

III. Organizing Billionaire Actions

This is where the rubber meets the road, or rather, the Lear Jet meets the sky.

Billionaire actions fall into three broad categories:

- A. Joining Bush-friendly events
- B. Counter-demonstrating at anti-Bush events
- C. Billionaire-Initiated events and activities

Joining Bush-Friendly Events

Here we celebrate President Bush's tireless efforts on behalf of millionaires and billionaires everywhere. There are various kinds of President-Friendly events:

- * Campaign speeches by President Bush, Dick Cheney, Karl Rove, and their henchmen
- * Republican Fundraisers
- * Press Conferences on behalf of Bush campaign or policy initiative
- * Social gatherings of the fabulously wealthy

See the end of this section for tips on how to research opportunities to hold Bush-friendly events.

Frequently the organizers of Bush-friendly events are not very pleased when Billionaires for Bush decide to participate. They seem to want to control the event, and want to suppress our message of appreciation. Perhaps they're jealous of our wealth. But all participants at all actions should adhere to our strict standards for Billionaire behavior. **Remember to stay in character and on message!** We are rich, and in control. (For example, if we are not on the guest list and are asked to leave, it must be because our assistant failed to RSVP for us.) **Always remain extremely friendly and positive about the President.** If it takes people a little while to catch on, so much the better.

A NOTE ON AUDIENCE

You should always plan your actions with a clear sense of who is your audience. At bush-friendly events, your audience will usually NOT be the people at the event. In most cases, particularly fundraisers, they have made up their minds about George Bush and your presence will probably not sway their opinion. (One possible exception is the larger rallies, where you might find some curious undecided voters in attendance.) Therefore it isn't important that you be close to the event and the people who are arriving.

You usually will have two audiences: the press (to help you reach the folks who aren't at the event) and the other protestors (who are potential billionaires). To reach the press you'll need to either contact them directly and arrange to meet them before the event, or be at the event location at least one and a half hours early in order to meet the press before they go into the event. Sometimes reporters specifically to cover the protestors, but not always. As for the protestors, even though you want to remain separate from them as much as possible to convey the idea of a counterprotest, you should make a point to talk with them about being a Billionaire (out of character is ok) and get their contact information (name, phone and email) if they seem interested so you can invite them to your next action! There is a B4B sign-up sheet in the Sample Materials section.

There are endless variations on the actions described below, but these are the basic elements of a robust Billionaire action portfolio.

Thank You Rallies This is a good entry-level activity for new Billionaires. Bring fliers and signs and stand outside event to greet people as they arrive. Be prepared to provide a good photo opportunity if the media arrives: have a banner or large sign that says Billionaires for Bush, and well-dressed Billionaires with props and signs. If this is a low-security event, this action can also be paired nicely with Guerrilla Q&A (see below) and/or a simple Infiltrate and Mingle (also below) to observe reactions on the inside and speak further with the participants.

Mix in With Real Supporters Since Billionaires are already supporters of the President, you can join in with the crowd at his campaign events. Stay together as a group, but mix in. Try to get a good location where he, the media, and others can see you. Always stay in character. If he's giving a speech, judge the mood of the crowd and the level of surveillance. Even though your chants are "positive" they can be delivered in a disruptive way. However, you may not want to be disruptive, particularly if security is tight. Often it can be more effective to just cheer super-enthusiastically ("Huzzah!") at the right moments, and have your rich costumes, and the written messages on your banners/signs/leaflets tell the other side of the story. Use your humor and positiveness to disarm others. Remember: you are the President's most important and enthusiastic special interest group.

Trojan Horse This action involves a high level of stealth and disruption. Here's one example: In 1999, several Billionaires showed up in Concord, NH as Steve Forbes announced his candidacy for President. They wore conservative jackets and ties (but no bowler hats, etc.) and carried innocuous signs such as "Run, Steve, Run." Happy to have grass-roots support, the Forbes handlers (who believed the Billionaires were students from a nearby business school) placed them in front of the cameras, very near to the podium from which Forbes was speaking. However, each of their signs had another sign behind it. And behind their banner (which read "Forbes 2000: He wants YOU to win") was another banner, waiting. At the most dramatic moment of his announcement, the Billionaires flipped their signs, and pulled away the large banner to reveal one which read: "Billionaires for Forbes: Because Inequality isn't Growing Fast Enough." The business-school students cum Billionaires started chanting "Let workers pay the tax so investors can relax!" and other slogans. Forbes and his handlers were completely thrown off, a little tussle ensued, and the Billionaires were pushed off to the side away from the cameras. Not wanting to miss the action, half the TV crews left the Forbes speech to cover the Billionaires. The action got lots of coverage.

Something to remember if you do this yourself: It only works once, so make it good. It is probably unwise to try this action with the President (no, um, sudden movements near the President, please!), but you might succeed if the spotlight is on a lower-level official, such as a member of Congress, the state legislature, or perhaps the Governor.

Guerrilla Q & A Dressed corporate, not over-the-top wealthy (YES: Suit, tie, well-groomed. NO: Bowler hat, shades, mink stoles.), and leaving all the signs behind, attend a public campaign event, Republican fundraiser, candidate breakfast, etc. Have Billionaires there, but not sitting together (or go in pairs but only one Billionaire per pair will ask a question). During the Q & A session get yourself called upon. Say something like this:

"First, I want to commend you on voting to repeal the estate tax. As a multi-millionaire, and one of the very very few Americans who will benefit from its repeal, I want to thank you personally. My question is this: How did you do it? How did you convince the American people that it was in their interest to repeal this tax when it so clearly isn't? Basically, repealing the estate tax takes \$1 trillion dollars of government revenue over the next 20 years, and gives it to the richest 2% of the population. Don't get me wrong, I think it's great, but it's clearly a tough sell, since very few taxpayers benefit, and it results in so much lost revenue that undoubtedly will result in higher taxes for other Americans. How did you do it?"

Be polite, dead pan serious. Sit down when you are finished. Play it cool, as if you've done nothing out of the ordinary. Get as many of your members called upon as you can. After the first one, the Senator won't expect a second. But after the second, he might be expecting a third. So, each of your statements should be sufficiently subtle and different enough from one another that he won't know whether you are real or fake till you are all or mostly done with your question. After two of you have spoken, you might even try this approach, from someone who is dressed more Joe/Jane six pack:

"Senator, who are these people we've been hearing from today? Are they part of this group I've been reading about, I think they're called Billionaires for Tax Cuts for Billionaires? Are they a real support group? Is it true that you've accepted money from them...and that you're supporting this Estate Tax Repeal?"

Remember to bring leaflets if the participants are part of your target audience. But keep them to yourself till the Q & A is over. Find additional sample questions in Sample Materials chapter.

Infiltrate and Mingle This approach is similar to "Mix In With Supporters" but it requires a higher level of stealthiness. Since it involves one-on-one interactions with other Bush supporters, it is important for participants to have developed Billionaire personas. Typical venues would include a cocktail reception or high-dollar fundraising dinner, a house party, a meeting of the county campaign committee, or a political forum. It can be paired with other types of actions, such as Guerrilla Q&A or Thank You Rallies.

Research

Finding Bush-friendly events can require some research. If you're lucky, the President himself is coming to town and it's no secret. But sometimes the President's visits are not announced until the day of the event, probably to keep those annoying protesters away. While this secrecy can make it harder to plan an event, it can work to your advantage if you get advance information on an event that hasn't been publicly announced. If the press finds out about the event from you, they will regard you as a source of information and they're more likely to give you good press coverage, especially if you're the only group to attend the event.

Many of these events can be found online. Whitehouseforsale.org keeps a short-term but reliable schedule of President Bush's fundraising appearances, and selected upcoming Bush/Cheney campaign events are posted at www.georgewbush.com/calendar/. GOP.com keeps schedules of Republican events in your state, as do your state and local Republican web sites, which can be found easily using an internet search engine. Many of these web sites allow you to sign up to receive periodic emails about upcoming events. You can also find Bush for President events in your area at meetup.com.

The internet is handy, but off-line intelligence is sometimes the best way to find out about these events. Your Special Ops Minister will help obtain advance information of this type. Young, clean-cut Billionaires are best-suited for this role, as they can pose as students who wish to start a young Republican chapter at their school, or who are interested in going into politics but feel like they have so much to learn. Be prepared to rotate this title, as the Special Ops Minister may eventually be recognized as a Billionaire, particularly if his photo appears in a local paper or she is spotted at a pro-Bush action.

Counter-Demonstrating at Anti-Bush Events

Great hordes of middle-class Americans have been taking to the streets against President Bush. They must be stopped. When we counter-protest these protesters, we show the world that the President is backed by strong moneyed interests!

Counter-demonstrate these types of events!

- 💰 Demonstrations at Bush/Cheney '04 campaign stops (aka. Thank You Rally)
- 💰 Press Conferences announcing the launch of campaigns we oppose.
- 💰 Campaign events hosted by the Democratic party
- 💰 Anti-corporate rallies and demonstrations

This type of action is fun, provides good practice, is good for recruiting, and is oddly amusing for the folks at the event. The counter-protest can take a number of forms: a few protesters on the edge of

a rally, a (planned) takeover of the stage and microphone, the odd man out on a panel discussion, etc.

Simple Counter-demonstration Show up to the opposition's event with banner, signs and leaflets. Engage in mockery of their misguided ways and shout relevant chants. Here the audience can be the participants in the event that we're counter-demonstrating, and the goal might be to recruit some of them to participate in upcoming Billionaire actions. You might have one or two Billionaires "interrupt" the rally or demonstration to give speeches. If this is your approach, you should coordinate with the event you're counter-demonstrating. And be sure that the speeches are humorous, short, and related to the topic of the rally.

Statement for Press The Press Statement can be valuable to have at events that are expected to get press coverage — whether a rally, demonstration, or press conference. If a local group is announcing the kick-off of a campaign to raise the minimum wage, for example, the Billionaires can issue a statement about the importance of keeping wages low if we are to keep profits high (see sample press releases). The Press Statement will be more effective if paired with a Counter-demonstration or Thank You Rally.

Billionaire-Initiated Events and Activities

Sometimes you will want to stage your own event. Here are some examples of activities and actions your chapter can initiate. The Billionaire concept is fertile soil for creative action-making, so your chapter might come up with actions that have never been tried before, or variations on the actions described below. Visit our Web site at www.billionairesforbush.com to read about actions held by chapters around the country, and post descriptions of your action on our action blog at www.billionairesforbush.com/blog.

Postering This is a low-intensity way to publicize our message to the voting public, and to not-yet-recruited Billionaires. Postering is easy to organize, a good way to build group cohesion, and can help build for upcoming events. Posters can be downloaded from our web site and then posted on community billboards and in other highly-trafficked public places. Remember that if there are some buildings or lamp posts in your area which are not owned by you or a fellow Billionaire (rare as that may be), you risk being fined if you post without permission, depending on local ordinances and enforcement. Consider bringing a couple wads of cash in the event your are approached by a law enforcement officer. Have your butler join the postering crew to be on the lookout for concerned citizens.

Tabling for the Dick Cheney Defense Fund Billionaires set up a table in any high-trafficked pedestrian area to proclaim Cheney is Innocent and raise funds to educate the public that Cheney did NOT oversee Enron-style accounting at Halliburton, he did NOT bribe Nigerian officials, and he did NOT break US law by doing business with nations that harbor terrorists. For leaflets, signs and props, visit www.billionairesforbush.com/cheney.php Be sure you have a sign-up sheet (see Sample Materials) to collect contact information of interested people and invite them to future events.

Diamond & Bake Sale Billionaires do their part to help pay for Bush's generous tax cuts by holding a bake sale on a busy street corner. This is a small way to show our appreciation for the sacrifices kids, (or Americans without health care, etc) will make on our behalf. Leaflets distributed to passers-by convey our message. Be sure you have a sign-up sheet (see Sample Materials) to collect contact information of interested people and invite them to future events.

B4B Campaign Events Sometimes we need to organize campaign events to highlight the pro-Billionaire policies of President Bush. Endless possibilities include awards ceremonies, \$2 million per plate dinner, a speech by the chair of your local B4B chapter, country club luncheon

announcing endorsement of President Bush by B4B chapter etc. You can easily turn this event into a fundraiser for your chapter.

Million Billionaire March Might be held in response to visit by Democratic hopeful — as a way to demonstrate that Billionaires won't stand idly by while plutocracy is challenged. Most effective in large cities. The big one of course is during the Republican National Convention August 29, 2004.

Rally for the Really Rich Can be used as counter-point to too much talk about the need for raising living standards — what about raising high living standards even higher?! — or other issues we oppose that are receiving too much press attention.

Billionaire Flashmobs A flashmob has been described as “an e-mail-driven performance art event in which people suddenly materialize in public places, interact with others according to a loose script and then dissipate just as suddenly as they appeared.” Billionaires can do it too. This action requires a larger number of Billionaires (ten to 20 or more, depending on location) but is a very fun way to raise the B4B profile locally. Basic idea is a bunch of Billionaires show up at a pre-determined location, overtake the place seemingly independent of one another, and act like Billionaires, i.e., talk in cell phones or to a partner about rigging the bid for contracts in Iraq, demanding a meeting with Bush next week — no later!!, offer to loan your private jet to Dick Cheney to get to his undisclosed location, boast about the latest tax loophole discovered by your accountant, etc. After the impression has been made, Billionaires all leave at once, but independently. Can be easily scheduled at your convenience, so you may want to have it just before or after another action. See www.flashmob.com for more info.

Billionaire Rampages A rampage is a cross between the more absurdist dada-ist flashmob (above) and a more traditional political march. Billionaires gather at a pre-determined location and go on a playful mob-like odyssey through the town. You might begin with a two-martini lunch at a fancy watering hole, move on to the public library to register your disbelief that public institutions are even allowed to exist, open a bottle of champagne (or sparkling apple cider to stay legal) on the steps of the local stock market or chamber of commerce, then on to 10 minutes of formal waltzing in the local bus or train station. At each location some of you could hold signs and hand out leaflets. Invite participants or the media to join you at any juncture. Designate a cell phone or hotline number to keep interested parties apprised of you current location and expected progress. Look at la.cacophony.org/santa1999.html for an example of an annual Christmas-time rampage of Santas.

Petition Drives Very adaptable to a wide variety of issues. Perhaps local Billionaires seek a special tax break for the two-Hummer household (has been brewing in Los Angeles) or the Large Yacht offshore tax haven (Florida Billionaires might need one of these). Draw up your petition, grab some clipboards, put on your finery, then go solicit signatures from the masses. This action can be conducted with just two people. It can be carried out at any crowded street corner or paired with a large Presidential campaign event where you solicit signatures from people arriving. Decisions about where and how to plan the event will be informed by your purpose, which could include any and all of the following: media attention, collecting information and recruitment, and interacting with the public. Obviously a pro-Bush event isn't a good place to recruit new Billionaires, but you may get some media attention there, especially if you issue a press statement announcing that you will kick-off of your petition drive at the pro-Bush event. A petition drive at an environmental rally, for example, would be better for recruitment.

Write Letter to Editor or Op-Ed A letter can extend the publicity you receive. Writing it in a small group can be amusing, too. You'll have greater success getting your letter published if a) the letter references a specific article published by the newspaper and either b) the letter is subtle enough to slip under the editor's irony radar or c) the letter is preceded by a statement to the letters editor explaining that the letter comes from a group that uses sarcasm to highlight how this Administration has served the interests of the very wealthy at the expense of everyday Americans. An Op-Ed piece

doesn't reference a specific article but should be related to a specific topic currently receiving media attention. It is typically longer. Check with your local papers for length restrictions and other guidelines. Please boast if you get published by writing to chaptermaster@billionairesforbush.com.

Radio Interviews These are free, fun and usually fairly easy to come by. Once you develop your persona you are ready to go. Schedule the interview at a time when you can use it to publicize a specific action or event. Be humorous, avoid being preachy, and have your talking points prepared ahead of time. Confirm with your host that you'll be in character and ask what questions you should anticipate. Be sure to mention the Billionaires for Bush web site so listeners have an easy way to learn more about us and let them know about any upcoming events you have planned.

Host Campus Visit by Billionaires Spokesperson You can arrange for a visit by a member of the Billionaires Speakers Bureau by contacting us at speakers@billionairesforbush.com. Your chapter will just need to arrange for a meeting space and ensure a decent turnout of current and potential Billionaires. The visit can be a good way to announce the formation of a new B4B chapter and recruit new members to join Billionaire activities.

Vigils for Corporate Welfare Highlight need for more no-bid contracts for rebuilding (and maybe four more wars, to drum up new business!) and more tax breaks for companies that lay off workers. Local offices of Halliburton and other companies that have benefited from wartime rebuilding are especially good locations.

Thanking Taxpayers on Tax Day for "Paying more than your fair share" Can be held outside post office as people stream in to mail their returns. Call a press conference for added impact.

Auctioning off public property Hold outside a school or community center as if to raise money to pay for Bush's tax cuts or wartime spending. Valuable as a recruitment tool, a publicity stunt for passers by, or for broader publicity if you can convince the press to come.

High Tea This can be a fun way to test out your outfits and get together for fun on a sunny weekend afternoon. Host the tea in a public space with white tablecloth and real china for added interest and public profile. High Tea is less of a campaign action and more of a social event to build group cohesion and reach out to future Billionaires.

Croquet Similar to the purpose of high tea, but is more competitive and requires equipment and coordination skills. May be combined with High Tea to offer fun for everyone.

Billionaires Ball A big party for Billionaires, appropriate attire required. Good parties create a buzz and generate interest. Get a good DJ for dance music, a VJ to show footage of actions, if you have any, an awards ceremony (brief!) can provide a humorous focus, and a Billionaire Beauty Contest to reward the best-dressed and best-looking. Bootie from door cover and drink sales can help fund your B4B activities. Have a table where people can buy bumper-stickers and props (pearls, monocles, fake cigars, top hats, long gloves, feather boas, etc.) for their Billionaire outfits.

Essential Tips for Conducting Effective Actions

Media

Use the Media! Just because we own the press doesn't mean that we can take them for granted. (They need to at least give the appearance of impartiality.)

- 💰 Develop a press list with phone, e-mail and/or fax info for reporters likely to cover our actions.
- 💰 Contact these people prior to an action via a press advisory and follow-up phone call.

- \$ Designate a particular Billionaire as the media contact — your Local Media Mogul — so that person develops a personal rapport with the reporters.
- \$ Assign or hire someone in advance to shoot still photography for your events. You and your descendants will derive years of pleasure from sitting around the mansion and reminiscing about the days when you dressed in your finery and bought the presidency. Post the photos on our web site with a description of your action!
- \$ Media advisories should indicate that the action will offer interesting photo opportunities, and describe them. Make sure to send advisories to the photo editors!
- \$ Many major cities have an independent media outlet. Find yours online (www.indymedia.org) and post a report of your local action with your contact information so that other activists can find out how to join your Billionaires for Bush chapter.

For a helpful guide to working with the media, please visit:

<http://www.urban75.com/Action/media.html>

<http://www.hrconnection.org/hrc/media/index.htm>

http://media.socialchange.net.au/using_media/Contents.html

Considerations for any disruption attempt

- \$ Although in reality, you may be "disrupting" the event — theatrically, as Billionaires, you are always "contributing" to the event. Even in the midst of being escorted out by police, you are asking, "But why, officer, we're just here to support... There must be some misunderstanding." Stay in character.
- \$ Don't just rehearse, role play the scenario. Have members of your team play the speaker, event organizers, other attendees, security, the cops, etc. Play out various ways the action could go. Get comfortable responding "like a Billionaire" and staying on message in many of the possible situations that could arise.
- \$ Be sensitive to security concerns in these days of code orange alerts; don't make sudden moves in tense situations and be attuned to whether it's really a good idea that you insist you remain at any given event.

Know Your Audience

- \$ Remember, we need to reach people where they are, and on issues where there's some common ground. If you're trying to reach swing voters who tend to support the war, set aside topics such as no-bid contracts for rebuilding, and the benefits of wartime weapons economics for our surging stock portfolio. Instead focus on economic issues: tax breaks for the rich, indifference toward job loss, etc.
- \$ Messaging can be more aggressive at events where the audience is more in agreement with us, like on college campuses or in the blue states.

Strengthen the National Effort

- \$ Help us find new Billionaires in all the Battleground states! Invite your friends to join their local chapter (complete list of chapter contacts posted at <http://www.billionairesforbush.com/blog/chapters>)
- \$ We are looking for new chapter leaders in these states: OH, FL, PA, MI, WI, MN, IA, MO, AK, TN, WV, NV, NM, AZ, CO, WA, OR, NH, and ME. If you know someone who might head up a chapter, please contact chapters@billionairesforbush.com and we'll help get them started!