

BCA Dispatch

Newsletter of the
Boston-Cambridge Alliance for Democracy

February
2004

*Dark and cold we may be, but this
Is no winter now. The frozen misery
Of centuries breaks, cracks, begins to move;
The thunder is the thunder of the foes,
The thaw, the flood, the upstart Spring.
Thank God our time is now when wrong
Comes up to face us till we take
The longest stride of soul men ever took.
Affairs are now soul size. The enterprise
Is exploration into God.
Where are you making for? It takes
So many thousand years to wake,
But will you wake for pity's sake!*

—Christopher Fry

from the play *A Sleep of Prisoners* (1951)

ALLIANCE NEWS (Continued on page 8)

Chapter Calendar

** If Bush Wins—Then What?? **

Boston-Cambridge Alliance for Democracy will meet on
Wednesday, February 18, from 7:00 to 9:15 p.m. at
Cambridge Friends Meeting, 5 Longfellow Park (9-minute walk
from Harvard Square T station, west on Brattle St.)

— Agenda —

* If elected, Bush & Co could destroy our democracy and environment, and perhaps human life on earth (e.g., thru nuclear/star wars catastrophe)? If Plan A is to elect "any Democrat"—what is our **Plan B?** What mobilization will move us on the right course?

Join our informal discussion, which could lead to a feature in July's Boston Social Forum. Sitting in with us as resource persons will be **Prof. Elaine Hagopian**, Near Eastern specialist of Simmons College; **Donovan Walker**, dynamic Boston activist; **Brian Corr**, Northeast Action organizer; and **Prof. Mark Solomon** historian of Simmons College.

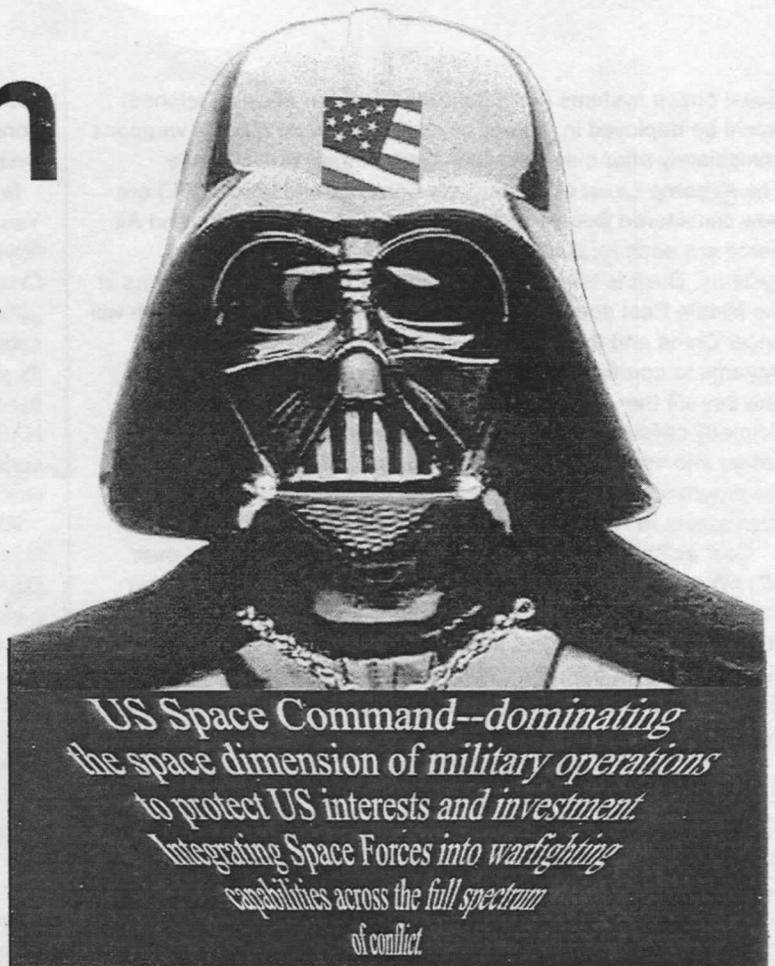
— Refreshments —

Gandhi Lives! at World Social Forum Confronting "The New American Century"

by Arundhati Roy, *World Social Forum, 19 Jan 2004 (excerpt)*

Lula and Mandela are, by any reckoning, magnificent men. But the moment they cross the floor from the opposition into government they become hostage to a spectrum of threats—most malevolent among them the threat of capital flight, which can destroy any government overnight. To imagine a leader's personal charisma and a c.v. of struggle will dent the corporate cartel is to have no understanding of how capitalism works or, for that matter, how

(Continued on page 4 >>)



Star Wars Expands Despite Treaties Pentagon: Nuke-Powered Earth-Dominance

by Bruce Gagnon, *Global Network Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space, Brunswick ME* www.space4peace.org

The arms race is moving into space. The U.S. Space Command has publicly stated that it intends "to control space in order to protect U.S. interests and investments." During the Persian Gulf War in the early 90's the U.S. became convinced that whoever controls space will be able to project force "in space, from space and into space." As we have seen in Iraq, Yugoslavia, and Afghanistan, by using current space technologies the U.S. is able to identify and target any "enemy" that it wishes. Through this "full spectrum dominance" the U.S. intends to control the Earth and beyond. Thus the Space Command's logo reads "Master of Space."

History Of Missile Defense

During the Reagan/Bush years the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) was funded at over \$3 billion per year. Following the election of former President Clinton, one of his first acts was to declare that Star Wars was dead. In place of SDI Clinton created the Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) program and moved the Star Wars funding into BMD. Since the 1950's over \$120 billion of our tax dollars have been wasted on space weapons research and development. In 2003, Bush's Star Wars funding is over \$7 billion.

What Is Missile Defense?

George W. Bush has renamed BMD the Missile Defense Agency (MDA) and it is made up of three components: Boost phase, Mid-course, and Terminal systems. (Continued on next page >>)

Boost phase systems (formerly called Theater Missile Defense) would be deployed in regions of "conflict" and hit nuclear weapons immediately after they were launched, in their Boost Phase. The Airborne Laser (ABL) and the Space-based laser (SBL) are now considered Boost Phase systems. The Army, Navy, and Air Force are each running testing programs for boost phase systems. Bush is talking about deploying Boost Phase systems in the Middle East and in Taiwan, Japan, and South Korea which will anger China and force them to increase the development of systems to counter U.S. moves. The resulting arms race would only benefit the weapons corporations. Midcourse systems (formerly called National Missile Defense) would hit missiles further into space during their midcourse of flight. Midcourse is the program to "protect" the North American continent by placing interceptors in Alaska, North Dakota, and possibly Maine.

Cost estimates for the Midcourse system are now well over \$60 billion. Terminal systems are battlefield launched systems would strike "offending" missiles as they descended toward the target. These systems include PAC-3, Medium Extended Air Defense System (MEADS), Navy Area, Theater High Altitude Air Defense (THAAD) and international programs like the Arrow system.

Bush's Deployment Decision

George W. Bush has undertaken groundbreaking at Ft. Greely, Alaska following the U.S. pullout of the ABM Treaty with Russia and promises to deploy "missile defense" systems there and at Vandenberg AFB, CA before the 2004 elections. Radar upgrades in California, Cape Cod, Greenland, United Kingdom and new radar construction in Alaska will also be necessary to support the expansion program. Testing of the Midcourse system will continue, at \$100 million per test at Vandenberg AFB, CA and Kwajalein Atoll in the Pacific, although Bush has recently stated that he may deploy the systems without fully testing them if he chooses.

Offense Or Defense?

The U.S. sells Star Wars as "defensive." The Space Command, committed to space "control and domination," has other plans. Missile defense is truly a Trojan horse, a way to get public support for the deployment of offensive systems in space. Gen. Lester Lyles, Vice-Chief of Staff of the Air Force recently stated: "Space control and all of its capabilities and ramifications, I think, are going to grow exponentially... Ultimately, you can see the Air Force deploying systems that can deny space capabilities to our enemies. Systems like the Space-Based Laser (SBL), which we are currently trying to develop and demonstrate..." The Pentagon has recently announced that the \$30 billion SBL testing program will now build a facility in Mississippi at NASA's Stennis Missile Center.

Will Star Wars Work?

Missile defense proponents are trying to create hysteria by claiming that "rogue states" are poised to attack the U.S. with nuclear warheads. They name North Korea, Iran, China, and Iraq (before we "liberated" them) as probable suspects. It seems unlikely that any "enemy" would be foolish enough to launch a nuclear strike at the U.S. considering the fact that the attacking nation could be overwhelmed in return by massive U.S. military power. The more likely scenario for an attack by a terrorist would be a suitcase or truck bomb or an airplane—something that an expensive Star Wars system could not prevent. There are also many technical means to fool a "missile defense" system, including using decoy missiles, or simply inundating it with enough incoming missiles to

make it useless. The best defense for the U.S. is to negotiate and honor international treaties limiting the proliferation of nuclear weapons and space-based weapons.

Is NASA Involved In Star Wars?

Yes. There is growing evidence that many of NASA's so-called "civilian" missions are running Star Wars tests for the Pentagon. One example is the Deep Space Program Science Experiment (DSPSE), the first of a series of technology demonstrations jointly sponsored by the Pentagon and NASA. Launched in early 1994, its principle objective was to test Star Wars sensors and component technologies for the next generation of military spacecraft. NASA told the public that the mission's purpose was to map the surface of the Moon. We are seeing more and more of these "dual use" missions as the Pentagon takes over the space program.

What About The U. N.?

Russia, Canada, and China have asked the U.N. Commission on Disarmament to create an ad hoc committee in order to negotiate a global ban on weapons in space. The U.S. has refused to participate in such talks. Neither Russia nor China can afford to enter a dangerous and expensive space arms race. Secretary-General Kofi Annan has said that space must be kept "as a weapons-free environment." Rep. Dennis Kucinich (D-OH) has introduced legislation in the U.S. Congress called the "Space Preservation Act" that would ban the research, development, testing and deployment of weapons in space. His legislation would also require the U.S. to enter negotiations for a global ban on weapons in space. Congressional support for the Kucinich bill is urgently needed.

How Does Nuclear Power Fit Into Star Wars?

Weapons in space will require enormous amounts of power. Such weapons will likely be nuclear-powered. One Air Force study entitled *New World Vistas: Air & Space Power for the 21st Century*, states: "A natural technology to enable high power is nuclear power in space... Setting the emotional issues of nuclear space power aside, this technology offers a viable alternative for large amounts of power in space." The space-based laser, the "follow-on" technology to missile defense, could require nuclear reactors to provide the massive power it would need to hit "enemy" satellites in space or targets on the ground. NASA is now vigorously promoting the nuclear rocket to Mars (Project Prometheus), with nuclear reactor engines. The development of the nuclear rocket will enable the Department of Energy and the Air Force to initiate plans for the space-based laser. Bush is spending \$3 billion in the next five years on the Nuclear Systems Initiative that will dramatically escalate the numbers of nuclear launches in the coming years.

What's Really Behind Star Wars?

In the U.S. Space Command document called *Vision for 2020*, the Pentagon states that because of corporate "globalization of the world economy" there will be a widening gap between the "haves and have-nots." Space "superiority," the document says, will emerge as an "essential element of battlefield success" as the Space Command becomes the military instrument by which challenges to corporate control are suppressed in regions around the world. *Vision for 2020* also states the Space Command will protect new "interests and investments" in space as aerospace corporations begin to "mine the sky." As in the days of Columbus, NASA is now discovering precious minerals on planetary bodies. Like the Spanish Armada, the Space Command will secure these riches for the aerospace industry. Weapons corporations such as Lockheed Martin, Boeing, TRW, and Raytheon stand to make

billions from Star Wars. Social spending will have to be cut even more to pay for it. In the end the people of the Earth will become less secure. ■

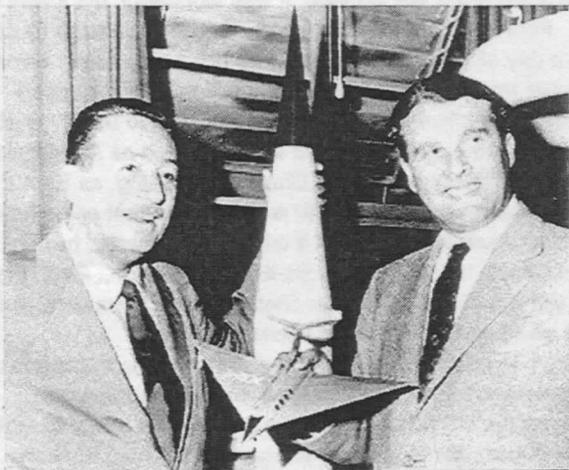
EDITORIAL

Death to Us All, From Space—Unless...

by Dave Lewit, Boston-Cambridge Alliance for Democracy

Once upon a time, actually 1947-49, the War Department and Navy Department became the Department of Defense. Having won World War II, with the help of the Soviet, Chinese, French, British, and other armies and tens of millions of their civilians dead, the US hunkered down for defense. Defense against the Evil Empire of Communism. Or so the story goes.

Two atom bombs had been dropped on Japanese cities, and now it was time to prepare to project such bombs, without the use of airplanes, to any target in the USSR or elsewhere in the world. Before those bombs were dropped the Germans had already used rockets to propel high explosives onto London, Paris, Antwerp and other cities. As German defeat neared, Germany's chief rocket scientist Wernher von Braun surrendered himself and 500 other rocket scientists and technicians to the US Army in the Bavarian Alps.



Wernher von Braun (r) and Walt Disney (l) in 1954

They had commandeered a train and migrated from Peenemünde on the Baltic Sea and Mittelwerk in central Germany where 10,000 of the slaves he used—some he personally had recruited from Nazi concentration camps—perished of malnutrition and disease. Some of these had urinated on electrical wiring in the rockets to cause them to malfunction—for which a dozen were summarily hanged. Von Braun himself was arrested by the Gestapo for dawdling with dreams of rocketing to the moon.

He and 126 of his colleagues were screened at Fort Strong in Boston harbor and sent to Fort Bliss, Texas, to train military, corporate, and university personnel in building, flying, and maintaining V-2 rockets captured in Germany. Eventually, in New Mexico and Alabama, von Braun and his men built the Saturn V-

ollo rocket which carried Capt. Neil Armstrong to the moon. Now we are setting up a NASA base on the moon. Between the moon and earth are hundreds of spy and communication satellites used by the military and other US agencies. NASA, the

aeronautics and space administration, functions now entirely for military-industrial "dual use" operations although it pretended for a while to be purely civil—to explore space for scientific and humanistic reasons.

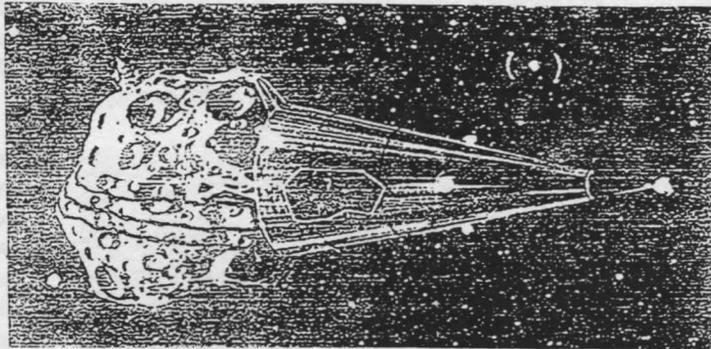
The US Space Command, aiming to become the premier armed service, is illicitly but openly planning to lift hundreds of nuclear powered laser weapons into this space. There is so much space junk up there now that windows of vehicles are regularly pitted with hits by small objects and routinely need to be replaced. Soon launches will pass through "a hail of bullets". Lovers, beware. And space truckers—is your cargo and fuel safe?

Why Mars and The Moon?

Von Braun's dream of man-on-the-moon was realized less than 25 years after he was welcomed to America. Now man-on-Mars is the military and corporate dream coming true. The cute R2D2-like machines scraping rocks are not merely looking for evidence of ancient Martian cities. They are looking for valuable minerals like titanium and helium-3 (to power nuclear fusion reactors) which they would mine and refine in space by the ton. The numerous problems of living and mining in space are being addressed. See, for example, on the web site of the University of Wisconsin's Fusion Technology Institute—<http://fti.neep.wisc.edu/neep602/FALL97/LEC23/lecture23.html>

Possible solution to low gravity problems:

- * Cable the mining equipment to the small asteroid.
- * The cable holds both the fracturing/removal equipment and the collecting 'bag' to the surface of the asteroid. The bag maintains its shape because the asteroid is spinning; this spinning also helps collect the broken material into the bag.
- * Material needs to be boosted with enough energy to pass the synchronous orbit limit so that centripetal force collects it into the bag.
- * Blasting could be an alternative but would have to be done very carefully.



As *Newsweek* commentator Gersh Kuntzman relates, "Someday, we'll get fuel—if we give the sun, the moon and the stars to companies like Halliburton. Former astronaut Harrison Schmitt (the last man to leave his footprints on the moon) said that private companies would gladly rape the moon if they can be assured of 'a competitive rate-of-return.' (In other words, taxpayers pay for the rockets, NASA provides the know-how, and private companies skim the profits.) Schmitt added that scratching the surface of the moon is just scratching the surface. There's a lot more helium-3 on Saturn and Uranus."

Apart from greed and the spirit of entrepreneurship, a moon base would be a control center for star wars. China is the military's bugaboo for the 21st Century. US communications ships and nuclear war ships are already moving into the seas surrounding

China. China is not happy. They have a space program and will seek to disable US sensing and communication satellites and challenge US hegemony by refusing the US dominance of space. Russia and India may get into the act. Star Wars!

Oh, well. "Let the boys duel in outer space—it can't hurt us here on earth!" Quite the opposite, my dears. Remember holding your breath for Cassini, the nuclear-powered vehicle hurled into space 7 years ago to whip around earth in August, 1999, and gain speed on its way to Saturn? It carried 72.3 pounds of plutonium—enough to irradiate and kill 6 billion people on earth if accidentally released in a fly-by burning in our atmosphere. The US Space Command wants to use plutonium-fueled reactors, with more fuel than Cassini, to halve the travel time of vehicles to Mars to establish mining and space-control bases.

Plutonium Out Of Control

Star Wars would be conducted largely by heavy-duty laser beams powered by plutonium reactors. Dozens or hundreds of them. Yes, they would shoot at the Chinese satellites and vehicles. But more ominously, their principal purpose is to zap earthly targets—see the cover picture of US Space Command's *Vision for 2020*, and its contents (read their mantra under the picture of Darth Vader, this issue, page 1). Would those targets be only Chinese? Not likely, for a Pentagon which demands unchallenged hegemony. Not likely, for a Pentagon whose satellites can see individuals walking around, anywhere. Not likely, for a Pentagon which, with the CIA, monitors from dozens of foreign bases all email entering the US. Must we become moles? And what if one or two of these weapons fell into the atmosphere in our time (or our grandchildren's time), and disintegrated, spreading its highly radioactive plutonium? Is this the quality of life our "security" tax dollars are paying for? Is this the "freedom" our presidents promise? Is this "our" government? Is this the big brother that lesser nations and peoples should look up to?

We have a lot of thinking and work to do. We have to look at the big picture and trace the Pentagon visionaries' resources to their governmental and corporate sponsors. Yes, like British protesters at Menwith Hill, North Yorkshire, we can camp out beneath the giant US space-communication "golf balls" and try to interfere with their supply and staffing.



But we may be better advised to follow the advice of Arundhati Roy (this issue, page 4) to select the most greedy and egregious aerospace corporations like Raytheon here in Massachusetts, identify all their branches, bring your dogs, and shut them down. Only then will our voracious Republican legislators feel the pinch; only then will our "me-too" Democratic legislators come around. Only then will they be willing to risk weaning from corporate money. Only then will we have a chance of changing the system by which we elect legislators—to be able to vote our will rather than bet on an "electable" winner who represents only a few. ■

power works. Radical change cannot be negotiated by governments; it can only be enforced by people.

[At the World Social Forum some of the best minds in the world come together to exchange ideas about what is happening around us. These conversations refine our vision of the kind of world we're fighting for. It is a vital process that must not be undermined. However, if all our energies are diverted into this process at the cost of real political action, then the WSF, which has played such a crucial role in the movement for global justice, runs the risk of becoming an asset to our enemies.] What we need to discuss urgently is strategies of resistance. We need to aim at real targets, wage real battles and inflict real damage. Gandhi's salt march was not just political theater. When, in a simple act of defiance, thousands of Indians marched to the sea and made their own salt, they broke the salt tax laws. It was a direct strike at the economic underpinning of the British Empire. It was real. While our movement has won some important victories, we must not allow nonviolent resistance to atrophy into ineffectual, feel-good, political theater. It is a very precious weapon that must be constantly honed and reimagined. It cannot be allowed to become a mere spectacle, a photo opportunity for the media.

It was wonderful that on February 15 last year, in a spectacular display of public morality, 10 million people on five continents marched against the war on Iraq. It was wonderful, but it was not enough. February 15 was a weekend. Nobody had to so much as miss a day of work. Holiday protests don't stop wars. George Bush knows that. The confidence with which he disregarded overwhelming public opinion should be a lesson to us all. Bush believes that Iraq can be occupied and colonized as Afghanistan has been, as Tibet has been, as Chechnya is being, as East Timor once was and Palestine still is. He thinks that all he has to do is hunker down and wait until a crisis-driven media, having picked this crisis to the bone, drops it and moves on. Soon the carcass will slip off the bestseller charts, and all of us outraged folks will lose interest. Or so he hopes...

We have to become the global resistance to the occupation.

Our resistance has to begin with a refusal to accept the legitimacy of the US occupation of Iraq. It means acting to make it materially impossible for Empire to achieve its aims. It means soldiers should refuse to fight, reservists should refuse to serve, workers should refuse to load ships and aircraft with weapons. It certainly means that in countries like India and Pakistan we must block the US government's plan to have Indian and Pakistani soldiers sent to Iraq to clean up after them.

*I suggest we choose by some means two of the major corporations that are profiting from the destruction of Iraq. We could then list every project they are involved in. We could locate their offices in every city and every country across the world. We could go after them. We could shut them down.** It's a question of bringing our collective wisdom and experience of past struggles to bear on a single target. It's a question of the desire to win.

The Project for the New American Century seeks to perpetuate inequality and establish American hegemony at any price, even if it's apocalyptic. The World Social Forum demands justice and survival.

For these reasons, we must consider ourselves at war.

* Presumably Halliburton and Bechtel. Italics ours—Ed.



Arundhati Roy at World Social Forum, Mumbai (Bombay), India. Photo accompanying an op-ed (*The Indian Express*, New Delhi, 22 Jan) by Prof. V. Santhakumar in Kerala state, India. *Santhakumar elaborates neoliberal arguments that keeping jobs in the US deprives Indians of various means a chance to get ahead, and that subsidies for electricity, for example, benefit the Indian middle class rather than the poor, while farmers are thereby apt to use too much water. Valuing progress brought by British imperialists and now by economic globalization, he cautions Roy to consider the myriad interconnected details and the downsides of keeping leftist proposals.* Thanks to Gulshan Saini of Brookline sending us this clipping. —Ed.

Eco-Disaster Strikes India, Pakistan Vultures Die Scavenging Drug-Tainted Cattle

by James Gorman, *New York Times*, 29 Jan 2004

A mysterious and precipitous plunge in the number of vultures in South Asia, which has pushed three species to the brink of extinction, is probably a result of inadvertent poisoning by a drug used widely in livestock to relieve fever and lameness, scientists reported yesterday...

In the United States diclofenac, which is in the same class of nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs as ibuprofen, is not used in veterinary medicine, although it is often prescribed for people. In Asia the drug is widely given to cattle because it is cheap and because losing livestock to lameness or fever can be devastating to small farmers with only a few animals...

Vulture populations had been shrinking gradually from loss of habitat and disease throughout Asia, but what happened in India and Pakistan was different. The decline was quick and severe and posed a problem in a part of the world that relied heavily on the ubiquitous vultures for the efficient disposal of dead livestock. The decline also threatened the traditions of the Parsi's, a sect of Zoroastrians who have traditionally exposed their dead to the elements rather than burying or cremating them. In Bombay they had stopped putting their dead on the stone Towers of Silence because the birds that once quickly consumed them were vanishing.

Privatize Medicare in Dead of Night How GOP Gangsters Manage Congress

by Rep. Sherrod Brown, *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, 11 Dec 2004

Never before has the House of Representatives operated in such secrecy:

___ At 2:54 a.m. on a Friday in March, the House cut veterans benefits by three votes.

___ At 2:39 a.m. on a Friday in April, the House slashed education and health care by five votes.

___ At 1:56 a.m. on a Friday in May, the House passed the Leave No Millionaire Behind tax-cut bill by a handful of votes.

___ At 2:33 a.m. on a Friday in June, the House passed the Medicare privatization and prescription drug bill by one vote.

___ At 12:57 a.m. on a Friday in July, the House eviscerated Head Start by one vote.

___ And then, after returning from summer recess, at 12:12 a.m. on a Friday in October, the House voted \$87 billion for Iraq.

Always in the middle of the night. Always after the press had passed their deadlines. Always after the American people had turned off the news and gone to bed. What did the public see? At best, Americans read a small story with a brief explanation of the bill and the vote count in Saturday's papers.

But what did the public miss? They didn't see the House votes, which normally take no more than 20 minutes, dragging on for as long as an hour as members of the Republican leadership trolled for enough votes to cobble together a majority.

They didn't see GOP leaders stalking the floor for whoever was not in line. They didn't see Speaker Dennis Hastert and Majority Leader Tom DeLay coerce enough Republican members into switching their votes to produce the desired result.

In other words, they didn't see the subversion of democracy.

And late last month, they did it again. The most sweeping changes to Medicare in its 38-year history were forced through the House at 5:55 on a Saturday morning. The debate started at midnight. The roll call began at 3:00 a.m. Most of us voted within the typical 20 minutes. Normally, the speaker would have gavelled the vote closed. But not this time; the Republican-driven bill was losing. By 4 a.m., the bill had been defeated 216-218, with only one member, Democrat David Wu, not voting. Still, the speaker refused to gavel the vote closed. Then the assault began.

Hastert, DeLay, Republican Whip Roy Blount, Ways and Means Chairman Bill Thomas, Energy and Commerce Chairman Billy Tauzin - all searched the floor for stray Republicans to bully. I watched them surround Cincinnati's Steve Chabot, trying first a carrot, then a stick; but he remained defiant. Next, they aimed at retiring Michigan congressman Nick Smith, whose son is running to succeed him. They promised support if he changed his vote to yes and threatened his son's future if he refused. He stood his ground. Many of the two dozen Republicans who voted against the bill had fled the floor. One Republican hid in the Democratic cloakroom.

By 4:30, the browbeating had moved into the Republican cloakroom, out of sight of C-SPAN cameras and the insomniac public. Republican leaders woke President George W. Bush, and a White House aide passed a cell phone from one recalcitrant member to another in the cloakroom.

At 5:55, two hours and 55 minutes after the roll call had begun - twice as long as any previous vote in the history of the U.S. >>

House of Representatives - two obscure western Republicans emerged from the cloakroom. They walked, ashen and cowed, down the aisle to the front of the chamber, scrawled their names and district numbers on green cards to change their votes and surrendered the cards to the clerk.

The speaker gavelled the vote closed; Medicare privatization had passed.

You can do a lot in the middle of the night, under the cover of darkness.

U.S. Congressman Sherrod Brown, a Democrat from Ohio, is the ranking member on the Committee on Energy and Commerce's Subcommittee on Health.

Local Farm Radio Disappearing Agribiz, Media Consolidation Take Toll

by Leon Lazaroff, *Chicago Tribune*, 23 Jan 2004

Jim Ufkin misses his familiar lunch companions. The corn and soybean farmer from Hoopole, Illinois, about 130 miles west of Chicago, spends most of his day driving his tractor or working in his barn. Lunch was not only a time to rest and eat, but also to catch up on business by listening to Orion Samuelson and Max Armstrong on the "The Noon Show," a half-hour farm news show.

For nearly a half century, "The Noon Show" boomed across the Midwest from Chicago's WGN-AM 720. But earlier this month, in a business decision that says as much about changes in the Midwest and agriculture as it does about broadcasting, WGN canceled the show, citing declining ratings and advertising revenue.

Throughout the Midwest, radio farm shows are disappearing, as consolidation ripples through agriculture, reducing the number of listeners and companies willing to pay to reach a rural audience.

In the past year, radio stations in Iowa, Nebraska, Minnesota and North Dakota — owned by Clear Channel Communications Inc. and Infinity Broadcasting Corp., the nation's largest radio operators — have eliminated or scaled back locally produced farm programming. Often farm broadcasting has been replaced by syndicated programming, such as Rush Limbaugh's talk show.

Citing a drop in agriculture advertising, stations in Cedar Rapids, Ft. Dodge and Burlington, Iowa, in August replaced locally produced programs with a simulcast noon show from their larger sister station, WHO-AM in Des Moines. But even at WHO, General Manager Joel McCrea said agricultural advertising has fallen to 6 percent of the station's revenues from 21% in 1999.

Largely to blame for the decline is a wave of mergers among agricultural equipment, seed and chemical companies that remade the industry in the late 1990s. Meanwhile, the decades-long turn from family to corporate farming has shrunk the rural target audience.

Since 1999, membership in the National Association of Farm Broadcasters has dropped to about 150 from about 230...

A Video You Must See — And Won't Forget

Bruce Gagnon, author of the Star Wars article above, page 1, narrates and elaborates this material in facts and pictures in the 60-minute video "Arsenal of Hypocrisy: The Space Program and the Military-Industrial Complex". You can borrow a copy from *The Dispatch's* editor, or order one from www.space4peace.org.

The Latest Halliburton-Cheney Flap We Pay Them \$2.64 for a 96c Gallon of Gas

by Russell Mokhiber and Robert Weissman,
Multinational Monitor, December 2003

Sometimes corporate practices are so outrageous, they seem ripped from the pages of a Gabriel Garcia Marquez novel. Take Tyco's Dennis Kozlowski spending millions of shareholders' money on an extravagant party for his wife, complete with an ice replica of Michaelangelo's David, with vodka spurting through David's penis.

Or take Halliburton. After the first Gulf War, then-Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney hired Brown & Root to conduct a crucial study on outsourcing of military operations. Brown & Root would eventually be merged into Halliburton. So would Dick Cheney.

In 1995, Cheney took over as Halliburton CEO. The company's military contracts doubled during the five years he headed the company. Reports from the General Accounting Office, the Congressional research arm, would eventually charge the company with cost overruns. But that was nothing compared to what would happen after Cheney returned to government, as one of the most powerful vice presidents in U.S. history. Cheney still receives annual deferred compensation payments from Halliburton, of more than \$150,000 a year.

In 2001, Halliburton subsidiary Kellogg Brown & Root won the U.S. Army's third Logistics Civil Augmentation Program (LOGCAP) contract. LOGCAP contracts establish an ongoing relationship between the army and the contractor, which supplies an array of support for field operations — including even combat support — as the Army requests it. The contract is "cost-plus," with the contractor paid a percentage of expenditures on each "task order" as profit. According to the Center for Public Integrity, Halliburton pulled in more than \$2 billion in contract work under the LOGCAP contract as of September 2003.

In March 2003, the Army placed five task orders worth up to \$7 billion with Halliburton under the LOGCAP contract. Because these orders were placed under the rubric of the LOGCAP contract, they were no-bid, sole-source arrangements — meaning no other company had the right to bid on them, and the Army is relying on only one company to perform the requested operations.

In April, the Army Corps of Engineers offered an initial defense of the contract award. "Competition for initial performance of portions of the Central Command's (CENTCOM) classified contingency support planning was not possible due to the requirements of the CENTCOM mission," wrote Lt. General Robert Flowers. "To invite other contractors to compete to perform a highly classified requirement that [Halliburton] was already under a competitively awarded contract to perform would have been a wasteful duplication of effort. It would also have delayed CENTCOM's war planning."

One of the tasks assigned to Halliburton was to import oil into Iraq, while the country's oil operations are repaired. Halliburton has been charging very high prices for the oil, with some analysts saying the charges amount to "highway robbery." Halliburton flatly denies any wrongdoing. "The claims made about our fuel delivery mission in Iraq are inaccurate, misleading and unwarranted," says company CEO Dave Lesar.

For oil imported from Kuwait, the company is charging \$2.64 a gallon. According to evidence uncovered by Waxman and Dingell, this fee includes \$1.17 to purchase the gasoline in Kuwait — during a period when the spot price in the Middle East averaged \$.71 a gallon. The company is spending \$1.21 to transport the gasoline from Kuwait to Iraq, even though experts told Waxman and Dingell the cost should be only about one-fifth that level. And, Halliburton is tacking on a \$.26 charge for markup and "other" costs — even though its profits are paid on top of its expenses.

(Continued on next page, column 2 >>)

Electronic Voting in Massachusetts: Problems and Prospects. A Conference

A Massachusetts conference on electronic technology and voting transparency. Sponsored by Alliance for Democracy, Mass & Boston League of Women Voters, Mass. ACLU, and IEEE (Soc. on Social Implications of Technology), Mass Vote, Lawyers Committee on Civil Rights

Saturday, February 28, 8:30 AM (refreshments) **to 4:00 PM**

Room 295, Suffolk University Law School, 120 Tremont Street,
Boston, MA 02108 (right across from Park Street Station)

PROGRAM

9-9:10 Welcome

Madhu Sridhar, President, Massachusetts League of Women Voters

Carol Rose, Executive Director, ACLU of Massachusetts

9:10 -9:50 *RELIABILITY OF ELECTRONIC AND PAPER VOTING*

Stephen Ansolabehere, Professor of Political Science at MIT; member of the Cal Tech/MIT Voting Project

Introduced by Alex Brown, Institute of Electronic and Electrical Engineers - Society on Social Implications of Technology

9:50 - 11:15 Panel I: THE SEARCH FOR VOTING INTEGRITY

From Congress to the Commonwealth: an overview of initiatives -
George Pillsbury, Policy Director, MassVote

Lessons from Florida - **Arlene Ash**, Research Professor, Boston University Schools of Medicine (Division of General Internal Medicine) and Public Health (Department of Biostatistics).

Do new voting technologies present solutions or new problems for communities of color? - **David Harris**, Executive Director, Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights under Law of the Boston Bar Association

Diebold: in their own words - **Scott Ananian**, Laboratory of Computer Science, MIT

Moderator: Madhu Sridhar, League of Women Voters

11:15 - 11:30 BREAK

11:30 - 12:00 *ELECTRONIC VOTING - PROBLEMS*

Rebecca Mercuri, Harvard University

Introduced by Dave Lewit, Alliance for Democracy

12:00 - 12:30 *ELECTRONIC VOTING - PROSPECTS*

Ted Selker, Associate Professor of Media Arts and Sciences, MIT

Introduced by Robert Plotkin, ACLU of Massachusetts

12:30 - 1:00 CURRENT PROBLEMS AND DISCUSSION

Discussion and audience Q&A with Rebecca Mercuri and Ted Selker

Moderator: David Harris, Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law of the Boston Bar Association

1:00 - 2:00 LUNCH

2:00 - 3:00 Panel II: TECHNICAL AND LEGAL ISSUES IN VOTING INTEGRITY

Electronic Voting Technology and Disability Rights- **Jim Dickson**, American Association for People with Disabilities

Open source software: trade secrets and the public interest -
Jonathan Zittrain, The Berkman Center for Internet and Society at Harvard Law School

Can Voting Machines Be Returned? - **Curt Nyquist**, New England School of Law

Moderated by Carol Rose, ACLU of Massachusetts

3:00 PLENARY

discussion: audience and speakers invited to participate

Conclusions and directions - Dave Lewit, Alliance for Democracy

4:00 CLOSE

In contrast to the Halliburton \$2.64 price, the Iraqi state oil company, SOMO, is importing gasoline from Kuwait -- using the same transportation and distribution mechanisms -- for \$.96 a gallon. Halliburton argues that its charges are higher because it cannot engage in the long-term contracting that SOMO can. "KBR is bound by guidelines in its contract to negotiate fuel prices on a short term basis only," the company said in a statement, "from suppliers acceptable to the US Army Corps of Engineers. Contractually, KBR has been prevented from procuring fuel contracts for longer than a 30-day period. In addition, all services and their associated costs to execute the mission are subject to the same 30-day procurement limit including trucks, trailers, depots and labor. Simple economics dictate that companies who are not bound by these guidelines, and are able to negotiate price on a long-term contract basis, can negotiate lower prices." Halliburton is importing hundreds of millions of gallons of gasoline, so "literally hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars are at stake," note Waxman and Dingell in a December letter to National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice.

In December, a Pentagon audit agency found that Halliburton had overcharged the Army \$61 million for gasoline, but that the profits had been accrued by a Kuwaiti subcontractor, not by Halliburton. Halliburton continues to maintain that it has not overcharged. Says a company statement, "The Defense Contracting Audit Agency (DCAA) is conducting a routine audit and has requested additional information from KBR [Halliburton's subsidiary]. There have been no conclusions reached. ... It would not be appropriate to discuss the specifics of the questions until our conversations with DCAA are complete."

Pentagon Cancels Internet Voting Wolfowitz Cites Concerns with Security

by John J. Lumpkin, Associated Press, 5 Feb 2004

WASHINGTON - The Pentagon won't use an Internet voting system for overseas U.S. citizens this fall because of concerns about its security, an official said Thursday. The official, who requested anonymity, said Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz made the decision to scrap the system because Pentagon officials were not certain they could "assure the legitimacy of votes that would be cast."

Computer security experts who last month reviewed the Secure Electronic Registration and Voting Experiment, or SERVE, had urged the Pentagon to scrap the system, saying it was too vulnerable. The experts said the system could be penetrated by hackers who could change votes or gather information about users.

"Internet voting presents far too many opportunities for hackers or even terrorists to interfere with fair and accurate voting, potentially in ways impossible to detect," the experts said in a statement Jan. 21. "Such tampering could alter election results, particularly in close contests."

Despite the concerns, Pentagon officials had said they still planned to use the system this fall and would test it during Tuesday's South Carolina primary. But the day before the voting the Pentagon called off the South Carolina test. About 6 million U.S. voters live overseas, most of them members of the military or their relatives.

This event is free of charge. To register or obtain more information, email evoting@lawyerscom.org or telephone (617) 988 0604. Because space is limited, we will hold seats for those who have registered only until 8:45 AM on the morning of the conference.

CHAPTER & REGIONAL NEWS

"Localization" was the vital theme of January's BCA chapter meeting. In this rush toward corporate globalization, asserting local resistance, responsibility and self-reliance are ever more important. **Jonathan Leavitt**, down from Lawrence, has started an Anti-Corporate Clearing House (www.stopcorporatecontrol.org) to resist privatization and to promote local power. His experience in defeating a corporate take-over of the Lawrence drinking water system—and a creeping corporate takeover of schools—leads him to counsel against "the quasi-liberal social services mentality". What makes a difference is "community-based economics" projects that make it easy for hard-working, low-income people to plug in—to take part. Provide concrete things for them to do.

A former teacher in his native Puerto Rico, Boston City Councilor **Felix Arroyo** learned from minority local officials Mel King and Chuck Turner that you could transform the system rather than its transforming you. He is hard at work changing the rules in the city council and creating a democratic city planning board to remedy the concentrated power of the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) and its mayoral control. He strengthened his seating in the city council by bringing together racial, ethnic, gender, labor, and church groups to deal with sharing power. In response to a question, Felix observed that some CDCs (community development corporations) are locally based, others are not — you can't generalize. Who controls the CDC is critical. CDCs do have a lot of flexibility. Same way with non-profits.

Thanks to **Dan Proctor** for the detailed notes from which these highlights were taken! —Ed.

BCA has collaborated with six other sponsors of our February 28th **Voting Integrity conference**: "Electronic Voting in Massachusetts: Problems and Prospects". Aimed especially at the legal and policy community, officials responsible for the election process, and of the technology community, its planning has involved BCA members **Jesse Burkhardt**, **Brit Eckhart**, **Bill King**, **Dave Lewit**, and **Jed Schwartz**, and North Bridge members **Lynn Gargill**, **Cynthia Ritscher**, **Stan Robinson**, and **Lois Voltmer**. Dave will introduce **Rebecca Mercuri**, and lead the "conclusions & directions". Please see conference program on page 7 of this issue, and the conference web site www.evote-mass.org.

New Hampshire's water privatization battle continued on 5 Feb at Nottingham Town Offices, where the state Dept of Environmental Services and 100 citizens heard a dozen irate citizens scold it for reopening the case of USA Springs Inc's request for large groundwater withdrawal, after having denied it. **Lynn Gargill**, **Dave Lewit**, **Mary White**, and **Carl Whitman**; and **Nancy Brown** and **Olivia Zinc** of Seacoast AfD enjoyed the unified democratic atmosphere of "Live Free or Die" NH determination. After seeing written testimony, DES will continue this case in late March.

Amy Hendrickson led a ~100-person forum on the proposed BU Level-4 **Bioweapons Lab**, supposedly for defense against terrorist attacks, at Brookline High School on Feb 1st. Extensive information and analysis was provided by **Jonathan King** of MIT, **Sheldon Krinsky** of Tufts, **Patricia Hynes** of BU, Boston City Councilor **Chuck Turner**, and **Klare Allen** of Alternatives for Community and Environment (ACE), stressing various dangers and profitability for certain of Boston's corporate leaders.

Ruth Weizenbaum has moved to Pawtucket RI but continues her characteristic high energy involvement in Boston pro-democracy affairs. She, **Dave Lewit**, and **Victor Wallis** serve on the program planning committee of the **Boston Social Forum**, which is led by **Jason Pramas**, **Matt Borus**, **Lara Jirmanus**, **Jonathan Leavitt**, **Russ Davis**, and others. Ruth has gathered an impressive group including Victor to develop an **Environment "track"** (set of presen-

tations), while Dave is attempting the same with **Localization**, and **Strategic Nonviolence**. Call them with your ideas.

BC sociologist **Charlie Derber** invites all to read and introduce others to his forthcoming book *Regime Change Begins At Home*.

"When Bush comes to shove, resist."

—slogan, Pakistani women's organization,
World Social Forum, Mumbai, 2004

ACTION ALERTS

Sun, 15 Feb, 1pm. Cambridge. **Noam Chomsky** speaks on "**Militarization of Science and Space**". Kresge Aud, MIT, opp. 77 Mass Av (#1 bus—Harvard-Roxbury).

Sat, 28 Feb, 8:45-4pm. Boston. "**Electronic Voting**" conference with **Rebecca Mercuri** and **9 other speakers**, national and local. Suffolk U Law School, opp Park St. T stop. See program in this issue, **page 7**. www.evote-mass.org

Tue, 2 Mar, 8pm. Boston. Showcase of **short radical films** and videos. Mass College of Art, East Hall screen #1, Mass Av near Longwood (Green E line, or 39 bus Forest Hills-Back Bay).

Sat, 20 Mar. Here and worldwide. Anniversary of **Iraq invasion—Marching**. **Save the date**. More info later.

JOIN THE BCA

YOU DON'T HAVE TO LIVE IN BOSTON TO LOVE BCA

Please help us as we fight to make a better future for ourselves and our children — Join the Boston/Cambridge Alliance for Democracy. (Cut out this form and send it to:

Dave Lewit, 271 Dartmouth St., 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	Bill King	Brit Eckhart
Editor	Ed. Consultant	Ed. Consultant
617-266-8687	617-244-3557	617-629-5830
271 Dartmouth St. #2H, Boston MA 02116.		
dlewit@igc.org		

Visit the Alliance web site: www.TheAllianceForDemocracy.org