

Media critic presents documentary on state of corporate America Nov. 8

"Are lobbyists and large corporation controlling too much of the U.S. economy and politics? Is the domestic political process in a death spiral? What is President Trump's current role as to these forces? Should we care?"

Speaking to these issues in Florence is Jeff Cohen, noted long-time journalist, documentary film producer and U.S. media critic. He presents his newest documentary "The Corporate Coup D'état" at the Siuslaw Public Library, 1460 Ninth St. in Florence, on Friday, Nov. 8. The free Friday night Bromley Room event starts at 6:30 p.m. Donations are accepted to cover costs.

Cohen is the 1988 founder of FAIR (Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting), a highly respected national media watch and advocacy organization. He also was founding director of Park Center for Independent Media at Ithaca College in New York. For five years he appeared on the weekend panel show Fox News Watch and in the mid-1990s, Cohen was a regular guest on CNN's Crossfire.

One local organizer of the event, Siltcoos Lake resident Rand Dawson, said, "Cohen

is a highly regarded national media commentator, author, activist, television producer and retired journalism professor. We are indeed fortunate he was willing to bring his film debut to Florence."

Florence and Astoria are his only Coastal stops in a Northwest tour for the documentary.

"After the free movie showing, Jeff will conduct a Q-and-A and then 'mingle' with the audience," Dawson said. "Many American media commentators, such as Robert McChesney, have significant regard for his work, describing Cohen as 'perhaps the country's foremost progressive media scholar.'"

The film, which Hollywood Reporter calls: "A horror film of the most realistic kind," depicts Trump as a symptom of corporatism.

Featured analysts include Chris Hedges, Cornel West, Sarah Jaffe and John Ralston Saul.

The movie attempts to examine how America "arrived at Trump." It interviews union workers in Ohio who'd voted for Obama and Bernie Sanders and then flipped to Trump. The film moves through a variety of possible con-

nections to a changing U.S. politics while asking, "What is the influence of the large corporations?"

Local event organizers refer to themselves as "Florence Friends For Independent Media" and have had connections to U.S. media in many forms.

One organizer, Tom McSweeney, describes himself as a "Child of the '60s," and said, "I started out as a singer-songwriter and saw the early demonstrations that helped raise awareness. I've seen how media is changing. Now, more than ever, we need political process with integrity — and for that we need good media. This is why I volunteer and support our local non-commercial community station, KXCR (FM 90.7). Cohen embodies that effort."

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