resource extraction and destabilize leftist regimes.<sup>44</sup> Critics further charge that the Ford Foundation funded programs to revitalize Indian religions in India to counter the spread of communism. This tactic has the impact of defusing opposition from a leftist framework, but also fuels religious fundamentalism and the rise of Hindu Right nationalism.<sup>45</sup>

Foundations have also been directly involved in squelching revolutionary movements in the Third World. The Ford Foundation was actively involved through its various programs in diverting the antiapartheid movement in South Africa from an anticapitalist to a pro-capitalist movement.<sup>46</sup> Cyril Ramaphosa, a secretary-general of the African National Congress who led a 1987 miners strike praised by the Ford Foundation,<sup>47</sup> signed a \$900 million contract with Anglo American, a corporation that accounts for 25 percent of South Africa's gross domestic product and controls much of South Africa's gold and diamond mining. The goal of this collaboration is to bring "blacks into the mainstream economy" rather than to challenge the economic status quo.<sup>48</sup> As demonstrated in "The NGOization of the Palestine Liberation Movement," a series of interviews with four longtime activists, these same strategies are being used by NGOs to deradicalize the struggle in Palestine.

James Petras makes some similar arguments in his 1994 essay "NGOs: In the Service of Imperialism." Petras notes that despite claiming to be nongovernmental organizations, they actually support government interests. NGOs, he writes,

receive funds from overseas governments, work as private sub-contractors of local governments and/or are subsidized by corporate funded private foundations with close working relations with the state....Their programs are not accountable to local people, but to overseas donors who "review" and "over-see" the performance of the NGOs according to their criteria and interests. The NGO officials are self-appointed and one of their key tasks is designing proposals that will secure funding. In many cases this requires that NGO leaders find out the issues the Western funding elites fund, and shape proposals accordingly.<sup>49</sup>

For example, he notes that NGOs direct organizing efforts away from dealing with exploitation by the World Bank to supporting micro-credit projects that place the solution to poverty on individual initiative rather than changing global economic systems. He adamantly opposes even "progressive" NGOs, arguing

that they divert resources from the people, they subordinate movement leadership to NGO leadership, and they do not put their lives on the lines.

Progressive NGOs use peasants and the poor for their research projects, they benefit from the publication—nothing comes back to the movements not even copies of the studies done in their names! Moreover, peasant leaders ask why the NGOs never risk their neck after their educational seminars? Why do they not study the rich and powerful—why us?...The NGOs should stop being NGOs and convert themselves into members of socio-political movements.... The fundamental question is whether a new generation of organic intellectuals can emerge from the burgeoning radical social movements which can avoid the NGO temptation and become integral members of the next revolutionary wave.<sup>50</sup>

## reformulating the role of non-profits

In contrast to Petras, contributors Adjoa Florência Jones de Almeida and Paula X. Rojas suggest alternative possibilities for understanding the proper relationship between non-profits and social movements as informed by the role of non-profits in mass movements in other countries. Jones de Almeida and Rojas point out that in many countries, social movements are not necessarily dominated by non-profits. Instead, movement building is funded and determined by the constituents. These movements may make strategic alliances with non-profits or develop their own non-profits as intermediaries to fund specific aspects of their work. But a key difference is that these non-profits are accountable to social movements; they are not seen as part of the movement themselves. Furthermore, the goal is to sustain movements, not non-profits that support movements. Within the US, Ruth Wilson Gilmore suggests that many organizations can be effective even with 501(c)(3) status if they have a clear mission and purpose—and if they are funded by their constituents. She further suggests it is central to remember that our focus should not be on organizational (or career) preservation, but on furthering the movement of which an organization is a part. Eric Tang also concludes that while non-profits can have a role to support the movement, they cannot be an end unto themselves. He argues that the revolution will not be funded—we must create autonomous movements. But once we develop that mass movement, non-profits could serve as buffers that protect autonomous movements from government repression.

Most of the essays in this anthology were presented in 2004 at *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Non-Profit Industrial Complex*, a conference organized by INCITE! Women of Color Against Violence. Co-organized by the Women of Color Collective of the University of California, Santa Barbara, this historic international gathering provided an opportunity for activists



and organizers to share their struggles of organizing within the context of the non-profit system. While providing no simple answers, it did encourage a conversation on new ways to think about organizing and activism.

These essays do not necessarily represent the views of INCITE! and they do not necessarily agree with one other. Nevertheless, they provide a space for social justice organizers and activists to begin thinking of ways to build movements that either do not rely primarily on the non-profit model or position themselves differently within this system. We hope it will continue a conversation that may move us forward in developing new strategies for revolutionary work.

### notes

1 Sheila Slaughter and Edward Silva, "Looking Backwards: How Foundations Formulated Ideology in the Progressive Period," in *Philanthropy and Cultural Imperialism*, ed. Robert Arnove (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1980), 55–86.

2 James Allen Smith, "The Evolving Role of American Foundations," in *Philanthropy and the Non-profit Sector in a Changing America*, ed. Charles Clotfelter and Thomas Erlich (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1999), 34–51.

3 Thomas J. Billitteri, "Donors Big and Small Propelled Philanthropy in the 20th Century," *The Chronicle of Philanthropy Gifts and Grants*, January 13, 2000, <http://philanthropy.com/free/articles/v12/i106/06002901.htm>.

In 2006 the American Association of Fundraising Counsel (AAFRC) changed its name to Giving Institute: Leading Consultants to Non-Profits. See AAFRC, "AAFRC Celebrates 70 Years of Service to Philanthropic Community; Gurin Forum, Gala Set the Stage for New Name, Direction," press release, March 7, 2006, [http://www.aafc.org/press\\_releases/trustreleases/gala06.html](http://www.aafc.org/press_releases/trustreleases/gala06.html).

4 Thomas Atwood, "The Road to Ludlow" (paper), <http://archive.rockefeller.edu/publications/resrep/andrews.pdf>.

5 Ibid.

6 Barbara Howe, "The Emergency of Scientific Philanthropy, 1900–1920: Origins, Issues and Outcomes," in *Philanthropy and Cultural Imperialism* (see note 1), 25–54.

7 Ibid.

8 Sheila Slaughter and Edward Silva, "Looking Backwards: How Foundations Formulated Ideology in the Progressive Period," in *Philanthropy and Cultural Imperialism* (see note 1), 55–86.

9 James Allen Smith, "The Evolving Role of American Foundations," in *Philanthropy and the Nonprofit Sector in a Changing America*, ed. by Charles Clotfelter and Thomas Erlich (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1999), 34–51.

10 Waldemar Nielsen, *Golden Donors* (New York: Truman Talley Books, 1985), 53.

11 John Edie, "Congress and Foundations: Historical Summary," in *America's Wealthy and the Future of Foundations*, ed. Teresa Odendahl (New Haven, CT: The Foundation Center, 1987), 43–64.

12 Billitteri, "Donors Big and Small."

13 Joan Roelofs, *Foundations and Public Policy* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003), 15.

14 Michael Shuman, "Why Progressive Foundations Give Too Little to Too Many," *Nation*, 12/19 January 1998, 12.

15 Karen Rothmyer, "What's Conspiracy Got to Do with It?" *Nation*, 23 February 1998, 20.

16 Roelofs, *Foundations and Public Policy*, 19.

- 17 Steve Gunderson, "Foundations: Architects of Social Change," *eJournal USA*, May 2006, <http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itsv/0506/ijse/gunderson.htm>.
- 18 The Nonprofit Congress, <http://www.nonprofitcongress.org/sectorinfo.htm>.
- 19 Waldemar Neilsen, *The Big Foundations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1972), 358.
- 20 *Ibid.*, 359.
- 21 Roelofs, *Foundations and Public Policy*, 127.
- 22 *Ibid.*
- 23 Robert Arnove, ed., *Philanthropy and Cultural Imperialism* (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1980), 1.
- 24 Suzanne Pharr, plenary address, The Revolution Will Not Be Funded conference, University of California, Santa Barbara, April 30, 2004.
- 25 Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory*, ed. Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 92–93.
- 26 Roelofs, *Foundations and Public Policy*, 31.
- 27 Reprinted in Dale Hathaway-Sunseed, "A Critical Look at the Population Crisis in Latin America" (paper, University of California, Santa Cruz, spring 1979). The efforts these men supported led to 30 percent of women being sterilized in Puerto Rico and 44 percent in Brasil, despite the fact that sterilization was illegal in Brasil. Betsy Hartmann, *Reproductive Rights and Wrongs: The Global Politics of Population Control* (Boston: South End Press, 1995), 248, 250.
- 28 Hartmann, *Reproductive Rights and Wrongs*, 254.
- 29 *Ibid.*, 113–124. Hartmann identifies the major players as USAID, the UN Fund for Population Activities, governments of other developed countries (particularly Japan), the World Bank—which has forced Third World countries to adopt population policies contingent upon release of structural adjustment loans), the International Planned Parenthood Federation, the Population Council, various consulting firms and academic centers, foundations (particularly the Ted Turner and Pew Charitable Trusts) and various pressure groups (that is, Zero Population Growth and the Population Action International as well as environmental organizations such as the Sierra Club).
- 30 *Ibid.*, 29–30.
- 31 Ammu Joseph, "India's Population Bomb," *Ms.* 3, no. 3 (November/December 1992): 12.
- 32 Hartmann, *Reproductive Rights and Wrongs*, 148.
- 33 Pew Global Stewardship Initiative, white paper, July 1993, 12.
- 34 Martin Marty, "Population and Development," *Second Opinion*, no. 20 (April 1995): 51–52. See also "Varied Religious Strands on Population," *Christian Century* 111 (July 27–August 3, 1994): 714–715.
- 35 "Morals and Human Numbers," *Christian Century* 111 (April 20, 1994): 409–410.
- 36 Pew Charitable Trust, *Report of Findings from Focus Groups on Population, Consumption and the Environment*, July 1993, 64.
- 37 *Ibid.*
- 38 Pew Charitable Trust, *Global Stewardship* 1, no. 3 (March 1994): 1.
- 39 Contrary to impressions left by the media, Carol Benson Holst points out that there are many people who were very critical of the Cairo program. For instance, her former organization, Ministry for Justice in Population Concerns, which was funded by Pew, issued a statement that was not allowed to be read at the plenary, calling the program "nothing but an insult to women, men and children of the South who will receive an ever-growing dose of population assistance, while their issues of life and death will await the Social Development Summit of 1995." Ramona Morgan Brown and Carol Benson Holst, "IPCD's Suppressed Voices May Be Our Future Hope," *Ministry for Justice in Population Concerns*, October–December 1994, 1.
- Consequently, Pew (which had funded the organization knowing it was concerned primarily with the relationship between social justice and population growth) defunded the organization because it "was too accommodating to people of color." *Ministry for Justice in Population Concerns, Notice of Phase-Out*, January 1, 1995. Pew's March 1994 newsletter also

dismissed the concerns women of color had about the racist implications of population control as “rumor mongering.” *Global Stewardship* 1, no. 3 (March 1994): 3. For another critical view of Cairo, see Charon Asetoyer, “Whom to Target for the North’s Profits,” *Wicozanni Wowapi*, Fall 1994, 2–3. She writes: “Early into the conference, it became obvious that the issues facing third world countries such as development, structural adjustment, and capacity building was not high on the list of issues that the “Super Powers” wanted to address. It was clear that the issues facing world population were going to be addressed from the top down with little regard for how this may affect developing countries.” While it had first seemed Pew was concerned about justice issues, it became clear that they were only interested insofar as it furthered their population agenda. Other church-based organizations have privately questioned Pew’s stance on this issue, but cannot do so publicly if they do not want to jeopardize their funding. See Brown and Holst, “IPCD’s Suppressed Voices.”

- 40 Stephen Greene, “Who’s Driving the Environmental Movement?” *Chronicle of Philanthropy* 6 (January 25, 1994): 6–10.
- 41 Barry Karl and Alice Karl, “Foundations and the Government: A Tale of Conflict and Consensus,” in *Philanthropy and the Nonprofit Sector in a Changing America*, ed. Charles Clotfelter and Thomas Erlich (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1999), 52–72.
- 42 Roelofs, *Foundations and Public Policy*, 39.
- 43 *Ibid.*, 86.
- 44 Gerard Colby and Charlotte Dennett, *Thy Will Be Done* (New York: HarperCollins, 1995).
- 45 Roelofs, *Foundations and Public Policy*, 86.
- 46 *Ibid.*, 141.
- 47 *Ibid.*, 174.
- 48 Donald McNeil, “Once Bitter Enemies, Now Business Partners; South African Blacks Buy Into Industry,” *New York Times*, September 24, 1996.
- 49 James Petras, “NGOs: In the Service of Imperialism,” *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 29, no. 4 (1999): 429–440.
- 50 *Ibid.*