

Untitled Documentary on The Poor People's Campaign

Proposal

by

John Buffalo Mailer

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To: Jules

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Pages: 5 Total

Re: The Poor People's Campaign documentary

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At first glance, Mark Webber appears the same as any number of up-and-coming actors in their early twenties. He's good looking, edgy, has a local fan base where he comes from in Philly, talks the talk and walks the walk of his fellow hipsters in the business, and cherishes the fact that he has just landed a lead role in the new Ethan Hawke picture.

But scratch a hair under the surface and you quickly learn what separates Mark from the rest of the pack; he grew up homeless with his single mother and helped her start a national organization dedicated to ending the homeless problem in America. Ask him and he's quick to tell you about how his mother was arrested in front of her social studies class, hand-cuffed in front of her students, for welfare fraud. See, Mark's mother, Cheri, never had it easy. She was born into an extremely poor family in the Mid-West and ended up leaving home when she was fourteen. By sixteen she had Mark. After his father took off, Cheri entered the sex industry to support herself and feed her baby. At eighteen, she was able to get on Welfare and managed to slip away to Philadelphia with her son to start a new life for them. She earned her GED and was accepted to college on full scholarship. That was the law she broke that lead the police to arrest her in front of her students four years later. At that time in America, the early '90s, it was illegal to receive welfare checks and scholarships to college at the same time. Since she had no interest in getting back into the sex industry, and felt the only way for her to work her way out of the situation she had been born into was to get her college diploma, Cheri continued to receive the welfare checks while accepting the scholarship she had been granted.

At her trial, Cheri asked the jurors what they would have done if they were faced with her situation? Lose the opportunity to get her college diploma, or lose the ability to feed her son without prostituting herself in between studies? Cheri was found not guilty and the case became a landmark, ultimately effecting a change in the laws regarding access to both Welfare and scholarships. But that was the breaking point for Cheri. She lost her teaching job and could no longer afford the home she had managed for the two of them. From that day forward, she was on a mission.

Mark was around twelve years old at the time. They slept in their car until it was stolen. In a homeless shelter that night, she heard about how the federal government pays to keep the heat going in the abandoned houses they have possessed so that the pipes don't explode in Winter. It blew her mind that the government would rather pay to keep pipes alive than pay to keep people alive. What blew her mind even more, is that there are more abandoned federally owned houses in this country then there are homeless families. And yet, thousands of people freeze to death every year because they have no place to go.

On a particularly cold night in the middle of winter, a night when all the shelters were full, Cheri decided that instead of letting them freeze to death, she and Mark were going to break into one of these houses and stay alive. And it worked. No one came to kick them out. They fixed up the house and the neighborhood was grateful for it. Cheri was able to start working again and Mark was able to go to school. And that's when other homeless families began to come to her and see if she could help them do the same.

Word quickly spread that if you don't have a place to stay, go see this woman, she'll help you. Before long the local papers were writing articles about her. This drew the attention of the police who quickly began arresting any squatters they could find. They would go to jail, get out, and go directly back into the house, repeating the process over and over again, getting more and more press with each time they did it, until finally, in a few cases, the federal government granted them the houses. Cheri officially formed THE POOR PEOPLE'S ECONOMIC HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN and the organization to end homelessness in America was under way.

When he was eighteen, Mark landed his first big role in a feature film. He took his mom out to lunch and told her that he was going to donate all of his salary to the organization. Cheri recalls it as the happiest moment in her life, simply put, because she knew she had raised a good man against incredible odds.

Mark went on to do movie after movie and in 2000, landed a role in the Chevy Chase studio picture, *Snow Day*. This role, while certainly not the peak of his artistic merit, had a huge PR department behind it who, when they learned of Mark's story, got a spot on ABC's 20/20 for them. In addition to promoting the movie, Mark and Cheri managed to garner more donations and letters of support than they had ever done before. The power of the media and celebrity was undeniable. Hundreds of families who otherwise would not have made it through the Winter were provided with food and shelter directly because of the donations sent in by the people who watched the show.

And if that's where the story ended, it would feel like a fairytale. But the reality is it doesn't end there. Six years later, Mark continues to struggle to break into the studio system which could make him rich and bring the organization the kind of attention it needs to accomplish its goal. While he works constantly, he remains just on the outside of real fame, seemingly one movie away from breaking through, but fully aware of how many actors have been in exactly the same spot and never made it to the next level. He continues to pour every cent he can into the organization.

In the past six years, the homeless problem has not improved, it has gotten much worse. Cheri has organized over hundreds of marches with numbers of protesters reaching into the tens of thousands, in hopes of bringing more awareness and support to the organization. She has fought tirelessly to get legislation passed, such as the current TREAT (Tennessee Reform, Ethics, Accountability, and Transparency) Act of 2006, which eases the suffering of some of the poorest people in our country. For many, Kensington has come to be known as the only glimmer of hope left. Cheri has been called the heir to Martin Luther King, picking up the Civil Rights movement where he left off, acknowledging that it doesn't matter if you're allowed to sit at the same lunch counter as everyone else if you can't afford a bowl of soup.

Kensington is comprised of all homeless or formerly homeless people and they run the entire gamut in terms of race, religion, and geography. But while the fact that Kensington is run by the same people it is out to help, fuels their drive in a way few activist organizations can match, it is also their Achilles heel. They are lacking in resource, overwhelmed by the tasks of finding homes for the families who come to them everyday with no where else to go, while still trying to grow the organization to an international level.

Cheri has been arrested over ninety times and feels the only reason she has not been put away for a long sentence is because she has a two year-old child now and that would be some ugly press for the local officials in Philly. Cheri is most definitely a local hero in that city. But the clock is ticking. She has been placed on *Front Line Defender's* (an international watchdog group for the well-being of activists) top ten most endangered list. She also knows that unless she can raise the national awareness of what they are doing, eventually, the authorities will put her away for life. Her biggest fear is that if it happens before she can groom someone to take her place, the organization will fall apart.

Of late, financial times have become so hard for Kensington that to fund the organization, Cheri has started stripping at night. It's not something she is proud of and is certainly not something she would do if she felt there was another legal way for her to raise that kind of money in one night, but given her extraordinarily practical nature, she does not see letting a family starve because she does not want to take her clothes off three nights a week as a choice. She is a woman who will do whatever she has to do to get the resources necessary to fight this war.

Mark understands why his mother has to do this. However, his resolve to make it big in the business and be able to support his family and the organization is stronger than ever.

As we follow Mark over the course of a year, we will explore the dual life he leads as an actor and activist, bouncing around the Hollywood scene, hobnobbing with stars and hoping against hope that this Ethan Hawke movie will be the one that enables him to support his family. We will follow Cheri and the Poor People's movement as they continue to fight for legislation they believe is every American's right to have, and journey with them through the ups and downs of triumphs and arrests, experiencing the low of having to accept the fact that there is just no place for a family in need to go, and the high of securing a home for people who believed all hope was lost.

Director - Gena Konstantinacos www.konstantpictures.com

Producers - John Buffalo Mailer, David Moscow

Executive Producer - Richard Stratton

Norris

From: "jmwordcraft" <jmwordcraft@yahoo.com>
To: <nmncm@comcast.net>; <draymond63@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, April 17, 2006 3:24 PM
Subject: Fwd: two queries--pls print for NM

Doesn't look good, coming right after the Mailer Society stuff in Ptown, but for what it's worth...

--- Jeffrey Posternak <jposternak@wylieagency.com> wrote:

> From Jeffrey Posternak Mon Apr 17 12:15:40 2006
 > X-Apparently-To: jmwordcraft@yahoo.com via
 > 206.190.37.237; Mon, 17 Apr 2006 12:15:55 -0700
 > X-Originating-IP: [208.201.217.7]
 > Return-Path: <jposternak@wylieagency.com>
 > Authentication-Results: mta197.mail.re2.yahoo.com
 > from=wylieagency.com; domainkeys=neutral (no sig)
 > Received: from 208.201.217.7 (EHLO
 > exchange.wylieagency.com) (208.201.217.7)
 > by mta197.mail.re2.yahoo.com with SMTP; Mon, 17
 > Apr 2006 12:15:54 -0700
 > Content-class: urn:content-classes:message
 > MIME-Version: 1.0
 > Content-Type: multipart/alternative;
 > boundary="----=_NextPart_001_01C66253.508F569C"
 > X-MimeOLE: Produced By Microsoft Exchange
 > V6.5.7226.0
 > Subject: two queries
 > Date: Mon, 17 Apr 2006 15:15:40 -0400
 > Message-ID:
 >
 <F49F5382B0E1C14AB7667DC53AC3D3DC0143FBEF@mail.wylieag
 > X-MS-Has-Attach:
 > X-MS-TNEF-Correlator:
 > Thread-Topic: two queries

the Roman Group.

Thanks for any and all feedback in the next couple of days.

Sincerely,
Jacqueline Knapp

For Your Convenience the list from the Romans is copied below:

Proposal from the Rome Film Festival to the Actors Studio

This proposal is intended as a working list of possible films representing the Actors Studio's work in the 1950's. Subject to change.

1951-A STREET CAR NAMED DESIRE, Kazan....Brando, Leigh, Hunter etc...

1954-ON THE WATERFRONT, Kazan, with Brando, Malden, Steiger

1956-BABY DOLL, Kazan, with Malden, Carroll Baker, Eli Wallach

1955-REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE, Nicholas Ray with Dean, Wood, Dennis Hopper

1956-BUS STOP, Josh Logan with Monroe, Eileen Heckart

1957-THE STRANGE ONE, Jack Garfein with Ben Gazzara, Peppard, Arthur Storch, Larry Gates, Cifton James

1958-THE LONG HOT SUMMER, Martin Ritt with Newman, Woodward, Lee Remick

1957-THE THREE FACES OF EVE, Nunnally Johnson, with Woodward (oscar for Joanne)

1955-THE BIG KNIFE, Robert Aldrich with Steiger, Winters

1957-RAINTREE COUNTY, Edward Dmytryk with Eva Marie Saint

1957-FEAR STRIKES OUT, Robert Mulligan with Anthony Perkins, Malden

1959-THE STORY ON PAGE ONE, Clifford Odets with Rita Hayworth, Franciosa,

1957-A HATFUL OF RAIN, Fred Zinneman with Don Murray, Eva Marie Saint, Franciosa

1957-12 ANGRY MEN, Sidney Lumet with Balsam, Cobb, EG Marshall, Klugman, Fonda, Begley, Warden

Your choice when

Thurs May 25

possible shoot date NM, JBM

JBM and NM to do 2 10-min TV segments (Karin at same time?)

for BIG EMPTY—Ariel at A&E network

212-210-1492

Tues, June 6th

NM, NCM to NYC

Wed, June 7

evening

art show dinner, Danielle

details TK

Thurs June 8

possible shoot date NM, JBM

JBM and NM to do 2 10-min TV segments

for BIG EMPTY—Ariel at A&E network

212-210-1492

This might work since you're in NYC for Danielle's events

Friday June 9

Danielle's opening

June—15??

Due date, Sasha and Michael

Thurs June 25

possible shoot date NM, JBM

JBM and NM to do 2 10-min TV segments

for BIG EMPTY—Ariel at A&E network

212-210-1492

Fri 23 June

NM and NMC to CT?

Sat 24 June
 Danielle and Peter's wedding
 details TK

Mon June 26 or??
 Boston, appt with Dr. Levinson
 waiting to hear back
 Dr. Burke wants NM to see Levinson
 "two weeks" before knee surgery

Monday 10 July
 knee replacement surgery
 Dr. Burke
 contact Liz 617-726-3411

Date to be set
 Jack Horshouer's friend
 doctoral candidate, seeing NM in Ptown
 late spring/summer
 When NM is back home from surgery—audio recording

Oct 12-14 (Thurs-Sat)
 Norman Mailer Soc conference
 Ptown
 details TK

Thurs 2 Nov
 NM to Montgomery County

Fri Nov 3
 Montgomery County Writer's Conf
 15K evening with NM

Sat Nov 4
 NM return ?Ptown NYC?

Nov 9-12 (Thurs-Sunday)
 tentative acceptance
 Mailer Symposium
 U of TX at Austin

Norris

From: "Deborah Dixon" <ddixon@theactorsstudio.org>
To: <pfioretti@feurygrant.com>; "Harvey via Main" <main@thegoatsingers.com>; "Jim Lipton" <jamesliptonproductions@yahoo.com>; "Mark Rydell" <mrydell@sbcglobal.net>; "Robert Wankel (E-mail)" <Bobw@shubertorg.com>; "Al Pacino via Tim (E-mail)" <tjudge@chalproductions.com>; "Carlin Glynn (E-mail)" <angelton@aol.com>; "Ellen Burstyn (E-mail)" <burstyne@aol.com>; "Estelle Parsons (E-mail)" <eparsons1@nyc.rr.com>; "Martin Landau (E-mail)" <martin@memimirage.com>; "Norman Mailer (E-mail)" <nrmcm@comcast.net>; "Patricia Bosworth (E-mail)" <Patriciabosworth@aol.com>
Cc: "Helen Sanders" <hsanders@theactorsstudio.org>; <mquinn@chalproductions.com>
Sent: Monday, April 10, 2006 11:15 AM
Subject: ROME FILM FESTIVAL- IMMEDIATE RESPONSE NEEDED

Monday, April 10, 2006

Dear Executive Committee:

Since the last Executive Committee Meeting, Deborah and I met with Counsel Gray Coleman and 3 gentlemen from the Rome Film Festival: Antonio Monda, whom you met; Mario Sesti, Project Manager of the Festival; and Carlo Fuortes, CEO for the Festival and of the Renzo Piano designed Auditorium.

We said we would agree to their 3 year offer, but with the understanding that we could dissolve it at any time if we were unhappy with the "marriage."

Since we have a full plate at the moment starting our new relationship with Pace and dealing with a major renovation of our beloved home, the three Romans understood that we needed to put their documentary and book of interviews on hold for now.

Since they are planning on a three year relationship with us, they have decided that they would like to focus this first year's Actors Studio Retrospective on films from the 50's. (The second year would include 60's to mid 70's; and the third year: mid 70's to the present.)

Below you will find their list of 14 films that they want to use for this year's Retrospective. We need to approve this list, or suggest films to add or subtract as we deem fit.

Films that I see missing on their list that were on our original list are: "East of Eden" (dir. by Kazan with James Dean, Jo Van Fleet, and Lois Smith -1955), "The Goddess" (with our stellar Kim Stanley and Tony Perkins - 1958) , "A Place in the Sun" (with Montgomery Clift and Shelley Winters - 1951), and "The Left-Handed Gun" (about Billy the Kid - directed by Arthur Penn, with Paul Newman - 1958).

Please let me know if you agree that the above films should be added, and what films presently on their list might be dropped to make room for these. Any and all feed-back will be much appreciated and as soon as possible, as the Romans are eager to begin securing these films. (You can email me at JacquelineK3@AOL.com, or get word to Deborah Dixon either by fax, phone, or email.)

Our counsel Gray Coleman will be meeting with Bob Wankel re/ an appropriate fee to ask in exchange for our participation in the Film Festival, and drawing up an agreement to send to

Norris

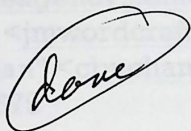
From: "jmwordcraft" <jmwordcraft@yahoo.com>
 To: <nmncm@comcast.net>; <draymond63@aol.com>
 Sent: Monday, April 10, 2006 1:32 PM
 Subject: Fwd: email from Tatiana Rotenberg--pls print for NM

Notes for NM--

This has dragged on for years, and while you should certainly respond, waiting a week or so will hurt nothing, I suspect.

Re Ira Lowe, I remember him--he sent us one letter on Tatiana's behalf (2000 perhaps) and he and I spoke as well. In any case, that letter went to the archive ages ago and Tatiana clearly had more recent contact data. Short of an online search--or Jeff trolling his contacts for any possible leads--I don't know what we could do exactly.

JM



--- Jeffrey Posternak <jposternak@wylieagency.com> wrote:

> From Jeffrey Posternak Mon Apr 10 10:22:23 2006
 > X-Apparently-To: jmwordcraft@yahoo.com via
 > 206.190.37.245; Mon, 10 Apr 2006 10:22:24 -0700
 > X-Originating-IP: [208.201.217.7]
 > Return-Path: <jposternak@wylieagency.com>
 > Authentication-Results: mta103.mail.re4.yahoo.com
 > from=wylieagency.com; domainkeys=neutral (no sig)
 > Received: from 208.201.217.7 (EHLO
 > exchange.wylieagency.com) (208.201.217.7)
 > by mta103.mail.re4.yahoo.com with SMTP; Mon, 10

> Apr 2006 10:22:24 -0700
> Content-class: urn:content-classes:message
> MIME-Version: 1.0
> Content-Type: text/plain;
> charset="us-ascii"
> Content-Transfer-Encoding: quoted-printable
> X-MimeOLE: Produced By Microsoft Exchange
> V6.5.7226.0
> Subject: email from Tatiana Rotenberg
> Date: Mon, 10 Apr 2006 13:22:23 -0400
> Message-ID:
>
<F49F5382B0E1C14AB7667DC53AC3D3DC0143FAB3@mail.wylieag
> X-MS-Has-Attach:
> X-MS-TNEF-Correlator:
> Thread-Topic: email from Tatiana Rotenberg
> Thread-Index: AcZcw1SVOs1bpD2eQaCObV1jQbcx3w==
> From: "Jeffrey Posternak"
> <jposternak@wylieagency.com>
> To: "jm wordcraft" <jmwordcraft@yahoo.com>
> CC: "Charles Buchan" <cbuchan@wylieagency.co.uk>
> Content-Length: 1679
>
>
> Dear Judith:
>
> I know how fond Norman is of Tatiana Rotenberg, and
> we'll do everything
> we can to place her translation of ANCIENT EVENINGS
> in Russia. Please
> see her P.S. - do you have any news about Ira Lowe
> to report?
>
> Best,
> Jeff
>

>
 >
 >
 > To: jposternak@wyllieagency.com
 > Copy: jmwordcraft@yahoo.com "Alexandra Gruebler"
 > agruebler@wyllieagency.co.uk
 > Subject: Ancient Evenings in Russian
 >
 > Dear Mr. Posternak,
 >
 > as you had put it in your e-mail of 12 Dec 2002:
 > "Ira Lowe told you: we
 > "were still persuing the hope of publishing a
 > Russian translation" and
 > in fact I still am.
 >
 > The past three years were very hard for me as my old
 > blind mother was in
 > bed. I
 > was all alone with her for 24 hours day after day
 > and I got very ill
 > myself. Last October my mother died and in November
 > I was in Moscow to
 > bury the urn. Staying in Moscow I offered my
 > translation of "Ancient
 > Evenings" to two Publishing houses: AST and GLAGOL
 > (Verb). The Chief
 > Editor of AST was not eager to consider the
 > possibility of publishing
 > the book. He explained that they had problems with
 > selling HARLOT'S
 > GHOST. Nevertheless I asked him to think it over but
 > he is still not
 > ready with the answer. The Director of GLAGOL
 > Alexander Shatalov was
 > very much impressed by the novel and the

- > translation, conveying the
- > style and the atmosphere of the book, and he would
- > like to publish it as
- > soon as possible. He certainly would like to contact
- > you about the
- > rights. May I give him your e-mail address?
- >
- > I'd like to refresh the information from my e-mail
- > message of 6 August,
- > 2003: I signed the Agreement with Progress-Tradition
- > in August 2000. I
- > read the text of the American part Agreement several
- > months before. The
- > term of the Agreements was 5 years - so it has
- > expired at any rate. You
- > wrote about your intention "to define the status" of
- > the publication, I
- > answered that there is no such. In the first variant
- > of proofs the text
- > was damaged technically: shifted paragraphs, lost
- > pages, sentences and
- > words. In the second one, due to the work of the
- > editor who didn't know
- > English, in many places the style and the meaning
- > were distorted.
- > Progress-Tradition refused to accept my corrections
- > (it meant the third
- > proofs) and to continue the work.
- >
- > All these years I was kept in Germany because of my
- > mother's illness and
- > was practically unable to look for another
- > possibility of publishing the
- > book. I spent five years of my life translating this
- > brilliant novel.
- > Next five years I kept worrying that my translation

> would be published
> in this distorted form or perhaps under somebody
> else's name. Now that I
> am able to deal with the problem I hope the novel
> will be finally
> published. Would you kindly reply to my letter so
> that I could be sure
> that the contact has been reestablished.
>
> I am looking forward to hearing from you soon,
> Sincerely yours,
>
> Tatiana Rotenberg
>
> P.S. Could you possibly do me a favor and inform me
> about "the status"
> of my long term friend Ira Lowe. He stopped to call
> me, his telephone
> number is disconnected and his e-mail does not
> function either. I tried
> to reach him for two years and can only hope that he
> is still OK
>
>