

IMAGINE THAT! AWARDS

Michael Riordon, Sept 3/03

Stage notes:

- 1) I've written the script for two hosts. Suggest one woman, one man; or two women.
- 2) Though the hosts can read from the script, on a podium or music stands, they should be familiar with the script before the show. At least one rehearsal is advisable.
- 3) The other performers should be familiar enough with the script that they don't need to read from it, particularly if their parts involve action. At least one rehearsal is advisable.
- 4) Performers needed (total = 6):
 - 2 hosts
 - 1 actor to accept the corporate awards (he – a male is preferable – should be costumed to represent The Corporation – eg suit jackets if possible, etc.)
 - 1 actor to represent second water corporation in Water Snakes sequence.
 - 1 actor to play Heckler at back of auditorium; their lines can be read from the script.
 - 1 actor to play the "Audience Response Meter."
- 5) Props needed:
 - Podium or music stands for hosts
 - A sound system would help
 - Large balloons, inflated. Minimum required = 6, but spares would be advisable. Also a good quantity of smaller balloons to hand out to audience.
 - Something to prick the balloons – ball point pen? (Test it first!)
- 6) Timing: By my own reading, the show in English should run about 40 minutes, depending on pace. Translation will add some length.

THE SHOW

Host 1: Benvenidos a todos. Bienvenue. Welcome to the 2003 Imagine That! Awards.

Host 2: We dedicate this event to the bright, strong memory of a hero who is present with us tonight. ¡Viva Carlos Sánchez López! ¡Viva!

Host 1: We are here to mark in our own way the highest corporate values so richly on display over at the Cancún Convention Center: Arrogance, Corruption, Cruelty, and – at the heart of it all – Greed.

Host 2: In case there are corporate spies with us tonight, we should give due credit for the title of these awards. "Imagine" is the corporate slogan of Monsanto. The word is, believe it or not, *trademarked*. At Monsanto, imagination is intellectual property to be bought and sold. Well, let it be known, tonight we reclaim the right to imagine a better world!

Host 1: The title also comes from the 1971 John Lennon song, *Imagine*. "Imagine there's no countries,/ It isn't hard to do,/ Nothing to kill or die for...../ Imagine all the people/ living life in peace...// Imagine no possessions, / I wonder if you can, / No need for greed or hunger, A brotherhood of man" – let's just change that to 'A unity of all' – "No need for greed or hunger, A unity of all."

Host 2: Imagine that. Our five award categories tonight are:

Host 1: Gobbling the World, for agri/food/biotech parasites;

Host 2: Cooking the Books, for high finance thieves;

Host 1: Getting Away with Murder, for weapons-makers of mass destruction;

Host 2: Hardest Pill to Swallow, for drug-pushers; and -

Host 1: Poisonous Water Snake, for pirates of the blue gold, water. In addition, we are proud to present a Special Award for Lifetime Achievement, to a surprise winner that will be announced later tonight.

Host 2: If we neglect to mention your favourite corporation, please understand, given so many candidates with such superb qualifications, it was extremely difficult to select the nominees and finalists.

Host 1: Of course, in honour of the World Trade Organization, the process was completely secret and the judges' decisions cannot be appealed. For further dirt on the nominated corporations and so many others.... (*identify resources available.*)

Host 2: Unlike the WTO, we will leave the final judgement to you. We'll provide some dirt on each nominee, and let you decide which of them most deserves each award.

Host 1: Since you know these corporate thugs as well as we do, instead of naming them first, we'll just dish up the dirt, and you identify where it sticks.

(Stage note: the hosts should be prepared to incorporate correct identifying responses from the audience as they occur.)

Host 2: Our first award is Gobbling the World, for the worst agri/food/biotech parasite.

Host 1: Our nominee is the world's largest privately owned corporation. As such they are not required to make any public reports on their income, profits, or executive salaries. But of course they can't help bragging – their 2002 revenues were 50 billion dollars US. Imagine that.

Host 2: Their stated corporate mission is, quote: "To be the global leader in nourishing people." How, you may wonder? Well, they control over a quarter of the world's grain production, they're the third largest food processor in the world, and they also rake in huge profits from commodity trading, meat processing, genetic seed manipulation, steel manufacturing, utility companies and financial services.

Host 1: They are one of just four corporations that monopolize all meat packing in the United States. Deregulation and NAFTA have allowed them to bash unions, slash wages, and shift their operations to parts of Canada and Mexico where wages are even lower. Is this what they mean by "nourishing people?"

Host 2: The Bush regime recently appointed a former senior executive from the company to direct the agricultural "reconstruction," as they have the nerve to call it, in Iraq. During the Reagan regime Daniel Amstutz was chief US negotiator at the Uruguay Round of GATT talks in 1987-89, where food & agriculture were added to the list of targets for exploitation. Their next meal will be Iraq.

Host 1: And Mexico may be next. This year our nominee began the take-over of one of the largest sugar producers in this country. They are the first foreign investor in sugar since the Mexican government decided to nationalise half the industry in 2001.

Host 2: Do you know them? Our first nominee is – *(pause)* – Cargill!

Host 1: And now, our second nominee for Gobbling the World. Their corporate motto is, quote: "Delivering better food for a better world." Imagine that.

Host 2: They are the largest agribusiness corporation in the world, pushing chemicals, patented seeds and biotechnology in more than 90 countries.

Host 1: In India, our nominee exploits thousands of child labourers in cotton seed production.

Host 2: Determined to maintain sales of their pesticide diazinon, which is known to cause brain damage, they fed doses of it directly to human test subjects in the United States.

Host 1: And by the way, our nominee supplies rivers of toxic chemicals world-wide to keep the grass smooth and green for that ultimate corporate pastime, golf. Imagine that.

Host 2: Our second nominee brags of being a world leader in developing both 'Terminator' and 'Traitor' seed technologies. Traitor technology controls plant characteristics like ripening, which can only be switched on or off by a particular chemical, which is available only from – guess who.

Host 1: This claim about "nourising people" – strange, we couldn't find any examples.

Host 2: And that's it our second nominee – Syngenta!

Host 1: Now, our third nominee for Gobbling the World. Their corporate motto is, quote: "Good Food, Good Life."

Host 2: What is going on here? Good food, lovely world, yum-yum – do these people all have the same writer?

Host 1: Our third nominee is the world's biggest food manufacturer, with 2002 sales of \$64 billion US. They're Number One in coffee, they're Number One in bottled water.

Host 2: In China, they profit from forced labour by political prisoners who work twelve hours a day, seven days a week, and are subject to torture for uncooperative behaviour.

Host 1: In Ethiopia, where more than 11 million people face starvation, our nominee recently demanded \$6 million compensation for a company that was nationalised 27 years ago.

Host 2: In the Ivory Coast, our nominee uses child labour in its coffee and cocoa plantations, under conditions that international observers call slavery.

Host 1: In Colombia, a union representing workers in one of our nominee's factories accuses the company of complicity in the disappearance of seven union organizers.

Host 2: Our fourth nominee controls half the world's market for breast milk substitute, a market drenched in shame. The WHO estimates that 1.5 million infants die every year – that's one baby every 30 seconds – from unsafe bottle feeding. All for the sake of profit.

Host 1: You got it. Our third nominee is Nestle.

Host 2: Our fourth and final nominee for Gobbling the World pledges itself to uphold, quote: "honesty, decency, consistency and courage." We think they're too modest. That list should also include bullshit, great steaming piles of it.

Host 1: They dominate key corn and soybean markets in North America, Latin America, and Asia. One of their gifts to a hungry world has been the infamous defoliant Agent Orange, and currently they supply newer poisons to fumigate peasants under Plan Colombia. Now which part of their pledge would cover that – consistency?

Host 2: Our nominee is a world leader in pushing Terminator seeds. Terminator plants produce sterile seed, which would force millions of farmers who now rely on farm-saved seed to buy new seed every year from – guess who. Guaranteed: A little bit of death in every seed.

Host 1: In June, food products in Britain labelled 'GM-free' were found to be contaminated with genetically modified soya manufactured by – guess who.

Host 2: In July, our nominee admitted they had secretly planted genetically mutilated wheat in the US and Canada. Of course they know that GM wheat will wipe out all organic and even conventional wheat farming. Organic farmers in the Canadian province of Saskatchewan are fighting through the courts to stop the invasion.

Host 1: The Bush regime, a very good buddy to our nominee, tells African countries that if they want any cash to combat hunger and disease, they will also have to plant genetically mutilated crops from the USA.

Host 2: In India, our nominee has registered a patent on plants stolen from the traditional Indian variety of soft wheat used to make rotis and chapattis. Blatant biopiracy, the patent is being opposed.

Host 1: (*faster*) In India the company also forces their child labourers to work ten to thirteen hours a day, for less than 50 cents US a day, and frequently exposes them to toxic pesticides –

Host 2: (*faster*) In North America our nominee has sued over 2,000 farmers for patent infringement, basically for saving seed –

Host 1: (*faster*) They've got reporters fired for raising question about the dangers of bovine growth hormone, of which our nominee is the world's only supplier –

Host 2: (*faster*) They've sued a dairy in the state of Maine for saying on its milk labels that it *doesn't* use growth hormones –

Host 1: (*faster*) They control every patent world-wide on every form of genetically mutilated soya –

Host 2: (*faster*) And in Brazil they even have the gall to demand revenues from GM soya which they caused to be planted *against the law!*

Host 1: (*breathless*) There is so much dirt on our fourth nominee, we could go on and on. But you already know them, all too well – Monsanto!

Host 2: And there you have it, the four nominees for Gobbling the World: Cargill, Sygenta, Nestle, and Monsanto.

(Stage note: Actor playing the Audience Response Meter comes on stage and stands within clear view of the audience.)

Host 1: *(To audience)* Now it's your turn. Which corporation do you think most deserves the award as worst agri/food/biotech parasite?

(Stage note: Audience Response Meter actor raises arms to demonstrate degree of response – arms down, arms raised to horizontal at sides, arms raised fully above head.)

Host 2: Our Audience Response Meter will measure your reaction to each nominee. So here we go. Will it be Cargill? *(Pause for audience reaction.)*

(Stage note: Audience Response Meter actor raises arms to indicate degree of audience response.)

Host 1: Will it be Syngenta? *(Pause for audience reaction.)*

Host 2: Or Nestle? *(Pause for audience reaction.)*

Host 1: *(push it)* Or will the award go to Monsanto? *(Pause for audience reaction.)*
Aha, you see, brand recognition really does work! And the Imagine That! Award for Gobbling the World goes to.....

(Stage note: Actor representing The Corporation comes on stage. Host 2 presents the balloon. They pose, smile and shake hands for an imaginary camera.)

Host 1: Our second award is for Cooking the Books – corporate grand theft, that is.

Host 2: The first nominee describes itself as, quote: "Dedicated to community service, making each community a better place because we are there." Imagine that. All that's missing is the Hollywood music.

Host 1: They are the second-largest financial corporation in the world, the largest credit card issuer, and the first US bank with \$1 trillion in assets. Their CEO was paid \$22 million last year – and that's only the part we know about. Their president has worked for the US government, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank – one small happy family, you might say.

Host 2: Our nominee has swallowed up banks in quite a few countries, including Mexico's former national bank – at a bargain price after Mexican citizens helped, through paying higher taxes, to restore it during the peso crisis.

Host 1: In Ecuador our nominee guaranteed a \$200 million loan for a pipeline to carry crude oil from the rainforest along the Andes to the coast. This was *after* scientists said

the earthquake-prone Andes was the last place on earth where a pipeline should be built. Now how's that for community service!

Host 2: In Papua-New Guinea they arranged a \$98 million loan for oil companies to drill wells and build a pipeline through the rainforest. The financing also opened the area to timber companies.

Host 1: In the US, our nominee and other top banks conspired to loot billions of dollars via their own pipeline called Enron. Thousands lost their jobs, and thousands more their life savings. The \$400 million in fines that the bank had to pay was peanuts to our nominee, and watch for higher bank charges to cover it!

Host 2: If these crooks get their way at the Cancun Convention Centre, this is the kind of community service the rest of the world can expect.

Host 1: In case you don't know them yet, our first nominee for Cooking the Books is – Citigroup International!

Host 2: Which brings us to our second nominee for sleaziest corporate crook.

Host 1: Operating in 142 countries, they call themselves the world's largest professional services organization, with a 2002 Sales Volume of \$13.8 billion. If you think that sounds kind of small for the world's largest professional services organization, then you'll understand why they are nominated for Cooking the Books.

Host 2: They claim to, quote: "contribute in a responsible manner to the development of communities." A couple of examples:

Host 1: In May, our nominee placed full-page ads in all the major US newspapers to attack corporate fraud. The ads asked, "Can anyone be trusted?" Well, apparently not. A few days later our nominee was fined \$1 million for covering up their own crooked auditing of corporate financial statements. Oops!

Host 2: In the multi-billion dollar corporate fraud at Tyco International, a senior partner with our nominee was found to have broken the law, and permanently barred by regulators from working on any public company's finances. As usual in corporate crime, he remains a partner with the company, and the settlement includes no fines. Now how's that for cooking the books?

Host 1: While one of our nominee's corporate divisions advises wealthy clients on how to profit from global warming – yes, you heard that right – another provides consulting on how to build golf courses worldwide! What do you think? As the rain forest goes down, can we expect to see more and more golf courses in its place?

Host 2: And there you have it, our second and final nominee for Cooking the Books – PricewaterhouseCoopers!

Heckler at back of auditorium: (*calls out*) Excuse me, excuse me! Why have you left out American Express? And Bush senior's Carlyle Group? And what about JP Morgan

Chase, the New York bank which the Bush regime has just announced will plunder what's left of Iraq?

Host 1: What can we say? So much corruption, so little time. We had to make hard choices, that's what freedom is all about.

(Stage note: Audience Response Meter actor raises arms to approximate audience response to each nominee.)

Host 2: Once again, friends, the decision is yours. For Cooking the Books, sleaziest corporate crook, will it be Citigroup? *(Pause for audience reaction.)*

Host 1: Or will it be PricewaterhouseCoopers? *(Pause for audience reaction.)*

Host 2: And the winner of the Imagine That! Award is.....

(Stage note: Actor representing The Corporation comes on stage.)

Host 1: That's strange. Didn't you just accept the award for Gobbling the World?

(Stage note: Actor representing The Corporation shakes his head, NO.

Host 2 presents the balloon. They pose, smile and shake hands for an imaginary camera.)

Host 1: We will now present our third award, Getting Away with Murder, for the weapons-maker that best defends true corporate values: Arrogance, Corruption, Cruelty, and Greed.

Host 2: Please note, this category is particularly sensitive, since all the nominees are heavily armed and extremely dangerous.

Host 1: Our first nominee started off making nice, practical things like radiators and radio tubes. That was a long time ago.

Host 2: Now they are the world's largest manufacturer of missiles of mass destruction, including the Cruise, Patriot, Sidewinder, Tomahawk and Maverick missiles. By the way, will the person who thought up those names please go see a therapist?

Host 1: Their stated corporate values include, quote: "Welcome diverse opinions; Be honest, forthright and trustworthy; Treat people with respect and dignity." Imagine that.

Host 2: Their "Mission areas" – this is their language, not ours – include, quote: "State-of-the-art systems and solutions to defend the free world; every phase of the Precision Engagement kill chain" – really, this is how these people talk! – "and state-of-the-art technology to detect, protect and respond to terrorism and provide Homeland Defense."

Host 1: Please be warned, anyone here who is concerned about your look – outfit, hair, whatever – our nominee is watching.

(Stage note: Both hosts wave.)

Both Hosts: Hi, Big Brother!

Host 2: Our nominee wants NATO to welcome new members like Poland, Hungary and the Czech republic. You see, new members are required to spend at least 3% of their national budgets on weapons, to be bought from – guess who.

Host 1: So *that's* what they mean by "welcoming diversity." Our first nominee is – *(pause)* – Raytheon!

Host 2: Our second nominee for Getting Away with Murder has a very grand corporate motto: "Forever New Frontiers." With declared revenues of \$54 billion in 2002, they're the largest supplier of weapons of mass destruction to a hungry world.

Host 1: In their corporate values statement, value number one says, quote: "We will always take the high road by practicing the highest ethical standards." Don't you just love these people?

Host 2: A sample of their ethical standards at work: From 1999 – 2001, our nominee paid \$100 million in fines for bribery, fraud, kickbacks, violations of military contracts & export laws. In the wacky world of weapons, fines like these are normal business expenses, like lunch.

Host 1: On the global scene, our nominee lobbied hard for the World Trade Organization to include the People's Republic of China. Why? Well, China accounts for 10 percent of our nominee's business. It also provides very cheap labor via the People's Liberation Army, which ensures that workers always work and never, ever unionize.

Host 2: Recently our nominee appointed a new vice-president to take care of business in the Middle East. The company's Senior Vice President of International Relations explained, quote: "The strength and increasing stability of the region, together with its inherent growth prospects, provide an excellent opportunity to expand our globalization initiatives in a meaningful way." Sends a little shiver up the spine, doesn't it?

Host 1: Our nominee is a huge fan of the WTO. Not only do weapons-makers profit from the elimination of environmental, health, and labor standards, but all their activities – like massive subsidies from their home governments – are exempt from challenge under the WTO's "security exception."

Host 2: Suddenly I feel a lot more secure, don't you? And that's it for our second nominee – *(pause)* – Boeing!

Host 1: At first glance our third nominee for Getting Away with Murder doesn't seem to fit the military category. First up on their website, it says: "Improve your rate of drilling penetration." Please, don't ask.

Host 2: Our nominee describes itself as "one of the world's largest providers of products and services to the oil and gas industries in more than 120 countries." We went looking for their corporate values, but they don't seem to have any.

Host 1: Why are they in the military category? Just give us a minute and you'll see.

Host 2: Our nominee has been widely criticized for doing business in many countries where human rights and environmental abuses are widespread, including: Algeria, Angola, Bolivia, Bosnia, Brazil, Croatia, Haiti, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Libya, Nigeria, Rwanda, and Somalia.

Host 1: In December 2001 our nominee was awarded a contract by the Bush regime to build military bases anywhere and at any time for US troops. Since the corporate grand plan for the world will need many US bases in many countries, the contract has no top cost limit. This, folks, is a contract to die for.

Host 2: In July 2002 our nominee was awarded another contract by the Bush regime to build a detention centre for alleged terrorists. It's at the US naval base in Guantanamo, Cuba. By all accounts – except the Bush regime's – the place can only be called a concentration camp.

Host 1: In March 2003 our nominee was awarded another huge contract by the Bush regime, with no bidding process. Originally it was for putting out oil well fires, but then it was quietly extended to include the operation of Iraq's oil fields and, basically, to coordinate the plunder of its oil.

Host 2: Oh, did we mention, our nominee's former CEO is now Vice-President of the Bush regime. He's a Dick. Dick Cheney.

Host 1: This Dick is really something. In 1996 he explained why his company, our nominee, does business with so many dictators. Quote: "The problem is that the good Lord didn't see fit to always put oil and gas resources where there are democratic governments." Nor oil companies, we might add.

Host 1: Speaking of oil, at the same time that the US regime was strangling Iraq with sanctions that killed at least 50,000 children, our US corporate nominee – with Cheney in charge – was propping up the Saddam Hussein regime by selling them \$73 million worth of oil production equipment.

Host 2: In the Land of the Free there are no sanctions, only prizes, for hypocrisy and greed.

Host 1: And our third and final nominee for Getting Away with Murder is – *(pause)* – Halliburton!

Heckler at back of auditorium: *(calls out)* I protest! Why only these three? What about Lockheed-Martin? And United Technologies, look what they're doing to Colombia with their attack helicopters! And what about –

Host 2 interrupts: So many others, we know. Don't worry, there's always next year! *(To audience)* Alright now, you be the judge. Which maker of mass destruction best deserves the award for Getting Away with Murder?

(Stage note: Audience Response Meter actor raises arms to approximate audience response to each nominee.)

Host 1: Will it be Raytheon? *(Pause for audience reaction.)*

Host 2: Or Boeing? *(Pause for audience reaction.)*

Host 1: Or will it be Halliburton? *(Pause for audience reaction.)*

Host 2: And the winner of the Imagine That! Award is.....

(Stage note: Actor representing The Corporation comes on stage.)

Host 1: This is ridiculous. You've already accepted two awards!

(Stage note: Actor representing The Corporation shakes his head, NO.)

Host 1: Well, this certainly is odd. Do you corporate types all look the same?

(Stage note: Actor representing The Corporation nods, YES. Host 2 presents the balloon. They pose, smile and shake hands for an imaginary camera.)

Host 1: On to our fourth award, Hardest Pill to Swallow, for worst drug-pusher.

Host 2: Our first nominee pushes drugs in 158 countries. Their corporate values state, quote: "We have a responsibility to be a good corporate citizen in our communities and – blah blah blah blah blah" – we needn't go on, you've heard it all before.

Host 1: From the pile of dirt we've gathered on this nominee, we'll just share one sample that nicely demonstrates their corporate citizenship in action.

Host 2: Last fall, in the new US homeland security bill – a giant step forward for the police state, by the way – someone noticed a little clause had been inserted that exempts from legal liability any company that made Thimerosal, a mercury-based preservative in vaccines for children. It is known to cause autism and brain damage. Several law suits had just been launched against the manufacturer, which happens to be – guess who.

Host 1: At first no one – no one in Congress, no one at the White House, and of course no one at the company – would admit to having sneaked the profit-protection clause into the bill. Finally a Texas Republican, Dick Armey, confessed. "I did it and I'm proud of it," he said. "It's a matter of national security. We need their vaccines if the country is attacked with germ weapons."

Host 2: Caught in the act, the Republicans dropped the clause, but the Senate Majority Leader said he hopes to stick it back into new vaccine legislation later this year.

Host 1: Meanwhile, in the current panic created by the Bush regime over chemical and biological weapons, our nominee is raking in huge profits from its exclusive patents on vaccines for smallpox and anthrax.

Host 2: Our nominee happens to be a major donor to the Republican party, the White House budget director happens to be a former executive with the company, and their current CEO happens to be a prominent advisor on the Bush regime's Homeland Security Advisory Council.

Host 1: It's all good corporate citizenship in the Land of the Free.

Host 2: Of course there are other dangerous drugs, other scandals, but we'll leave it at that. Well, just one more item, we can't resist:

Host 1: In July, the Bush regime chose one Randall Tobias to coordinate their AIDS program for Africa and the Caribbean. Tobias is the former CEO with our nominee, also a major personal donor to the Republican Party. Guess who's going to benefit from the Bush regime's AIDS program?

Host 2: In case you don't know them already, our first nominee is – *(pause)* – Eli Lilly!

Host 1: Our second nominee for Hardest Pill to Swallow is the world's largest pharmaceutical company, with declared revenues of \$32.4 billion in 2002. Their goal is, quote: "To be the company that does more good for more people than any other company on the planet." Now that is ONE BIG PILL!

Host 2: In the 2000 US elections, the pharmaceutical industry – of which our nominee is the leader – spent \$24 million on election propaganda, most of it for the Republicans. One of the first rewards for the industry: a new law from the Bush regime makes it much harder for people to sue drug corporations! Lesson: You get the government you pay for.

Host 1: Last month our nominee announced that they would restrict sales of their drugs to Canada so pharmacies there couldn't sell them back to US citizens. Americans, especially the elderly, had discovered that they could get their medicines in Canada for as little as one-third of the US price. Unlike the US, Canada has price controls on drugs.

Host 2: In April, our nominee, after swallowing their former rival Pharmacia Corporation, announced that there would be "mass layoffs" in the coming months. Leaked documents indicate that some employees will not be given any advance notice due to, quote, "security reasons."

Host 1: The CEO of our nominated company also chairs the most powerful pharmaceutical lobby in the world. They're the main force behind TRIPS, with its 20-year patent protections that effectively block affordable generics. The United Nations Subcommission for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights concluded that WTO patent rules effectively cripple efforts by poorer countries to confront epidemics.

Host 2: In 2001 Oxfam accused our nominee of forcing up the price of life-saving drugs in poorer countries. How? Our nominee gets the Bush regime to threaten sanctions against any country that makes or buys generic drugs, at a fraction of the cost. In South Africa one of our nominee's patented HIV drugs costs \$9.00 *for each pill*. The average wage in South Africa is \$7.00 per month.

Host 1: By the way, along with Pharmacia, our nominee also gobbled up Monsanto, the winner of this year's Imagine That! Award for Gobbling the World.

Host 2: We think they ought to change their motto. Instead of saying they want to be "the company that does more good for more people than any other company on the planet," why don't they just get to the point – "The one company on the planet. Period."

Host 1: We rest our case. Our second nominee is – *(pause)* – Pfizer!

Host 2: And now your decision, please, for Hardest Pill to Swallow, the drug-pusher of choice:

(Stage note: Audience Response Meter actor raises arms to approximate audience response to each nominee.)

Host 1: Will it be Eli Lilly? *(Pause for audience reaction.)*

Host 2: (push it) Or will the award go to Pfizer? *(Pause for audience reaction.)*

Host 1: And the winner of the Imagine That! Award is.....

(Stage note: I've structured the script to maximize the chances that Monsanto will win Gobbling the Earth, and Pfizer the Hardest Pill. If this happens, proceed as follows: Actor representing The Corporation comes on stage, holding a balloon received earlier.)

Host 1: We hope you don't mind, but since Pfizer and Monsanto are really the same thing, we'd like to cut costs by covering both awards with one balloon. Would that be alright with you?

Actor representing The Corporation: *(yells)* Certainly not! We want TWO balloons! We want ALL the balloons! We're very big, you know! Don't mess with us, or we'll hit

you with our favourite club, the WTO! We'll get our friend George Dubya to bomb you into the stone age! We'll –

Host 1 (*interrupts*): Alright, alright, you can have another damn balloon. The winner of the Imagine That! Award for Hardest Pill to Swallow is

(Stage note: Host 2 presents the second balloon. They pose, smile and shake hands for an imaginary camera.)

(Stage note: If either Monsanto or Pfizer does not win an award, then proceed as normal, ie:

Host 1: And the winner of the Imagine That! Award is.....

(Stage note: Actor representing The Corporation comes on stage. Host 2 presents the balloon. They pose, smile and shake hands for an imaginary camera.)

Host 1: And now for our final award –

Host 2: Except for the Special Lifetime Achievement Award, the winner of which will be announced in a few minutes –

Host 1: Our final category is Poisonous Water Snake, for worst pirate of the blue gold.

Host 2: Our first nominee's declared revenues for the first half of 2003 were \$15.6 billion US, of which more than ½ was derived from selling stolen water to 110 million people in more than 100 countries.

Host 1: This nominee has just changed their name. Their new name is derived from Aeolus, the keeper of the winds in Greek mythology. It's supposed to express their commitment to, quote: "the sustainable development of the planet." Here are a few examples of what they mean:

Host 2: In France, our nominee regularly bribes the governing political party in return for public contracts worth billions. Investigators working full time can't keep up with them.

Host 1: In 2001, Italian judges sentenced the former Milan city council president to jail for taking bribes from our nominee.

Host 2: Also in 2001, our nominee's subsidiary US Filter dumped raw sewage for two hours into the Mississippi River from the privatized sewage treatment plant they managed in New Orleans, USA. An electrical fire had burst out in equipment that the company knew was at risk.

Host 1: A little postscript on that – Andy Seidel, President of US Filter, recently called opponents of water privatization "left wing hate groups." That would be you, folks.

Host 2: And the mainstream New Orleans newspaper which reported that raw sewage dumping? Seidel called it, quote, "a crappy little pulp-rag," that ought to be taken over by a right-wing media conglomerate.

Host 1: In 2001 and 2002, while our nominee managed the Puerto Rico water authority, they failed consistently to maintain and repair aqueducts and sewers. They also ran up huge debts that had to be covered by, as usual, people like us.

Host 2: Our nominee is one of the few companies in the world to be on both the US Coalition of Service Industries and the European Services Forum, the key US and European special interest groups pushing to privatize everything in sight through the General Agreement on Trade in Services.

Host 1: It's not hard to see why they love their GATS. First the World Bank and the IMF make privatizing public services a condition for new or renewed loans, then they give the corporations huge handouts to help them extract huge profits from us, the public!

Host 2: After private companies in South Africa raised water rates 100 to 300 percent, millions of South Africans who couldn't pay had their water cut off. Many had to get water from polluted rivers and lakes. The resulting cholera epidemic infected a quarter of a million people and killed close to 300.

Host 1: Said the managing director of our nominee's operations in South Africa, and I quote: "Free water is not a good idea. It gives the impression that water is free, and you can use as much as you want."

Host 2: So much for our first nominee in the Poisonous Water Snake category. Formerly known as Vivendi, they are – *(pause)* – Veolia!

Host 1: And now our second nominee. Their stated mission is, quote: "Delivering the essentials of life."

Host 2: With water concessions in 130 countries, and 2002 revenues of \$50.5 billion US, that's a whole lot of essentials. Here are a few snapshots of how they do it.

Host 1: In 2000, instead of building the new sewage treatment plant that their contract required in Sao Paulo, Brazil, our nominee simply dumped most of the sewage into tanks, directly into the La Plata river, or onto streets and open fields.

Host 2: In 2002, they threatened to sue Argentina for revenues lost in the country's financial collapse. They wanted to send a signal much clearer than the water they provide: The first essential of life is Profit.

Host 1: Over the last two years in the Philippines, our nominee doubled the cost of water in Manila. When the government regulator objected to yet another big rate increase on

top of that, the company simply cancelled the contract, leaving the city \$530 million in debt. On top of which the company demanded \$303 million in "compensation" for lost profits. You have to admit, these people certainly do have gall!

Host 2: In 2002, our nominee took over the water services contract here in Cancun, and another contract covering a major part of Mexico City. Look out, Mexico! And in Puerto Rico, after their main rival lost the contract through mismanagement, our nominee has also taken over running the water and sewage facilities for the entire country. Look out, Puerto Rico!

Host 1: That's our second and final nominee for Poisonous Water Snake. Who else could they be but – *(pause)* – Suez!

Heckler at back of auditorium: *(calls out)* That's it?? What about the other water thieves? In England, in Germany –

Host 2 interrupts: Wherever they are, believe me, it won't be long before they're swallowed up by one of our nominees!

Heckler at back of auditorium: *(calls out)* And what about Worldcom-MCI, the biggest corporate fraud in US history and suddenly they've got the contract to build a cell phone network in Iraq!

Host 2: That's telecommunications fraud. We don't have an award for that.

Heckler at back of auditorium: *(calls out)* And what about Accenture, those gangsters formerly known as Anderson Consulting, bleeding public healthcare and welfare systems dry for profit?

Host 1: That would be your government services gangsters. No award for that, sorry. We'd be here all night.

Heckler at back of auditorium: *(calls out)* You could call the award Vampire of the Year.

Host 2: Great idea, we love it. Next year you'll write the show.

Host 1: So now, everyone – your decision, please. Which of these two corporations most deserves the Award for most Poisonous Water Snake?

(Stage note: Audience Response Meter actor raises arms to approximate audience response to each nominee.)

Host 1: Will it be Vivendi/Veolia? *(Pause for audience reaction.)*

Host 2: Or will it be Suez? *(Pause for audience reaction.)*

Host 1: And the winner of the Imagine That! Award is.....

(Stage note: Actor representing The Corporation comes on stage. Host 2 moves to present the balloon.)

Host 1: Wait, wait, stop, we have a problem here!

Host 2: What's wrong?

(Stage note: Actor representing the other water corporation comes on stage as Host 1 speaks the next line. The two water-corp actors stand very close together, side by side, and move as if connected at the shoulder.)

Host 1: Well, the thing is, even though our two nominees do compete in the usual capitalist way, they also *collaborate* whenever it suits them to win contracts, for example in Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro. And now they're doing the same thing here in Mexico (*details?*). It's a classic win-win-lose situation – Veolia wins, Suez wins, we lose.

(Stage note: Actors representing Veolia & Suez try to seize the balloon from Host 2. Host 2 avoids them. It turns into a chase, with V & S moving as a unit.)

Host 1: This is very awkward, very embarrassing. *(To the audience)* What do you think we should do? Should we provide two balloons? Or should we let them share?

Veolia & Suez *(shout in unison)*: NO SHARING!! SHARING IS BAD!!

(Stage note: V & S grab the balloon from Host 2, then V & S start fighting over it. They move off stage, fighting all the way. If they succeed in bursting the balloon, so much the better.)

Host 1: Well, that takes care of that. Isn't the free market amazing?

Host 2: And now – the moment we've been waiting for, our special first-ever Imagine That! Award for Lifetime Achievement.

Host 1: On this one there is no need to vote. There is no contest.

Host 2: The Imagine That! Lifetime Achievement Award is for those who stay awake –

Host 1: For those who see through the lies –

Host 2: For those who care more for each other and the earth than they do for power and the dollar –

Host 1: For those who risk their own well-being, even their lives, to burst the corporate bubble and make the world a better place for all of us –

Host 2: This award is for those who dare to imagine.

Host 1: And the winner of the special Imagine That! Award for Lifetime Achievement is..... (to audience) You!!

(Stage note: During the previous line, the Actor representing The Corporation and the 2nd water corp actor return to the stage with all their balloons. Each of the five balloons now represents a particular international trade regime: WTO, IMF, FTAA, TRIPS, GATS.)

Host 2: And now, friends, here it is, the biggest prize of all. Join us, won't you?

Host 1: What shall we do with the FTAA?

(Stage note: Host 2 pricks the FTAA balloon, BANG.)

Host 2: What shall we do with TRIPS?

(Stage note: Host 1 pricks TRIPS balloon, BANG.)

Host 1: What shall we do with GATS?

(Stage note: Host 2 pricks GATS balloon, BANG.)

Host 2: What shall we do with the IMF?

(Stage note: Host 1 pricks IMF balloon, BANG.)

Host 1: And finally, friends, what shall we do with the WTO?

(Stage note: Both hosts prick WTO balloon, BANG. Then everyone on stage directs their applause to the audience. If there are musicians present, this would be a perfect moment for them to start playing something wonderful...)