

BCA Dispatch

Newsletter of the
Boston-Cambridge Alliance for Democracy

November
2004

*Oh, is there not one patriot breast
Which proudly feels the moral beauty
Of making worldly interest
Subordinate to sense of duty?

Who would not give up willingly
All senatorial ambition
To rescue such a wrong'd country
From its unfortunate position?..*

—Pirates of Foggy Bottom (apologies to Gilbert & Sullivan)

Sen. Kerry: Apologize to us for quitting!

ALLIANCE NEWS (Continued on Page 8)

Chapter Calendar

* * Stolen Election: Now What? * *

Boston-Cambridge Alliance for Democracy will meet on
Wednesday, November 17 from 7:00 to 9:15 p.m. at
Cambridge Friends Meeting house, 5 Longfellow Park (9-minute
walk from Harvard Square T station, west on Brattle St.)

— Agenda —

So the election was stolen—millions more vote, but millions are dumped—Kerry hastens to concede— Alliance members demand a recount in Ohio—Republican officials are recalcitrant—Blacks are more prominent in Congress—Can a militant resistance innovate and succeed? Will more Enrons happen? Will the UK quit Iraq? Will youth accept a draft? Will moderate Congressmen rebel? Will war and tax burden force top dogs to resign? Shall we push this? Or shall we turn our backs, roll up our sleeves, and build an autonomous New England? And where does religion come in for us?

Come, brainstorm with us—spin your scenarios, propose solutions and next steps. Everybody—feel the energy!

— Refreshments —

Why Kerry Lost What Democrats Need to Do

by Doug Ireland, Z-Net, 3 November 2004

John Kerry has definitively lost the popular vote by some three and a half million votes. That makes an all-out lawyers' war in Ohio devoid of moral force (and I doubt that in the end there'll be one).

Kerry ran a tactical campaign, devoid of vision or explicable alternatives, utterly lacking in message discipline, and riddled with misjudgments—it was one of the most (Continued on Page 2>>)



"Wind" by Carl Hofer, Berlin 1937 [during Nazi rule]

STOLEN ELECTION

Kerry Won Guerrilla Anti-Vote War in Ohio, NMex

by Greg Palast, TomPaine.com, 4 Nov 2004

Bush won Ohio by 136,483 votes. Typically in the United States, about 3 percent of votes cast are voided—known as "spoilage" in election jargon—because the ballots cast are inconclusive. Palast's investigation suggests that if Ohio's discarded ballots were counted, Kerry would have won the state. Today, the Cleveland Plain Dealer reports there are a total of 247,672 votes not counted in Ohio, if you add the 92,672 discarded votes plus the 155,000 provisional ballots.

Kerry won. Here's the facts.

I know you don't want to hear it. You can't face one more hung chad. But I don't have a choice. As a journalist examining that messy sausage called American democracy, it's my job to tell you who got the most votes in the deciding states. Tuesday, in Ohio and New Mexico, it was John Kerry.

Most voters in Ohio thought they were voting for Kerry. CNN's exit poll showed Kerry beating Bush among Ohio women by 53 percent to 47 percent. Kerry also defeated Bush among Ohio's male voters 51 percent to 49 percent. Unless a third gender voted in Ohio, Kerry took the state.

So what's going on here? (Continued on Page 4>>)

incompetently run presidential campaigns by a Democrat in my lifetime. In addition, the voters just didn't like the rich stiff--and, as I've often observed, Americans don't want a president they can't like. (In the exit polls, 76% said the one candidate quality which mattered most in how they voted for president was "he cares about people like me," which is the way pollsters determine likeability).

Kerry's biggest blunder was his failure to focus like a laser on the economy in the final weeks of the campaign, despite polls showing it was the number one issue on voters' minds. The lethal character of Kerry's scatter-shot, flailing, themeless campaign close can be clearly seen in the Ohio exit polls. In the Buckeye State, 62% of the voters said the economy was "not good"--BUT asked who they'd trust with the economy, they were evenly split between Bush and Kerry, 48-48%. The national number on that question actually favored Bush, who got 48% on the economy to Kerry's 46%.

By not focusing on the economy, even in a state that had lost 250,000 jobs on Bush's watch Kerry couldn't make the case that he'd do better. Whatever economic message (feeble though it may have been) which his campaign had was blown out of the water by Kerry's final-week harangues on the Iraqi explosives issue (about which there was too much reportorial dispute in the media to provide him a clean shot at Bush).

The Rove-Bush Republicans ran a brilliant, disciplined, and utterly base campaign that used three principal issues to defeat the Democrats: Iraq, Israel, and gays.

History will record that John Kerry lost the election on the day he voted the Constitution-shredding blank check for Bush's war on Iraq. He was hobbled throughout the campaign by this vote, which shackled him to a me-too posture that included endlessly repeated pledges to "stay the course" in Iraq and "win" the occupation. Kerry could not, therefore, develop and present a full-blown critique of Bush on Iraq, nor offer a genuine alternative to him on it. The non-existent Kerry "plan" (based on the hubris that he could con foreign allies into sending their troops to bleed and die for the U.S. crimes at Abu Ghraib) wasn't bought by the voters. Bush won by making the link between Iraq and the war on terrorism--the Big Lie which Kerry could not effectively counter, because he'd bought into it at the beginning. And it was on that endlessly hammered lie that Bush won the country on the Iraq issue--the exit polls Tuesday night showed that voters thought the Iraq war was part of the war on terror by 52-44%.

There was a missed moment (one of many) in the campaign, right after the devastating Senate report on the U.S. intelligence failure leading up to the war, when Kerry could have done what his Senate colleague (and Intelligence Committee ranking Democrat) Jay Rockefeller did then--say, "If I'd known then what I know now, I'd never had voted for the war." But the cautious and spineless Kerry didn't have the intestinal fortitude or the inner conviction necessary to break with his vote for war. It would probably have worked--Americans like someone who can admit a mistake. But Kerry listened to his overpriced, condohead campaign consultants, and instead hid behind his medals.

The Rove-Bush decision to French-kiss Ariel Sharon was entirely an electoral one, directly aimed at Florida. It worked. Bush thus was able to peel off enough of the Jewish vote to reduce the Democratic majorities in Dade County, Palm Beach and other enclaves necessary to overcome Bush, with his lock on the Hispanics and evangelicals. The president won Florida, and quite comfortably.



Finally, there was the decision to surf on the anti-gay backlash that first surfaced in the wake of the Supreme Court's decision to overturn the so-called sodomy laws, and intensify it as soon as the Massachusetts Supreme Court decided (as it was clear it would) that denying marriage equality to gay people was a violation of fundamental civil rights. The tools to scapegoat gays were the Federal Marriage Amendment, and the 11 anti-gay state referenda.

This is, after all, a country drowning in censorious, politicized religiosity. The exit polls showed 21 percent of voters said that "moral values" --more than either Iraq or the economy--was what determined their vote. Nowhere did this

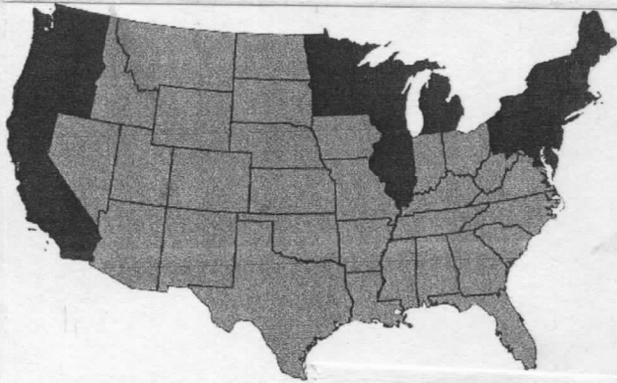
strategy work better than in Ohio, where the southern tier is the cultural equivalent of a Deep South state, downing in religiously inculcated homo-hate; and where traditionally Democratic working class Catholic voters --whom Kerry failed to bind to him with an economic program that could arouse their passions--were peeled off in sufficient numbers to reduce Kerry's margins in the larger cities. And the sweeping anti-gay referendum in Ohio --which outlaws civil unions or any more minor legal recognition of same-sex couples, as well as gay marriage-- passed by 2-1. As it did in all the other ten states with referenda, with the smallest margin of victory for the anti-gay measure in Oregon (where it won by a resounding 14 points.)

Undoubtedly, the Corporate Democrats and their liberal power-junkie helpmates will decide that they lost the election because they didn't squirm far enough to the right. Where is the institutional leadership--or the leader--who could fight for a reorientation of the party toward a populist, progressive, passionate commitment to social and economic justice as a REAL alternative to reactionary Republicanism? Oh, Hillary Clinton, you say? Don't make me laugh. But she'll undoubtedly be the Democrats' nominee in 2008--which is why we can expect, not four more years of Republican rule, but 12.

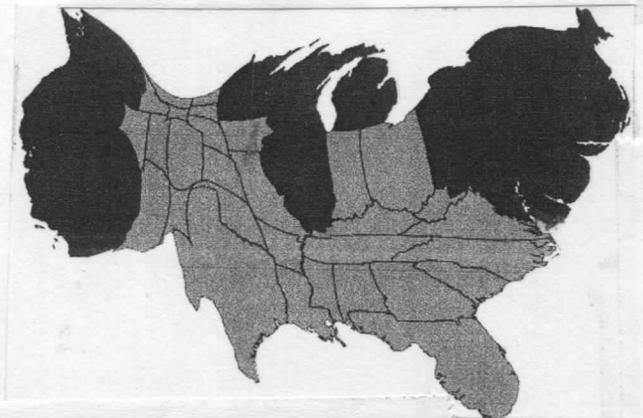
Doug Ireland is a New York-based media critic and commentator.

Deceptive "Red" and "Blue" States Communities Are Shades of Purple, People

maps by Michael Gastner, Cosma Shalizi, & Mark Newman
Univ. of Michigan www-personal.umich.edu/~mejn/election/



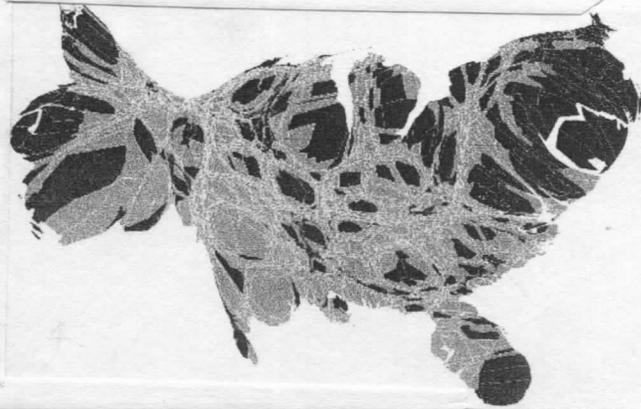
1. Red (gray)=Bush majority, Blue (black)=Kerry majority



2. Cartogram—states swollen or shrunk according to population



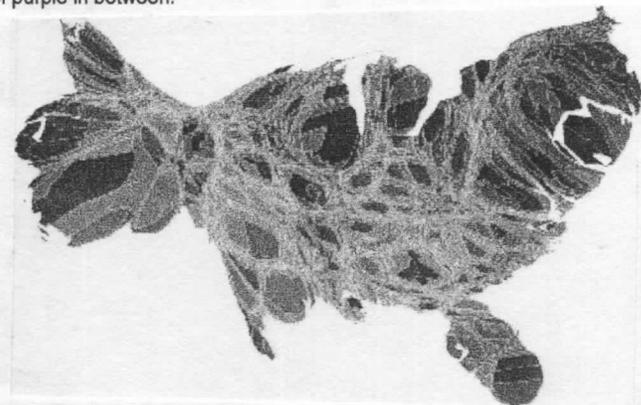
3. Red/Blue majorities by counties



4. Cartogram—same as (3) but swollen according to county population



5. OK. A county shown in solid red or solid blue should really be some shade of purple—reddish purple if, say, 59% voted Bush and 38% Kerry. Massachusetts would be bluish purple. These last two maps use solid red if Bush got 70% or more, and solid blue if Kerry got 70% or more of the vote, with shades of purple in between.



6. So—what do we learn? Cartograms show that our bluish communities aren't as isolated as the standard TV maps suggest. The standard county maps (by area, not by population) show Democrats clustered not only in coastal cities, but in along the Mississippi and Rio Grande, for example, and in southern Florida despite the Cuban migrants there, and in much of New Mexico. Why are northeast Minnesota and the Connecticut River valley so blue? These distinctions are hard to see on the population-scaled cartograms, which do, however, show about as much blue as red. Since I grew up in Essex County, New Jersey, I find it odd that rural southern NJ is so Kerry while affluent areas closer to New York City are so Bush. I thought that those country folk had more in common with Dixie, and those "professionals" would be more liberal! Or maybe they vote their \$net worth? Give me a bigger map—I can't make out Newark! —Ed.

Answer: the exit polls are accurate. Pollsters ask, "Who did you vote for?" Unfortunately, they don't ask the crucial, question, "Was your vote counted?" The voters don't know.

Here's why. Although the exit polls show that most voters in Ohio punched cards for Kerry-Edwards, thousands of these votes were simply not recorded. This was predictable and it was predicted. [See TomPaine.com, "An Election Spoiled Rotten," November 1.]

Once again, at the heart of the Ohio uncounted vote game are, I'm sorry to report, hanging chads and pregnant chads, plus some other ballot tricks old and new.

The election in Ohio was not decided by the voters but by something called "spoilage." Typically in the United States, about 3 percent of the vote is voided, just thrown away, not recorded. When the bobble-head boobs on the tube tell you Ohio or any state was won by 51 percent to 49 percent, don't you believe it ... it has never happened in the United States, because the total never reaches a neat 100 percent. The television totals simply subtract out the spoiled vote.

And not all vote spoil equally. Most of those votes, say every official report, come from African American and minority precincts. (To learn more, click here.)

We saw this in Florida in 2000. Exit polls showed Gore with a plurality of at least 50,000, but it didn't match the official count. That's because the official, Secretary of State Katherine Harris, excluded 179,855 spoiled votes. In Florida, as in Ohio, most of these votes lost were cast on punch cards where the hole wasn't punched through completely—leaving a 'hanging chad,'—or was punched extra times. Whose cards were discarded? Expert statisticians investigating spoilage for the government calculated that 54 percent of the ballots thrown in the dumpster were cast by black folks. (To read the report from the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, click here .)

And here's the key: Florida is terribly typical. The majority of ballots thrown out (there will be nearly 2 million tossed out from Tuesday's election) will have been cast by African American and other minority citizens.

So here we go again. Or, here we don't go again. Because unlike last time, Democrats aren't even asking Ohio to count these cards with the not-quite-punched holes (called "undervotes" in the voting biz).

Ohio is one of the last states in America to still use the vote-spoiling punch-card machines. And the Secretary of State of Ohio, J. Kenneth Blackwell, wrote before the election, "the possibility of a close election with punch cards as the state's primary voting device invites a Florida-like calamity."

But this week, Blackwell, a rabidly partisan Republican, has warmed up to the result of sticking with machines that have a habit of eating Democratic votes. When asked if he feared being this year's Katherine Harris, Blackwell noted that Ms. Fix-it's efforts landed her a seat in Congress.

Exactly how many votes were lost to spoilage this time? Blackwell's office, notably, won't say, though the law requires it be reported. Hmm. But we know that last time, the total of Ohio votes discarded reached a democracy-damaging 1.96 percent. The

machines produced their typical loss—that's 110,000 votes—overwhelmingly Democratic.

The Impact Of Challenges

First and foremost, Kerry was had by chads. But the Democrat wasn't punched out by punch cards alone. There were also the 'challenges.' That's a polite word for the Republican Party of Ohio's use of an old Ku Klux Klan technique: the attempt to block thousands of voters of color at the polls. In Ohio, Wisconsin and Florida, the GOP laid plans for poll workers to ambush citizens under arcane laws—almost never used—allowing party-designated poll watchers to finger individual voters and demand they be denied a ballot. The Ohio courts were horrified and federal law prohibits targeting of voters where race is a factor in the challenge. But our Supreme Court was prepared to let Republicans stand in the voting booth door.

In the end, the challenges were not overwhelming, but they were there. Many apparently resulted in voters getting these funky "provisional" ballots—a kind of voting placebo—which may or may not be counted. Blackwell estimates there were 175,000; Democrats say 250,000. Pick your number. But as challenges were aimed at minorities, no one doubts these are, again, overwhelmingly Democratic. Count them up, add in the spoiled punch cards (easy to tally with the human eye in a recount), and the totals begin to match the exit polls; and, golly, you've got yourself a new president. Remember, Bush won by 136,483 votes in Ohio.

Enchanted State's Enchanted Vote

Now, on to New Mexico, where a Kerry plurality—if all votes are counted—is more obvious still. Before the election, in TomPaine.com, I wrote, "John Kerry is down by several thousand votes in New Mexico, though not one ballot has yet been counted."

How did that happen? It's the spoilage, stupid; and the provisional ballots.

CNN said George Bush took New Mexico by 11,620 votes. Again, the network total added up to that miraculous, and non-existent, '100 percent' of ballots cast.

New Mexico reported in the last race a spoilage rate of 2.68 percent, votes lost almost entirely in Hispanic, Native American and poor precincts—Democratic turf. From Tuesday's vote, assuming the same ballot-loss rate, we can expect to see 18,000 ballots in the spoilage bin.

Spoilage has a very Democratic look in New Mexico. Hispanic voters in the Enchanted State, who voted more than two to one for Kerry, are five times as likely to have their vote spoil as a white voter. Counting these uncounted votes would easily overtake the Bush 'plurality.'

Already, the election-bending effects of spoilage are popping up in the election stats, exactly where we'd expect them: in heavily Hispanic areas controlled by Republican elections officials. Chaves County, in the "Little Texas" area of New Mexico, has a 44 percent Hispanic population, plus African Americans and Native Americans, yet George Bush "won" there 68 percent to 31 percent.

I spoke with Chaves' Republican county clerk before the election, and he told me that this huge spoilage rate among Hispanics simply indicated that such people simply can't make up their minds on the choice of candidate for president. Oddly, these brown people drive across the desert to register their indecision in a voting booth.

Now, let's add in the effect on the New Mexico tally of provisional ballots.

"They were handing them out like candy," Albuquerque journalist Renee Blake reported of provisional ballots. About 20,000 were given out. Who got them?

Santiago Juarez who ran the "Faithful Citizenship" program for the Catholic Archdiocese in New Mexico, told me that "his" voters, poor Hispanics, whom he identified as solid Kerry supporters, were handed the iffy provisional ballots. Hispanics were given provisional ballots, rather than the countable kind "almost religiously," he said, at polling stations when there was the least question about a voter's identification. Some voters, Santiago said, were simply turned away.

Your Kerry Victory Party

So we can call Ohio and New Mexico for John Kerry—if we count all the votes.

But that won't happen. Despite the Democratic Party's pledge, the leadership this time gave in to racial disenfranchisement once again. Why? No doubt, the Democrats know darn well that counting all the spoiled and provisional ballots will require the cooperation of Ohio's Secretary of State, Blackwell. He will ultimately decide which spoiled and provisional ballots get tallied. Blackwell, hankering to step into Kate Harris' political pumps, is unlikely to permit anything close to a full count. Also, Democratic leadership knows darn well the media would punish the party for demanding a full count.

What now? Kerry won, so hold your victory party. But make sure the shades are down: it may be become illegal to demand a full vote count under PATRIOT Act III.

I used to write a column for the Guardian papers in London. Several friends have asked me if I will again leave the country. In light of the failure—a second time—to count all the votes, that won't be necessary. My country has left me.

Greg Palast, contributing editor to Harper's magazine, investigated the manipulation of the vote for BBC Television's Newsnight. The documentary, "Bush Family Fortunes," based on his New York Times bestseller, The Best Democracy Money Can Buy, has been released this month on DVD.

What You Can Do Now — Fix Ohio!

The Alliance for Democracy, in partnership with two third-party candidates, is demanding a recount of all votes in Ohio in accordance with the law. The state charges a fee of \$10 per precinct, so we need to raise \$110,000 + lawyers' fees. Please contribute on-line now. Go to www.TheAllianceForDemocracy.org and, on the home page, click on "DONATE NOW" button below Granny D's photo. Thanks!!

"This offer is limited, so act now!"

Better That Bush Should Win His Fatal Arrogance Will Activate Us

by Eric Francis Coppolino, *Chronogram* (Mid-Hudson NY), Nov 2004

The illusions we live with are still too well packaged to see through. One is the utterly false notion that the United States is a democracy rather than an oligarchy (government by the rich and privileged for their own purposes), a theocracy (government by religious leaders under religious values), or a fascist state. Under Bush, the United States seems to have elements of all these things, and to be some kind of demented monarchy. There appears to be just one branch of government, the executive branch, as well as rule by fiat.

I'm afraid that if Kerry wins we're going to fall asleep and dream that we live in a free country. Then, with a somewhat sensible (or at least human) person in a position to make decisions, the war in Iraq will be escalated, ostensibly as a means of getting out. Halliburton and Carlyle Group, Bechtel and Unocal will still make the profits, but a Democrat will get the blame. If the economy tanks, Kerry will be blamed. If there is more terrorism as a result of the insane Bush administration policies of the past four years, Kerry will get the blame. And it is always possible for rival factions of lunatics to totally disrupt the process of governing the country with special prosecutors, intern scandals, and so on. It's easy to mess up something and hard to set it right.

I say keep the Republicans busy. Leave them in power. Let the ample distractions, struggles, and disasters of the modern world sit on their shoulders. Let them reap what they have sown. And for all those voters who casually let the whole stolen election crisis slide four years ago, let's see the results of our apathy and stupidity for what they are. We don't, as a nation, deserve to be set free of the Neocon Nemesis so easily. We have too much to discuss with our neighbors. We have too much to find out about what's being done to our country. We have too much to discover about who these people really are.

There is a truly positive side to having Bush in office. The widespread interest in politics, peace, and justice that have suddenly sprung up has all been very refreshing, and we have to thank Bush & Co. for that. With Bush and Cheney "re-elected," I think that our resolve is only going to get stronger; it will have more time to take hold. The movement is only getting underway.

We desperately need the obvious illegitimacy of the Bush administration to rail against. We need to know that every time he makes a move, we had nothing to say about it. We need to know we live in a country that is of, by, and for the corporations. We need to never forget that our country has been ripped off—otherwise we're never going to get it back.

—Special thanks to Marika Daciuk for forwarding this article.

To Those Who Seek Information as a Basis For Action Regarding Bush's "Victory":

4 November 2004 9:49am.

I examined the discrepancies between the actual vote tabulations as reported and the Edison/Mitofsky exit poll results in 47 states, incl. D.C. (in 4 states—NJ, NY, NC, VA—I did not have early exit poll results available, and the later results had already been amended to reflect input of actual vote totals, which rendered them corrupt as exit polls and useless for the purpose of checking the veracity of actual vote totals).

I noticed an overall red shift (to Bush) across the spectrum of states, but the shift was significantly nonuniform. Having divided the 47 states examined into two groups, 35 noncritical states and 12 critical or suspect states (Nebraska included because of ES&S control and prior anomalies even though not a battleground state), I calculated that the average discrepancy in the 35 safe states was a +1.4% red shift, that is the average of the vote totals in each state was 1.4% more favorable to Bush than what the exit polls predicted (= total movement of 2.8%). In the 12 critical states (CO, FL, MI, MN, NE, NV, NH, NM, OH, PA, WI, IA) the average discrepancy was a 2.5% red shift (= total movement of 5.0%), nearly twice that in the safe states. This in spite of the fact that the average sample size in the critical states was nearly twice that in the noncritical states and should have produced significantly more accurate results.

Further, assuming a 3% margin of error and 95% confidence interval for each state poll (the standard Mitofsky protocol, but a conservative assumption here, since the sample sizes were significantly increased in critical states), the red shift exceeded the margin of error in 4 of the 12 critical states (and equaled it in a fifth). The chance of this occurring in 4 of the 12 states in the absence of "mistabulation" can be computed using a simple probability equation and is approximately 0.002 or one in five-hundred. It's a relatively crude analysis and better analysis would have to wait on more complete data, but basically what it's telling

us is that we can say with 99.8% certainty that "mistabulation" played some significant role in this election.

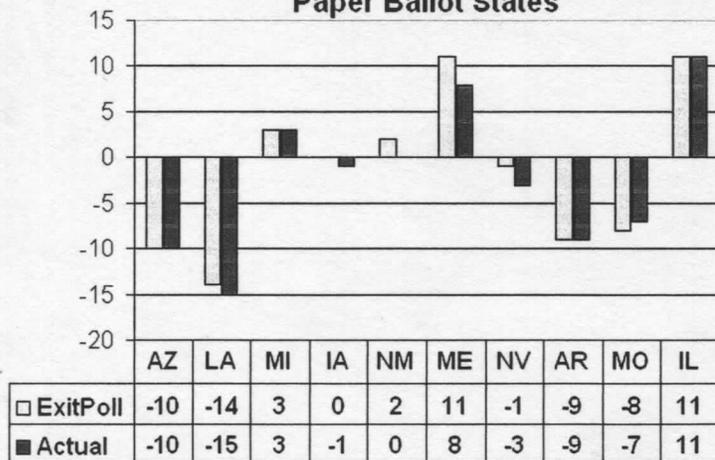
From the specific discrepancies in Florida, Ohio, and New Mexico; from the amazing voter turnout, which any analyst on truth serum will admit should have guaranteed a Kerry victory; from what we know, but the media has now chosen to forget, about how suspect and partisan the vote counting equipment is; and from pieces of circumstantial evidence, such as Bush hardly deigning to campaign in Ohio (crazy unless the fix was in): we can be all but certain that another election has been stolen and that the toilet has been flushed on our democracy.

Kerry, inanely, has conceded. But the truth remains to be dug out to lie in the light and stink in the open air. If we can do no more, let's at least make sure we don't rest until we have done that... Bear in mind that Kerry's concession is not legally binding and can be rescinded if sufficient evidence comes to light (not that such an action is likely on his part, but possible). Remember also that the presidential election is a staged (pun intended) affair, and that all we've had so far is Stage One. There is still a certification process in the states and in joint Congress plus the meeting of the electors. There is still time—if overwhelming evidence comes to light, if overwhelming opposition is generated—to influence, and perhaps historically alter, this process at one or more of these junctures. We need a smoking gun, of course, clear and convincing evidence (which the media can't ignore) of outcome-determinative rigging, such that the average (voting) American says "this is an outrage that far outweighs in importance which candidate I supported."

—Jonathan Simon (Alliance for Democracy, Boston)

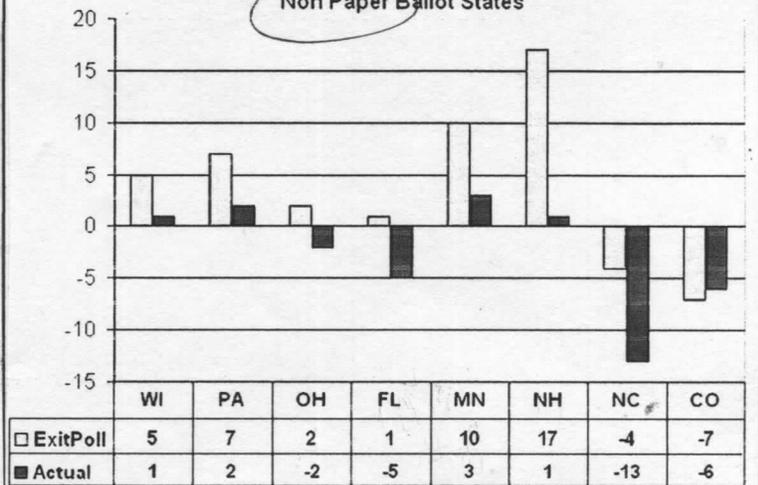
Now, from an article by Jonathan Simon & Kat L'Estrange: ...Rather than objectively exploring reasons for these identified discrepancies, the networks now glibly claim exit polling based on scientific methodology is completely unreliable, and have all but forgotten that there was a deep and widespread concern about the reliability and security of the vote tabulating apparatus leading up to this election...

Kerry Margin: Exit Poll vs. Actual Vote Paper Ballot States



These graphs, posted at www.DemocraticUnderground.com by "TruthIsAll" on 6 Nov, show that exit poll vs. vote-count discrepancies are small in states

Kerry Margin: Exit Poll Vs. Actual Vote Non Paper Ballot States



using paper ballots (recountable), but large in states using nonpaper (electronic) voting (nonrecountable). Tabulation tampering?

Stop Dancing and Start Digging Dems Must Reclaim "Party of the People"

by Thomas Frank, *New York Times*, 5 Nov 2004

The first thing Democrats must try to grasp as they cast their eyes over the smoking ruins of the election is the continuing power of the culture wars. Thirty-six years ago, President Richard Nixon championed a noble "silent majority" while his vice president, Spiro Agnew, accused liberals of twisting the news. In nearly every election since, liberalism has been vilified as a flag-burning, treason-coddling, upper-class affectation. This year voters claimed to rank "values" as a more important issue than the economy and even the war in Iraq.

And yet, Democrats still have no coherent framework for confronting this chronic complaint, much less understanding it. Instead, they "triangulate," they accommodate, they declare themselves converts to the Republican religion of the market, they sign off on Nafta and welfare reform, they try to be more hawkish than the Republican militarists. And they lose. And they lose again. Meanwhile, out in Red America, the right-wing populist revolt continues apace, its fury at the "liberal elite" undiminished by the Democrats' conciliatory gestures or the passage of time.

Like many such movements, this long-running conservative revolt is rife with contradictions. It is an uprising of the common people whose long-term economic effect has been to shower riches upon the already wealthy and degrade the lives of the very people who are rising up. It is a reaction against mass culture that refuses to call into question the basic institutions of corporate America that make mass culture what it is. It is a revolution that plans to overthrow the aristocrats by cutting their taxes.

Still, the power of the conservative rebellion is undeniable. It presents a way of talking about life in which we are all victims of a haughty overclass - "liberals" - that makes our movies, publishes our newspapers, teaches our children, and hands down judgments from the bench. These liberals generally tell us how to go about our lives, without any consideration for our values or traditions.

The culture wars, in other words, are a way of framing the ever-powerful subject of social class. They are a way for Republicans to speak on behalf of the forgotten man without causing any problems for their core big-business constituency.

Against this militant, aggrieved, full-throated philosophy, the Democrats chose to go with ... what? Their usual soft centrism, creating space for this constituency and that, taking care to antagonize no one, declining even to criticize the president, really, at their convention. And despite huge get-out-the-vote efforts and an enormous treasury, Democrats lost the battle of voter motivation before it started.

Worse: While conservatives were sharpening their sense of class victimization, Democrats had all but abandoned the field. For some time, the centrist Democratic establishment in Washington has been enamored of the notion that, since the industrial age is ending, the party must forget about blue-collar workers and their issues and embrace the "professional" class. During the 2004 campaign these new, business-friendly Democrats received

high-profile assistance from idealistic tycoons and openly embraced trendy management theory. They imagined themselves the "metro" party of cool billionaires engaged in some kind of cosmic combat with the square billionaires of the "retro" Republican Party.

Yet this would have been a perfect year to give the Republicans a Trumanesque spanking for the many corporate scandals that they have countenanced and, in some ways, enabled. Taking such a stand would also have provided Democrats with a way to address and maybe even defeat the angry populism that informs the "values" issues while simultaneously mobilizing their base.

To short-circuit the Republican appeals to blue-collar constituents, Democrats must confront the cultural populism of the wedge issues [e.g., gay marriage] with genuine economic populism. They must dust off their own majoritarian militancy instead of suppressing it; sharpen the distinctions between the parties instead of minimizing them; emphasize the contradictions of culture-war populism instead of ignoring them; and speak forthrightly about who gains and who loses from conservative economic policy.

What is more likely, of course, is that Democratic officialdom will simply see this week's disaster as a reason to redouble their efforts to move to the right. They will give in on, say, Social Security privatization or income tax "reform" and will continue to dream their happy dreams about becoming the party of the enlightened corporate class. And they will be surprised all over again two or four years from now when the conservative populists of the Red America, poorer and angrier than ever, deal the "party of the people" yet another stunning blow.

Thomas Frank is the author, most recently, of "What's the Matter with Kansas? How Conservatives Won the Heart of America."

LETTER

Chechnya—Whose Side Are You On?

The article "Neocons Love Terrorists if they happen to be Chechen" reprinted in the October *BCA Dispatch* was somewhat misleading. The American Committee for Peace in Chechnya (ACPC) does seem to represent the US foreign policy establishment (chairman is Zbigniew Brzezinski). We might well wonder what they are up to. Nonetheless, their emphasis on human rights abuses and the desirability of a political solution conforms with the view of the Chechen conflict shared by most of the world (except Putin's government).

The ACPC (web site peaceinchechnya.org) currently features an excellent article by Dr. Brian Glyn Williams of UMass/Dartmouth entitled "Shattering the Al Qaeda-Chechen Myth". This article tracks post-9/11 media references to Chechen terrorists against the actuality of Chechen-Islamic terrorist contacts.

—Joanna Herlihy, Cambridge

CHAPTER AND ALLIANCE NEWS

The Cost-Benefit Game

In part due to nearly universal attention to the Boston Red Sox vs. the NY Yankees on October 20, attendance was sparse at BCA's last chapter meeting. We can't imagine a more worthy distraction than the Sox going on to win the World Series for the first time since Babe Ruth! Nevertheless, we had a lively discussion, led by Tufts U economist **Frank Ackerman**, of formulaic digitizing and more commonsensical valuation of lives at risk due to industrial pollution, war, and so on—as they may be mitigated in some degree by government policy. Frank was introduced by **Jed Schwartz**.

Water and Democracy in New England

Our campaign on Corporate Globalization and Positive Alternatives is shifting to high gear. Following their tour of water activists in four NE states, **Dave Lewit** and **Ruth Caplan** joined forces with **Gianpaolo Baiocchi**, Brazil-born sociologist at Umass/Amherst, to invite 20 New England activists to a strategic roundtable conference in Amherst on 13 November: "Promoting Popular Governance in New England". Town meeting reps and others will learn about participatory budgeting (Brazil), neighborhood planning assemblies (Burlington), anti-agribiz ordinances (Penna.), water anti-privatization (Lee and Lawrence), limiting water mining (VT, NH, ME), people's law (POCLAD), living wage, town charter reform and revival, and so on. We will brainstorm and recommend goals and actions for our local groups and for regional integration. Stay tuned!

Web Site Restarted

Thanks to a generous gift from **Harold Stokes**, stalwart Alliance member from the Detroit area, BCA is planning to implement its April 2003 interactive web design to cover all New England projects. **Bhavin Patel**, designer of Boston Social Forum's web site, and **Stan Robinson**, software engineer and BCA rep to last January's working group on electronic voting, will lead development and maintenance of the site.

Get Well Soon!

AfD councilmember **Ted Dooley**, of St. Paul MN, and **Stan Robinson** of Wayland, BCA, and No-U-Turn Radio are each anticipating surgery in the coming weeks. We wish them speedy recovery!

Our Fellow Alliance Chapters

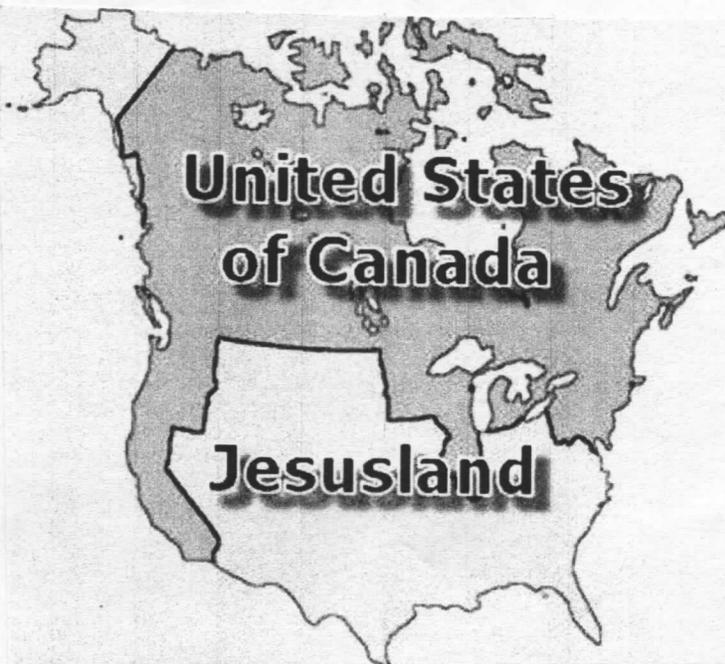
We had a call from the Seacoast (NH) chapter wanting some joint work activity. Meanwhile North Bridge and Mass Bay South have also been biding their time. With initiatives by **Ruth Weizenbaum**, **Cynthia Ritsher** and **Lynn Gargill**, North Bridge has been plumbing issues at recent meetings. Now that we have the challenge of Bush 2, why not all gather at BCA chapter meeting on Wednesday, November 17, to share and plan collaboration? See Box, page 1.

ACTION ALERTS

Sun. 21 Nov. 10:45am. Boston. **Ronnie Dugger** speaks on "The Votes Have Been Counted, Now Where Do We Go?" Community Church of Boston, 2nd fl., 565 Boylston St. (between Dartmouth and Clarendon Sts, Copley Sq. Info: 617-266-6710.

ACTION ALERTS

Wed. 1 Dec 7:30-9pm "Gather the Spirit, Harvest the Power—A conversation to reflect on the ELECTION". At Unitarian Universalist churches in Providence RI, Franklin, N.Easton, Hingham, and Chatham. Info: 508-559-6650 or 401-353-5334 www.bcd.uua.org.



JOIN THE BCA

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

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

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

BOSTON-CAMBRIDGE ALLIANCE 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: _____

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