

# BCA Dispatch

Newsletter of the **Boston-Cambridge Alliance for Democracy** **October 2005**

*The atom bomb brought an empty victory to the Allied armies, but it resulted for the time being in the soul of Japan being destroyed. What has happened to the soul of the destroying nation is yet too early to see.*  
—Gandhi, 1945

## CHAPTER NEWS (Continued on Page 6)

### Chapter Calendar

#### \*\* Argentina: Folks Take Charge \*\*

The Boston-Cambridge Alliance for Democracy's next meeting will be on **Wednesday, October 19 at 7:00 p.m.** at **Cambridge Friends Meeting**, 5 Longfellow Park (9-minute walk from Harvard Square west on Brattle St.), Cambridge.

If we play with our own fire (like IMF, World Bank), we might get burned like we burned the Argentinians a few years ago. This video, "**Argentina: Hope In Hard Times**", shows—up close—how street crowds shaped themselves into neighborhood assemblies, and how abandoned workers took over their factories, and ran them at good profit... So if we in the USA crash, can we learn bottom-up organizing from the Argentinians? Join the showing and discussion.

*Next month's meeting will feature a speaker to discuss the 2006 World Social Forum (in Caracas) and the big shift toward human welfare in Venezuela—also encouraging.*

--- Refreshments ---

## Endangered Species Act Endangered To Prevent Gutting, Senators Need Your Say

by Brad Knickerbocker, *Christian Science Monitor*, 6 Oct 2005

**T**he Endangered Species Act—the nation's premier environmental law affecting thousands of plants and animals and many times that many landowners—is poised to undergo its greatest shake-up since Richard Nixon signed it 32 years ago.

The House has passed legislation that changes several fundamental elements of the law, including protection of critical wildlife habitat and the financial rights of property owners. Whether similar legislation passes in the Senate—a large question at this point—it illustrates a deep and growing regional divide over fundamental environmental protections.

In general, ranchers, farmers, and others in the rural West (and their champions in Congress) want to make laws like those protecting endangered species far less restrictive. Eastern lawmakers, whether Republican or Democrat, are more likely to support sanctions on development and other land use in the name of protecting plants and animals threatened with extinction.

Protected under the ESA are 1,268 species. They range from



On British display dummy, Boer War officer's uniform

## Like the British, US Empire Declines Bled by Iraq, Can US Deal with India, China?

by Timothy Garton Ash, *The Guardian* (UK), 25 August 2005

**I**f you want to know what London was like in 1905, come to Washington in 2005. Imperial gravitas and massive self-importance. That sense of being the center of the world, and of needing to know what happens in every corner of the world because you might be called on—or at least feel called upon—to intervene there. Hyperpower. Top dog. And yet, gnawing away beneath the surface, the nagging fear that your global supremacy is not half so secure as you would wish. As Joseph Chamberlain, the British colonial secretary, put it in 1902: "The weary Titan staggers under the too vast orb of his fate."

The United States is now that weary Titan. In the British case, the angst was a result of the unexpectedly protracted, bloody and costly Boer war in which a small group of insurgents in South Africa defied the mightiest military the world had seen; concern about the rising economic power of Germany and the United States; and a combination of imperial overstretch with socio-economic problems at home. In the American case, it's a result of the unexpectedly protracted, bloody and costly Iraq war, in which a small group of foreign insurgents defies the mightiest military the world has seen; concern about the rising economic power of China and India; and a combination of imperial overstretch with socio-economic problems at home.

**Iraq is America's Boer war.** Remember that after the British had declared the end of major combat (Continued on Page 4)

such "charismatic megafauna" as grizzly bears to obscure species that many nonexperts would call bugs and weeds (but that scientists classify as important to the web of natural life).

Over the years, only a dozen or so species have rebounded to the point where they can be delisted, while nine have gone extinct. Were it not for the protections of the law (such as preserving habitat), many more would have disappeared, supporters of the law say. Or as Carl Pope, executive director of the Sierra Club, has said, "Ninety-nine percent of all the fish, plants and wildlife ever conserved under the Endangered Species Act have been saved from becoming lost forever."

Critics disagree, noting the large number of species that have languished on the list without recovering robustly as well as those whose status is not clearly known.

"Do these sound like the statistics of a successful law? Of course not," said Rep. Richard Pombo (R), the principal author of the proposed law, at a hearing. "The bottom line is the Endangered Species Act is in desperate need of an update," said Representative Pombo, a farmer and rancher from California's San Joaquin Valley who chairs the House Resources Committee.

Supporters of the bill say there needs to be a greater role for states, local governments, private individuals, and others potentially affected by the law.

"Local people want to do the right thing," Michael Pasteris, speaking on behalf of the National Association of Counties, told a Senate subcommittee recently. "But more often than not they lack the tools to get the work done on the ground."

Politically, this may be especially true of farmers, ranchers, home builders, and others who find themselves stymied by the presence of a listed species on their property, especially since some three-quarters of all endangered species are found on private property. "Get landowners involved in the planning process," says Chuck Cushman of the American Land Rights Association in Battle Ground, Wash. "Reward them, don't penalize them."

The reward, in the case of the House-passed bill, is a provision for reimbursing owners whose property value is reduced by the law. What this amounts to, critics say, is paying private individuals for complying with environmental law.

"If this language were applied to local zoning, no mayor or city council could govern a community without fear that their decisions might drive the community into financial ruin," said Rep. Nick Rahall of West Virginia, senior Democrat on the House Resources Committee, in a statement.

Although most House Democrats, together with 34 moderate Republicans, proposed an alternative bill that failed by 10 votes, the largely pro-development Pombo bill passed 229 to 193.

In the Senate, such changes to endangered-species law face an uncertain future.

"It's going to have an uphill fight, mostly because it has to go through Sen. Lincoln Chafee," says Ron Talley, spokesman for the Republican Main Street Partnership, a centrist group with 59 members in the Senate and House. The Rhode Island Republican chairs the subcommittee where such bills are first considered.

While Senator Chafee promises to "take a hard look at the effectiveness of the ESA," he (along with many Democrats and several other key Republicans) comes to the debate with pro-environment credentials.

In any case, many on both sides agree with Governors Bill Owens (R) of Colorado and Dave Freudenthal (D) of Wyoming who recently testified on behalf of the Western Governors' Association: "The act has become too contentious; the parties too litigious; there is too little collaboration and trust between stakeholders; and conservation efforts have suffered as a result."

*Who says that 32 years is enough for any endangered species to "recover"? Some impatient Republican or Republican land-owners? People who think it's enough to keep a few specimens in a zoo? People who don't care about whatever is "out of sight"—small bugs, weeds, and the adult lives of their own grandchildren? —Ed.*



## The People Belong to the Land Owning Land Imperils Basic Relationships

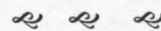
by Winona Laduke (Ashinaabe), *IFG Bulletin*, Spring 2005

**T**he teachings of our people concerning our relationships to land are deeply embedded in our language. For instance, in Ojibway, "*nishnabe akin*" means "the land to which the people belong". This implies an entirely separate paradigm about property rights from that in the US courts today. *Nishnabe akin* doesn't mean "the land that belongs to the people." It means that we belong to the land.

This concept is accompanied by many teachings, one of which is that our relationship to the land is just that—a relationship. Not a bargaining of rights versus responsibilities. In a relationship with the land, responsibilities are already implicit.

Another phrase which we hear quite a bit in our language is "*dinawaymaaganinaadog*" which means "all our relatives"—not just those with two legs, but those with four legs, or wings, or fins. Our teachings are filled with stories about *dinawaymaaganinaadog* such as how the bears taught us medicine, or how the wolves taught us child-rearing. We also have many teachings about trees, and our communities are known for our excellent birch bark canoes and houses.

The concept of "relationship" is not only central to our philosophy in the broadest sense, but absolutely crucial to the health of our immediate environment. So you see, our language, our teachings, and our cultural practices are one. This is why it is paramount in our communities to ensure the vitality of our languages, and the viability of our cultural teachings that are imparted by those languages. Without our languages, we are simply wandering—philosophically, spiritually, economically. To preserve our languages we need to protect our lands and our historic practices.



## EDITORIAL

### 9-11-06: Campaign for Truth-Force Strategic Nonviolence and Mardi Gras

by Dave Lewit, Alliance for Democracy

**“N**ine-Eleven” nowadays recalls the day of attack, on 9-11-2001, against New York’s World Trade Center and the Pentagon in DC. But there was an earlier 9-11 that rouses not shock and awe, or kick-ass anger, but righteous determination to create a constructive, peaceful way of life for all.

*September 11, 1906, was the beginning of Gandhi’s Satyagraha [Truth-Force] movement. It started in Johannesburg and was later used to fight for India’s independence. “Satyagraha,” explained Gandhiji, “is a relentless search for truth and a determination to reach truth. Satyagraha is an attribute of the spirit within. Satyagraha can be described as an effective substitute for violence.” An eye for an eye, said Gandhi, only ends up making the whole world blind.*

*On September 11, 1906, in Johannesburg, Gandhiji initiated his Satyagraha against the Natal Government, which was trying to pass an ordinance meant to disenfranchise the Indians and if passed would have made life impossible for the Indians in the country. It was on September 11, 1906—when more than 1000 Indians gathered to discuss how to meet the challenge of the ordinance—that Gandhiji thought of facing violence with non-violence, of fighting—and suffering—for truth and justice. He warned the meeting that pursuit of Satyagraha might mean prison or even cost them their life. Everyone who attended that meeting took a pledge to resist the ordinance with non-violence whatever the provocation.*

#### Centennial Could Launch A World-Turning Campaign

The above two paragraphs were written by India’s Mission to the European Union, which went on to suggest a Global Gandhi Peace Festival in 2006. But celebrating 100 years of Gandhi’s ideas is only one thing. As Gandhi launched a practical spiritual revolution against British imperialism in 1906, let us launch a practical Gandhian revolution in 2006 against hi-tech, global imperialism now accelerated by ideology-crazed Washington usurpers—and a large band of Democrat as well as Republican followers.

As Bush’s policies fail and as his conduct becomes ever more deaf and strident, grassroots supporters are turning away. What shall they turn toward? We could help create forums in 100 American cities to air visions, and discuss practicalities. “We” means hundreds of community organizations in every region, jostling and embracing one another, and bound to others through broader, national and international networks. We need to get beyond *personal* nonviolence—pepper spray protection and weekend bail—and develop long-term *strategic* nonviolence, regionally concerted nonviolence pinpointing critical military-industrial, financial, media, and political targets.

As we address greed and corruption, we must embrace and

share a more spartan material existence ourselves, hitching our efforts and plans to a country without wasteful and isolating sprawl, but with ever more shared facilities and common—natural and cultural—spaces. We must redesign our institutions of government. We must take sustainability and inclusion seriously, and also merrily and jubilantly.

Bring in a Mardi Gras of democracy on 9-11-2006, and renew it every month!

### Bring the Troops Home Now? You Must to Fight to Protect Your Comrades

by Virginia Pratt, Boston-Cambridge AfD, 17 Sept 2005 event

**T**he BU Law School auditorium was filled to capacity. The table at the front was jammed with members from American Friends Service Committee, BU Faculty for a Humane Foreign Policy, BU Peace and Justice Project, Gold Star Families for Peace, Inter-University Coalition for a Humane Foreign Policy, Iraq Veterans Against the War, and Military Families Speak Out.

Cindy Sheehan was the star of the show. She talked about how she decided the best way to honor her son Casey was to try to stop the war and prevent other families from suffering a similar loss. Cindy said that before going to Crawford she had tried in variety ways to get answers from Bush to her question “For What Noble Cause” did her son die? She questioned why if the cause was so noble did Bush not send his daughters to fight. Finally, she said that Bush’s refusal to meet with her added credibility to her cause. Sheehan said that Bush couldn’t meet with her because the war is not for any noble cause.

Rose Gonzalez, a member of Military Families Speak Out, talked about her mother—a grandmother aged 48—in the National Guard currently serving in Iraq. Rose said that she would have more respect for Bush if he would send his mother to Iraq.

Mrs. Arredondo, Alex’s step mother, talked about being a pacifist, and having felt like she could not come out against the war until after Alex was dead because she had to support him even though she disagreed with his decision to join the military.

The Lucey family told their heartrending story about their son having committed suicide six months after returning from Iraq. Mr. Lucey said that his son was emotionally shattered after the war. The day before his death, his grown son crawled into his lap and sat there for 45 minutes. Mr. Lucey said that next time he was to hold his son was the last time, as he removed the rope from around his neck.

Another woman from Military Families Speak Out said that her son encourages her activism. He begs her, “Tell people that they have to come out against this war, and protest. Otherwise, this government will never send us home.” She urged us to join in Washington DC for demonstrations.

Mike Hoffman, co-founder of Iraq Veterans Against the War, described his experience with

(Continued on Page 6)

## Boer War (Continued from Page 1)

operations in the summer of 1900, the Boers launched a campaign of guerrilla warfare that kept British troops on the run for another two years. The British won in South Africa only by a ruthlessness of which, I'm glad to say, the democratic, squeamish and still basically anti-colonialist United States appears incapable. In the end, the British had 450,000 British and colonial troops there (compared with some 150,000 US troops in Iraq), and herded roughly a quarter of the Boer population into concentration camps, where many died.

In a recent CNN/Gallup poll, 54% of those asked said it was a mistake to send American troops into Iraq, and 57% said the Iraq war has made the US less safe from terrorism. The protest camp outside President Bush's ranch in Crawford, which grew around the mother of a soldier who died in Iraq, exemplifies the pain. CNN last Sunday aired a documentary with top-level sources explaining in detail how the intelligence on Saddam's weapons of mass destruction was distorted, abused, sexed up and, as the program was entitled, Dead Wrong. This will hardly be news for British or European readers, but the facts have not been so widely aired in the US. In another poll, the number of those who rated the president as "honest" fell below 50% for the first time. This week, he has again attempted to bolster support for his administration and his war. It doesn't seem to be working.

A recent article in the New York Times plausibly estimated the prospective long-term cost of the Iraq War at more than \$1 trillion. If Iraqi politicians do finally agree a draft constitution for their country today, only the world's greatest optimist can believe that it will turn Iraq into a peaceful, stable, democratic federal republic. Increasingly, the Islamic Republic of Iran quietly calls the shots in the Shia south of Iraq. As the Washington joke goes: the war is over, and the Iranians won.

Meanwhile, oil prices of more than \$60 a barrel put the price of petrol at American pumps up to nearly \$3 a gallon for basic unleaded fuel. For someone from Europe this is still unbelievably cheap, but you should hear the shrieks of agony here. "Gas prices have changed my life," moaned a distressed Californian commuter. If higher energy prices persist, they threaten not just a still vibrant economy but a whole way of life, symbolized by the Hummer (in both its civilian and military versions). Besides instability in the Middle East, the main force pushing up oil prices is the relentless growth of demand for energy from the emerging economic giants of Asia. The Chinese go around the world quietly signing big oil supply deals with any oil-producing country they can find, however nasty its politics, including Sudan and Iran. When a Chinese concern tried to buy a big California energy company, that was too much—American politicians screamed and effectively blocked the deal.

China and India are to the United States today what Germany and America were to Britain a hundred years ago. China is now the world's second largest energy consumer, after the United States. It also has the world's second largest foreign currency reserves, after Japan and followed by Taiwan, South Korea and India. In the foreign reserve stakes, the US comes only ninth, after

Singapore and just before Malaysia. According to some economists, the US has an effective net savings rate - taking account of all public spending and debt - of zero. Nil. Zilch. This country does not save; it spends. The television channels are still full of a maddening barrage of endless commercials, enticing you to spend, spend, spend - and then to "consolidate" your accumulated debt in one easy package.

None of this is to suggest that the United States will decline and fall tomorrow. Far from it. After all, the British empire lasted for another 40 years after 1905. In fact, it grew to its largest extent after 1918, before it signed its own death warrant by expending its blood and treasure to defeat Adolf Hitler (not the worst way to go). Similarly, one may anticipate that America's informal empire—its network of military bases and semi-protectorates - will continue to grow. The United States, like Edwardian Britain, still has formidable resources of economic, technological and military power, cultural attractiveness and, not least, the will to stay on top. As one British music hall ditty at that time proclaimed:

And we mean to be top dog still. Bow-wow. Yes, we mean to be top dog still.

You don't have to go very far to hear that refrain in Washington today. The Bush administration's national security strategy makes no bones about the goal of maintaining military supremacy. But whether the "American century" that began in 1945 will last until 2045, 2035 or only 2025, its end can already be glimpsed on the horizon.

If you are, by any chance, of that persuasion that would instinctively find this a cause for rejoicing, pause for a moment to consider two things: first, that major shifts of power between rising and falling great powers have usually been accompanied by major wars; and second, that the next top dog could be a lot worse.

So this is no time for schadenfreude. It's a time for critical solidarity. A few far-sighted people in Washington are beginning to formulate a long-term American strategy of trying to create an international order that would protect the interests of liberal democracies even when American hyperpower has faded; and to encourage rising powers such as India and China to sign up to such an order. That is exactly what today's weary Titan should be doing, and we should help him do it.

---

*The Boer War is a watershed event for the British Army in particular and for the British Empire as a whole. Their last European (i.e. white) opponents were the Russians in the Crimean War (1853-56). Since then, for the previous 40 years, the Empire had been fighting ill-equipped and ill-organized (albeit brave) native forces. Easy victories made for an over-confidence that was quickly shattered by the opening battles in South Africa. The British generals had a difficult time adjusting to the different tactics of a different war. The Boers were a fast and highly mobile guerilla force, using the new smokeless cartridges in their German Mauser rifles which greatly concealed their positions; and they employed hit-and-run tactics that*

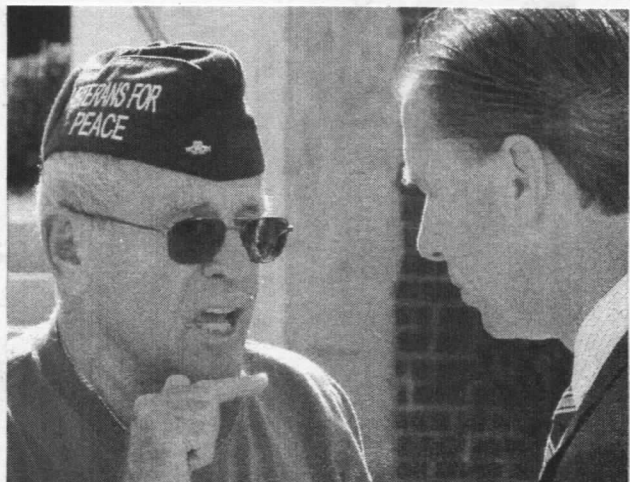
not only caused losses the British couldn't afford, but thoroughly frustrated the Empire's view of a 'fair fight'. As costs and casualties mounted, with the generals continually professing that the end was near, and the war taking a bitter and brutal twist in the last two years, British public opinion soured. [Out of a total of almost 450,000 British and Empire troops put into the field during the war, there were 22,000 deaths, two thirds of them from disease... Our Iraq slow-motion disease may be "depleted" uranium. —Ed.] Thus began the long slow decline of support for the Imperial idea.

—This summary by geocities.com

## Head-to-Head with Rep. Lynch Let's Debate Iraq Service with Local Kids

by Tony Flaherty, Veteran for Peace, South Boston

Your story and reporting (*Patriot-Ledger*, 3 Oct 05) that Congressman Lynch "was puzzled by the protesters," is evidence there could be no war without a complicitous press. Congressman Lynch was confronted about his vote for the war, and his continual support of the war despite overwhelming evidence there was no legitimate reason for going to war, and its being based upon lies. He lamely offered that "We got Saddam," notwithstanding the fact that Saddam was America's stooge, and his crime of slaughtering the Kurds was accomplished with gases furnished by the United States.



Tony Flaherty confronts Stephen Lynch at Braintree Middle School

This illegal and immoral war is no less similar than the unreported murder of thousands of innocent civilians when we invaded Panama and imprisoned [President] Noriega, another stooge who enabled the Reagan Administration, and mainly George Bush I, to flood the streets of Los Angeles with illegal drugs in order to fund the Contras.

While it was never mentioned to the children [high school juniors and seniors] at Braintree that the mission of the [US military] Academies was, pure and simple, to learn to kill and order others to do so, it was pointed out that the "elite" officers are

This is the dark time, my love;  
All around the land  
Brown beetles crawl about;  
The shining sun is hidden in the sky;  
Red flowers bend their heads in sorrow.

This is the dark time, my love  
It is the season of oppression, dark metal,  
And tears;  
It is the festival of guns,  
The carnival of misery;  
Everywhere the faces of men are strained  
And anxious.

Who comes walking in the dark night time?  
Whose steel boot tramps down the slender grass?

It is the man of death, my love,  
The strange invader,  
Watching you sleep  
And aiming at your dreams.

---Martin Carter, Guyana

virtually guaranteed jobs later in the military-industrial complex.

Congressman Lynch did agree with the offering that the only fact surrounding the Iraq War we could agree on was that "Halliburton is making a lot of money". That it does so upon the life and limb of our young men and women was avoided. Your figures with respect to the numbers of casualties was woefully in error, as also was Congressman Lynch's recent reporting that our young men and women were receiving the best of body armor, but not the fact that they and their families still have to pay for it themselves.

Why is it that the opinion of veterans who have served this country in combat is a secondary story to that of the presence of a congressman who never served his country except in his current lucrative position? [To his credit] he did acknowledge concern over our "volunteer" National Guardsmen involuntarily being continually extended [in their overseas assignments], and their families, many of whom are now living on food stamps.

Why not initiate a story with Veterans for Peace, and ask for Congressman Lynch's response. Better yet, sponsor a debate in front of the high school children of the South Shore. Ask him as does Cindy Sheehan, "What is the noble cause for this war?" Let's talk about "freedom," "democracy," "God" and sending our children to die for the rich of this country—and just who is responsible for their patriotic delusions.

## CHAPTER NEWS

### Veterans Confront Chicken-hawk Congressman

On Saturday afternoon, 1 October, BCA members **Patricia "Pat" McSweeney** and **Dave Lewit** joined 14 Veterans for Peace (VfP) and others at a special meeting at Braintree's East Middle School to protest a military dog-and-pony-show designed to recruit high school seniors for the US military academies. The meeting was organized by pro-war **Rep. Stephen Lynch**, whose 9<sup>th</sup> Congressional District squiggles from Beacon Hill and South Boston to Bridgewater. About 50 parents and teen-age youth heard representatives of West Point, Annapolis, Air Force Academy, Coast Guard Academy, Merchant Marine Academy, the Congressman, and his local chief of staff tout the exclusiveness and academic quality of these officer-training institutions, and explain how to get in. Since you must be nominated by your congressman, there are elements of both dice and favoritism in your selection to this great "leadership" opportunity. (Is a junior officer commanding lesser bureaucrats and enlistees really a "leader"?)

The protest was organized by VfP's South Boston bulldog **Tony Flaherty**, a former naval officer. Tony was one of three who stood up after the academy advocates spoke and demystified the assembled parents and kids concerning military training—for killing. The second vocal protester, a woman, was shouted at continuously by the mother of one nail-biting youth. Monday's *Patriot Ledger* came out with a story by reporter Dennis Tatz, answered on Page 5 by Tony.

### BCA Discusses New Orleans Disaster

At our 21 September chapter meeting **Lester P. Lee, Jr.** analyzed this "biblically proportioned" destruction and struggle as a product of Southern segregationism and Republican global militancy. The Southern pattern has kept blacks poor by paying for public education thru lotteries, depriving the poor of decent education and opportunity while white kids outside the city's core go to private schools. Thus most blacks and poor people in New Orleans lacked the means of escape, and without federal resources were left exposed, injured, starved, abused by guards, and eventually deported to places like Texas (to swell the population there and eventually add yet another Texas congressional district?).

Meanwhile the federal administration had rechanneled much of the city's infrastructure maintenance funding toward foreign wars. So-called terrifying Muslims have taken precedence over terrifying giant hurricanes; petrochemical profits have taken precedence over wetlands and other natural protections. The current administration prefers to consider hurricanes as acts of God, absolving themselves and insurance companies of duty.

**So what to do?** Participants suggested bringing home the MA National Guard (petition at [www.HomeFromIraqNow.org](http://www.HomeFromIraqNow.org)), redirecting taxes to state and local offices, holding media accountable, re-shaping districts biointensively, reforming insurance law/companies and Federal Emergency Management (FEMA), telling the truth about Republican government size, building Democratic courage, and making "Connecting-the-Dots" the top mission and campaign priority for The Alliance. ❧

## Marching To Irrelevance Getting Beyond Weekend Mass Rallies

by David Corn, TomPaine.com, 29 Sept 2005 (Abridged)

**W**hat does it really tell us that 178,342 people gathered on a weekend in Washington (when most members of Congress are out of town) to declare their opposition to Bush's misadventure in Iraq, or that several thousand remained in town to lobby on a Monday (when most members of Congress are out of town), or that a few others were arrested at the White House? The blunt retort is that 279.8 million Americans did none of this and that 28 million Americans watched "Desperate Housewives" that same weekend. And if most of these dissenters came from blue states—or blue pockets in red states—why should the Republicans running and supporting the war fret about them?

Certainly, a demonstration can produce memorable rhetoric. The passionate remarks delivered on Saturday by Etan Thomas, forward for the NBA's Washington Wizards, have zipped across the Internet. But the anti-war crowd should ask: How much did this rally bolster popular opposition to the war? It can be argued that one demonstration can lead to another larger in size that can lead to another larger in size, as a movement builds to a point at which it cannot be denied. But I don't envision dramatic and quick growth, unless Bush stupidly revives the draft.

Demonstrations consume money and time, and there are opportunity costs. What else might be done with this energy? Most congressional districts are gerrymandered to afford the incumbent political protection. Finding pressure points in this rigged political system is tough. In some ways senators, who campaign statewide, may be more susceptible to heavy-muscle persuasion than representatives ensconced in districts drawn for their advantage, yet upper-body lawmakers only have to worry every six years about re-election. Still, shouldn't war opponents in New York focus all their effort on, say, Sens. Hillary Clinton and Chuck Schumer and not worry about getting on a bus to D.C.?

War critics who live in those few areas represented by legislators already skeptical of or opposed to the war might take the money they spent on heading to the rally and send it to an organization that will use it wisely in a focused campaign.

So, is politics-by-demonstration outdated and no longer effective? Could it be that, like many a general, the anti-war movement is fighting the previous war?

*David Corn is the Washington editor of The Nation and is the author of The Lies of George W. Bush: Mastering the Politics of Deception.*

### BRING TROOPS HOME (Continued from Page 3)

post-traumatic stress syndrome and how it never goes away. Mike said that when he got to Iraq his commanding officer told their unit "You're not here to liberate Iraqi people. We're here for one reason and one reason only—oil. But, that doesn't mean that you don't have to fight. You have to protect each other." #

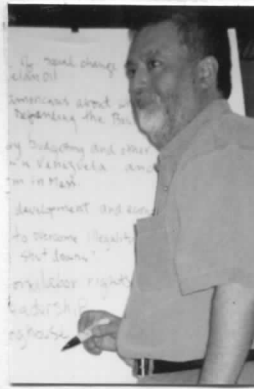
## Venezuela and World Social Forum VI Boston Contingent Forming for January 2006

Several dozen Boston-area people gathered at Boston City Hall on October 1<sup>st</sup> to learn about Venezuela and the Bolivarian revolution led by Hugo Chavez. They were regaled by stories from



Kim Foltz

youths who met there for the World Festival of Students & Youth in August, reports by World Social Forum (WSF) participants who met in Porto Alegre (Brazil) and Mumbai (Bombay—India), and Venezuelan singing by Marta Rodriguez and Sergio Reyes & Rafael



Sergio Reyes

Medina—lyrics at right.

After a brain-storming session, all left with a list of 22 collective concerns we might bring from Boston to the WSF. These include

- legitimization and rights of migrant labor
- independent media and communication
- international solidarity clearinghouse
- document economic & political realities of the US
- Bolivarian redistribution of wealth
- participatory budgeting & other democratic institutions
- new leadership for social change

Open meetings of the local WSF organizing group are held in Jamaica Plain every Wednesday evening at 3313 Washington St (info: see [www.lfsc.org/wsf](http://www.lfsc.org/wsf) or call City Life/Vida Urbana, 617-524-3541). The group includes **Jorge Marin** (MLK Bolivarian Circle), **Roberto Torres** and **Sergio Reyes** (Latinos for Social Change), **Karen Slater** (July 26 Coalition), **Charlie Welch** (TecsChange), **Juan Leyton & Magali Troncoso** (City Life), **Richard Krushnic** (City of Boston Community Development), **Suren Moodlar** (North American Alliance for Fair Employment), and more.

The next general meeting in Boston will be on 22 October (see [Action Alerts](#), page 8). BCA will feature one of the organizers at its 15 November meeting. Do you want to travel?

The culmination of these meetings will be the World Social Forum IV—itsself polycentric—in Caracas, Venezuela; Bamako, Mali; and Karachi, Pakistan. Simultaneously 25-29 Jan 2006.



Diego Perez Lacera & Dalizu Nova—Boston Area Youth Organizing Project

### Cardboard Roofs

by Alí Primera

*How sad the sound of rain on cardboard roofs  
How sad the lives of people in cardboard shacks  
The workers go down the hills  
Barely walking with the weight of suffering  
Look, so much suffering  
Look, how heavy the suffering.*

*Up above his woman is pregnant  
Below the city awaits him  
And he is lost in that web  
Today is the same as yesterday  
His life has no tomorrow.*

*The rain falls, the suffering continues  
The rain stops, When will the suffering stop?  
When will we have the hope we need?*

*Children, the color of earth with the same cracks  
With millions of worms... that's why  
How sad, the children in the cardboard shacks  
How happy are the dogs, in the boss' house.*

*You will not believe this, but there are dog schools  
and they teach them not to bite the newspapers  
but the boss, year after years  
continues to bite his workers off.*

*How sad, the rain on cardboard roofs  
How far is hope from the cardboard roofs.*

### Song for His (Bolivar's) Comeback

by Alí Primera

*People are wise and patient  
Is what old people say  
Those who can tell time  
By the singing of the guacharaca bird.  
They the time is coming  
For us to be happy again  
Bolivar left us yesterday  
But today he is coming back.*

*Let's go in his direction  
Let's go and welcome him.*

*They say that Bolivar brings fury and anger within him  
When he sees how they have stolen  
What he gave us  
They say he is angry about our behavior  
Because we dropped his sword  
And also dropped his teachings.*

*Let's go...*

*Just like Jesus Christ kicked the merchants off the temple  
Bolivar is also coming back to liberate his people.*

*Let's go...*

*They say he is coming back on horse But in his bags  
he brings an arsenal of love to sow on this Motherland.  
Motherland is a woman and he is coming back to love her  
To fight off those who only want to enjoy her  
And, instead of caressing her, stain her with dirty hands.*

*Let's go*

## ACTION ALERTS

**Fri. 14 Oct, 5-7pm, Boston. Confront CAFTA and ARENA Party** of El Salvador's **President Saca**, who is meeting inside with US profiteers. Immigrant opponents barred from speaking. Mr. Saca supports US military and police policies vs. Salvadoran public opinion. Outside Hynes Convention Center (Green Line), 900 Boylston St. Info: David Grosser, (617) 492-8719.

**Wed. 19 Oct, 8pm, Boston. Deadline for Voter Registration.** Register in person or by mail, and plan to vote on 8 Nov (see below). Info: [www.cityofboston.gov/elections](http://www.cityofboston.gov/elections) or 617-635-3767.

**Sat. 22 Oct, 2pm, Boston. Explore Jan'06 World Social Forum in Venezuela.** Hear reports, help plan Boston delegation to WSF/Caracas. Government Center, Boston City Hall, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Piemonte Room. Front entrance closed weekends, so enter by back door (almost hidden at left rear of drive-in overhang). Info: 617-566-2861.

**Tue. 25 Oct, 4:30pm, Cambridge. "Demise of Fact in Political Discussion"** Lecture by **Kathleen Hall Jamieson**, Professor of Communication, U of PA. Reviews the 2004 National Annenberg Election Survey. Askwith Lecture Hall, Longfellow Hall, 13 Appian Way, Harvard (Red Line). Info: [www.radcliffe.edu](http://www.radcliffe.edu) 617-495-8600.

**Wed. 26 Oct, 7pm, Portsmouth NH. "Telling it Like it Is: Putting Our Values into Action"** Hear **Doris "Granny D" Haddock**. Also BCA-Seacoast connection. Cosponsored by Seacoast AfD. South Church, 292 State St. Info and rides: Dave Lewit: 617-266-8687 or Nancy Brown [NRGBrown@aol.com](mailto:NRGBrown@aol.com) 603-436-7861

**Wed. 26 Oct. 7:30pm. Boston/Newton. "Exposing America's Hidden Power Brokers and Revitalizing the Democratic Party"** Lecture by **Charles Derber**, Prof of Sociology, Boston College. Charlie's new book is *Hidden Power: What You Need to Know to Save Our Democracy*. 101 Devlin Hall, Boston College, Chestnut Hill (near Newton city line, Green Line B, or D+ walk up Beacon from Reservoir). Info: 617-552-4820 Map: [www.bc.edu/about/maps](http://www.bc.edu/about/maps).

**Sat. 29 Oct. 11am. Boston Common. Big Antiwar Rally and March.** Endorsed by 30+ organizations. Info: [www.oct29.org](http://www.oct29.org) or 617.338.9966

**Tue. 8 Nov. 7am-8pm. Boston. Election Day.** Vote for **Felix Arroyo** for City Council (at large), and **Maura Hennigan** for Mayor. Both are persistently progressive city councilors. Felix works hard for systemic reform, e.g., democratizing BRA. Maura contests basically pro-corporate Mayor Menino. Info: [www.cityofboston.gov/elections](http://www.cityofboston.gov/elections) or 617-635-3767 for polling locations, etc.

**13-19 Nov. All towns. Wal-Mart Watch** is the new advocacy organization committed to reforming Wal-Mart's destructive business practices. Hundreds of public events and thousands of house parties designed to bring attention to the dangers of Wal-Mart's unchecked growth. We need your help—Andy Stern, president, SEIU. For details, call SEIU Local 220, 617-442-4100, or go to <http://www.walmartwatch.com/november>

## EDITORIAL REQUEST

*BCA Dispatch* and/or [NewEnglandAlliance.org](http://NewEnglandAlliance.org) needs an **Associate Editor** to develop **personal news**. She or he would write a column each month profiling one member or associate, and help readers know what other members are up to. So the AE would chat with many Alliance people on the phone, and would obtain photos for profiles. People would know that we care! AE would also learn a lot about what **chapters** and kindred organizations are doing, and that would be valuable news. Such information will help to build the Alliance locally and regionally, and to build a **network** of all system-changing organizations! See **Editor's phone/ email below. THANKS!**



Rafael Medina and Sergio Reyes at WSF brainstorming. Story page 7.

## JOIN THE BCA

**YOU DON'T HAVE TO LIVE IN BOSTON TO LOVE 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:

Dave Lewit, 271 Dartmouth St. #2h, Boston, MA 02116.)

BOSTON-CAMBRIDGE ALLIANCE fr DEMOCRACY PLEDGE  
\_\_\_ \$26/Year - "Count me in!"

\_\_\_ \$52/Year - "Contributor" (We need to average this amount.)

\_\_\_ \$104/Year - "Sustainer" (Helping us thrive.)

\_\_\_ \$208/Year - "Community Steward"

\_\_\_ \$500/Year - "Realize the vision!"

\_\_\_ What's fair for YOU? \_\$\_\_\_\_\_

Name : \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Street, No./Box/Apt: \_\_\_\_\_

Town and Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Day \_\_\_\_\_ Night: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

## COLOPHON

Dave Lewit, Editor 617-266-8687. Pls apply as Asso. Editor. 271 Dartmouth St. #2H, Boston MA 02116. [dlewit@igc.org](mailto:dlewit@igc.org)  
Visit the Alliance web site: [www.TheAllianceForDemocracy.org](http://www.TheAllianceForDemocracy.org)  
Visit our new regional web site: [www.NewEnglandAlliance.org](http://www.NewEnglandAlliance.org)  
Web builder: Sergio Reyes. Webmaster: Stan Robinson.  
Web council: To be elected from all AfD chapters in region.