

# BCA Dispatch

Newsletter of the **June**  
**Boston-Cambridge Alliance for Democracy** **2007**

*I hope to live to see when "impy" and "cappy" will be as disparaging a term as "commy" once was.*

—Vitaly Purto, in blogger exchanges

## CHAPTER NEWS (Continued on Page 12)

### Chapter Calendar

#### \* \* **Cities Networking for Power** \* \*

Boston-Cambridge Alliance for Democracy's next meeting will be on **Thursday, June 21, at 6:45 p.m. at Cambridge Friends Meeting house, 5 Longfellow Park** (10-minute walk from Harvard Square T station, west on Brattle St.), Cambridge.

— Agenda —

Hundreds of cities, in the U.S. and worldwide, have undertaken plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. **Rosalie Anders** coordinates such initiatives for the City of Cambridge. She will tell us all about keeping it Green—through building construction, non-carbon sources, and networking around the state and the world for new ways and support.... Can such networking also be harnessed to strengthen our Democracy? Come with your questions and comments!

*(Please note unusual meeting day: Thursday!)*

**Open to All — Refreshments**

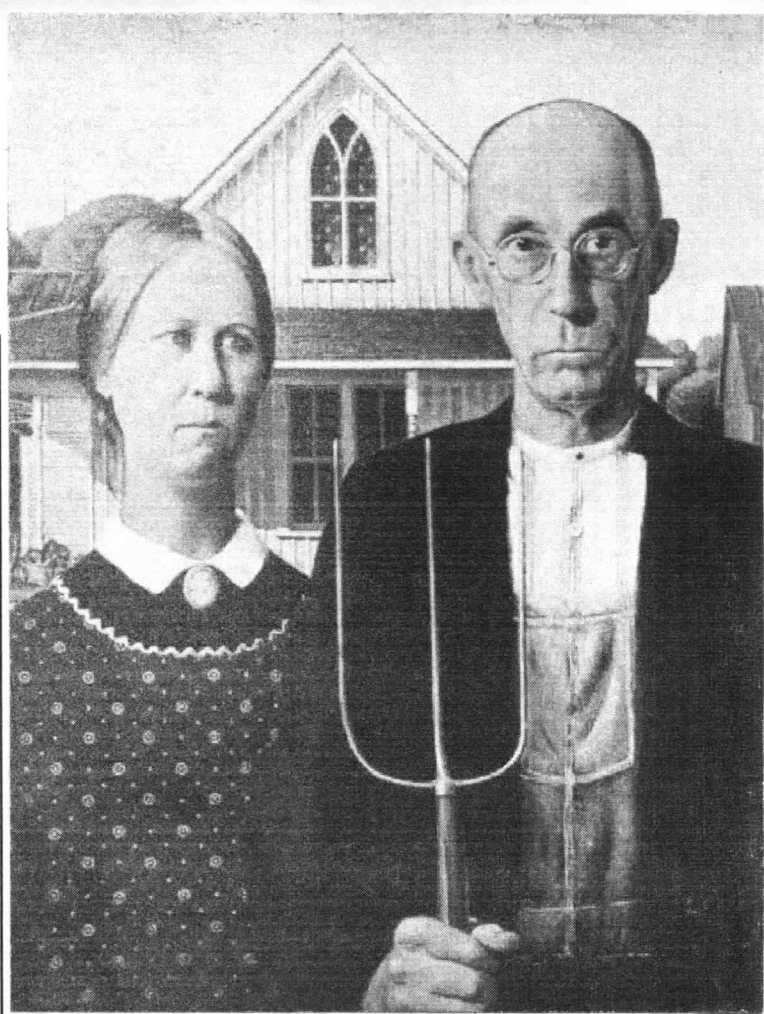
## Bush Plans For Being Dictator Declares Powers In "Catastrophic Emergency"

by Lee Rogers, [www.GlobalResearch.ca](http://www.GlobalResearch.ca), 21 May 2007

**T**HE BUSH ADMINISTRATION HAS RELEASED A DIRECTIVE called the National Security and Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD-20). The directive released on May 9th, 2007 has gone almost unnoticed by the mainstream and alternative media. This is understandable considering the huge Ron Paul and immigration news but this story is equally as huge. In this directive, Bush declares that in the event of a "Catastrophic Emergency" the President will be entrusted with leading the activities to ensure constitutional government. The language in this directive would in effect make the President a dictator in the case of such an emergency.

The directive defines a "Catastrophic Emergency" as the following: *"Catastrophic Emergency" means any incident, regardless of location, that results in extraordinary levels of mass casualties, damage, or disruption severely affecting the U.S. population, infrastructure, environment, economy, or government functions.*

So what does this mean? This is entirely subjective and doesn't provide any real concrete definition of what such an emergency would entail. Assuming that it means a disaster on the scale of the 9/11 attacks or Katrina, there is no question that the United States at some point in time will experience an emergency on par with either of those events. When one of those events takes place, the President will be a dictator in charge of ensuring a working constitutional government. *(Continued on next page >>)*



*"American Gothic" by Grant Wood, 1930*

Grant Wood painted in Iowa, while Norman Rockwell adopted Vermont as his home. Wood's farm couple could pass for New Englanders, and while Rockwell's people were fun, Wood's reflect the tough times we face. Let's just say that we need to network with Iowa.

## Brave New England Part III: Strategies for Autonomy

by Dave Lewit, *Alliance for Democracy*, 13 June 2007

**V**ICTORIOUS GEN. GEORGE WASHINGTON, retired to Mount Vernon, was alarmed by news of the aggressiveness of several thousand western Massachusetts farmers and other small landholders—many of whom had fought under his revolutionary command. Led by Captain Daniel Shays and several others, they met frequently at a tavern in East Pelham now covered by the Quabbin Reservoir. In a time of post-war depression, they were outraged by the Massachusetts head and property taxes levied by an elite state senate to pay off war bonds held by eastern Massachusetts lenders. In Amherst, Pelham and many other towns in counties on either side of the Connecticut River, assets were traded by barter, while the state tax authorities demanded cash. The courts thus sold the lands of many farmers to pay those war debts and some were thrown into debtors' prisons. Shays' "Regulators", backed by county conventions, were increasingly incensed and by force took control of courts and prisons from Pittsfield to Concord, to reverse these injustices. In 1787, after five months, there was an armed confrontation and most "Regulators" were captured by a militia hired by Governor Bowdoin and other wealthy easterners. By popular demand *(Continued on Page 8 >>)*

The language written in the directive is disturbing because it doesn't say that the President will work with the other branches of government equally to ensure a constitutional government is protected. It says clearly that there will be a cooperative effort among the three branches that will be coordinated by the President. If the President is coordinating these efforts it effectively puts him in charge of every branch. The language in the directive is entirely Orwellian in nature making it seem that it is a cooperative effort between all three branches but then it says that the President is in charge of the cooperative effort.

The directive defines Enduring Constitutional Government as the following: "Enduring Constitutional Government," or "ECG," means a cooperative effort among the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of the Federal Government, coordinated by the President, as a matter of comity with respect to the legislative and judicial branches and with proper respect for the constitutional separation of powers among the branches, to preserve the constitutional framework under which the Nation is governed and the capability of all three branches of government to execute constitutional responsibilities and provide for orderly succession, appropriate transition of leadership, and interoperability and support of the National Essential Functions during a catastrophic emergency.

Further on in the document it states the following. *The President shall lead the activities of the Federal Government for ensuring constitutional government.*

This directive on its face is unconstitutional because each branch of government the executive, legislative and judicial are supposed to be equal in power. By putting the President in charge of coordinating such an effort to ensure constitutional government over all three branches is effectively making the President a dictator allowing him to tell all branches of government what to do.

Even worse is the fact that the directive states that the Secretary of Homeland Security will serve as the lead for coordinating overall continuity operations. We already know that the Homeland Security department is not really working to secure the homeland. Instead the Homeland Security department is really working to enslave the homeland just like the Home Office over in the United Kingdom has made that country an Orwellian hell of closed-circuit TV spy cameras. If such an emergency is declared, we can only guess what sort of surprises the Homeland Enslavement department will have for us.

The directive itself recognizes that each branch is already responsible for directing their own continuity of government procedures. If that's the case then why does the President need to coordinate these procedures for all of the branches? This is nothing more than a power grab that centralizes power and will make the President a dictator in the case of a so-called "Catastrophic Emergency".

It is insane that this directive claims that its purpose is to define procedures to protect a working constitutional government when the very language in the document destroys what a working constitutional government is supposed to be. A working constitutional government contains a separation of powers between three equally powerful branches and this directive states that the executive branch has the power to coordinate the activities of the other branches. This directive is a clear violation of constitutional separation of powers and there should be angry protests from our legislators about this anti-American garbage that came from the President.

[Note: to see the presidential order official document, go to <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/05/20070509-12.html> or email Dispatch editor.]

## Preserving Democracy Against A Coup

*For those who have concluded that the White House and/or Pentagon were complicit in the 9/11/01 emergency, let us imagine what similar event may trigger presidential assumption of these emergency powers. Mini-nuke (Chernobyl)? Blowing up a train (Spain)? Releasing gas in a subway (London)? Suicide bombing (Israel, Iraq)? Sinking a naval ship in port (Havana, Pearl Harbor)? Blowing up Statue of Liberty? Deseccrating Mt. Rushmore? Poisoning aquifer at Camp David? Sending anthrax to 20 police chiefs (Congress)? Smashing presses at New York Times (Mussolini)? or Toppling antennas of WABC?... the mini-nuke might be the most credible, most blame-avoiding option, with maximum fright factor.*

*To defend against the resultant coup, a national coalition of citizen groups could take action now. Specifically, we may seek widespread local noncompliance with Homeland Security emergency directives. For starters, a survey group in each state could ask every mayor (or top municipal administrator), every police chief, and the president (or moderator) of every city or town council (or meeting) what they are prepared to do in sustaining traditional constitutional governance in their area, and promoting normal police and judicial investigation of the "emergency" event. Combined survey results should then be publicized in every locality and internationally. Local groups should be encouraged to develop plans for coordinated local defense of democracy.* —Ed.

## Regulators Cut Freedom of Speech Close Curtain on Environmental Alarms

*by David Goldstein, McClatchy Newspapers, 18 May 2007*

**T**HE SENTENCE WAS BURIED DEEP within a recent Labor Department ruling, but the message was clear: Whistleblowers, Beware.

More specifically: Whistleblowers relying on the protections against official retaliation contained in several major environmental laws, proceed with caution.

The sentence was in a footnote at the end of a ruling against a federal whistleblower. It said the Labor Department recognized only the protections written into the clean air and solid waste-disposal acts, not laws governing clean water, drinking water, toxic substances and hazardous waste.

"This is the latest attack in a systematic war to gut the environmental whistleblowers' statutes," charged Tom Devine, the legal director of the Government Accountability Project, a nonprofit watchdog group. "They are a lifeline so government workers can challenge illegality without engaging in professional suicide." ...

At issue is the Bush administration's view that since the government has "sovereign immunity"—individuals can't sue it unless it agrees to be sued—only Congress can waive that immunity, and it hasn't done so with all the environmental whistleblower laws...

"Without transparency, the special interests hijack government agencies and run them in the service of private, parochial profits," charged Joan Claybrook, a former government official who heads Public Citizen, a nonprofit consumer-advocacy group. "We have seen this happen again and again under the current administration, and no trend is more corrosive to democracy." ■

## A Synagogue Amid Mosques

### Jews Live Relatively Freely in Iran

by Scott Peterson, *Christian Science Monitor*, 27 April 2007  
(condensed)

**E**NMITY RUNS DEEP BETWEEN ARCH-FOES IRAN AND ISRAEL. And that confrontation complicates the lives of Iranian Jews, who make up the largest community of Jews in the Middle East outside the Jewish state.

Iran's Jews are buffeted by inflammatory rhetoric from President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad about "wiping Israel off the map" and denying the Holocaust, and a politically charged environment that often equates all Jews with Israel and routinely witnesses the burning of the "enemy" flag.

But despite what appears to be a dwindling minority under constant threat of persecution, Iranian Jews say they live in relative freedom in the Islamic Republic, remain loyal to the land of their birth, and are striving to separate politics from religion.

They caution against comparing Iran's official and visceral opposition to the creation of Israel and Zionism with the regime's acceptance of Jews and Judaism itself. "If you think Judaism and Zionism are one, it is like thinking Islam and the Taliban are the same, and they are not," says Ciamak Moresadegh, chairman of the Tehran Jewish Committee. "We have common problems with Iranian Muslims. If a war were to start, we would also be a target. When a missile lands, it does not ask if you are a Muslim or a Jew. It lands."

The continuous Jewish presence in Iran predates Islam by more than a millennium. One wave came when Jews sought to escape Assyrian king Nebuchadnezzar II around 680 BC; others were freed from slavery by Cyrus the Great with the conquest of Babylon some 140 years later.

#### Anti-Semitism historically 'rare'

Historically, say Jewish leaders, anti-Semitism here is rare, a fact they say is often lost on critics outside, especially in Israel, where many Iranian Jews have relatives. Still, the Jewish community has thinned by more than two-thirds since Iran's 1979 Islamic revolution, to some 25,000; the largest exodus took place soon after the Islamic Republic was formed, though a modest flow out continues.

"Our problem is that the Israel issue is not solved, and that affects us here," says one Iranian Jew who asked not to be named.

But that does not affect every Iranian Jew. Surgeon Homayoun Mohaber measures his nationalism in blood, and bits of metal—the kind of support that Iranian Jews say has defined their small community's ties to Iran. During the Iran-Iraq War of the 1980s, as an Iranian military surgeon, Dr. Mohaber conducted more than 900 frontline operations, was himself wounded, and gave blood twice to save fellow Iranian soldiers. Today, in his Tehran clinic, he keeps a jar full of bullets and shrapnel fragments, extracted during the war from wounded soldiers.

"The relations between Jews and Muslims, between 70 million Muslims and 30,000 Jews, are very good," says Mohaber. "In Israel, the situation for Iranian Jews is quite misunderstood." "[The Islamic regime] made very good respect for me all the time, and did not care about my religion after the revolution," says Mohaber, who avoided a general purge of Jews from the officer ranks after

Iran's 1979 Islamic revolution.

But some episodes have shaken those who remain. In 1999, charges of spying for Israel were brought against 13 Jews in Shiraz and Isfahan, sparking a new exodus and widespread fear. Amid a welter of international criticism, 10 of those charged were handed sentences—later shortened—that ranged from four to 13 years in prison.

Jews in Tehran at the time told the Monitor of their fears that "Zionist groups connected with the US" were hurting their cause by using the issue against Iran. Today, all 13 are free, and remain living in Iran.

"The effect [of the Shiraz cases] was very bad," recalls Mohaber. "But they have rectified it. I think it was a political case between Iran and Israel..."

"We have obviously had migration out of Iran," says Afshin Seleh, a teacher of Jewish heritage with a white yarmulke skullcap, who says he loses two to three students per year in classes of up to 30. Upon the walls of the Jewish school are portraits of revolution leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, and Iran's current supreme religious leader.



"There have been different voices [coming] from the government, so people felt unsafe," says Mr. Seleh. "But our existence here has always been separate from politics in Iran, and we always had peaceful coexistence with the Muslim community."

Part of that coexistence has been gratitude for the Dr. Sapor Hospital, a Jewish charity hospital that would have closed years ago, but for subsidies from Jews inside and outside Iran, doctors say.

During the 1979 revolution, the hospital refused to hand over those wounded in clashes with the security forces of the pro-West Shah Reza Pahlavi. Ayatollah Khomeini later sent a personal representative to express his thanks. Ahmadinejad, too, has made a \$27,000 donation.

Still, the Iran-Israel standoff has spilled over into many avenues of life here, with varied results for Iranian Jews. Strong anti-Zionist undercurrents developed in Iran—and across the Middle East—since Israel's creation in 1948. Those views came to a boil in Tehran after the 1967 war, when Israel crushed Arab foes and occupied the West Bank, Gaza, and Sinai. That war marked a turning point in Iranians' attitudes toward the Jewish state, and sometimes toward Iranian Jews...

"Jews here have great Iranian roots—they love Iran," says chairman Moresadegh. "Personally, I would stay in Iran no matter what. I speak in English, I pray in Hebrew, but my thinking is Persian." ■

## "Yes Men" Strike Again New Fuel: "Vivoleum" From Human Bodies

by Sean Myers, *Calgary Herald (Canada)*, 14 June 2007

**B**Y THE TIME CANDLES SUPPOSEDLY MADE FROM REMAINS of a deceased ExxonMobil janitor named Reggie Watts were handed out, an audience of oil and gas professionals attending a keynote luncheon at Calgary's Gas and Oil Exposition realized they'd been had.

A man named "S.K. Wolff," claiming to be an analyst for the Washington-based National Petroleum Council, and co-speaker "Florian Osenberg," said to represent ExxonMobil, were getting ready to show a memorial video made by Watts when security officers forcibly ushered the two men from the stage. Wolff is really Andy Bichlbaum and Osenberg is Mike Bonanno—or so they say.

As the Yes Men, the pair have traveled the world with an anti-globalization agenda perpetrating hoaxes on groups ranging from the World Trade Organization to the BBC.

In Calgary, ostensibly to promote their book and a documentary they filmed three years ago at the Plaza Theatre tonight, the activists said they couldn't resist taking a shot at the oil and gas trade show, held over three days this week at Stampede Park. "This was a great opportunity for us, like the holy grail, really," said Bichlbaum. "We've never had an audience like this. These people are wrecking the Earth and they're quite conscious of it."

The premise of the presentation, which included a PowerPoint lecture by "S.K. Wolff," was that as humans begin to die as a result of calamities caused by climate change, their remains could be harvested for an alternative fuel source called "vivoleum" that would eventually replace oil. Osenberg, supposedly the director of human resources with the vivoleum program, took the stage carrying a lit candle while volunteers handed out candles to the audience.

The approximately 250 assembled guests were told the vivoleum for the candles had been "sourced" from an ExxonMobil maintenance worker who donated it before dying of cancer. The candles were actually made of wax and human hair gathered from barbershops.

Organizers of GO-Expo were not impressed with the stunt. Officials from dmg world media, the company that runs GO-Expo, apologized profusely for the incident. Police were called in, but no charges were laid and no investigation will be launched, said a spokesman. Bichlbaum and Bonanno said they were each issued a \$287 fine for trespassing.

"The organizers were furious," said Bichlbaum. "They thought we should be charged with crimes against humanity or something. The police were great. They were just going to let us go, but the organizers insisted we be charged with criminal trespass."

The Yes Men started their unique form of protesting when they created a fake WTO website to protest the Seattle summit in 1999. When conferences began inviting them to speak, thinking they were actual representatives of the WTO, they began accepting.

Bichlbaum said he was invited to the GO-Expo event by organizers who saw the vivoleum website the duo concocted. The Yes Men are appearing at the Plaza Theatre tonight to present a multimedia show of their past hoaxes. ■

## The English Submarine A Choice Between Healing and Holocaust

by Fidel Castro, *Granma.cubaweb.cu*, 26 May 2007

**T**HE PRESS DISPATCHES BRING THE NEWS; it belongs to the Astute Class, the first of its kind to be constructed in Great Britain in more than two decades.

"A nuclear reactor will allow it to navigate without refuelling during its 25 year of service. Since it makes its own oxygen and drinking water, it can circumnavigate the globe without needing to surface," was the statement to the BBC by Nigel Ward, head of the shipyards.

"It's a mean looking beast", says another.

"Looming above us is a construction shed 12 storeys high. Within it are 3 nuclear-powered submarines at different stages of construction," assures yet another. Someone says that "it can observe the movements of cruisers in New York Harbor right from the English Channel, drawing close to the coast without being detected and listen to conversations on cell phones". "In addition, it can transport special troops in mini-sub that, at the same time, will be able to fire lethal Tomahawk missiles for distances of 1,400 miles", a fourth person declares. *El Mercurio*, the Chilean newspaper, emphatically spreads the news.

The UK Royal Navy declares that it will be one of the most advanced in the world. The first of them will be launched on June 8 and will go into service in January of 2009. It can transport up to 38 Tomahawk cruise missiles and Spearfish torpedoes, capable of destroying a large warship. It will possess a permanent crew of 98 sailors who will even be able to watch movies on giant plasma screens.

The new Astute will carry the latest generation of Block 4 Tomahawk [missiles] which can be reprogrammed in flight. It will be the first one not having a system of conventional periscopes and, instead, will be using fibre optics, infrared waves and thermal imaging.

"BAE Systems, the armaments manufacturer, will build two other submarines of the same class," AP reported. The total cost of the three submarines, according to calculations that will certainly be below the mark, is 7.5 billion dollars.

What a feat for the British! The intelligent and tenacious people of that nation will surely not feel any sense of pride. What is most amazing is that with such an amount of money, 75 thousand doctors could be trained to care for 150 million people, assuming that the cost of training a doctor would be one-third of what it costs in the United States. You could build 3 thousand polyclinics, outfitted with sophisticated equipment, ten times what our country possesses.

Cuba is currently training thousands of young people from other countries as medical doctors.

In any remote African village, a Cuban doctor can impart medical knowledge to any youth from the village or from the surrounding municipality who has the equivalent of a grade twelve education, using videos and computers energized by a small solar panel; the youth does not even have to leave his hometown, nor does he need to be contaminated with the consumer habits of a large city. The important thing is the patients who are suffering from malaria or any other of the typical and unmistakable diseases that the student will be seeing together the doctor.

The method has been tested with surprising results. The knowledge and practical experience accumulated for years

have no possible comparison. The non-lucrative practice of medicine is capable of winning over all noble hearts.

Since the beginning of the Revolution, Cuba has been engaged in training doctors, teachers and other professionals; with a population of less than 12 million inhabitants, today we have more Comprehensive General Medicine specialists than all the doctors in sub-Saharan Africa where the population exceeds 700 million people.

We must bow our heads in awe after reading the news about the English submarine. It teaches us, among other things, about the sophisticated weapons that are needed to maintain the untenable order developed by the United States imperial system.

We cannot forget that for centuries, and until recently, England was called the Queen of the Seas. Today, what remains of that privileged position is merely a fraction of the hegemonic power of her ally and leader, the United States.

Churchill said: Sink the Bismarck! Today Blair says: Sink whatever remains of Great Britain's prestige! For that purpose, or for the holocaust of the species, is what his "marvellous submarine" will be good for.

—Fidel Castro Ruz, 21 May 2007

## Taming the Giant Corporation

### Student Highlights Nader Conference

By Zach Marks, *campusprogress.org*, 14 June 2007

"THE CORPORATE INSTITUTION IS ABLE TO METASTASIZE its power through mergers, acquisitions, partnerships, unilateral contracts, and to evade law enforcement, taxes, and other restraints through fleeing jurisdictions, lobbied loopholes, legal wars of attrition or 'disappearing' its own existence," Ralph Nader said Friday at "Taming the Giant Corporation," a conference hosted by the Center for Study of Responsive Law that ran from Friday through Sunday. The result, said Nader, has been "the supremacy of corporate commercial values and controls over community civic values and voices."

The Washington, D.C. conference drew about 200 activists, scholars, and advocates to the Carnegie Institution's lovely Beaux Arts Administration Building, where about 30 experts gave presentations examining the evolving forms of corporate power and discussing how to "subordinate corporate power to the will and interests of the people," according to the conference program.

The three-day event featured 10 panels whose purposes included: identifying how corporations have expanded their power and abused it; how policymakers, advocates, and communities can reduce the influence of corporations; and what institutions can do to offset corporate power.

Members of the first panel, "The Great Constitutional Deficiency: Corporate 'Rights,'" pointed out that "corporations are not people" and have no rights under the Constitution.

"Corporations have no authority to make our laws and define our culture," argued Richard Grossman, co-founder of the Program on Corporations, Law, and Democracy. "So when they govern, democracy flies out the door."

A Friday afternoon panel on "Subordinating Corporate Power" featured a rousing call from James Brock, a professor of economics at Miami University in Ohio, for citizens to "reclaim the language corporations have stolen to gain power." Brock claimed corporations "are winning the fight against antitrust because they've taken the terms 'efficiency' and 'consumer welfare.' Efficiency isn't an excuse for economic power to go unchecked if it

means you're going to charge \$5,000 a pill."

Lori Wallach, director of Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch, added that executives "stole the words 'free trade' and used them to excuse corporate scandal."

While many students in attendance found the presentations informative, some felt the conference did not adequately prepare them to take action against corporate power in their daily lives.

"The panelists talked about big-picture strategy, but never presented concrete examples of what we can do to get involved as young people," said Daniel Schechner, a sophomore at Yale University. "That's a shame because this is such a relevant issue for students."

Indeed, Charlie Cray, director of the Center for Corporate Policy, noted the overwhelming influence of corporations over education. "You see it in the corporate advertising on school grounds, the corporate warping of the curriculum, the corporate endowment of professorships, and the corporate pushing of credit cards which leave students graduating in debt," Cray said. "The latest wave is that academic research has become a wholesale subsidiary industry of corporations and there are now over 700 corporate [for-profit] universities. It didn't used to be this way."

Serena Thomson, a senior at the University of British Columbia who was in attendance, said she had noticed the growth of corporate power in the "alarming corporatization of the college campus." UBC recently demolished a library and constructed in its place a "learning center, which was really just the same as what we had before," Thomson said, "but it gave the school an excuse to put up plaques of corporate donors." She added that "Coke has a monopoly on everything at UBC. You think you're getting water, but you're getting Dasani. When you want juice, you're buying Minute Maid."

Wenonah Hauter, director of Food and Water Watch, commented on the environmental impact of corporations at a Saturday panel, "Displacing Corporations: Expanding the Commons." She pointed out that bottling water from springs can have a devastating effect on ecosystems and the containers release dangerous toxic chemicals into the air and water when they are manufactured. "Think of how we could improve our tap-water infrastructure if we took the money spent on bottled water and spent it on our public water systems," Hauter said.

Throughout the conference, speakers emphasized the need to eliminate corporate influence from politics. Warren Gunnels, a policy adviser to Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT), pointed to the role of corporations in the recent immigration debate.

"What the immigration bill was really about was corporate America's ability to import low-skilled and high-skilled workers to keep wages down," said Gunnels, who noted that American workers are paid significantly more than foreign workers in the country on H-1B visas. Gunnels said an amendment sponsored by Sanders to reduce the number of H-1B visas given to companies that are simultaneously laying off workers never reached the floor because of the sway corporations held over other senators.

Mark Green, president of Air America Radio and former public advocate of New York City, said politicians who are influenced by corporations "are not bad people. They're the product of a bad system. Only when officials fear voters more than donors will we have real change."

Zach Marks is an undergraduate at Yale University and writes for the *Yale Daily News*.

## The Price of Free Airwaves Time to Insist on Valuable Programming

by Michael J. Coppins, *New York Times*, 2 June 2007

**A**S A MEMBER OF THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION, I often hear how fed up Americans are with the news media. Too much "if it bleeds it leads" on the evening news and not enough real coverage of local issues. Too little high-quality entertainment and too many people eating bugs.

It doesn't have to be this way. America lets radio and TV broadcasters use public airwaves worth more than half a trillion dollars for free. In return, we require that broadcasters serve the public interest: devoting at least some airtime for worthy programs that inform voters, support local arts and culture and educate our children—in other words, that aspire to something beyond just minimizing costs and maximizing revenue.

Using the public airwaves is a privilege—a lucrative one—not a right, and I fear the F.C.C. has not done enough to stand up for the public interest. Our policies should reward broadcasters that honor their pledge to serve that interest and penalize those that don't.

The F.C.C. already has powerful leverage to hold broadcasters to their end of the bargain. Every eight years, broadcasters must prove that they have served the public interest in order to get license renewal. If they can't, the license goes to someone else who will. It's a tough but fair system—if the commission does its job.

The problem is that, under pressure from media conglomerates, previous commissions have eviscerated the renewal process. Now we have what big broadcasters lovingly call "postcard renewal"—the agency typically rubber-stamps an application without any substantive review. Denials on public interest grounds are extraordinarily rare.

Just recently, the F.C.C. made news because it fined Univision, the Spanish-language broadcaster, a record-breaking \$24 million. Univision claimed that its stations offered three hours of children's educational programming per week—one of the few public interest rules still on the books—in part by showing a soap opera involving 11-year-old twins.

That was the right decision. But, viewed closely, it also illustrates just how slipshod our renewal process has become.

The fine was not levied at the ordinary time. In fact, the license term for one of the two stations initially at issue had expired 18 months earlier. This is typical—applications opposed by watchdog groups often languish for years while the broadcaster is permitted to continue business as usual. Then infractions are commonly disposed of with a small fine.

The commission paid attention to the Univision complaint because the station was part of a chain of 114 TV and radio stations being transferred from a public corporation to private equity firms. Without that, it is unclear when, if ever, the violations would have been acted upon. This even though scholars believe that one-fifth of what is billed as children's programming has "little or no educational value" and only one-third can be called "highly educational." Our children deserve better.

It wasn't always like this. Before the deregulatory mania in the 1980s - when an F.C.C. chairman described television as a "toaster with pictures"—the commission gave license renewals a hard

look every three years, with specific criteria for making a public interest finding. Indeed, broadcasters' respect for the renewal process encouraged them to pay for hard-hitting news operations. That was then.

Nowadays, a lot of people claim that because of the Internet, traditional broadcast outlets are an endangered species and there's no point in worrying about them. That's a mistake.

First, broadcast licenses continue to be very valuable. Univision's assets—many in small markets—were sold for more than \$12 billion. A single station in Sacramento, owned by Sinclair Broadcasting, went for \$285 million in 2004. A station in a megamarket like New York or Los Angeles could easily fetch half a billion dollars or more.

Second, broadcast outlets are still primary, critical sources of information for the American public. Nearly 60 percent of adults watch local TV news each day—it remains the nation's most popular information source. And so it's imperative that broadcasters continue to provide high-quality coverage of local and national issues.

But ensuring they do so means putting teeth back into the renewal process. To begin with, shorten the license term. Eight years is too long to go without an accounting—we ought to return to the three-year model.

Let's also actually review a station's record before renewing its license. Here are just some of the criteria for renewal the F.C.C. considered in the 1990s but never put into place:

- Did the station show programs on local civic affairs (apart from the nightly news), or set aside airtime for local community groups?
- Did it broadcast political conventions, and local as well as national candidate debates? Did it devote at least five minutes each night to covering politics in the month before an election?
- In an era when owners may live thousands of miles from their stations, have they met with local community leaders and the public to receive feedback?
- Is the station's so-called children's programming actually, in the view of experts, educational?

All of this information ought to be available on the Web so people can see how their airwaves are being used.

These issues are even more pressing today: broadcasters are making the transition to digital technology that permits them to send several television and radio channels into our homes instead of the single channel they've had up to now. The FCC's next step after reforming the licensing process should be to address how this new digital capacity can increase local programs and also improve the generally shoddy coverage of minority and other underserved communities. New benefits for broadcasters should translate into public benefits, too.

If you need convincing that something needs to be done, consider that only about 8 percent of local TV newscasts in the month before the last presidential election contained any coverage whatsoever of local races, including those for the House of Representatives.

This low number is just one example of how poorly stations are serving their viewers. Do stations that make so much money using the public airwaves, but so plainly fail to educate viewers on the issues facing them, really deserve to have their renewals rubber-stamped? ■

## If We Can Choose A Future

### Consider the Rich, Simple Life

by Garrison Keillor, *Baltimore Sun*, 7 June 2007

I BOUGHT A JAR OF ELDERBERRY JELLY and an armload of rhubarb at a small-town festival last week, simply because the seller was a slender, fair-haired, luminous beauty who happened to be Amish, sitting, demure in a black bonnet, at a table beside her horse and buggy.

There was a time I would've pitied her for her stern upbringing and all the deprivations thereof, but nowadays I tend to pity the children of heedless parents. Great romantic visionaries who leave a trail of messed-up progeny and embittered lovers. The Amish focus on the scriptural admonition to be "in the world but not of the world," a religious discipline based on prepositions which leads them into their stubborn fetishism, which sets them apart and makes them a tourist attraction, which they cannily exploit—and this young beauty sat, eyes averted, a devout 19th-century girl in the midst of plaid-shorts, cell-phone-toting, drive-by, feel-good America, and did a brisk business in rhubarb and elderberry jelly, \$4 a jar.

You look at the Amish and you see the past, but you might also be looking at the future. Our great-grandchildren, faced with facts their ancestors were able to ignore, might have to do without the internal-combustion engine and figure out how to live the subsistence life. Maybe someone will invent a car that runs on hydrogen or horse manure, or maybe people will travel on beams of light like in old radio serials, but the realist in you thinks otherwise.

Fred Thompson, a vanity candidate for president, goes around sneering at the notion of global warming, pointing out that Mars is heating up too, but nobody who has read the scientists' latest report on climate change is in a joking mood: It says that the situation will get a good deal worse before it gets better, if it ever gets better, and nobody knows just what "worse" means in this case.

The matter of greenhouse gases has to be addressed, and it won't be while the country is stuck in the disaster that is Iraq. The way to get unstuck is for some intrepid Republicans to get off the bus and put their shoulders to it and push. It needs to back up. The Current Occupant has driven it into a mudhole and is spinning the tires. Human lives are being tossed away carelessly, a country is bleeding, and the big man behind the desk is dishonest, incoherent and incompetent. He might do well as mayor of this little town, but he might also turn the water department over to his buddy from high school and order the police to search the cars of visitors.

As it is, it's an idyllic town. A classic townscape: tree-shaded boulevards, blocks of frame houses with spindle railings on the porches, lovingly kept up by families who feel cheered and encouraged by the gentle ornamentation, the humane scale of things. They endure the same uncertainties as you or I, the same shocks of mortality, are as capable of crankiness and outright absurdity, but the classic small town speaks of a steadiness and everyday valor that anchor our lives.

I know a woman who has spent the past year on airplanes. Her husband has a good job in London. An old mother is dying in Nevada. Her children are scattered. She is overseeing the construction of a house in Montana. Her wrist was broken in a car crash, and now doctors have found a dark spot in her brain that needs investigation, and yet she complains less than any 14-year-old you ever met.

There are bandits and demagogues and red-eyed zealots and destructive visionaries out working the main roads, but back here in the little towns and 'hoods, the country survives on steadiness and some innovation.

I made rhubarb crisp, but used less sweetening so as not to smother the tartness of the fruit, and it turned out well. Onward.

Garrison Keillor is the host of *The Prairie Home Companion*. His e-mail is [oldscout@prairiehome.us](mailto:oldscout@prairiehome.us).

## BOOK REVIEW

### *Earth Democracy*

by Vandana Shiva

South End Press, 2005, \$15.00

review by Joanna Herlihy, *Alliance for Democracy*

FOR VANDANA SHIVA, *EARTH DEMOCRACY* is both a traditional worldview and an emergent political movement. She has carried Gandhi's inspiration into her leadership of Indian peasants threatened by international corporations, resisting Monsanto's genetically engineered seeds and, more recently, river diversion for water projects. She is also an international leader, working in the International Forum on Globalization and the Slow Food movement.

Dr. Shiva sees the *fundamental economy* as the production of goods and services by nature—water recycled, soil enriched by microorganisms, plants fertilized by pollinators. Based on natural resources is the *human sustenance economy*, where people work to directly provide the conditions necessary to maintain their lives. Over millenia, this economy has given us agriculture, plant breeding, animal husbandry, metallurgy, weaving, home building, medicine.

The market economy (capitalism), now global, became dominant with the enclosure of the commons—pasture and forest—first in Europe, then in the colonies—excluding poor and indigenous people from the resources which had sustained them in order that commodities might be produced for the benefit of those who control land and capital, wasting and degrading those resources in the process.

Traditional communities are better able than capitalists to manage these resources sustainably. She continues, "As it was with the land commons, so it is today with the biodiversity and seed commons through intellectual property rights and the water commons through privatization. Now the seeds, the medicine, the water that have historically been the common property of communities need to be bought at high cost from gene giants like Monsanto, who own the patents, and water giants like Suez, Bechtel, and Vivendi, who own the concessions. The transformation of common property rights into private property rights implicitly denies the right to survive for large sections of society."

Shiva sees globalization as "the ultimate enclosure—of our minds, our hearts, our imagination, and our resources." The "enclosed" mind mistakenly accepts the global market economy as fundamental. The sustenance economy becomes invisible and natural processes are ignored.

A World Bank economist argues that natural resources may best be preserved by commodification and privatization, saying, "Large problems need large-scale solutions." Dr. Shiva counters that Gandhi showed how small measures can be powerful when performed by millions—Gandhi "brought down the British Empire with a pinch of salt and a spinning wheel."

Shiva's opposition to corporate seed patents was based on a tradition—seed saving. In her current campaign for water democracy, she is building alliances of people's movements from along the Ganges River and citizen's groups in Delhi.

most prisoners were soon freed (though two were hanged), debts revised, and a friendly new governor—John Hancock—elected.

**How We Got Into Our Present Crisis**

THE PREVAILING DISTRUST OF STANDING ARMIES in the post-revolutionary years under the Articles of Confederation was shaken by Shays' Rebellion. Nationalists agitated for a central government with a federal army, and only four months after the rebellion propertied delegates from each state (except Rhode Island) met behind closed doors in Philadelphia, with George Washington presiding. Originally charged with revising the Articles, they were persuaded to draft a new, federal constitution instead. The result was a strong central government protecting property (including slaves) and a promise, fulfilled in the first session of Congress, to ensure certain civil rights including freedom of speech and assembly, freedom from arbitrary search and seizure of personal records, fair trial for alleged violators, and so on. Corporations were not mentioned in the Constitution, but almost 100 years later they wheedled a Supreme Court judgment which gave them those civil rights as if they were "persons" under the law.

It was this "personhood" that locked millions of populists into a contest for economic rights which were then co-opted by winking corporatists' Progressivism of the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, and accelerated by the elite Trilateral Commission in the 1970s (including most living US presidents) which decried an "excess of democracy". That trend was popularly legitimated by President Ronald Reagan, with corporatism triumphant when Congress narrowly approved the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and acquiesced in the World Trade Organization (WTO) in the 1990s. These arrangements had the effect of treaties stripping federal, state, and local environmental, labor, health and other laws at the pleasure of corporate "dispute settlement" arbitrators. Swollen by mergers and acquisitions, corporations were now "transnational", declaring that the US government has "no automatic right" to tax or regulate them, despite the gift of personhood bestowed on them by that government. The US sent an adviser to the United Nations who caused the dissolution of the UN's Center on Transnational Corporations which would have monitored them.

These giant domestic and transnational corporations (TNCs) include the manufacturers of the gross, intricate, and very expensive weaponry of modern warfare, as well as the controllers of commercial law, energy, chemicals, communications, forests, mines, and even much food and water. They bring comforts and convenience at a price, but along with the armed services and a corrupt Congress these TNCs control public discourse and are responsible for the progressive destruction of our environment, culture, democratic society, and millions of people in foreign lands. The Earth is now in crisis, with plant and animal species decimated, rivers and seas poisoned, soil deadened, forests cut or burned, glaciers melting, and millions slaughtered and displaced in the chaos of imperial adventures.

How can we survive? How can we "revolve" [root of "revolution"] back to the humane principles of the Enlightenment and of indigenous cultures, while adapting and progressing in line with new realities—ecological, scientific, technical, and social?

**Double Trouble**

LET'S BE CLEAR ABOUT THE CHALLENGE WE FACE. We are in double trouble. We must restore democracy, and we must restore the ecosystem. The living earth—our only earth—cannot survive if we allow corporatism (capitalism, hierarchy, imperialism) to continue. We must be pro-Earth and pro-Democracy. As visionaries and practical planners we must develop social means capable of

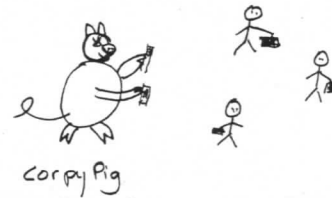
nursing a seriously injured earth, and we must develop cultural and scientific means—social science as well as physical and biological—capable of maintaining social health and integrity.

**Strategic Nonviolence**

**C**LEARLY ATTITUDES OF PEOPLE AND THEIR LEADERS MUST CHANGE in the direction of tolerance and conservation. They must change away from competition and personal accumulation of wealth. They must change to reverse corporate pretentiousness and immunity, or we must find new ways for advanced and efficient production. People must abandon the notion that market demand equals deservingness. They must revisit basic values of love, honor and community; liberty, equality, and solidarity; harmony with nature and acceptance of mortality. They must refocus on inward development, not growth—elaborating and interconnecting local microcosms rather than trying to own the galaxy.

Parts I and II of this essay outlined economic and social features of a necessary brave new world on a regional level, because the implied paradigm shift is too big for a continental nation, or the nation too big for such a shift. The distant federal authorities and the groups benefitting from elite control will resist, backed by trained police, courts, prisons, and ultimately assassins and armies. Elements of the system will resist

Give large donations to BOTH Presidential candidates AND all members of Congress so that NO Matter Who Wins YOU WIN!



But give a little more to the candidate who really knows how to return a favor.

Corpy Pig. From a draft of Jan Johnson's *Little Book of How to Protect Corporate Profits*. A former resident of east-central Massachusetts, Jan now lives 100 miles north on a farm in New Hampshire.

unless their commitment is weakened and their minds—for once skeptical—are encouraged to see, accept, and even promote new ways.

We are talking about strategic nonviolence in the service of radical change—revolution, or rapid guided evolution. "Radical" in the sense of root causes (from Latin "radix"—root). *What is strategic nonviolence? It is the use of a wide range of complementary nonviolent techniques of social change by a wide range of groups, locally developed but somewhat coordinated and systematized, and persisting with allowances for revision over years until welcome change has become stable.* Examples include the push of millions of Polish people in the



late 1970s and most of the 1980s, led by the indigenous organization Solidarity, against the Communist regime and toward a liberal society with strong union and church participation. Another is the recent nonviolent resistance of millions of Bolivians against their authoritarian, neoliberal regime and their transnational corporate patrons, and in support of the indigenous Evo Morales and his promises to establish popular control over water and gas resources for egalitarian development. Another, older example is the American Revolution for liberty (self-determination) from Crown control, which was largely accomplished nonviolently before the violent Revolutionary War to drive out the tenacious British authorities. Another example is the Montgomery, Alabama bus boycott as part of the decade-long civil rights struggle and the generations-long struggle for racial equality in the United States. All of these are illustrated in the Gandhi Circle exercise found on the web at [www.NewEnglandAlliance.org](http://www.NewEnglandAlliance.org).

Reasons that the revolutionary effort must be almost entirely *nonviolent* are: First, that the cost in injury and lives when hugely outgunned is unacceptable; and second, that a society built on violence cannot value democracy and be nonviolent. We do not wish to struggle for another oppressive, coercive, or chaotic society.

Strategic nonviolence is *offensive*, in contrast to the *defensive* avoidance of police brutality during a demonstration or sit-in. It actively seeks to realize a number of objectives, not yet realized, on the way to a welcome state of affairs. Isolated acts of civil disobedience such as blocking traffic to inconvenience authorities and call attention to the movement are among the building blocks of social change. They are tactical, and effective only when combined and at least loosely orchestrated with—for example—

*a visioning process*  
*high level negotiation*  
*media coverage*  
*multi-level and multi-media criticism of the system*  
*community support*  
*international support*  
*constructive alternative projects*  
*conversion of some oppressors*  
*review process*

Note— With regard to including former oppressors, can a nonviolent movement tolerate some violence? Of the dozens or hundreds or thousands of involved activists mobilized for action, many will be angry and tempted to strike out physically, harming opponents or damaging property. Are you going to drive them out? No, you may drive out the worst, but you are going to help most to cooperate with the nonviolent strategy. To engage powerful and violent opponents nonviolently takes much practice and determination—courage. If there are groups around who advocate or use physical violence, their exclusion or inclusion deserves consideration of a range of factors, for example, whether police provocation can be moderated. Furthermore, if the occasional violence is perceived as David's in the face of Goliath, the movement may not be damaged, albeit not be enhanced either. Gandhi said he would rather use violence than do nothing.

### Framing the Strategy

THE GOALS OF A SOCIAL MOVEMENT like Poland's Solidarity involve many objectives—some emerging late because of oversight or changed circumstances. Each one, or perhaps several at a time, may be the object of a campaign. A series of campaigns started in different places at different times will overlap and even exchange energy—thought, resources, leadership. The strategy is less a blueprint than a set of guidelines and theoretical understandings.

Kurt Lewin's change paradigm can be useful. First you must *unfreeze* old understandings and behaviors, then *move* or transform them, then *refreeze* or institutionalize them. (We are

applying this chiefly to the dispositions of our opponents and deniers, who likely are not all the same but of different factions. We ourselves also may advantageously change especially in elaborating our conceptions of resources, opponents, success, and so on.)

To unfreeze we must cause our opponent to doubt the value or accuracy of his/her [hereafter: "his"] understanding or behavior. This may be done through negative feedback from his own actions, abandonment by his friends, irrelevance in the bigger picture of other things which really make the difference, and so on, being sure that he does not see you as a hidden source of these outcomes. A small or incomplete example is voluntary confession by an important collaborator about unwarranted harming of your cause—unwarranted or lied about. It's not that you can directly cause such a thing, but you may be able to set it up or spotlight it.

To move his understanding or behavior we must avail the opponent or denier of a path toward some new system or way of doing things, intensify forces pushing and pulling him in that direction, and most importantly weaken counterforces and obstructions. Otherwise he will experience intensified conflict and tension, and might do something dangerous or unpredictable.

To refreeze his understandings and behavior so that he doesn't backslide, he must find himself in or establish an institution to support new behaviors and thinking. This is what happens when someone converts to a different religion or takes a position in a different organization. The effect may be blunted if he is a specialist and merely moving from one venue to another. The challenges are compounded when individuals come together to form a new institution, where new rules, opportunities, friends, and enforcements—even new values—must be developed from the scraps of experience of component individuals and groups, rather than their stepping into in a pre-existing institution.

Lewin's paradigm emphasizes the futility of trying to move someone or some group before unfreezing. And the futility of moving without refreezing, if one expects the new understandings and behavior to stabilize. These principles also apply to our own efforts to adopt a new way of doing things. They apply at every level—individual, group, organization, community.

Clearly, massive social change—multiple unfreezings, movings, and refreezings in new formations—cannot happen in a week or a month. As illustrated in Ackerman & DuVall's *A Force More Powerful* and other 20<sup>th</sup> Century case descriptions, popular or democratic changes are complex and take years, although critical events like the resignation of a key leader may accelerate change for a time. Not only must rules and sanctions be developed, but trusting and collaborative relationships formed and exercised. Corporations and other authoritarian organizations including government departments may be able to make rapid changes, but they endure only with heavy and frequent sanctions and—coming from the top down—are usually narrowly conceived and often maladaptive.

### Participation and Assemblies

**P**OPULAR PARTICIPATION IN PLANNING generates commitment, while imposition of even "friendly" plans results in short-term compliance at best. Commitment aside, popular participation brings detailed and varied experience to bear on framing problems and planning solutions. Thus in Argentina when the economy came apart in 2001 after the government followed prescriptions of the International Monetary Fund for

loans, neighbors and abandoned factory workers came together in assemblies and rapidly developed plans which worked—to exchange necessities and services, and to get factories going again on a worker-owned, cooperative basis.

In Brazil the Workers Party (PT) developed plans for governance when the military dictatorship might be dissolved, which happened after years of economic distress with increasing poverty and unemployment. When the PT won office in the city of Porto Alegre their plan for participatory budgeting (PB) was put into effect. The result was neighborhood assemblies all over the city, and the establishment of district assemblies for PB. Within a few years 50,000 people—5% of the adult population—were participating in these district assemblies and drawing up the city budget—with a treasury stocked in part by constitutionally mandated federal funding—which thus greatly benefitted poor people and districts. Porto Alegre's model was applied on the state level as well, successfully, and PB spread to 500 cities all over Brazil and the continent. (Presently PB is languishing in Porto Alegre because of corruption in the governing PT at the national level, and city voters replacing the PT mayor with a conservative who withdrew technical support for the PB system and substituted "expert" planning and considerable private funding.)

Hugo Chavez's Bolivarian revolution in Venezuela has used oil revenues to support alternative governance and service institutions nationwide. One feature, hardly a year old, is thousands of local assemblies to set local priorities. They have been successful in drawing large numbers of citizens and establishing cooperative services to supplement limited mainline medical services, schools, housing, and so on, and to assure services regardless of ability to pay.

These are experiments in direct democracy, engaging the concerns and talents of millions of ordinary people at the local level, and virtually eliminating corrupt practices in city spending. In the United States, city government is generally less corrupt than at the state and federal levels, where representatives distant from their constituents regularly accept money, directly or indirectly, from corporate lobbyists and their employers. However, there is direct participation, for example, in allocating funds from the federal Housing and Urban Development department earmarked for neighborhood development—a drop in the city's budget bucket. Many New England towns have open town meetings where citizens debate and amend a draft budget presented to them by their town meeting finance committee. Burlington, Vermont, has an elected city council, like most US cities, but with advisory assemblies in neighborhoods. Participation is not heavy, largely because with a progressive government citizens are not very distressed.

In Chattanooga, Tennessee, in the early 1980s, an open citywide assembly was organized in the wake of industrial abandonment with high pollution and unemployment. This large, diverse citizen group developed a vision for city redevelopment, and fostered new institutions which turned the city around, tending to embed the economy in the local and regional society.

In the Boston area a different model was used for citizen participation in governance on top of the elected government—a community-based lobby. The Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO), a coalition of already-existing church groups spent two years in the 1990s intensively connecting group members with one another through small group and peer interviewing before they selected priority issues. They then forced themselves upon high-level city officials, bringing them to large assemblies to own up to policies and respond to demands for government action on community priorities—which they followed up. Such methods can be found in right-wing as well as progressive organizations, and

indeed in corporate technical and management centers, though in the latter participation is hardly voluntary.

Though scattered and poorly publicized—US television and government eschew community organizing—there are at least a million local or regional peace/justice/environmental groups or movements worldwide, according to Paul Hawken in his new book *Blessed Unrest*. Perhaps this should come as no surprise considering the millions who turned out on two or three continents to protest corporate globalization and soon again, the imperial war in Iraq. With organization and planning there is great potential for stemming global destruction and constructing humane and mindful societies.

### Constitutional Issues

"NO TAXATION WITHOUT REPRESENTATION!" was a strong motto during the American Revolution. Today we are being taxed—morally as well as financially—for an endless, multifront, dirty war while our representatives do not represent the majority who reject the war and would disempower corporations. Similarly, polls show that critically large portions of the public distrust voting machines while our "representatives" play political games and retain them. Unlike our revolutionary days, there are few wealthy gentlemen willing to choose delegates to debate, draft, and pass democratic articles of confederation, so it is up to the aware not-so-wealthy. Negative motivation to change the system is there, but what positive principles would they gather around?

In Part II (section on Governance) we outlined four "pillars" or values to support an ideal state: Human rights, corporate subordination, local decision making, and protection of nature. These are quite different from property, limited accountability (long terms of office, lax campaign finance laws), executive appointment, balance of powers, privacy, and other values of the federal Constitution as amended. Regional forums could be called to debate regional constitutional issues, and these values could be offered as an elegant (comprehensive and concise) basis for most laws—adjusting municipal, county, and state laws accordingly if these territorial boundaries are to be maintained.

Afterward, public debate could ensue with word-of-mouth leading the mobilization until, for instance, newspaper pressmen and TV production contractors—libertarian geeks perhaps—take time off for civic meetings and media companies begin to feel the pinch. At this point groups around the region and the country already committed to these four pillars might be spotlighted and storied more seriously and persistently. Doubt will be created about the gentlemen's values embodied in the old Constitution. The old ideology will be reconsidered, and like melting glaciers, a thaw will accelerate. But will the public resonate to expanded campaigns on the issues of rights, personhood, subsidiarity, and nature? And will they pick up on the idea of combining them into a new constitution—regionally at least?

### Moving

**S**UPPORT FOR ACTIVISTS, THINKTANKERS, AND DEFACTORS may be the key strategic element. Is there a multimillionaire like Marshall Field III, who funded the Industrial Areas Foundation for the non-partisan radical organizer Saul Alinsky in the 1930s? Or will volunteers be able to fill the bill? When a turning point becomes obvious, as in the wake of Hurricane Katrina around New Orleans, people become active. A better model is the union strike fund and associated community logistical effort—meals, lodging, care for children and the

infirm, alternative jobs, publicity, examples of sacrifice and determination, songs.

Through churches, veterans organizations, automobile clubs, women's groups, retired persons' organizations, student groups, and unions, a network of Community Logistical Support (CLS) groups could be promoted. Pressure on city councilors could bring municipal support wherein citizen volunteers could partially direct the activities of public agencies toward a Brave New England. "Base" organizations like the churches and clubs cited above might provide even more of necessary labor, transportation, and funding. Pressure on retirement fund managers could bring funds to be offset by delayed payment of taxes to federal agencies. The process of general withholding of war taxes could begin by creating a New England Development Bank to handle escrow accounts for war resisters and whole town governments supporting the effort, while financing needed regional development.

Women and elders could play the dominant roles in CLS, substantially aided by high school students. Thinking ahead to 2012, for example, federal troops (e.g., national guard, or even Homeland Security mercenaries) may be confronting citizen groups after a national "emergency" with martial law declared on the pretext of another 9/11. If CLS could take care of their domestic duties, women and elders could have a powerful deterrent effect on the young men (mostly men) of the Guard. High rates of desertion not only during the Vietnam war but also during the Iraq war (extrapolated from UK desertion rates in the absence of recent US figures) are among the best kept secrets of the US government and media. A protective and nurturing CLS could encourage refusal of command by soldiers who are shocked by the possibility of shooting their aunts and grandparents—or people who look like them. That CLS be multiracial and multi-ethnic by connections among neighboring communities is important because by 2012 Homeland Security will have filled its ranks with immigrants given special privileges.

With regard to immigration, most immigrants from Latin America and many from Asia and the Caribbean as well are farmers, displaced by market forces and US farm subsidies unleashed by NAFTA and WTO. A sustainable New England needs to shift its food supply from imported to local, and as pointed out by Richard Heinberg will need a million or more new farmers. Why not tap this farm-ready immigrant force? For New England to determine its own immigration policy it will have to defy current federal practice, but what if Kansas—closer to the Mexican border—was of the same mind? What if New England groups negotiated with Kansas? A perfect project for New England Development Bank.

As unemployment in the US increases and "war on terror" becomes replaced with "war on Corpy", urban farming will become more visible, with rooftop, greenhouse, backyard vegetable gardens and egg-laying chickens, and marginal-area fish ponds and maybe parks. The righteous spirit of World War II may return.

Fleshing out spirit will be constant negotiations with not only government officials, but with religious leaders, media directors, corporate leaders, professional associations, university scholars and researchers, foreign supporters, and leaders of various civic and political organizations, as well as exchanges among ordinary folk in different communities through CLS.

As momentum toward change increases, many new tactics and elements are likely to emerge. For example—

- Pass "open organization" laws in several states, first opening government facilities to journalist and citizen oversight, and then nonprofit and corporate facilities. For example, citizens should be able to live for a while in prisons and talk with prisoners and officers—this was actually done in the 1940s... Sit in on corporate

board meetings. At the same time, research effects of proprietary secrets and their broaching.

[Note— Much federal government business happens beyond scrutiny in the offices of private contractors. According to Daniel Brook in the July 2007 *Harpers Magazine*, "private employees working on federal contracts now outnumber actual federal employees" and are "not subject to Freedom of Information Act requests."]

- Design and experiment with new forms of participatory democracy, covering regional as well as local concerns. Part of this would be alternatives to winner-take-all elections. Another part might be proportional sharing, in parliamentary bodies, of initiatives and resources by the different parties.

- Study and forecast 2017 climate, food security, diet, energy, social unrest, outside-market dependency—in view of true security. Exactly how do ecology and societal activity interact?

- Support culturally fertile segments of the population through organizations like a Geek Nation (technical people into music and politics) or a Mary Dyer Society (women speak out).

- Work with secessionist groups like Vermont Second Republic, getting specific about details of economy and governance... Work with groups like Association for Public Transport to phase out car culture while phasing in sustainable ways of living and traveling... Work with US government offices to enhance their functioning— Postal Service, Coast Guard, Social Security, etc... Work with groups in other regions of the US, Canada, and Mexico to promote collaboration and fair trade...

- Fly the flag of New England: Green pine tree on white square in the corner of a red flag—Goes back to the Battle of Bunker Hill!.. Adopt a "Yankee Doodle" brand, feather (like French revolutionary hat), and hymn (much more humane and fun than *La Marseillaise*)... Establish a Yankee political party incorporating Greens, Libertarians, Roosevelt Democrats, true conservatives, and alienated youth and adults—all open to radical change.

- Arrange for the Red Sox to play a series each with the top Japanese and Korean teams and top Cuban and Dominican teams—for a real World Series.

### Regionalism

**A**MONG THE MANY CHALLENGES OF RE-INSTITUTIONALIZATION to be faced by an autonomous New England will be selecting areas of independence, while maintaining federal links in other areas. Patent and copyright law will necessarily be revisited in our call for innovation. While pirating proprietary techniques and products was useful in China's economic rise, other countries such as Brazil and India are negotiating in international forums and have won concessions, for example, in seeds and drugs. But these are merely adjustments of parameters. New England could negotiate to reconceptualize copyright and patent rights. They have gradually been edged away from the inventors and into the pockets of investors and corporations. In the meantime, we must boldly make use of new inventions and developments after making due compensation to the truly creative people behind the supposedly risk-taking investors and the truly needed services of corporate "owners".

With autonomous trade agreements, New England has the resources needed for developing in its own way provided they are not drained away in imperial misadventures and corporate excesses. Current state budgets of the six states add up to around \$54 billion per year. New England residents pay many billions in federal taxes and receive many billions in services—the figures should not be too hard to research through National

Priorities Project, Northampton MA. A challenge and a justification for withholding many of the tax billions is not only the perhaps \$40 billion in New England's share of Pentagon expenditures beyond a reasonable \$100 billion per year for true national defense (not aggression and bases all over the world), but perhaps another \$60 billion for dysfunctional expenditures of the federal departments of Agriculture, Energy, Commerce, Transportation, and Homeland Security. That means another \$100 billion for us to intelligently invest. True, the federal government is likely to cut off contracts of New England arms manufacturers and subsidies to certain large corporations. Or maybe they would leave those corporations alone and find other ways to punish New Englanders. Calculations could be useful for justification, but we should on principle withhold payment for dysfunctional programs and divert those funds to regional development which we control. Meanwhile those abandoned facilities, as in Argentina, could be converted by their workers to useful, cooperative enterprise.

Moving toward regional autonomy will be gradual and, on our part, nonviolent, riding waves of economic crisis, war outrages, and civic heroism and insight—but only if persistent efforts are made to reveal the folly of many corporate and governmental practices and institutions, and only if alternative principles and institutions—including model local and regional constitutions—are promoted. ■

## CHAPTER NEWS

**Boston Cambridge Alliance Meeting 6:45 pm May 23, 2007**  
Friends Meeting House

*Present: Lucius Chiaraviglio, Soesan Kae Clarke, Joanna Herlihy, David Lewit, Diana Licht*

The centerpiece of the meeting was to have been a David Korten presentation on DVD. The group chose to spend the time on discussion instead. Discussion was mainly related to BCA priorities and projects. Dave Lewit informed others of a new presidential order relating to assumption of control in case of certain sorts of emergencies. [See article, Page 1, and box, Page 2 of this issue. *BCA is starting a project of local inquiry. The source document at White House web site seems to have been removed, but we will send it to you on request.* —Ed.]

Speculation about implications of this included observations that an incident with a mini-nuke attributed to Iran could provide occasion for invading Iran—on the other hand, that even nonintelligence people would see through such a ploy—that the next move of the neo-cons would be more cautious.

Kae recalled that, under the Patriot Act, local police are already under the command of the Defense Department. Boston city officials put up resistance at some point, but should have called public meetings. BCA resistance to this diktat: Kae will write some Boston city councillors, Joanna will try to figure out how to approach Cambridge city officials. She sees most hopeful resistance to be the knowledge of local officials that they are, indeed, the first responders in case of emergency. If local officials have a problem with the executive order, they might communicate with their peers nationwide via organizations such as the National Conference of Mayors, etc.

There was limited discussion of the latest version of the Holt Bill HR 811. All agreed with the Election Defense Alliance ([www.electiondefensealliance.org](http://www.electiondefensealliance.org)) that it is unacceptable not to have paper trails by 2008 and that we don't want elections under the control of a presidentially appointed commission (EAC).

The next meeting will be on June 20 with Rosalie Anders of the Cambridge Energy Alliance as guest.

Progress on bottled water action subsequent to the meeting:

Ruth Caplan, AfD water campaign and Sierra Club Water Privatization chairperson agreed to permit use of the Sierra Club bottled water pamphlet for guerrilla actions if we stamp it with logo of BCA or some ad hoc water group.

On May 31, Dave Lewit attended a meeting of Boston DSA relating to immigration and globalization where the speakers were provided with the usual bottled water. Afterwards, Dave spoke with DSA chair David Knuttunen about the water. There wasn't time to talk so they continued by email. David Kn.: "Should I attend the meeting naked? All my clothes are corporate made.... I am sympathetic to the desire to not use bottled water. I also know that I am a volunteer with many responsibilities (business...and family). I was at my desk at 7:30 that morning, worked non-stop until 4:30, then pulled stuff together for the meeting...didn't leave until 9:30. Nevertheless, I will take your concerns under advisement. It does occur to me that if I had a (corporate-produced, in fact, petro-business-produced) screw-top plastic water jug in my collection of meeting paraphernalia, I could fill that with ice water, and bring it and a few cups (which I always have on hand), and it would actually save me having to stop and pick up water (which is often a separate stop—if I'm not bringing other food). I would be still concerned about spills in a venue like last night's, where the water bottles stood on the floor next to the speakers feet."

Dave Lewit responded, "Ah, David—bravo. I love your spirit and appreciate your work..." Then Dave L asks others, "What is the cheapest safe pitcher (not polycarbonate, I presume)? Then we can make up kits for our members to take to meetings..." —Joanna Herlihy

**NOTICE: NO MEETING JULY or AUGUST. Enjoy a holiday! Phone and visit around. See Dispatch for Fall meeting.**

## 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 or copy this form and send it to

Dave Lewit, 271 Dartmouth St., Boston, MA 02116.)

BOSTON-CAMBRIDGE ALLIANCE for 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 [dlewit@igc.org](mailto:dlewit@igc.org)

271 Dartmouth St., #2h, Boston MA 02116

Diana Licht, Associate Editor

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