

BCA Dispatch

Newsletter of the **Boston-Cambridge Alliance for Democracy** November 2002

Some time ago Brazil's president-elect "Lula" da Silva characterized the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) as a "type of economic annexation of Latin America by the US."

Subsequently US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick warned that "Brazil's choice was either to trade with FTAA or with Antarctica."

This created an uproar in Brazil, to which Lula replied, "We have a number of things to settle with Comrade Bush."

—Walden Bello, 10/24/02, www.focusweb.org

ALLIANCE NEWS

Chapter Calendar (Continued on page 8)

The Boston-Cambridge Alliance for Democracy's next meeting will be on **Wednesday, November 20**, from **7:00 to 9:15 p.m.** at **Cambridge Friends Meeting**, 5 Longfellow Park (9 min. walk from Harvard Square T station, west on Brattle St.)

❶ What "democracy" does AfD stand for? How can we link with labor and unions? Discuss "**Labor and Community**" with **Russ Davis**, director of Boston's Jobs with Justice.

❷ Fight privatization of our water, schools, etc. We are forming a regional committee to **ensure our commons**, with water as #1 project, e.g., in Lawrence, Vivendi threat to privatize water.

→ **Steering Committee—Wed., Nov. 27, 5:30. 271 Dartmouth St., Boston 02116. All members invited. Call 617-266-8687.**

Who Beat Wellstone's Ghost? Coleman—Hollow Man—Will Not Last

by **Garrison Keillor**, on www.salon.com

Norm Coleman won Minnesota because he was well-financed and well-packaged. Norm is a slick retail campaigner, the grabbiest and touchiest and feelingest politician in Minnesota history, a hugger and baby-kisser, and he's a genuine boomer candidate who reinvents himself at will.

The guy is a Brooklyn boy who became a left-wing student radical at Hofstra University with hair down to his shoulders, organized antiwar marches, said vile things about Richard Nixon, etc. Then he came west, went to law school, changed his look, went to work in the attorney general's office in Minnesota. Was elected mayor of St. Paul as a moderate Democrat, then swung comfortably over to the Republican side. There was no dazzling light on the road to Damascus, no soul-searching: Norm switched parties as you'd change sport coats.

Norm is glib. I once organized a dinner at the Minnesota Club to celebrate [native son] F. Scott Fitzgerald's birthday and Norm came, at the suggestion (Continued on page 6 >>)



Lula hugs wife Marisa after election

Photo: Reuters

Lula Wins Presidency Brazil Wants a New Deal

by **Mark Weisbrot**, *Los Angeles Times*, 1 November 2002

Last Sunday's election in Brazil should send a message to Washington's economists and policymakers that their prescriptions for economic progress are no longer viable. But these people are slow learners.

The conventional wisdom among economists is that Brazil faces a grave danger: that the Workers' Party government of the victorious Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva might deviate from the orthodox economic policies of the past, causing a financial and economic disaster. Most of the financial news reporting in the near future will center on whether Lula can gain the trust of the financial markets by convincing them that he will continue the economic policies of his predecessor.

But this stands the world on its head. It is the current set of economic policies that have directly caused Brazil's current problems. Over the last eight years of the administration of Fernando Henrique Cardoso, Brazil's public debt swelled from 29% to more than 62% of gross domestic product. This is mostly because of very high interest rates: The average after-inflation rate of interest on the public debt has been more than 16% annually. This rate of debt accumulation is not sustainable; either interest rates will have to come down or the government will have to renegotiate its debt.

But the economists of the

(Continued on page 6 >>)

Mutual Education

Listening to Middle America

On election night I went to bed unhappy. In the morning the bad news became evident—Republican gains were sufficient to control the Senate as well as the House, and the unelected president was rewarded for his tough campaigning. "Tough" is in. I don't hear any of his dyslectic goofs anymore. We all live in Texas now and this desperado organizes the posses to go after the disappearing lone rangers or bad guys—no difference. Us homesteaders just stay put while corporate lawyers fill the federal benches.

I felt guilty, like a tattle-tale, for letting fear of Romney get the better of me and switching my vote, at the last minute, from Green Jill Stein to Democrat hack Shannon O'Brien for governor. Ironically, several evenings later I had the bonding experience of conversing with Jill and six others in Pat McSweeney's Taunton living room. There was no such fear attached to writing in Peace-Dem Randall Forsberg for US Senate—Kerry would win anyhow. Pending the official count, they say she copped 20,000 votes from him or from "blank".

Late that day I had a period of sober reflection, which I trust more than my fears or old prejudices, for illuminating the path ahead. *"We must listen to ordinary GOP and independent voters. And they must listen to us."*

Is it all corporate media? Is it all corporate money in politics? Is it all Democratic tweedledumness? Is it all induced war fever? Is it all rigged voting processes? Are all Republican voters narrow-minded or confused? Does everyone believe that America = democracy + compassion, if not competitiveness + kicking ass? What philosophies explain low turnout and GOP victories? And how pliant are those philosophies?

There's no doubt that corporate media, docile journalists, and White House media manipulation are indispensable to GOP victories. And there is some truth to some of the other indictments. But we must not be blinded by pride and fear—pride in our long-held progressive beliefs or transformational dreams, and fear of honest and open dialogue with our conservative brothers and sisters.

Many of us have not been resourceful, or even responsive, to opportunities to dialog with these folks. Our in-laws are limited, we don't go to their churches, we don't belong to a lodge or country club, we would be unwelcome at local Republican ward meetings and uncomfortable at the Chamber of Commerce. Or would we? What if we went in pairs? What if we brought little gifts? What if we just asked questions?

What if we started by just inventorying our experiences with conservatives, to see how extensive and persistent they are or could be? And the content—what are the sticky issues that could go either way? Like "competition" and "tough love"? Is there an "American" philosophy which we share? Do we share concerns about the machinery of government, the legality of big political donations, the mindlessness of the military, the banality of TV, the magic of money?

And dare we sit (over food) with young people cynical about government or (libertarians) striving to look like political sophisticates? Dare we sit, without sports knowledge, with Joe Six-pack and his buddies, union or otherwise, without condescend-

ing? These folks are not typical voters. They could turn the tide. But only if we are willing to engage them.

To prepare ourselves we must organize serious workshops. We need to develop valid visions, and valid roles for everyone who would work with us for a better America and a better world.



On 27 September at the CPPAX convention in Boston, 92-year old cross-country walker-for-campaign-finance-reform Doris "Granny D" Haddock said much the same, only more eloquently:

...Pull any contractor out of his white pickup truck, turn down the talk radio blaring from it, and ask him, "Government good, or government bad?"

His glazed eyes will widen. "Government bad!" he will say. OK, good. You found one to play with.

Now, ask him what the town might do to make it safer for kids to get to and from school, and around town when they're not in school, without getting killed by traffic or getting in trouble. He will have a million ideas. Good ideas. He has no clue that he is being government — if government is what happens when we get together to solve our common problems and to make life better for our communities.

You have broken his trance.

When a proposition is on the ballot, people talk about the mechanics of the idea, and the hypnosis is largely circumvented. You see quite progressive ballot propositions passing in otherwise quite unprogressive states. Why? Because people are problem-solvers at heart, and they enjoy it. They want to participate and be helpful and accepted as valuable players. It takes a lot of hypnosis to overcome that instinct, and a lot of hypnosis is what we have had. But we can get around it...

We should start with our younger people. As community leaders, we should work with the popular history and civics teachers in our high schools to bring the issues of the day and the issues of the town into the classroom — not to propagandize but to openly invite students to learn, research, and offer advice to the community on a wide range of issues. This is where the hypnosis falls apart. This is where democracy finds its feet again.

This summer I asked America's independent community radio stations to get involved with those same teachers in our high schools, to make students into community reporters and commentators. I reminded these indy news stations that they have the technology and the dramatic missions young people crave. I said young people will never become robots if they are enlisted in the cause of truth at an early age.

What we do in schools, we must also do in colleges and then in the general community. But if we only have the means to focus on the high schools, that is enough. These young people will be voting in only a few years. If we support their increased civic engagement as they move through college and into the community, we will have raised an army of citizens immunized against corporate hypnosis. Our victories for needed reforms will come naturally...

Check Granny D's web site at www.GrannyD.com, and read this whole speech at www.alternet.org/stuff/grannydm.jpg. You'll be glad you did!

Worldwide, Millions March Against War We're With Them—They're With Us

In eastern Massachusetts on 24 October (U.N. Day) an intrepid band of two dozen peace advocates pulled and pushed a wagon twenty miles from the Peace Abbey in Sherborn to the State House in Boston, while more than 100 others marched behind—for several miles at least—with anti-war placards and flags. The wagon contained a heavy granite stone engraved "to the victims of violence", and six or eight artificial limbs representing the fate of hundreds of thousands of children maimed by land-mines.

On 26 October about 150,000 war protesters including many Alliance members massed on the grass near the Vietnam War Memorial in Washington DC to hear many anti-war speakers such



as Jesse Jackson, Ramsey Clark, Cynthia McKinney, Ben Cohen, Al Sharpton, and Susan Sarandon, and march several miles in a wide perimeter around the White House. The march was good-spirited and peaceful, with thousands of banners, flags, and homemade placards. It was the biggest peace march in the U.S. since Vietnam days.

On the same weekend, huge numbers also marched in major European cities, Tokyo, San Juan, San Francisco and Manila, and some even in Ankara. Popular reception was enthusiastic—no serious violence was reported... Then on 3 November 15,000 gathered at the bandstand on the Boston Common for speeches and marched several miles in the South End and Back Bay.

If there are large numbers of people eager for war on Iraq, where are they? —Ed.

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by Luke Baker, Reuters, 9 November 02

FLORENCE, Italy - More than half a million anti-war protesters from across Europe marched through this Italian Renaissance city on Saturday in a loud and colorful demonstration denouncing any possible U.S. attack on Iraq.

Brimming with anti-American feelings and riled by a tough new U.N. resolution to disarm Iraq, young and old activists from as far afield as Russia and Portugal joined forces for the carnival-like rally, singing 1970s peace songs. "Take your war and go to hell," read one banner, in a forest of multi-colored and multi-lingual placards. "Drop Bush, not Bombs" read another. Some placards depicted President Bush as Hitler and Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi as Mussolini.

Organizers said the rally, planned months ago, gained added relevance by Friday's U.N. Security Council resolution which gave Iraq a last chance to disarm or face almost certain war.

The protest, involving children as well as grandmothers, marked the climax of the first European Social Forum, a four-day meeting of anti-globalization campaigners from all over Europe.

Delegates discussed topics from debt-reduction to support for the Palestinian uprising against Israeli occupation.

Florence has been virtually shut down for the November 6-10 period, with the State Department advising its citizens to steer clear of Italy's art capital over concerns that violent, anarchist groups might infiltrate the demonstration.

Authorities estimated that some 450,000 protesters flooded Florence's streets for the march on a chilly autumn afternoon. But by dusk, the crowd had swelled to over half a million, many of them arriving on specially chartered trains and buses. Organizers estimated the gathering at around one million, making it one of Italy's biggest ever anti-war rallies. Despite the large crowds, the march was largely peaceful and no incidents were reported. "The atmosphere here is wonderful. Absolutely perfect. It shows that a new young left is emerging," said Stavros Valsamis, a 27-year-old Greek activist from Athens. Children climbed on their parents' shoulders to get a view of the sea of crowds marching along the seven-km (4.5-miles) route. Many clapped as marchers passed by. The march was bigger than a protest at a G8 summit in Genoa last year, when 300,000 demonstrators took to the streets and an orgy of violence left one protester dead and hundreds injured. Some 7,000 police officers were on call but security forces kept a low profile along the rally's route. No incidents were reported. The rest of Florence was a ghost town with most shops in the art-rich



Demonstrators in Madrid, 27 October Reuters photo: Andrea Comas
historical center pulling down the shutters for fear of vandals. However, the city's famed museums remained open and offered free entry to the few tourists around.

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Many Florence residents deserted the city for the four days of the forum, prompting criticism from those who stayed behind. I'm really disappointed by my fellow Florentines—it really shows very little faith. This whole event has been very calm, in fact the city has been much calmer and friendlier than usual," said housewife Maria Briccoli, 37. As well as university-age students, older political activists and thousands of trades unionists, Saturday's throng also included Italian World War II partisans and a U.S. Vietnam war veteran who marched in the first row of the crowd.

While Friday's U.N. resolution gives the Security Council a central role in assessing the new arms' inspection program for Iraq, it does not require the United States to seek U.N. authorization for war in case of violations. "I think it's a scandalous resolution," said Sean Murray, 29, a member of Workers' Revolution. "It proves once more that the U.N. is a puppet of America, Britain and France." ■

U.S. Military Training and Violence America—Rambo or Jesus?

Sean Gonsalves, Seattle Post-Intelligencer, 29 Oct

Given the circumstantial evidence we've all heard or read about in the arrest of the Persian Gulf War vet John Allen Muhammad and his "stepson" John Lee Malvo in connection with the maniacal sniper killings, we apparently are faced with yet another tragic case of chickens coming home to roost.

Although most combat veterans don't turn into sociopaths upon completion of their tour of duty, I'd be a fool to think military training doesn't come with terrible psychological consequences for the combat survivor and harmful social consequences for the rest of us.

The Science of Creating Killers

Ever since I was a kid, I've been extremely concerned about the violence in the world around me. That, coupled with heavy doses of Jesus, Martin Luther King Jr. and Gandhi studies, has made me try to penetrate the mysteries of peace of security virtually all my life. My study was aided by a book called *On Killing*, written by retired Lt. Col. Dave Grossman, a former Army Airborne Ranger infantry officer and West Point Academy psychology and military science professor.

The book was a Pulitzer Prize nominee and is required reading at West Point, the U.S. Air Force Academy and in peace studies programs in colleges and universities across the country. Grossman, a scholar, lecturer and author, is considered to be one of the world's foremost authorities on the roots of violence and violent crime. He is also the director of the Killology Research Group, whose mission is to highlight "the psychological cost of learning to kill" (see www.killology.com).

The other day I came across a news account of a talk he gave in April 2001 in which he described the four "killing enabling methods" used by the military that are mirrored in our mass media today—brutalization, classical conditioning, operant conditioning and role models. He said brutalization and classical conditioning methods assaulting American minds everywhere are most evident in action-adventure movies where a horrible act is followed not by a quest for justice but for vengeance—"the evildoer's death."

"The people who do just want justice are seen as wishy-washy. They're just in the way," he said, exposing the foolishness of war

hawks and their verbal attacks against so-called peaceniks and appeasers. "The result is we have become a nation full of people who are going to make others feel their pain. Whenever you feed death and violence and destruction to your children, you reap what you sow in about 15 years," he added. This all swirls through my head when thinking about the sick heart-mind of the sniper and another Persian Gulf War vet Timothy McVeigh, who referred to his victims as "collateral damage."

When Colin Powell, a good and intelligent military leader by most accounts, was asked about the death toll of Iraqis following the Gulf War, he responded: "It's not a number I'm particularly interested in." Of course, Powell isn't even in the same category as McVeigh or the sniper. But to talk about these things in terms of "good guys" and "bad guys" is clearly overly simplistic. We're dealing with something much deeper here.

When You Pray for Peace

Now, let's consider Sisters Jackie Hudson, Carol Gilbert and Ardeth Platte — nuns affiliated with a peace group called Plowshares. Last week, they were arraigned in a federal courthouse in Denver, charged with obstruction of the national defense of the United States and injury of property of the United States. These are the same charges that Osama bin Laden and his cohorts were charged with in connection to the embassy bombings in Kenya a few years ago. Their crime? Recognizing that while wealth doesn't always trickle down as supply-side economists suppose, values certainly do. So the sisters took a pair of bolt cutters, cut through the fence of a missile silo in Well County, Colo., poured some of their own blood on top of the silo as a dramatic reminder of what these weapons are used for, and then prayed until they were arrested.

Facing a possible 30 years in prison for their non-violent direct action, they refused an offer to be released on personal recognizance because the bond requires them not to participate in any further demonstrations. As a matter of conscience, they couldn't accept the offer. I spoke to former priest Bill Sulzman who knows these peaceful women well. "These are very religious women," he told me.

A pretrial conference is set for Dec. 13. A support rally for them is being held in front of the Georgetown, Colo., jail on Nov. 10. It strikes me that there are only two kinds of religion in this world today — the religion of violence and the religion of non-violence. Which religion do you adhere to? ■



Washington crowd makes way for Bread & Puppet pantomime

Read more about *killology* in "A Bulletproof Mind" by Peter Maass in the *New York Times Magazine* for 10 November 2002.

ALEXANDER COCKBURN

Blowback: From Unruh to Muhammad

America is living in the blowback years. What goes around comes around. Unforeseen consequences, or consequences foreseen but discounted. Unleash the mujahedeen on the Soviets in Afghanistan, and you get Osama bin Laden. Blowback usually comes as a shock, because the art of politics is to separate actions from consequences.

A nation always on the war path means a nation always under arms, a nation to which war is always coming home. A minority of the homecomers arrive in the form of psychically maimed people, violence-prone drunks, domestic abusers, drug addicts, basket cases.

This summer, before Muhammad and Malvo embarked on their lethal jaunts, the whole issue of Wars Coming Home had turned red hot with the murders and suicides in North Carolina's Fort Bragg, a vast military base and home to the elite Special Forces.

On June 11 Sgt. Rigoberto Nieves, 32, of the 3rd Special Forces Group, shot his 28-year-old wife, Teresa, and then himself, in their bedroom, as Teresa's sister and other relatives sat downstairs. He had returned from Afghanistan two days earlier, having requested leave to resolve "personal issues." On June 29 Jennifer Wright was strangled by her husband, William. The 36-year-old Green Beret confessed to the killing three weeks later.

On July 9 Sgt. Cedric Griffin, 28, of the 37th Engineer Battalion at Fort Bragg, was arrested after stabbing his wife, Marilyn, more than fifty times before setting her body on fire. The couple had been married for eight years but had recently separated. Sgt. Brandon Floyd was a member of the Delta Force, a champion triathlete. He'd just come back from Afghanistan. On July 19, amid a domestic quarrel, Floyd shot his wife, Andrea, in the head. Then he put the barrel inside his mouth and blew the top of his head off.

On July 23 in Fayetteville, the support town for Fort Bragg, Joan Shannon killed her husband, Maj. David Shannon, part of the Special Operations Command. The 40-year-old was shot in the head and chest while sleeping in his bed.

A common theme of the few good news stories on this issue cites wives complaining of the great difficulty in getting any help in dealing with a violent, maybe homicidal, husband. Analisa Nazareno had a harrowing account this month in the *San Antonio Express-News* about Rhonda Pion, terrified of her husband, legally blind and therefore unable to drive away from Fort Sam Houston, an army base there. Rules required that Pion seek permission from her husband's commanding officer to get a protective order from the military judge advocate general's office. As one victim's advocate said, "It's like having to go to your father-in-law and asking him for permission to protect yourself from his son." Ultimately Pion fled to a relative in Louisiana.

Maj. Gen. Robert Clark is having trouble getting his third star because he's accused of not doing enough to deal with domestic and antigay violence when he was commanding officer at Fort



Campbell, in Kentucky. In 1999 Pvt. Barry Winchell was beaten to death there. In addition to Winchell's murder, there were four homicides related to domestic violence while Clark was in charge. Kathy Spence, the mother of one victim, LaRonda Spence, said her daughter complained at least thirty times to her husband's superiors about his abuse, but they did nothing. "How can you promote someone who is supposed to protect the country when they can't even protect our daughters?" Spence asked Ron Martz, a reporter from the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*.

Congress established a Defense Department task force in 1999 after findings showed that the rate of domestic violence in the military had risen by more than a third, to 25.6 per 1,000 soldiers in 1996 from 18.6 per 1,000 in 1990. At the time, domestic violence rates were dropping among the general population. In that six-year period there were 61,000 cases of military spouses suffering domestic violence, five times higher than the number in the civilian population. In the year 2000, 12,068 cases of spousal abuse were reported to the military's Family Advocacy Program. There were eight deaths that year—all women, and all involving domestic violence. The military is desperate to bury the stats, but it's clear that most abusers get away with it.

Special Forces soldiers, at hairtrigger readiness to kill, can be away for up to ten months a year. A Green Beret with five to seven years' experience earns \$25,000. Each partner in this financially stressed duo worries, often with reason, that the other is fooling around.

The two best recent stories on the Fort Bragg killings have, maybe unsurprisingly, appeared outside this country, which most recently hosted a bland piece of Army PR in *USA Today*, by Dave Moniz. Tim Reid, always a good reporter, had a fine piece in the *London Times*, as did Doug Saunders in the *Toronto Globe and Mail*. Saunders quotes David Grossman, a former US military psychologist who helped develop programs to make new recruits more effective killers, to increase what's called the "trigger-pull ratio." These programs are now part of basic training. Grossman says that the trick is to break down the natural human aversion to killing. He calls this "disengagement." Once this aversion has been removed, it never comes back, and can make it easier for former soldiers to become murderers. "The ability to watch a human being's head explode and to do it again and again—that takes a kind of desensitization to human suffering that has to be learned," Grossman said. Don't blame Charlton Heston. The US military is the chief sponsor of violence in this country.

One day in 1949 Howard Unruh, a 28-year-old World War II veteran, shot thirteen of his New Jersey neighbors. His famous line was, "I'd have killed a thousand if I'd had enough bullets." His military firearms training made his "walk of death" the first modern serial-killer case. From Unruh to Muhammad. Millions have been molded in this manner. Blowback is the consequence. It will be with us as long as the Empire needs war as its guarantor. ■

of his office, and spoke, at some length and with quite some fervor, about how much Fitzgerald means to all of us in St. Paul, and it was soon clear to anyone who has ever graded 9th grade book reports that the mayor had never read Fitzgerald. Nonetheless, he spoke at great length, with great feeling. Last month, when Bush came to sprinkle water on his campaign, Norm introduced him by saying, "God bless America is a prayer, and I believe that this man is God's answer to that prayer." Same guy.

(Jesse Ventura, of course, wouldn't have been caught dead blathering at an F. Scott Fitzgerald dinner about how proud we are of the Great Whoever-He-Was and his vision and his dream blah-blah-blah, and that was the refreshing thing about Jesse. The sort of unctuous hooey that comes naturally and easily to Norm Coleman Jesse would be ashamed to utter in public. Give the man his due. He spoke English. He didn't open his mouth and emit soap bubbles. He was no suck up. He had more dignity than to kiss the president's shoe.)

Norm got a free ride from the press. St. Paul is a small town and anybody who hangs around the St. Paul Grill knows about Norm's habits. Everyone knows that his family situation is, shall we say, very interesting, but nobody bothered to ask about it, least of all the religious people in the Republican Party. They made their peace with hypocrisy long ago. So this false knight made his way as an all-purpose feel-good candidate, standing for vaguely Republican values, supporting the president.

He was 9 points down to Wellstone when the senator's plane went down. But the tide was swinging toward the president in those last 10 days. And Norm rode the tide. Mondale took a little while to get a campaign going. And Norm finessed Wellstone's death beautifully. The Democrats stood up in raw grief and yelled and shook their fists and offended people. Norm played his violin. He sorrowed well in public, he was expertly nuanced. The mostly negative campaign he ran against Wellstone was forgotten immediately. He backpedaled in the one debate, cruised home a victor. It was a dreadful low moment for the Minnesota voters. To choose Coleman over Walter Mondale is one of those dumb low-rent mistakes, like going to a great steakhouse and ordering the tuna sandwich. But I don't envy someone who's sold his soul.

He's condemned to a life of small arrangements. There will be no passion, no joy, no heroism, for him. He is a hollow man. The next six years are not going to be kind to Norm.

Community Service Story



An old man lived alone in Maine. He wanted to spade his potato garden, but it was very hard work. His only son, who would have helped him, was in prison. The old man wrote a letter to his son and mentioned his predicament--

Dear Son,

I am feelin' pretty bad, because it looks like I won't be able to plant my potato garden this year. I hate to miss doin' the garden, because your mother always ays loved plantin' time. I'm just gettin' too old to be diggin' up a garden plot. If you were here, all my troubles would be over. I know you would dig the plot for me, if you weren't in prison.

—Love, Dad

International Monetary Fund, who came through in September with a \$30-billion loan package, have not offered assistance for either strategy. Instead, they have used this loan to try to lock Brazil into the same high-interest-rate, budget-austerity, low-growth policies of the past. The short-term rate set by Brazil's Central Bank is 21%, one of the highest in the world. Imagine if our own Federal Reserve set interest rates that high instead of the current 1.75%; nobody would be able to afford a home mortgage loan.

Brazil used to have one of the fastest-growing economies in the world: From 1960 to 1980, its income per person grew by 141%. Since 1980 it has hardly grown at all. Over the last eight years, income per person has grown about a modest 1.3% annually, and the economy has accumulated a high level of foreign debt in addition to the public debt buildup. The \$100 billion in privatizations over the last eight years have not seemed to help Brazil with its debt or with economic growth.

What is true for the Brazilian economy also is true for the Latin American region as a whole. It is one thing for a regional economy to undergo a cyclical downturn; it is quite rare, in modern economic history, for the average person to be no better off—and, given changes in Latin America's distribution of income and wealth, probably worse off -- than he was two decades earlier.

One would think that a prolonged economic failure of this magnitude might cause its architects to reconsider their policy prescriptions. There could be a healthy debate about what has gone wrong and what policies need to be changed. Yet there has been very little of that within the IMF, which is the leader among policymaking institutions, or within the economics profession. Rather, the great fear among economists, echoed on Wall Street and in most of the media, is that Brazil and Latin America will abandon the "free-market" policies adopted over the last 20 years, including the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas.

In 1932, during the Great Depression, the American electorate overrode the business community and the economics profession by choosing Franklin D. Roosevelt as president. The Brazilians now have demanded a New Deal for their own country of 175 million people. Other countries are likely to follow.

The IMF and the U.S. government should step back and not interfere rather than try to defend the economic orthodoxy that has put Brazil into its two-decade-long slump.

Mark Weisbrot is co-director of the Center for Economic and Policy Research in Washington.

Shortly, the old man received this telegram:

"For HEAVEN'S SAKE, Dad, don't dig up the garden! That's where I buried the GUNS!"

At 4 A.M. the next morning, a dozen FBI agents and local police officers showed up and dug up the entire area without finding any guns. Confused, the old man wrote another note to his son telling him what happened, and asking him what to do next. His son's reply was, *"Go ahead and plant your potatoes, Dad. It's the best I could do for you at this time."*

—(Folk e-mail, forwarded by Gayle E Harvey, Utica, N.Y.)

"Giovinezza, Giovinezza ... Il Fascismo è la Salvezza della Nòstra Libertà!"*

*Italian Fascist Youth Song, 1922-44:

"Youth, Youth... Fascism is the salvation of our liberty!"

(from)

Rod Paige, Secretary of Education
and Donald H. Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense 9 Oct 2002

Dear Colleague:

For more than 25 years, the Armed Forces of our Nation have been staffed entirely by volunteers. The All-Volunteer Force has come to represent American resolve to defend freedom and protect liberty around the world. Sustaining that heritage requires the active support of public institutions in presenting military opportunities to our young people for their consideration.

Recognizing the challenges faced by military recruiters, Congress recently passed legislation that requires high schools to provide to military recruiters, upon request, access to secondary school students and directory information on those students. Both the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002 reflect these requirements.

In accordance with those Acts, military recruiters are entitled [*interesting choice of words*]* to receive the name, address, and telephone listing of juniors and seniors in high school. As clarified in the enclosure, providing this information is consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, which protects the privacy of student education records. [*Oh really? From the department of education website: "Both laws override any previous restrictions found in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act about disclosing student information to military recruiters."*] Student directory information will be used specifically for armed services recruiting purposes and for informing young people of scholarship opportunities. For some of our students, this may be the best opportunity they have to get a college education. [*YIKES!*]

The support by our Nation's educational institutions on behalf of the U.S. Armed Forces is critical to the success of the All-Volunteer Force. It can be, and should be, a partnership that benefits everyone. As veterans, and as Cabinet Members serving the President, we can attest to the excellent educational opportunities the military affords, as well as an environment that encourages the development of strong character and leadership skills. [*double yikes!*]

The Department of Education and Department of Defense have worked together to provide you the enclosed guidelines for compliance with these new laws. We encourage you to examine the enclosed information carefully and to work closely with military recruiters as they carry out their important public responsibilities. ♣

It is an immoral outrage to dangle a college education in front of poor or disadvantaged children and it is an outright lie to say that the military presents the best opportunity for them to acquire

*one! All political issues aside, it is absolutely not the best opportunity for any student to obtain a college education. You know what? I couldn't afford to send my kids to college either, but they managed to attend some of the finest liberal arts schools in the nation. They did so through federal loan programs, federal work study, scholarships, generous grants from schools that knew they couldn't be there otherwise, and summer jobs. Thanks to Bill Clinton, we were able to get tax credit on the meager funds we were able to contribute to the effort. Had I been a less informed parent or one who just didn't happen to be blessed with some semblance of intelligence, I might have believed this...well, bullshit, for lack of a better word. Donald Rumsfeld is marching poor, minority, inner city and rural children whose educations have been disadvantaged from the get go, off to war so that his grandchildren might be free to attend Harvard. No, make that Falwell's Liberty University.**

*Note: Remarks in italics are by a mother in Ohio. Special thanks to Pat McSweeney. See U.S. government posting at www.ed.gov/PressReleases/10-2002/recruitingletter.html.

ACTION ALERTS

CITIZENS MEDIA CORP / ALLSTON-BRIGHTON FREE RADIO

Annual Meeting--Monday, 18 Nov.

Featured speaker: **Peter Miller**, director, CTC VISTA Project at UMass/Boston College of Public and Community Service, which helps to support recruitment, placement, and support of AmeriCorps*VISTA members in community technology centers. Supper 6:30, meeting 7-8:30. St. Elizabeth's Medical Ctr., Seaton Aud., Cambridge St., Brighton.

INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL THEATER

Tuesday, 19 Nov, 7:30-9:30. **Class Acts Theater Troupe** creates guerilla art, pushes limits, and works as part of a broader movement for social change. This is New Member night--Intro to the group, participation, games, activities, fun. Porter Exchange Bldg., 1815 Mass Av (in Porter Square), Room 403. Info: call Laura at 617-354-5455 or Matt at 617-482-4471 x23.

WATER PRIVATIZATION WATCH -- ENSURING OUR COMMONS:

Thursday, 19 Nov., morning and evening meetings:

(1) 10 a.m. **Commons** overview planning, forums, etc.

AfD new office, 760 Main St., Waltham MA. Call Nick Biddle at 781-894-1179 or Cynthia Ritsher at 781-259-8104.

(2) 7:30 pm. **Water Watch** committee planning local councils. At Lynn Gargill's, 324 Hemlock Circle, Lincoln, 781-259-1173. Call for info or ride.

COLOPHON

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LOCAL/REGIONAL ALLIANCE NEWS

WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON IN IRAQ? To give us their media-unfiltered views BCA was fortunate enough to have three guests who have had direct experience there.

At our meeting of 16 October **Tom Gale** of the Samantha Smith chapter of Veterans for Peace, in Ipswich MA, told of VFP's project to help Iraqis rebuild their war-ruined drinking-water purification system. The US and British air forces have killed an estimated half-million Iraqi children—dead from preventable water-borne diseases—since bombings and sanctions began in 1991, by deliberately destroying and refusing to rebuild water systems. VFP raised \$35,000 which they sent to a Muslim group to start with. Subsequently they raised \$125,000 for four water treatment plants in Basra (in the southern "no-fly" zone) and 12 Vets traveled there earlier this year for ten days of manual repair work, visiting hospitals and schools, and talking with people about the impacts of sanctions. Most were very friendly—"no one approached us in anger."

George Capaccio, also of Veterans for Peace, has visited Iraq many times "because my [adopted] family is under the gun." After the 1991 Gulf War the US induced the United Nations to place a severe embargo on Iraq, allowing only "food for oil"—oil accounts for 70 percent of Iraq's exports; another is dates. The total amounts to only \$10 or 11 billion over ten years, of which 5.5 billion is held in escrow because the US and Britain judge that much in desired imports as "dual use"—civilian products with possible military use, such as French ambulances whose vacuum flasks might have military use (eventually released). Water, sewer, and electrical parts have been held up. Imported food lacks basic nutrients—for example, women are more susceptible to disease due to lack of iron in their diets. Depleted uranium, used extensively by US forces, has sickened millions, and cancers now killing 95% of child patients, up from 40%. Except for those reserved for the Iraqi elite, hospitals are miserably under-equipped and under-supplied.

Mohamed Ahmed, a native Iraqi Kurd now retired in Sharon MA, migrated to the US decades ago and became a UN development specialist. He returned to Kurdish (northern no-fly zone) Iraq in 1992-4 to see a great improvement in conditions compared to the 50-70 years preceding, including but also preceding Saddam's regime—child mortality is down, and formal democracy with 20 political parties up. Saddam's treatment of the Kurds was nearly genocidal, killing 5000 with chemical bombing and driving others in to the mountains to freeze. Mr. Ahmed confirmed the remarks of Tom Gale and George Capaccio, and held that the Gulf War punished the people of Iraq, not Saddam. He is convinced that the US government wants war regardless of weapons inspections.

Arthur Holcombe, a UN colleague of Ahmed's and now president of the UN Association of Greater Boston, also attended and said that a war against Iraq would divert energy from the Pakistan nuclear threat and the Israel/Palestine disaster.

Anwar Kazmi, a Pakistani-American who shared views with BCA just after 9/11, believes that US right wingers want to re-colonize and redivide the Middle East. There is little sympathy for Saddam anywhere in the Muslim world, but they hate the United States even more—the US which under the spell of "dual use" notions bars chlorine for purifying Iraqi water and graphite for Iraqi pencils. He is afraid that the US will pressure

Indonesia—far from the Arab world—to crack down on "terrorists", leading people there to perceive prime minister Megawati Sukarno as a puppet of the West. US "asymmetric warfare"—attacking much weaker nations—will make Samuel Huntington's "clash of civilizations" notion a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Still, negative feeling toward Saddam can be extreme especially among Kurds. Toward the end of our discussion American-born Mrs. Shirley Ahmad could see no way short of war against Iraq in order to end the Pan-Arabist/Saddam regime. The "collateral damage" to millions would be classically tragic.

But are there less catastrophic ways to peace? We await your proposals.

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WATER-WATCH COUNCILS: BCA JOINS REGIONAL EFFORT

Joanna Herlihy, Jed Schwartz, and Dave Lewit have become active in the struggle of many Alliance members to prevent mega-corporate takeovers of public water resources and facilities. A group of 8-10 has been meeting (twice) in the North Bridge area, with Joanna and Dave carpooling to get there. Having visited Nottingham and Barrington NH more than once with AfD executive coordinator **Nick Biddle**, the group is turning to Massachusetts, proposing to involve citizens in towns all over the state in "water-watch" councils to study their local water politics, and take appropriate measures to safeguard the public trust—the commons. Acting chairperson **Carl Whitman** of Framingham and Dave Lewit have volunteered to study the new threat of water privatization in Lawrence MA, going there on 14 November to meet with Lawrence Grassroots Initiative's **Tennis Lilly**. We expect the BCA December meeting to focus on this project. Meanwhile, at **Cynthia Ritscher's** suggestion, she and Joanna and Dave are forming a subcommittee to stimulate public interest in protecting the commons—all such resources and institutions—through a series of co-sponsored forums. All BCA members should consider joining in this regional effort. The next water committee meeting will be at 7:30 p.m. on 21 November at **Lynn Gargill's** home in Lincoln—phone her at 781-259-1173 or Dave at 617-266-8687 for rides.



JOIN THE BCA

Please help us as we fight to make a better future for ourselves and our children — Join the Boston/Cambridge Alliance for Democracy. (Cut out this form and send it to David Lewit at 271 Dartmouth Street, Boston, MA 02116.)

BOSTON-CAMBRIDGE ALLIANCE FOR DEMOCRACY PLEDGE

- ___ \$26/Year - "Count me in!"
- ___ \$52/Year - "Sustainer" (We need to average this amount.)
- ___ \$104/Year - "Contributor" (Helping us thrive.)
- ___ \$208/Year - "Community Steward"
- ___ \$520/Year - "Realize the Vision"
- ___ \$_____ - What's fair for YOU?

Name : _____ Date: _____

Street No./Box/Apt: _____

Town and Zip: _____

Phone (night): _____

Phone (day): _____

E-mail: _____