

We invite you to join us in launching an important new project, destined to have a major impact on social progress and American journalism. You will, when you accept, become a

Founding Sponsor
of the
Mother Jones Investigative Fund

The Fund has been established to create a center of support for investigative reporting...to provide the resources needed to uncover the facts now hidden from the public about corporate and economic irresponsibility...to form an alliance of concerned citizens united to correct the ills that plague the people of this nation.

R.S.V.P.

The Staff of Mother Jones

Dear Fellow Mother Jones Reader,

This nation is experiencing the beginnings of an era of citizen action -- an era when grand deception by industry and government is no longer tolerated, when organized citizens are fighting to right many of the wrongs that have been allowed to depreciate the quality of our lives. How widespread that citizens' action becomes depends on how effectively the American people are alerted to the truth about the sources of so many of their problems.

And how effectively they are alerted to that truth depends on the success of investigative journalism.

Like the social change it can trigger, top-notch investigative journalism doesn't just happen, either. And it doesn't come easy.

Mother Jones
**INVESTIGATIVE
FUND**

625 Third Street, San Francisco, California 94107

It takes dedication, daring, time, probing research and courageous reporting. The kind of dedication, daring, time, research and reporting that Mother Jones has put into its award-winning stories ... the kind that the staff of Mother Jones is putting into the new public-supported project which will enable us to carry out investigative reporting on a much broader scale than ever before.

That project is the Mother Jones Investigative Fund.

Before I tell you about the Fund and the strategic role you can take in it, I want you to understand more about what goes into the articles you have been reading in Mother Jones.

It's been just short of five years since the first issue of Mother Jones came off the presses. Yet, in that time, despite a budget that's just a fraction of most major magazines', we have not only built what many consider to be the most important new American magazine in decades, we have alerted millions to matters that threaten their very lives.

Case in point: "Pinto Madness." It appeared in the September, 1977 issue of Mother Jones. It disclosed how Ford Motor Company was guilty of selling cars in which it knew hundreds of people would needlessly burn to death. The story resulted in the largest auto recall in history. Let me cite some firsthand knowledge of the preparatory work that went into this one article:

It took nine months to research and write "Pinto Madness."

I traveled 23,000 miles to uncover the facts.

I conducted and transcribed almost 100 in-depth interviews.

I compiled three full file drawers of documents.

I had to read a dozen books to get the necessary background information.

I spent days combing through the records of the Department of Transportation in Washington.

I rewrote seven or eight drafts of the article before it was published.

We hired an expensive lawyer to read it for libel.

All that for just one 11-page article in Mother Jones. Now try to imagine all the time, effort and money that goes into the investigative reporting of an entire issue, month after month after disclosive month.

And the most difficult part of the job is invisible to you, the reader: when I was writing "Pinto Madness" I had to stop at several points to raise the funds necessary to continue my investigation.

Mother Jones doesn't report the news. It makes the news. In the case of the Pinto exposé, over 1,000 newspapers and radio and television stations across the country picked up the story. CBS' "60 Minutes" devoted an unprecedented 29 minutes to it. When the article was first published, Ford denounced it. Ten months later, they responded to public and government pressure triggered by the Mother Jones story and recalled one and a half million Pintos to repair the defective fuel system responsible for so many deaths and injuries. And late last year an Indiana grand jury brought criminal indictments against the Ford Motor Company for deliberately selling an unsafe product to the people of their state. The first time in American history that a corporation has ever been charged with "homocide."

Mother Jones provided the knowledge. The public acted.

Mother Jones published an article revealing that the Dalkon Shield intrauterine device caused septic abortions and killed dozens of women who used it, while it made millions for the company that sold it. Result: the device is off the market and close to 1,000 lawsuits were brought against the manufacturer. Victims are winning big judgments.

Mother Jones provided the knowledge. The public acted.

Mother Jones published a searing article on how Nestlé and Bristol-Myers profited exorbitant hundreds of millions of dollars from sale in Third World countries of baby formula responsible for thousands of cases of malnutrition and even death. Result: the worldwide boycott against Nestlé and Bristol-Myers grew by leaps and bounds. Thousands of people volunteered their time or money to the activist organizations whose names we listed.

Mother Jones provided the knowledge. The public acted.

And Mother Jones published a special issue on what we called "the Corporate Crime of the Century" about the export of banned and hazardous products to Third World nations. The story was picked up by newspapers and magazines around the world. Pressure was brought to bear on our government and Congressman Michael Barnes recently introduced legislation to control the export of all banned and hazardous products and substances.

Mother Jones provided the knowledge. The public acted.

Mother Jones is really beginning to make a difference in our society. We are bridging the gap between concern and involvement. That's good. But it could be so much better. There's so much more we could be doing, so many more cases such as these we could be bringing to the public's attention if we had the means to do the additional investigating and reporting.

It costs a lot to publish Mother Jones every month, far more than we take in from subscriptions. Our staff gets paid less and works longer hours. Because we have strict financial limitations, we have been able to carry on just a small part of the reporting that needs to be done.

Almost every month, we have to turn down the chance to do investigative stories we simply can't afford. These stories are important -- but require us to travel too far, work too long ... and our limited budget can't stand the strain.

Despite these limitations, Mother Jones has been awarded the prestigious National Magazine Award three times in four years (unheard of for such a young magazine!). And now almost a million readers eagerly turn to Mother Jones every month for the kind of no-holds-barred reporting they know they won't find in other magazines or newspapers.

Now try to imagine how much more effective our work in economic and corporate investigative work could be if we had at our disposal the wherewithal needed to conduct investigative research and reporting on a much greater scale, unhampered by limited budget and facilities.

That's why the Mother Jones Investigative Fund has been established.

The Fund will help Mother Jones service an augmented staff of investigative reporters.

The Fund will establish a refuge to which anyone can safely turn with information about corporate or government misdeeds without fear of reprisal (a sanctuary for whistleblowers).

The Fund will disseminate information to consumer groups about effective ways to make business and government responsive to people's needs.

The Fund will stimulate activism around the subject of our investigations (like the international distribution of our recent exposé on the export of banned and hazardous products).

It would be nice to report that other publications were doing a first-rate job of exposing corporate malpractice. They're not. Maybe the matters are too hot for them to handle. Maybe they're afraid of losing advertising revenue. Maybe they choose to focus on political scandals. Whatever the reasons, the fact remains that there is a profusion of investigative work to be done on how big business and big government is operating today -- and Mother Jones has emerged as the leader in doing that work.

That brings us to you and the role you can take in the Fund.

By its very nature, the Mother Jones Investigative Fund must be publicly supported. It is you we are serving. It is you we turn to for help to make our work possible. We therefore invite you to become a Charter Sponsor of the Fund, to help us roll back the tides of consumer exploitation and environmental contamination.

When you read the exposés that the Fund helps get published in Mother Jones, there will be no printed credit given to you for

having made that article possible. But you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you played a key role in assuring that it was researched and written.

And if, as in so many cases, the articles result in the saving of lives or the prevention of future accidents or disease, you can take pride in knowing that you helped.

As a Charter Sponsor, you will receive the Fund's quarterly "Insider" newsletter, keeping you informed about our work. You'll learn the stories behind the stories, learn about what goes into the investigative process, how our researchers work, how our reporters work, how we tackled particular projects. You'll be advised, too, about how the public responded to these articles and what actions the articles triggered.

American corporations have endless resources to influence public opinion. They spend millions upon millions every year in public relations pap that glosses over too many misdeeds in their operations. The Mother Jones Investigative Fund has one major resource to compete with that: the invaluable concern and involvement of people like you.

Charter Sponsorship in the Mother Jones Investigative Fund is \$15. When you consider that the work of the Fund can inevitably bring about improvement in the quality of the products you buy and increase your buying power and keep you from being ripped off, that \$15 is a small investment. I urge you to make that investment by becoming a Charter Sponsor of the Fund today.

With enough people working for it, effective social change can happen. Help make it happen.

Your Charter Sponsorship Card is enclosed.

Sincerely,



Mark Dowie

P.S. Note that on your Sponsorship Card, you have the opportunity to contribute more than the \$15 sponsorship dues. If you can, please consider checking off one of these boxes. You give us added strength when you do.

P.P.S. I'd really be interested to know how you'd like your contribution invested. So scribble an idea or two on the back of the sponsorship card when you send it back.