

BCA Dispatch

"The issue is not issues; the issue is the system"
—Ronnie Dugger

Newsletter of the **Boston-Cambridge Alliance for Democracy** **June 2009**

I am not very happy with the word "hope." I don't believe in people just hoping. We work for what we want. I always say that one has no right to hope without endeavor...

---Aung San Suu Kyi

COMMUNITY NOTES

Don't be left out! Join the BCA/NorthBridge working group—call Barbara Clancy for time of next meeting: 781-894-1179.

Eyeing Collaboration

Representatives from three system-oriented social action groups met at a downtown café on May 29th to exchange possibilities for working on projects in common: Massachusetts Coalition for Healthy Communities (**Eli Beckerman**), Majority Agenda (**Paul Shannon** and **Suren Moodliar**) and Alliance for Democracy (**Dave Lewit** and **Joanna Herlihy**).

Agenda

To share concerns and possibilities for collaboration. We assumed that unlike most social action groups, all three of our groups have in common a holistic, dynamic approach to complex social problems. We assume that issues, their causes and effects are interrelated in a big system, and that changes in part of the system can affect other parts, more or less.

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"Prompt Global Strike"

Pentagon Plans Series of 5-10-Year Wars

by John T. Bennett, *Defense News**, 4 Jun 2009

OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS, THE U.S. MILITARY is likely to become engaged in a number of hot and cold conflicts, each spanning five to 10 years, meaning the Pentagon must "adjust" its decades-old force sizing and basing constructs, says Gen. James Cartwright, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs.

Since the Cold War, the Pentagon has used a so-called "force-sizing construct" that focused on a need to fight two conventional wars at once, while also placing emphasis on "the most deadly" threats to American national security, Cartwright said June 4 in Washington.

But the world has changed in major ways, meaning the two conventional-war-based approach is no longer a good fit, according to defense officials. Those changes are the reason senior Pentagon officials are examining whether the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) should include a new force-planning construct, as well as a new plan for how American bases, troops and combat equipment are located around the globe.

"It is clear we are going to have conflicts whose character will not be the same" as the ones on which the Pentagon has for decades based its force planning and global basing postures, Cartwright said. "It's clear [U.S. forces] will be engaged in operations that [each] last five or 10 years—and that is fundamentally different than in the past."

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Kim I Sim, Guide in Army Museum, Pyongyang, North Korea

Photo: Eric Laffargue

Korea Still Caged After 56 Years Nuclear Test Defies US-UN Embargo

Today's News

THE U.N. SECURITY COUNCIL HAS IMPOSED tough new sanctions on North Korea, punishing the country for its second nuclear test. Pyongyang responded to the resolution Saturday by vowing to "weaponize" all its plutonium and will consider any blockade "an act of war." The Security Council agreed Friday to expand an arms embargo and authorize ship searches on the high seas, with the goal of derailing the isolated nation's nuclear and missile programs...

—by Edith M. Lederer, *Associated Press*, 13 June 2009

Background

THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA (DPRK, a.k.a. North Korea) emerged in the 1950s from the Soviet- and Chinese-backed north of the Korean peninsula in its conflict with the US-backed south (which declared itself the Republic of Korea, ROK). An armistice was signed in 1953, but US troops remained in the south, and no peace treaty has been agreed to this day (2009). Their situation has been something like Cuba's.

With DPRK technically an enemy, the US—partially through the UN—has blocked much sea trade with North Korea. Still, under its "juche" (self-reliance) program, and with some trade with China, the country became self-sufficient in food by 1961 despite irrigation dams and processing facilities having been destroyed by war. When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1990, fuel for mountainous North Korea's farm tractors (Continued >>)

dried up, and with floods and droughts added, DPRK experienced a million deaths from famine and maldistribution of food over successive years. (This after possibly 3 million deaths during the war—more than Vietnam.) —Ed.

SOUTH KOREA IS A KEY [US] ALLY. It has been engaged in a rather substantial *modernization of its military*, first under Kim Dae-Jung and then under Roh Moo-Hyun. It might seem that South Korea was upgrading its military to counter the only country it publicly identifies as a threat in the region, North Korea. But this modernization began at a time of unprecedented rapprochement between the two countries and *when South Korea was already outpacing North Korea by about 40 to 1* [italics ours throughout —Ed.].

The real reason for the uptick in military spending was the United States. "In this most recent modernization, the drawdown of U.S. troops, the relocation of U.S. bases, the removal of the U.S. tripwire [readiness at the border with North Korea], and the handover of wartime military control—changes largely planned since the 1990s but accelerated during the tenure of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld—all contributed to intensifying fears of entanglement prominent among [then President] Roh Moo-hyun supporters and raising fears of abandonment," I write in "Ploughshares into Swords": "South Korean officials began to look into acquiring many, if not all, of the high-tech capabilities provided by the United States in order to fill the anticipated gap."

North Korea, meanwhile, has been feeling rather neglected. *It has threatened to launch a satellite—what we prefer to call a missile—to remind the world that it's still around and hungry to negotiate.* "From its standpoint, North Korea did not get enough from the recent agreements," I write in a recent op-ed for the Progressive Media Project. "While it received some heavy fuel oil and some food aid, and while the United States removed it from the list of state sponsors of terrorism, most economic sanctions remain in place. The normalization of diplomatic relations is a carrot dangling in the far distance. And North Korea hasn't received any substantial development assistance or potential trade deals."

—John Feffer, *Foreign Policy in Focus*, 5 March 2009 (excerpt)

Two Personal Views

THERE IS ONE ISSUE WHICH I FELT I MUST BE CONTESTED when I read it in the article [26 May] concerning Stephen W. Bosworth [who is dean of the Tufts University Fletcher School of Diplomacy, former US ambassador to South Korea, and recently appointed envoy to the DPRK].

Mr. Bosworth is quoted as saying that the DPRK is a "closed, regimented society...difficult to describe" because "you don't wander the streets and have coffee in a sidewalk café." Mr. Bosworth may not wander for some reason, but I visited the DPRK in 2003 with a National Lawyers Guild delegation and found a very different society than this 'usual' description implies. The country is certainly very poor due to the U.S. refusal to complete the promised peace process since the 1953 cease fire and the continued attempts to isolate it. It also has few English speakers, making communications difficult, but one thing I did was wander the streets & parks of the country.

Every morning I left our hotel to watch the herons leaving their rookery in the cliffs behind the hotel, walking down to the small village about a half mile away. One morning I met a man who had caught and heron with a bola, and we sat and tried (with limited success but much laughter) to communicate for an hour or so. On another occasion I left a restaurant during a musical

show to take a walk, and ended up in a bar playing pool with a few others, again with limited communications but much laughter.

One afternoon my group spent time walking around a picnic area meeting Koreans and singing, exchanging small gifts and taking each others' pictures. One afternoon we had some free time and went into a park where we met students learning traditional painting and discussing (through an interpreter) what the teenagers hoped their futures to be.

Lastly, all around the country we met people from many countries, and saw parks full of people playing music and games and generally hanging out like people everywhere else in the world.

Back in Beijing at the end of our trip the five of us talked of our experience. The strongest impression we all had was of how, unlike what we expected (one woman only brought black clothing as she expected a dark, dreary place), it felt like *any* third world country each of us had previously visited, not an isolated, paranoid 'hermit' country.

I think the differences between our countries will stop only when we stop demonizing each other. We have to begin to realize that the DPRK is just like every other country, with people concerned about their society, their children's future, and living safely without interference from bullying, imperialistic, militaristic countries such as the United States.

—Neil Berman, *Somerville MA*, letter to *Boston Globe*



Nighttime satellite photo of northeast China, Korea, and Japan. The very light spot in the center is Seoul, South Korea. The black area above is North Korea, whose only lighted spot (NW of Seoul) is said to be the president's compound in Pyongyang.

JUST BEFORE THE IRAQ INVASION BEGAN, a North Korean general was asked to defend his country's nuclear weapons program, and with refreshing candor replied, "We see what you are getting ready to do with Iraq. And you are not going to do it to us."

It really is quite a remarkable development. North Korea today is one of the most desperate countries in the world. Most of its citizens are either languishing in gulags or chronically starving. And yet—in contrast to all the debate that has taken place in recent years about whether the United States and/or Israel ought to launch a preemptive strike on Iran—no one seems to be proposing any kind of military strike on North Korea. Why not? Because of the mere possibility that North Korea could impose unacceptable damage upon us in reply...

—Tad Daley, *Tikkun Magazine*, May-June 2009

US-Canada Border Militarization

Tribe Blocked, Canada Loses in Trade

by Paul Weinberg, InterPress Service, 30 May 2009 (excerpt)

DESPITE THE ADVANCE OF A JOINT THREAT ASSESSMENT, Brian Masse, the opposition Member of Parliament from the border city of Windsor, Ontario, pointed to what he described as the "militarisation" of the Canada U.S. border. He expressed concern about the presence of U.S. gunboats, Black Hawk helicopters, drone planes, fences and spy towers on the U.S. side.

Masse is critical of a new feature in the Napolitano/Van Loan [US Homeland Security secretary/Canadian minister of Public Safety] announcement that will allow U.S. and Canadian law enforcement personnel to ride in each others' vessels in the lakes and waterways along the shared border and enforce the other countries' laws. "It allows on the Canadian side Americans to arrest Canadians and also on the American side Canadians to arrest Americans," the Canadian politician told IPS. [This is part of the hush-hush Security and Prosperity Partnership (SPP) among the gov-corp elites of Canada, US, and Mexico. —Ed.]

Masse remarked about the introduction on the U.S. side of Coast Guard vessels carrying auto cannons that have the capacity to shoot 750-1200 rounds per minute. He said this follows an earlier and little discussed announcement that U.S. troops will be allowed with the permission of Ottawa to enter Canada in an "emergency" situation.

He also stated that the Canadian government missed the opportunity, in the recent discussions with the homeland security secretary, to push for a loosening of the Canada U.S. border. "[The U.S. policy] is making our border like the Mexican border...

I can't imagine a threat coming from Canada. I mean we all want to be more secure. Does that require Black Hawk helicopters [and] gun boats?" he asked.

Canada has not recovered from the negative impact that the 9/11 attacks have had on north-south trade within North America, commented Steven Globerman, who teaches business Western Washington University in Belling-

ham, Washington and is the co-author of the recent book, *The Impact of 9/11 on Canada-US Trade*. While U.S. exports to Canada returned to a normal level by 2004, Canadian exports have between 2001 and 2007 declined by about 15 to 20% because of a hardened 9/11 U.S. border, Globerman told IPS.

Among the factors contributing to this trend has been the disruption of a formerly seamless border under the North American free trade agreement where parts produced within continental manufacturing operations such as auto and steel crossed back and forth without disruption.

Another manifestation of this has been the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative travel rules in the U.S. which obligate the



Akwesasne (Mohawk) people approach conference to demand the reopening of bridge uniting their people on both sides of border.

carrying of valid documentation by anyone including Canadians crossing into the U.S. Many commentators have observed that because more Canadians carry passports than Americans, it is widely expected that U.S. travel to Canada will decline.

"All of these various phenomena [of disruption] contribute to Canadian goods costing more in the U.S. because it costs more to bring them across the border," Globerman said. "If you raise the price obviously you are going to reduce your sales, whether we are talking about goods that are sold to other producers in the U.S. or goods that are sold to retailers."

The Carbon-Trading Scam

Markey-Waxman "Green" Bill A Disaster

by Daphne Wysham, AlterNet, 19 May 2009

ONE OF THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE PIECES of energy and climate legislation ever drafted by members of the U.S. Congress has finally seen the light of day. After lots of haggling among fellow moderate and conservative Democrats, Representatives Henry Waxman (D-CA) and Edward Markey (D-MA) released their "American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009."

Now the bad news: 1) It won't protect the poor from price-hikes as the price of carbon is slowly internalized into our energy bills, but will protect polluting industries by allowing them free pollution permits; 2) It opens the door to fraud and shell games instead of real climate action by setting up a huge carbon derivatives market; 3) It makes a mockery of our common understanding of "renewable energy," favoring dirty smokestacks over truly clean, renewable energy.

Slamming the Consumer

Right out of the starting gate, the bill provides a ridiculous number of giveaways to industry -- something President Barack Obama campaigned against as unfair to consumers: Upwards of 85 percent of pollution allowances are being given away for free to the electricity sector, with many of these free permits not phasing out until 2030. This means little to none of the revenues coming into the public coffers from this "cap and trade" scheme will be used to protect low and moderate households from energy price increases, as envisioned by Obama.

Carbon Shell-Game

This bill would open up the single largest market in carbon in the world, with the potential to reach \$2 trillion by 2020. Not only would the Waxman-Markey bill allow for carbon trading between industries, it would open up the so-called "sub-prime carbon" market in carbon offsets -- whereby industries can claim emissions reductions by investing in various projects around the world that theoretically reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The legislation allows 2 billion tons of carbon offsets -- half from developing countries and half from domestic sources--which represents almost 30 percent of all U.S. greenhouse gas emissions.

Yet the Government Accountability Office (GAO) claims it's virtually impossible to verify whether carbon offsets represent real emissions reductions. And numerous other studies have found that carbon offsets in developing countries often subsidize business-as-usual projects such as hundreds of large hydropower dams in China, many of which were already under construction when they claimed to be providing "emissions reductions."

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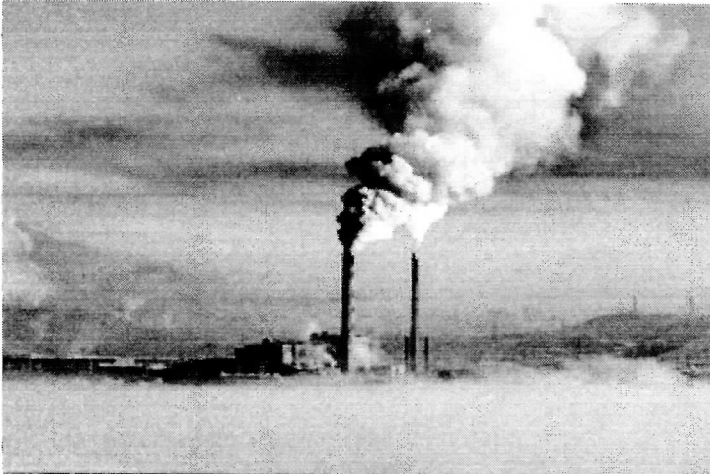
False Bonus: Pig-Gas into CO₂

Industrial hog farms have found ways of tapping the carbon offset market without making the slightest contribution toward getting society off its fossil fuel addiction. The logic is this: If you capture and flare methane from pig manure, you are turning methane (a potent global warming gas) into CO₂ (a less potent global warming gas). Pig farms benefit by selling that difference in greenhouse gas potency to big fossil fuel polluters as a carbon offset, allowing them to continue their business as usual.

Double Talk

And if "carbon offsets" are a misleading term, the words "renewable energy," as used in this bill, have an Orwellian ring. Do you think "renewable energy" means windmills or solar panels? Think again. The windmills and solar panels of our renewable energy dreams are being supplanted by the smokestacks of our nightmares. All it takes is a little imagination -- and a high-paid lobbyist -- to claim that just about anything is "renewable energy."

Take biomass burners: There are plans afoot to cut down 100-year-old trees, throw them into a burner, and call this "renewable energy." Never mind that trees can't match coal for stored energy, which would make it necessary to plant whole planets of trees to fuel industry. Just focus your mind on the idea that they grow back!



Or consider the municipal solid waste incinerator duplicitously recast as "waste to energy" projects. This waste could otherwise be recycled (generating 10 times as many green jobs as an incinerator, by the way) or composted, providing rich fertilizer. But, in the twisted logic of the Waxman-Markey universe, incinerators are "renewable" because there is an endless supply of waste going to landfills; if one burns that waste and turns the heat into energy—*presto, change'o*—this, too, becomes a "renewable" form of energy. This in spite of the fact that burning garbage produces more CO₂ per unit of electricity generated than the dirtiest coal power plants.

While industry lobbyists may have worked their magic tricks on members of Congress in the name of "bold climate legislation," Planet Earth is likely to remain unmoved by these sleights of hand. At 385 parts per million CO₂ and rising, our atmosphere is on a steady course to climate catastrophe unless these charlatans and their henchmen in Congress get real. Though the pigs may rule in Animal Farm, they shouldn't be running our climate politics.

Daphne Wysham is a Fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies, co-director of the Sustainable Energy & Economy Network, and co-host of Earthbeat Radio.

Desperately Seeking Mediocrity Medical Corp's Shove; Obama Calculates

by Derrick Z. Jackson, Boston Globe, 13 June 2009

PRESIDENT OBAMA SAYS THAT IF HEALTHCARE is not reformed this year, "we're not going to get it done." His Council of Economic Advisers warns that healthcare expenditures, currently 18 percent of gross domestic product, will nearly double to 34 percent by 2040 unless costs are contained. The number of uninsured people in the United States would expand from its current 46 million to 72 million by 2040. "The American healthcare system is on an unsustainable path," the council said. "Expenditures as a share of GDP are already substantially higher than in other developed countries . . . This growth threatens to have a devastating impact."

Even if Congress responds to Obama's alarm, it is doubtful reform will put us on par with other developed countries. Obama has already taken a single-payer system off the table, despite repeatedly acknowledging the clear benefits of eliminating the administrative costs of middlemen insurance companies. In a May town hall in New Mexico, he said to applause, "If I were starting a system from scratch, then I think that the idea of moving towards a single-payer system could very well make sense. That's the kind of system you have in most industrialized countries around the world."

Alas, he says, we are so entrenched in employer-based, insurance-company healthcare, all he can promise is "vast improvement." He told the New Mexico audience, "We don't want a huge disruption as we go into healthcare reform where suddenly we're trying to reinvent one-sixth of the economy."

Insurance companies and pharmaceuticals, the nation's top two lobbying industries, have Capitol Hill on lockdown. They have spent \$2.8 billion since 1998 on lobbying and \$76 million in the 2008 elections in campaign contributions, according to the Center for Responsive Politics. Faster than you can say Obama, contributions historically weighted heavily toward Republicans are swinging to the Democrats.

Part of the reason obviously is that the health industry feels the heat of American outrage on costs. A coalition of insurance and pharmaceutical companies, hospitals, and the American Medical Association this week issued a plan to voluntarily knock costs down between \$1 trillion to \$1.7 trillion over the next 10 years.

But that was short of a goal set by Obama of \$2 trillion. It underscores how hard it will be for Obama to get any goal line approaching universal healthcare, with our embarrassingly bloated middleman costs. The United States, according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, spends \$6,714 per capita on healthcare, double the spending in countries like Sweden, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Australia, and Japan. Second highest is Switzerland at \$4,520, and only two other nations, Norway and Luxembourg, cross the \$4,000 per-capita mark. Our per-capita spending on prescription and nonprescription drugs is \$843, compared with \$639 in Canada, \$500 in Germany, and \$303 in New Zealand.

We might say our for-profit system is worth it if, for all those health costs, Americans indeed boasted the best health in the world. But it can be argued that our system is literally costing each American two, three, and four years of life. The United States is the only industrialized nation with life expectancy under 78 years. Australia, Canada, France, Iceland, Japan,

Norway, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland all have life expectancies between 80.3 and 82 years.

Even more striking, in the early 1960s the United States was ahead of, or virtually tied with, Japan, Spain, Italy, Luxembourg, Germany, France, Finland, and Austria in life expectancy. Today, we are a year-and-a-half or more behind them all.

Will reform reclaim those years, at a time when we are compounding costs with preventable diseases, such as the highest obesity rates in the developed world? Reform will have to be as dramatic as the first heart transplant, as radical as taxing junk food, and as meaningful as making physical fitness as important as test scores.

As long as Obama and Capitol Hill say we cannot start from scratch on healthcare, we will forever be scratching the surface.

Ed. Comment: *The breaking news is this year's corruption evidenced among key Congress members as aired by Legistorm.com and printed/aired by the Washington Post and Democracy Now! For example, Sen. Baucus (chair of the committee shaping health bills and refusing to hear advocates of single-payer) received \$3,400,000 from the medical industry over 6 years, while Sen. (and Mrs.) Kerry and Rep. (and Mr.) Harman own \$5,200,000+ and \$3,200,000+ respectively in health care industry stock. Similar conflicts of interest hold regarding coal, oil, and gas holdings for many congress members dealing with climate change legislation... And they don't even consider it corruption—they OK it in law and institutional rules, and typically they cynically profess independent judgment...*

This is a chronic SCANDAL. Why isn't it screaming from every newspaper top headline? (One answer: It's been ignored or soft-pedaled by the corporate media for so long that folks are inured. Deeper: People feel they have no where to go—in school and suburban and inner city life they learn only the official channels of action—controlled elections and opaque government...)

*The short-term fix is hearing and **passage of H.676**, the only health care bill with single-payer, government funded and managed payment to doctors and hospitals. For information, see www.thealliancefordemocracy.org.*

*In the longer term, the issue is not "health care"; the issue is THE SYSTEM. By way of **institutional reform**, congress must be constrained by a single-payer form of **campaign finance**, where acceptance of payment from corporations or corporate bundles of individual contribution must be considered a **criminal offence** wherein both donor and recipient may go to prison.*

*Structurally, senate and house **rules** (or better, rules of a unicameral congress) must be democratized, including repeal of **seniority** and committee **chair power** such as agenda-setting. **Public opinion**, measured by the Census Bureau, must count as heavily as congress-member votes in procedural and structural matters if not in critical substantive matters, e.g., after serious challenges from minorities. Congressional **redistricting** should be done with algorithms featuring compactness and campaigning access, not incumbent preference.*

*Regarding **institutional innovation**, election to congressional seats is a holdover from aristocratic colonial times. We need to move to something truly representative like random jury selection, with professional-level payment and staffing. That way youth, women, racial minorities, the poor, and dissidents will be at least proportionally represented... These changes may first be tried in **regional assemblies**, funded by local governments and the likes of George Soros... And then there's **public media**... ■*

Citizen Trade Commissions

ME, VT, NH Critical of NAFTA, WTO

by David Lewit, Alliance for Democracy, 9 June '09 (testimony)

I'M QUITE SURE THAT THE MEMBERS OF THIS COMMITTEE are familiar with the purposes and terms of this Globalization Impact bill H.341—how a citizen trade policy commission may help to protect our laws and people from the excesses of trade agreements negotiated and enforced without our participation or consent. Indeed, the economic reversals which most of our country is experiencing today are in some measure due to financial and trade agreements like WTO and NAFTA.

In these few minutes I would like to offer excerpts from the most recent reports issued by such commissions already established and functioning in our neighboring states of Maine, Vermont, and New Hampshire.

From the Maine commission, in a letter dated last Wednesday to its US senators and congressmembers. <<http://www.maine.gov/legis/opla/CTPCPanamaFTAletter5-28-09.pdf>>

"Panama is a known tax-haven for corporations including national financial institutions that compete directly with Maine's local banks. Panama's laws create a system of banking secrecy and make it comparatively easy for U.S. companies to create subsidiaries there in order to evade U.S. taxes... The Senate Homeland Security Committee estimated that tax evasion in offshore havens costs U.S. taxpayers \$100 billion a year.

"The Panama tax haven creates an uneven playing field for companies in the U.S. that pay taxes and abide by the rules. Maine's local banks are comparatively small and are unlikely to have subsidiaries registered in Panama putting them at a competitive disadvantage with national banking institutions that can avail themselves of Panama's banking laws. We are very concerned that passing a free trade agreement with Panama will make this problem even worse, further weakening our local businesses' and financial institutions' ability to compete locally and nationally...

"Passing the proposed Panama Free Trade Agreement will further compromise our state's sovereignty and the authority of Maine's Legislature to enact laws in the public interest."

From Vermont's commission, in its annual report from last November.

<http://www.leg.state.vt.us/WorkGroups/Trade/Trade_Commission_Annual_Report_.pdf>

"Commission members would prefer that trade commitments be derived via a process based upon "positive lists" [of specified services to be liberalized] that are based on the affirmative, informed consent from affected state and local entities, rather than upon a system of 'negative list' opt-outs." They go on to discuss the problems created when the WTO tribunal ruled on internet gambling in favor of Antigua & Barbuda and against the US, because the US failed to opt out "either by inadvertence or by lack of knowledge of relevant laws and regulations..."

Regarding its plans for 2009, the Vermont commission expects to take up Panama, Colombia, and South Korea agreements, and the matters of Fast Track, and [Displaced] Workforce Assistance. They expect to "help create a strong Northeast regional network of state oversight bodies..."

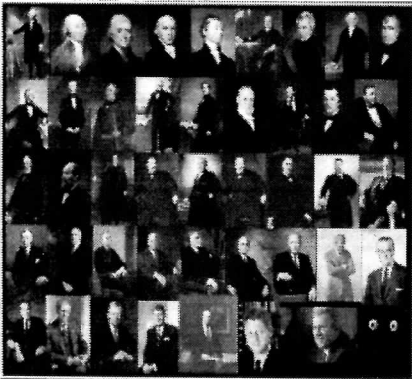
Finally, from New Hampshire's commission, in its first annual report, last November.

http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/statstudcomm/committees/1890/reports/2008_AnnualReport.pdf

"The Commission finds that the decisions to bind the state's procurement policies to the terms of several trade agreements [and they name six] were made by the office of the Governor without public comment and without the approval of General Court. [Vermont's Asst. Attorney General] Elliot Burg explained [in testimony] that procurement rules could prohibit "green purchasing" policies, [could prohibit] limits on off-shoring of state services, [could prohibit] prevailing wage agreements, and [could prohibit] any kind of preferences based on human rights standards...

"The Commission recognizes that impact of imports and exports on the state's economy is significant. We are pleased that New Hampshire businesses have generated business activity and created employment through enterprises that export goods and services. We are distressed that many New Hampshire manufacturers have shut their doors and laid off workers due to outsourcing, off-shoring, and foreign competition."

Let me conclude by saying that it is high time for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts—the richest state in New England and the cradle of the American revolution against a foreign power—to live up to its obligation to oversee federal law-making, and to recognize and act upon its responsibility to take care of its citizens and their liberties in the face of transnational corporate encroachment.



This so-called "Historical Keepsake Photo" of the U.S. Presidents, with Obama as a pair of white eyes on a black background, was sent out by Sherri Goforth, an aide to Republican [Tennessee] State Senator Diane Black—on the taxpayers' dime yet. Confronted about it, the clueless Goforth explained she "went on the wrong email... and hit the wrong button." Oh, right, the racist idiocy button. Good one, Goforth.
—Abby Zimet, CommonDreams

PROMPT GLOBAL STRIKE (Continued from Page 1)

Such conflicts are the "most likely" ones the U.S. military will fight in coming years, he said during an appearance at a Center for Strategic and International Studies forum. Senior Pentagon officials are mulling whether these conflicts—not conventional ones against peer militaries—should garner the majority of the military's planning focus. Plus, he said, officials have concluded that "the level of lethality" potential U.S. foes bring to the fight is no longer tilted so excessively toward conventional threats.

For those reasons, Cartwright said, "it is my opinion ... that we have to adjust the balance" between focusing resources and effort on the "most likely" and "most deadly" threats as part of the QDR process. The QDR will examine what future threats the U.S. military will have to combat, "and how we must be postured to do those things."

Altering the force-sizing construct will affect which weapons the services buy and how the U.S. military is positioned around the world. Cartwright said QDR study participants must look at the benefits and drawbacks of how American forces and gear

are based, including: permanent, prepositioned, and rotational basing.

Acquisition "Crossroads"

The vice chairman also said the U.S. military must shift from developing new and expensive weapons aimed at taking out a specific threat to focusing on how platforms fit into "the IT [information technology] world."

On defense acquisition, "we're at a crossroads" that incorporates all of American society. The nation is fundamentally "an industrial society," but must adjust to a global change that "the competitive advantage is on the IT side." The same is true for DoD [Dept of Defense], he said. "When [the services] build a plane, you build it for a threat," Cartwright said. "You can only update it every four or five years. ... So the utility of that plane is limited in an IT world."

The model for where the military must go in terms of new weapon systems lies in how it has come to use unmanned aircraft. Like with UAVs [unmanned aerial vehicle] in Iraq and Afghanistan, the most important feature of future U.S. weapon systems will be their "ability to gather information to help solve problems," the vice chairman said. He also touted the ability of UAVs to take on multiple missions, depending on a commander's needs like ISR [intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance] gathering today and targeting tomorrow.

Prompt Global Strike

Additionally, Cartwright said he continues to press for development of a new weapon that would allow Washington to take out a fleeting target in a manner of minutes. The Marine Corps general said he has concluded conventionally armed bombers are "too slow and too intrusive" for many "global strike missions."

Cartwright for several years has advocated for a "prompt global strike" (PGS) weapon, which would be ultra-fast and fitted with a conventional warhead. Congress, due largely to worries that other nations, like Russia, would be unable to quickly determine whether an in-flight warhead was nuclear, has refused to fund the program.

Cartwright said even congressional skeptics of the idea realize there is a "military requirement" for such a fast weapon to take out fleeting targets. The requirements for such a weapon are "starting to emerge," he said. "At the low end," a PGS weapon would probably need to be launched and hit a target within "one hour..." At the high end, the time frame could be as short as "300 milliseconds." The military might need a "hypersonic" weapon that would travel in the exoatmosphere to take out a limited number of fleeting targets, he said.

Finally, Cartwright told the audience the Pentagon is examining a new concept, called "extended deterrence," something "we're trying to force into the QDR." The idea would be to field a weapon so effective that it would dissuade enemies from carrying out a specific activity, while also "not starting a nuclear arms race" and "giving allies comfort." The options for an "extended deterrence" capability, he said, are not limited to nuclear-armed weapons.

* "Defense News and its web site, DefenseNews.com, are part of the Army Times Publishing Company, the leading military and government news periodical publisher in the world... Each week, the print edition of *Defense News* provides the global defense community with the latest insight and news analysis on defense programs, policy, business and technology. *Defense News* circulates to a highly selective VIP list of top leaders and decision-makers in North America and in Europe, Asia and the Middle East..." —DefenseNews.com

A Latter-day Dr. Strangelove?

THAT KUBRICK MOVIE WAS A PARODY on Washington's nuclear button-pushers during the rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union. Gen. James Cartwright's speech to the Center for Strategic and International Studies forum (just above) sounds like a movie, but it's real. We don't know who attended the forum, but CSIS's 35-member board of trustees includes top executives of Boeing, Time, Carlyle Group, Exxon Mobil, Morgan Stanley, etc., plus Harvard Kennedy School's Joseph Nye and financier Felix Rohatyn. Among their 13 Counselors are Zbigniew Brzezinski, Frank Carlucci, Brent Scowcroft, and Henry Kissinger.

Is this new, instant, global military stance a gesture toward economic rivals China, India, Brazil, Europe—plus Russia, Iran, and North Korea, or simply a Romanesque gesture toward all Barbarians, a.k.a. outsource workers, oilfield dwellers, coltan miners, conscientious journalists, Taliban, Independistas, and all Terrorists and their hosts? The sheer diversity of groups resisting the 800-foreign-base US Empire makes Gen. Cartwright and the Joint Chief's new weaponization and deployment strategy seem like a superficial attempt to exercise such destructive power that opponents will cringe in acquiescence—an attempt based on US superiority in electronic surveillance and weapons control, for example with space-based drone attacks in Pakistan. No, don't feature nukes because to use them would end the game of domination and substitute decimation and desolation for all, making the US, at best, king of a dung hill. So “take out” all trouble-makers identified by the CIA and military intelligence, never mind the collateral damage. It truly is a game of “defense”—defense of one's own oligarchic power.

One issue that seems not to be on the table is what will fuel the new weaponry. Right now, the US military is the greatest consumer of oil in the world—to run its ships, planes, missiles, tanks, trucks, heating plants, power plants, whatever. We have heard nothing about “greening” the airforce, navy (is nuclear green?), army, or marines. In olden days armies provisioned themselves off the land; it's doing the same today, except instead of bread and meat, the provisions are oil and more oil. Never mind global warming when it's apocalypse tomorrow.



Vapor Trails (CO₂+) at Air Show

Social Forces

The 21st Century may see a whole new ball game. Like the Roman empire, the US Army depends on minority recruits—poor blacks and Latinos who have nowhere else to go. But unlike Rome, the US does not reward these soldiers with civil rank and assets. As in Vietnam and Iraq, the numbers of desertions (and suicides) may reach unmanageable levels. As the numbers of non-whites grow outside the Army and in increasingly independent countries abroad, the Army will have a loyalty problem. Continuing discrimination within the US and continued development of democracy outside the US may force the Army to become less ethnocentric, which may create rifts within the military. As the military becomes more technical and less grounded with

foreign populations, combat troops may lose interest in serving as meaningless technicians and oppressors, the opposite of the action movies and games and need for social support which inspired them to join.

Civil resistance is likely to become an overwhelming factor. In this age of TV and increasing literacy, knowledge of successful pro-democracy movements, e.g., in Latin America, will generalize, making the organizing of more such movements likely. The military strategy of remote-controlled mass bombing and assassination will become counter-productive with respect to imperial goals, both military and economic. The threat of frequent attacks on US soil, rather than one-time staged attacks like 9/11, will raise levels of discord as well as fear in the “homeland”. As with the nineteenth century rebellions in China, religious and fascistic movements may thrive here, creating domestic problems which the Army currently is spared, even though Homeland Security is preparing elite units for mass internments of civilians under the mantra of Security and Prosperity (SPP).

As pro-democracy movements advance in Latin America, India, and even East and Southeast Asia and Russia and as European solidarity deepens, as business cycling and corruption take their tolls, as ecological deterioration accelerates, and as marginal regions like Australia and Mexico seek positive solutions to ecological and economic distress, US imperialism will become weakened and embarrassed, and may gradually retreat—helping to revive manufacturing, local agriculture, and self-reliance in North America.

Prospects

President Obama may be aware of these possibilities, and his public acts are likely to shift again as they clearly shifted since his electoral campaign. His job as president is difficult—he needs to be both moral leader-visionary and manager of forces in a corporate-corrupted Congress. He needs to use the media well, and perhaps, like Franklin Roosevelt and his “fireside chats” expand the civic possibilities of the media. The problem for us regular citizens is not to depend upon elected officials, who are too few and distant and too distracted by brush-fires and patrons, but to put on our cap-and-bells and work on systemic, institution-changing solutions in our local areas and well beyond.

COMMUNITY NOTES (Continued from Page 1)

Overview

A very informal conversation about our respective groups' activities and aims. This meeting gave us a sense of each other's major concerns and style, and helped us further connect—although we already know one another to varying degrees.

Dave suggested that we need to chart “the system”, and agreed to attempt this.

What They and We Are Doing

Suren explained that **Majority Agenda (MA)** was a new project spawned by Mass Global Action (MGA) and other organizations, with MGA as fiscal sponsor. On massglobalaction.org, MA is categorized under Antiwar and Peace Building along with several one-time projects and membership in Stop the Wars, Boston Bolivarianos, New England United, and United for Justice with Peace. (The other MGA activity categories are Contingent Work, Social Forum, Pro-Immigrant Organizing, Human Right to Water, and Encuentro 5 [leased space].)

Paul provided a one-page handout and described the project. MA's purpose is to bring together organizations and movements

---economic, ecological, antiwar, health---with common or overlapping political agendas because none can succeed without the others; or more positively, each can go further by engaging interconnected concerns of others. Their thinking and work needs to be at all levels from local to global, with local work tied to a national agenda. Sectors to be involved include progressive movement, Black churches, youth, labor, and intellectuals. We must pull together groups with system-related policies and induce national debate. (Voices of inspiration include Evo Morales, Paul Krugman, Chris Gauvreau, Joseph Gerson.)

Eli explained that **Massachusetts Coalition for Healthy Communities** works at the local and Mass state levels. Climate change is a major concern, to be dealt with at every level from individuals to global, but focused on interlinked communities in the state. MCHC sends out climate emergency alerts. According to the MCHC web site masschc.org, key programs are Relocalization, Community-Guided Development, Health Care, and Taxes. Relocalization is described as "The most hopeful alternative to unsustainable corporate globalization—a reinvestment in our own communities, building vibrant local economies based on cooperation instead of competition, meeting people's needs instead of manufacturing desires, and respecting the natural environment around us." (Voices of inspiration include Richard Heinberg, David Korten, James Kunstler, Bill McKibben, E F Schumacher, Jill Stein, Michael Shuman.)

A priority current project is organizing for demonstrations on October 24th, International Day of Climate Action, in which MA and AfD could participate.

Dave was prompted to say something about the **Alliance for Democracy's** statewide project to pass Globalization Impact legislation. By this time the conversation had become a free-for-all, making it difficult to explain the range of AfD concerns and projects. All related to the trifold mission: End corporate rule, build true democracy, and promote a just and sustainable economy. The watch words are "system" and localization/regionalization". (Voices of inspiration include Walden Bello, Maude Barlow, Tony Clarke, Ronnie Dugger, Brian Martin, John Perkins, Vandana Shiva, Howard Zinn, and most of the voices mentioned above.)

For the record: At the national level (thealliancefordemocracy.org) major projects include protecting public water (rural and urban) and denying corporate rights (personhood) through Democracy Schools and new town ordinances or charter changes; clean elections (ultimately with public funding and hand-counted paper ballots); and currently pressing for single-payer health insurance. Posted on the web site is the Common Agreement on Investment and Society (CAIS), our citizen-created, 24-Article model treaty-alternative to the WTO/IMF/WorldBank system.

At the local/regional level (newenglandalliance.org) democratic trade agreements (through state legislation establishing citizen trade commissions; exposing and ending the so-called Security and Prosperity Partnership [SPP] expanding and militarizing NAFTA); integration of regional (New England) economy (our second regional Roundtable featured Participatory Budgeting); connecting with local government (Democracy Protection Kit), and strategic nonviolence (Gandhi Circles). All these things, though started, are too ambitious to establish without collaboration among organizations and movements, and local governments.

Joanna was mentioned by Dave as producing and distributing pro-democracy DVDs for play on more than a dozen community access cable TV stations in the region and at meetings. As we

touched on ways of implementing project objectives, Joanna suggested using references in wiserearth.org to expand our contacts, and using International Council on Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) to track municipalities sympathetic to "sustainability".

In general discussion during and after these presentations we touched on state and local public banking (for green energy generation, housing, etc.-see, e.g., commongoodbank.com); media and school reform (do away with high schools, hah!-dysfunctional for adolescents! [Though AfD has promoted proactive civics.]); visiting each others' board or working group meetings; gathering survey data from existing studies and promoting community-based survey work.

We didn't really get around to explaining concretely how we have worked or intend to work, and how collaborations might work. Please share your impressions and ideas so that we may begin to engage productively. Join in! Thanks!

---Dave Lewit, 617-266-8687 boston@newenglandalliance.org

ACTION ALERTS

Before 9 July: Don't let ArborGen corporation endanger our environment with **genetically-modified trees**. The corporation wants to plant GM eucalyptus, modified to withstand cold, on a trial basis in SC, GA, FL, AL, MS, LA, and TX, and if successful, in more northerly states. Windblown pollination could wreck forests, groundwater. Register your protest with the US Dept of Agriculture online at www.globaljusticeecology.org/petition.php

This week or next: Support a new, honest investigation of the **9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City**. NYC must run a referendum if the grassroots organization NYCCAN gathers just 15,000 more signatures to override any veto by the city council. To donate, go to NYCCAN.org. For info: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TzC3Ql8JenU&fmt=18>

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. #2h, Boston, MA 02116.)

BOSTON-CAMBRIDGE ALLIANCE for DEMOCRACY PLEDGE

___ \$33/Year - "Count me in!"

___ \$66/Year - "Contributor" (We need to average this amount.)

___ \$111/Year - "Sustainer" (Helping us thrive.)

___ \$222/Year - "Community Steward"

___ \$444/Year - "Realize the vision"

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

Name : _____ Date: _____

Street No./Box/Apt: _____

Town and Zip: _____

Phone: Day _____ Night: _____

E-mail (for occasional contact): _____

COLOPHON

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Visit the Alliance web site: www.TheAllianceForDemocracy.org

Visit our regional web site: www.NewEnglandAlliance.org