

Clean Water Action

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Clean Water Action is a national citizens' organization working for clean, safe and affordable water; prevention of health-threatening pollution; creation of environmentally-safe jobs and businesses, and empowerment of people to make democracy work. Clean Water Action organizes strong grassroots groups, coalitions and campaigns to protect our environment, health, economic well-being and community quality of life. Articles in this publication may also reference special programs undertaken in coordination with Clean Water Fund, a research and education organization.

Spring/Summer 2003

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FROM THE PRESIDENT • David Zwick

There's nothing new about political double-speak. But the policies and rhetoric of the current administration and some of its allies set new lows in truth stretching. For example, to an almost unprecedented extent, the 2002 elections saw disturbingly lock-step adherence by many winning candidates to a strategy touted by political consultant Frank Luntz in a campaign briefing book which was leaked recently to environmentalists. Simply put, his advice to anti-environmental candidates is that they run for office claiming to be the candidates most concerned about the environment, regardless of their actual positions and records. (View an on-line copy at www.cleanwateraction.org/publications.) The Bush Administration's shamelessness goes further. Its clear cutting proposals are the "healthy forests restoration" bill, and its plan for weakening air pollution standards is the "clear skies" bill. In this climate, a new challenge in talking to people about White House efforts to gut the Clean Water Act (*see p.3*) is their initial disbelief.

When elected officials join polluters in claiming to be environmentalists, while promoting an agenda that will lead to more pollution and health harm, how should CWA and our members respond? Who can the public trust to tell them the truth?

For more than three decades, CWA has made a determined effort to represent the public interest, both vigorously and truthfully. Our consistent strategy has been to find and present reliable information and to help people work together for clean air, safe water and healthy communities — winning more often than not, along the way. We hope that we have earned your trust and that you will continue to count on CWA for information about our environment and how you can make a difference.

Last October, Clean Water Action — and all who care about a safer and more just world — lost a close friend and visionary partner to cancer. **Tony Mazzocchi** was a leader in the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union (OCAW, which merged with the paperworkers in 1999 to form a union called PACE). He was one of the first to call attention to the injustices of an industrial system that endangers workers' health both on the job and in the community. He believed — and acted effectively on the belief — that the path to solutions lies in building alliances between workers, environmentalists and community residents to transform conditions that ultimately threaten all of humanity. His tireless advocacy over five decades spurred creation of the modern workplace health and safety movement, sparked environmental groups' increased emphasis on health harm from toxic chemicals, and organized labor-environmental partnerships that produced many of those movements' most important victories.

He conceived and helped develop the "right to know" and "right to act" concepts — that people exposed to a dangerous chemical have the right to know what the hazard is and how to protect themselves, and the right to take preventive action. These rights are now partly codified in local, state and federal laws (many passed with CWA's help) and are credited with bringing more reduction in toxic exposures than all other measures combined. Mazzocchi also pioneered the "just transition" movement, which pushes for phase-out of toxic hazards and for polluter-paid transitions to a safer economy, including assistance and education for displaced workers. *Fuller descriptions of his prolific contributions to a better world can be found in a tribute on the publications page of CWA's web site (address above).*

ON THE COVER: Noted outdoors photographer **John Fielder** (www.JohnFielder.com) generously provided this shot of Colorado's Mt. Sopris. The trout stream in the foreground, the Roaring Fork, is an example of the kind of pristine waterways placed at risk by current White House proposals (*see p.3*). **U.S. Rep. Christopher Van Hollen** (MD, Mont-

gomery & Prince Georges Counties), was one of only very few 2002 challengers to unseat an incumbent member of Congress. CWA members and staff played a key role in that environmental victory. Rep. Van Hollen's remarks were part of a lengthier address at a December 2002 reception in Washington, DC, celebrating CWA's 30th Anniversary.

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Thank you.