

# BCA Dispatch

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

Newsletter of the **November-December**  
**Boston-Cambridge Alliance for Democracy** 2013

*All good people agree  
And all good people say,  
All nice people, like Us, are We  
And everyone else is They.  
But if you cross the sea,  
Instead of over the way,  
You may end (think of it!) by looking on We  
As only a sort of They!*

—Rudyard Kipling

## COMMUNITY NOTES

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

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While the *Dispatch* is bowing out, BCA is carrying on. We're focused on public banking for Massachusetts—Boston to start with. We meet once every 3 weeks or so (sometimes by phone), in Jamaica Plain or Roxbury. Regulars (*Continued on Page 18 >>*)

## Some of Us Will Die

### Christian Conspiracy in a Nazi World

—from the *Introduction to A Testament to Freedom*, edited by Geoffrey B. Kelly & F. Burton Nelson, a systematic compilation of key works of Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

**B**ONHOEFFER'S EXECUTION TOOK PLACE ON APRIL 9, 1945, only four weeks before the defeat of Nazi Germany. His actions to bring the war to an end were accomplished at a time when few Germans dared publicly question Hitler's rhetoric of blood and battle, or failed to snap at the bait of "patriotism" and national pride by joining the Nazi war effort. History tells us that patriotism has often lured people to enlist blindly in causes about which they know little more than the propagandist slogans with which political-military leaders fire up morale. Nazism's brutal conquest of Europe and the reign of terror in both Germany and occupied territories were no exception. The extermination of Jews, Slavs, gypsies, [homosexuals,] and political dissenters was construed by [Gestapo chief] Heinrich Himmler and the officers of the SS as the "patriotic deed", distasteful to be sure, but part of their "master plan" to deliver the promise of a Nazi millennium.

Yet in this morally inverted world of the Third Reich the "treason" of the conspirators became *true* patriotism for Bonhoeffer, and what was normally viewed as nazism's "patriotic" actions were viewed by him as, in fact, a treach- (*Continued on Page 3 >*)



Dietrich Bonhoeffer



## The Samson Complex

### Don't Panic—Do A 20-Year Plan

by Immanuel Wallerstein, Yale U., 15 October 2013

**I**N THE BIBLE THERE IS A FAMOUS STORY OF SAMSON, who is a hero. There are many interpretations of the meaning of the tale in which Samson, an Israelite, and someone of God-granted strength, pulls down the temple of the (also very strong) enemy Philistines, dying himself in the process. I take it to mean that an act which seems irrational (Samson dies in the process) is both heroic and quite sensible in that it becomes the way (possibly the only way) in which the strong enemy is defeated and his "people" saved.

We seem to have a lot of putative Samsons these days, who are blocking or seeking to block what they consider to be dangerous "compromises" with the enemy. Benjamin Netanyahu, Israel's Prime Minister, is saying that a bad deal is worse than no deal. He is referring to what he sees as the U.S.-Russian agreement on Syria and the possible U.S.-Iranian accord. In Colombia, the former Conservative president is inveighing against the current Conservative president because he is negotiating with the guerilla organization known as FARC under the auspices of Cuba and Brazil.

And of course we have the massive non-negotiations going on in the United States, in which the Tea Party members of the U.S. Congress, especially in the House of Representatives, are using their strength to veto any compromise with the enemy forces they see to be led by President Obama and the Democratic Party in general, with the collusion of those they consider to be the enemy within, that is, all those Republicans who are calling for some sort of "compromise."

It is not hard to show that all these Samsons are pulling the house down, not only on the enemy but on themselves. For them, however, even if this is true, it is a matter of timing. They must do it now while they still have the strength to do it. Otherwise, the enemy will win and institutionalize or maintain the evils they see being committed.

This kind of so-called ideological struggle, impervious to so-called pragmatism, has not been invented in the last 10-20 years. It is as old as human (*Continued on Page 17 >>*)

## Gaia Hypothesis

### Mother Earth to Shift Course and Go On

1989 review by Stephen Miller, of *James Lovelock's The Ages of Gaia* (excerpt)

**W**HAT IS THE HYPOTHESIS OF GAIA? Stated simply, the idea is that we may have discovered a living being bigger, more ancient, and more complex than anything from our wildest dreams. That being, called Gaia, is the Earth.

More precisely: that about one billion years after it's formation, our planet was occupied by a meta-life form which began an on-going process of transforming this planet into its own substance. All the life forms of the planet are part of Gaia. In a way analogous to the myriad different cell colonies which make up our organs and bodies, the life forms of earth in their diversity co-evolve and contribute interactively to produce and sustain the optimal conditions for the growth and prosperity not of themselves, but of the larger whole, Gaia. That the very makeup of the atmosphere, seas, and terrestrial crust is the result of radical interventions carried out by Gaia through the evolving diversity of living creatures.

Encountering the Earth from space, a witness would know immediately that the planet was alive. The atmosphere would give it away. The atmospheric compositions of our sister planets, Venus and Mars, are: 95-96% carbon dioxide, 3-4% nitrogen, with traces of oxygen, argon and methane. The earth's atmosphere at present is 79% nitrogen, 21% oxygen with traces of carbon dioxide, methane and argon. The difference is Gaia, which transforms the outer layer of the planet into environments suitable to its further growth. For example, bacteria and photosynthetic algae began some 2.8 billions of years ago extracting the carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen into the atmosphere, setting the stage for larger and more energetic creatures powered by combustion, including, ultimately, ourselves.

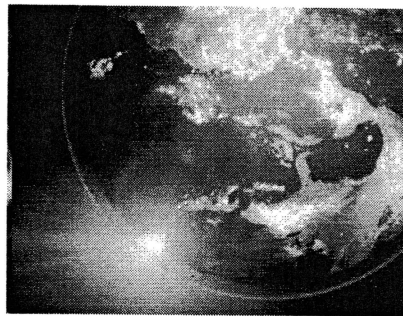
That is how James Lovelock discovered Gaia; from outer space. In the 1960's, during the space race which followed the launching of Sputnik, he was asked by the Jet Propulsion Laboratory and NASA to help design experiments to detect life on Mars. The Viking lander gathered and tested some Martian soil for life with no results. Lovelock had predicted as much, by analyzing the atmosphere of Mars: it is in a dead equilibrium. By contrast, the atmosphere of Earth is in a "far from equilibrium" state—meaning that there was some other complex process going on which maintained such an unlikely balance.

It occurred to him that if the Viking lander had landed on the frozen waste of Antarctica, it might not have found any trace of life on Earth either. But a sure giveaway would be a complete atmospheric analysis... which the Viking lander was not equipped to do. Lovelock's approach was not popular at NASA because NASA needed a good reason to land on Mars, and the best was to look for life. Viking found nothing on Mars, but Lovelock had seen the Earth from the perspective of an ET looking for evidence of life. And he began thinking that what he was seeing was not so much a planet adorned with diverse life forms, but a planet transfigured and transformed by a self-evolving and self-regulating living system. By the nature of its activity it seemed to qualify as a living being. He named that being Gaia, after the Greek goddess which drew the living world forth from Chaos.

"The name of the living planet, Gaia, is not a synonym for the biosphere—that part of the Earth where living things are seen normally to exist. Still less is Gaia the same as the biota, which is simply the collection of all individual living organisms. The biota

and the biosphere taken together form a part but not all of Gaia. Just as the shell is part of the snail, so the rocks, the air, and the oceans are part of Gaia. Gaia, as we shall see, has continuity with the past back to the origins of life, and in the future as long as life persists. Gaia, as a total planetary being, has properties that are not necessarily discernable by just knowing individual species or populations of organisms living together... Specifically, the Gaia hypothesis says that the temperature, oxidation, state, acidity, and certain aspects of the rocks and waters are kept constant, and that this homeostasis is maintained by active feedback processes operated automatically and unconsciously by the biota."

Even the shifting of the tectonic plates, resulting in the changing shapes of the continents, may result from the massive limestone deposits left in the earth by bioforms eons ago.



"You may find it hard to swallow the notion that anything as large and apparently inanimate as the Earth is alive. Surely, you may say, the Earth is almost wholly rock, and nearly all incandescent with heat. The difficulty can be lessened if you let the image of a giant

redwood tree enter your mind. The tree undoubtedly is alive, yet 99% of it is dead. The great tree is an ancient spire of dead wood, made of lignin and cellulose by the ancestors of the thin layer of living cells which constitute its bark. How like the Earth, and more so when we realize that many of the atoms of the rocks far down into the magma were once part of the ancestral life of which we all have come." The root question of Gaia's critics, and a central point in his theory concerns the difference between a planetary environment which might only be the aggregate result of myriad independent life forms coevolving and sharing the same host, and one which is ultimately created by life forms deployed, so to speak, to accomplish the purpose of the larger being.

Is the idea of Gaia only a romantic and dramatized description of the terrestrial biosphere and its effects, or is there a planetary being, whose life cycle must be counted in the billions of years, which spawns these evolving life forms to suit the purpose of its being. Do our kidney cells ask each other these sorts of questions? While your white blood cells thrive and reproduce, going about their business, they are indisputably serving the life of the larger body which you use, though whatever consciousness they experience in their realm is certainly far from that which you, the larger being, the whole, experience.

Recent scientific work, such as in the field of complex systems, have begun to give us the impression that this opposition of terms, the larger caused by its constituents, or the constituents created by the larger, may be one of those oppositions which are the constructs of our own minds, and must be dropped if we are to understand the truth, which is neither the one nor the other, but more difficult to comprehend and more fascinating to behold. Perhaps there is awareness appropriate at every level. Perhaps that is a property of life.

And what might be the nature of its evolution, this planetary being called Gaia? Anthropocentrists to the last, we might assume that the production of the human species is a great step upward for Gaia, a sort of rapidly evolving brain tissue.



Or that she prepares the earth as a cradle and crucible of consciousness evolving. Other analogies come to mind: are we part of her arsenal of interplanetary spores?

And what might constitute a life cycle for such a being—might be as strange as that of the slime mold? What stage would Gaia be in now? Is our species part of her maturity or an incubation period? Is Gaia herself somehow part of a larger living being, perhaps on a galactic scale? If so how do the cells of this larger being remain in communication? Will we eventually be able to experience something of the awareness which Gaia has?

Lovelock points out that Gaia, being ancient and resourceful enough to have carried out these successive changes of the planet in spite of asteroid collisions and other setbacks, is herself probably not endangered by the relatively momentary depredations of the human species, as it befouls and cripples the biodynamics of its environment. Rather, the danger is to the human race, not only from our own actions, but also by Gaia's reaction to them.

He adds the caveat however, that the passage of a bullet is also momentary, but the damage nonetheless lethal, and that we are not in a position yet to say whether or not some sudden, human caused imbalance, at a critical juncture, might be catastrophic to Gaia.

Lovelock first exposed his idea in his 1979 book, *Gaia, a New Look at Life on Earth*. The science behind the hypothesis was still sketchy, and it provoked a storm of criticism. It also provoked a lot of research, and the resulting body of information has encouraged Lovelock to publish this second book, a more confident and complete exposition of the Gaia hypothesis. *The Ages of Gaia* is easily readable for the educated layperson, but includes plenty of scientific depth.

Those of us who consider ourselves to be somehow involved in the birthing of a new age, should discover Gaia as well. The idea of Gaia may facilitate the task of converting destructive human activities to constructive and cooperative behavior. It is an idea which deeply startles us, and in the process, may help us as a species to make the necessary jump to planetary awareness. ■

#### **BONHOEFFER** (Continued from Page 1)

-erous undermining of Germany's spiritual heritage. The "survival tactics" of the churches which, for the most part, gave loyal acquiescence in political decisions and prayerful support of the troops, he rejected as a hypocritical evasion of responsibility for the violence and bloodshed of both war and death camps.

The contrast to church leaders—who avowed that meddling in matters of state, especially in the fate of Jews, was not part of any explicit gospel mandate—Bonhoeffer argued before his fellow conspirators that the ultimate question was not how to extricate themselves with "clean hands" from moral dilemmas, such as those presented by military oaths and the separation of one's "sacred" life from the profane, but the responsibility of individual Christians and of Christian churches to "shape history" for the sake of the coming generation. The war was, he insisted, a time for decisions of conscience and even of martyrdom. Death in the cause of bringing about peace would not, however, be like the "glorious martyrdom" portrayed in more euphoric literature about early Christianity. Rather, as Bonhoeffer declared in a strangely prophetic sermon, they were living in a macabre age in which martyrs' blood "will not be so innocent". Theirs, he admitted, was to be a sacrifice tainted by the "great guilt" of betraying their nation.

What moved Bonhoeffer, a dedicated pacifist in the 1930s and an agitator on behalf of world peace at ecumenical gather-

ings, into the role of double agent for German military intelligence—a center of the resistance movement within Germany—and conspirator against the Nazi regime, can best be seen as a growing solidarity with those who represented for him the compassion of Jesus regardless of their religious affiliation. This meant, above all, entering into solidarity with the victims of the national heartlessness then sweeping Germany.

Bonhoeffer's resistance group had, he remarked in a New Year's essay-gift to his fellow conspirators, "for once learned to see the great events of world history from below, from the perspective of the outcast, the suspects, the maltreated, the powerless, the oppressed, the reviled—in short, from the perspective of those who suffer."

Indeed, solidarity with the innocent victims of racial hatred, and with the multitudes of suffering strewn in the mass graves and rubble of a world war became a passion with Bonhoeffer. Yet the sparks of that passion are barely detectable in Bonhoeffer's earliest years spent in an atmosphere of relative affluence. He came from a family that enjoyed abundance, even privilege. More important, however, Dietrich's family provided a context for developing maturity of judgment and an esteem from freedom that was uncommon in the years of tight Nazi control over the lives and speech of German citizenry... ■

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### Who Am I?

Who am I? They often tell me  
I stepped from my cell's confinement  
Calmly, cheerfully, firmly,  
Like a Squire from his country house.

Who am I? They often tell me  
I used to speak to my warders  
Freely and friendly and clearly,  
As though it were mine to command.

Who am I? They also tell me  
I bore the days of misfortune  
Equally, smilingly, proudly,  
like one accustomed to win.

Am I then really that which other men tell of?  
Or am I only what I myself know of myself?  
Restless and longing and sick, like a bird in a cage,  
Struggling for breath, as though hands were compressing  
my throat,  
Yearning for colors, for flowers, for the voices of birds,  
Thirsting for words of kindness, for neighborliness,  
Tossing in expectations of great events,  
Powerlessly trembling for friends at an infinite distance,  
Weary and empty at praying, at thinking, at making,  
Faint, and ready to say farewell to it all.

Who am I? This or the Other?  
Am I one person today and tomorrow another?  
Am I both at once? A hypocrite before others,  
And before myself a contemptible weebegone weakling?  
Or is something within me still like a beaten army  
Fleeing in disorder from victory already achieved?

Who am I? They mock me, these lonely questions of mine.  
Whoever I am, Thou knowest, O God, I am thine!

—Dietrich Bonhoeffer

## A New, Radical Catholic Church?

### Liberation Theology Restored, Plus + + + +

by Paul Vallely, *The Independent (UK)*, 27 September 2013

*The Vatican has been turned upside down, but can [Pope Francis] ensure that his radical changes to the Church will last?*

**R**ADICAL CHANGE HAS BECOME THE NEW NORM in Rome under the first six months of the pontificate of Pope Francis. The first Pope from the Americas has brought with him—"from the ends of the earth", as he put it—a fundamentally new perspective. Now conservatives in the Vatican are braced for what could be, next week, a bigger change than anything so far.

A new council of eight cardinal advisers—mavericks to a man—will meet for the first time on Tuesday to offer guidance from outside the dysfunctional and self-serving Vatican bureaucracy known as the Roman Curia. The new Pope from Argentina has tasked them with the massive job of reforming the Curia. The new body has been described by the leading ecclesiastical historian Professor Alberto Melloni, of the University of Modena, as the "most important step in the history of the church for the past 10 centuries". Even allowing for a little Italian exaggeration, this is clearly a big deal.

Pope Francis caused a stir from the outset by eschewing the monarchical trappings of the papacy and presenting himself as an icon of assertive humility. But there has been much more to him than a Pope who rejects the papal palace, eats at the refectory table in his hostel, carries his own bags and makes impromptu calls on his mobile to a variety of ordinary people in response to letters whose envelopes were addressed only to "Pope Francis, The Vatican, Rome".

He has also been radical in his pronouncements on Church teaching. On the plane back to Rome from World Youth Day in Brazil—where his final Mass had attracted three million worshippers—Francis spoke freely in answer to reporters' questions on a wide range of topics. His softening of Rome's attitudes to gay people—"Who am I to judge?"—grabbed the headlines. But in 80 minutes of Q&As the new Pope signalled change in many areas.

That was a message reinforced this month when he gave a 12,000-word interview to a Jesuit publication. It sent shock waves through the Catholic Church.

He criticised it for putting dogma before love, and doctrine before serving the poor. It had grown "obsessed" with abortion, gay marriage and contraception and become a church of "small-minded rules". Where his predecessor, Benedict XVI, wanted a smaller, purer church, Francis wanted an inclusive one which was a "home for all".

"We have to find a new balance," Pope Francis concluded, "otherwise even the moral edifice of the Church is likely to fall like a house of cards, losing the freshness and fragrance of the Gospel."

Conservative Catholics have struggled with all this, stuttering that the new Pope was changing no doctrine but merely offering a different style. Many of his comments could have been made by Pope Benedict, they said—it was only Francis's tone that was different. Liberal Catholics, by contrast, who had felt out in the cold during the 35 years during which John Paul II and Benedict XVI occupied the papacy, were optimistic that there would be substance to match the style.

But it is now becoming clear that the new Pope is bent on real change. To some extent, style and substance have been interwoven. When Francis visited the southern Italian island of Lampedusa in July—to show solidarity with the African refugees

whose flimsy boats find it the easiest part of Europe for them to reach—he ruffled feathers in the Vatican. First, he did not consult the Vatican equivalent of the prime minister's office, the Secretariat of State. And he tried to book his own flight on Alitalia, until the airline's people rumbled him.

Symbol and substance have gone hand in hand elsewhere. At the scandal-hit Vatican Bank he first told all the cardinals on its supervisory board that they must forgo their €25,000 annual stipend. But then he set up a five-person commission of outsiders, including a Harvard law professor, to investigate the bank which has been accused of money laundering. In a handwritten document he gave them powers to summon any documents and data they deemed necessary and told them to report directly to him.

He has made moves to rehabilitate liberation theology—the Latin American movement which said the Church should work for the political and economic, as well as the spiritual, liberation of the poor. The theology was condemned as Marxist by the Vatican under previous popes, and its advocates were silenced. But Pope Francis last month met the father of liberation theology, Gustavo Gutierrez, in Rome. He has asked one of the previously silenced theologians, Leonardo Boff, to send him his writings. And he has removed the block on the canonisation of Archbishop Oscar Romero, the champion of the poor in El Salvador who was martyred under a right-wing military government.

Most recently, he has upset traditionalists in Rome by announcing that he will stop granting elite priests the honorary title of "monsignor" with its anachronistic aristocratic resonance—it means "my lord".

The big question is: will the new Pope be able to institutionalise that and the rest of his raft of changes so that they cannot be reversed by a conservative successor? There are two keys to that: the appointments he makes and the mechanisms he must establish to lock in reform.

The trend in his appointments has been steadily away from the conservatism of the previous three decades. He has replaced Benedict XVI's Secretary of State, Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, whose chief qualification for the job appeared to be that he was a friend and theological soulmate of the previous Pope. Bertone departed with bitterness, lashing out against the "crows and vipers" who had undermined him.

In his stead Francis has placed Archbishop Pietro Parolin, a talented and respected Vatican diplomat, who will rebuild the Holy See's international credibility and be a key player in Curia reform. In the previous era he fell foul of Bertone and was shunted off to be Papal Nuncio in Venezuela to get him out of the way.

His return was just the start of what looks to be a big round of far-reaching changes. The old guard, who were reconfirmed in their previous jobs only "provisionally" when Francis took over, are being steadily removed. New men are in place in the key Vatican departments.

The extent of the change they are expected to usher in was evident from Francis's big interview this month. Asked allusive religious questions the Pope plunged in with direct answers. Quizzed about "Ignatian spirituality", Francis responded with comments on reform. "Many think that changes can take place in a short time," he said, warning that it would take time to "lay the foundations for real, effective change."

He spoke openly about his failings as a younger man when—confirming for the first time the revelations made in my book *Pope Francis—Untying the Knots*—that as leader of Argentina's Jesuits, aged just 36, his "authoritarian and quick manner



of making decisions led me to have serious problems". He brought up the thorny issue of infallibility and insisted it applied to judgements arrived at by the whole church, including the ordinary people, not just the Pope.

Asked whether the Church should drop its rule that divorced and remarried people should not take communion, he said that pastoral care came before dogma, and brought up homosexuality in the same context. Not all the dogmatic and moral teachings of the Church were equivalent, he declared.

God is to be encountered in the world of today, he said. The Christian who "wants everything clear and safe... will find nothing". Tradition and memory of the past must help us to have the courage to open up new areas to God. The church was wrong in the past in accepting slavery and the death penalty. "Ecclesiastical rules and precepts that were once effective... have now lost value or meaning." The church must "grow in its understanding" and "mature in its judgement".

For a Pope this is explosive stuff. The task facing him now is to translate that vision into practice. That is the business that will begin on Tuesday at his first meeting with his Group of Eight cardinal advisers.

They will arrive in Rome well prepared. The eight men come from every continent and corner of the Church. All have been noted critics of the Vatican in the past. In their home provinces they have been consulting local bishops and lay experts about the priorities for reform. They have been in email and telephone discussions with one another. Each has been assembling ideas of his own on how to make Rome more accountable to local churches, so that the Curia is their servant and not their master.

The challenge for Pope Francis next week will be to begin the task of synthesising and coordinating the approaches of his new advisers. He has said he wants to proceed carefully, and with the collegial consensus of his brother bishops. But, at the age of 76, he knows he does not have that long.

On Thursday he will celebrate the feast of St. Francis of Assisi—whose name this first Jesuit Pope took. In his mind will echo the words that his namesake reputedly heard issuing from a crucifix in the 12th century: "Francis, repair my Church for it is in ruins." The new Pope knows he is charged with no less a task.

*Paul Vallely's Pope Francis: Untying the Knots was published in August.*

## Gandhi's Seventh Sin

### "Worship without Sacrifice"

*by Ignacio Castuera, Center for Process Studies, October 2013*

OF THE SEVEN SOCIAL SINS THAT GANDHI CONDEMNED, this is bound to be the most misunderstood, given the several ways in which the word sacrifice can be interpreted. One of the most common ways of understanding the term "sacrifice" is that of offering or gift. Many religions have rituals that require the presentation of a gift or sacrifice, sometimes referred to as oblation using another Latin-based word.

In many ancient rituals and still in some cults an animal is presented as a gift which then is ritually sacrificed. Several "primitive" religions (some might say that many religions in their early stages) included human sacrifices which were offered to the deity or deities to please and appease them thereby obtaining special favors or blessings. This type of sacrifice, connected with a priestly class with their temple structures and strictures, was critiqued and opposed in several faith paths, especially in Judaism.

The quintessential prophetic statement against this idea of sacrifice based religion comes from the prophet Micah:

With what shall I come before the LORD,  
and bow myself before God on high?  
Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings,  
with calves a year old?  
Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams,  
with tens of thousands of rivers of oil?  
Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,  
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?  
He has told you, O mortal, what is good;  
and what does the LORD require of you  
but to do justice, and to love kindness,  
and to walk humbly with your God?

The essence of Micah's text is reflected in another passage where the prophet Amos claims to have received a very specific message from God against rituals and sacrifice:

I hate, I despise your festivals,  
and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.  
Even though you offer me your burnt-offerings and grain-offerings,  
I will not accept them;  
and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals  
I will not look upon.  
Take away from me the noise of your songs;  
I will not listen to the melody of your harps.  
But let justice roll down like waters,  
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

One can say without exaggeration and without stretching the meaning of the title "prophet" that Gandhi was a prophet who in the name of faithfulness to the essence of his religious allegiance urged action for justice thereby incurring the wrath of those who disagreed with him and disapproved of his goals.

When Gandhi added the social sin of "worship without sacrifice" he used the term sacrifice as the payment, implicit in the justice-seeking actions of people of faith. When someone speaks truth to power in the name of a deep conviction one risks the possibility of having to suffer the consequences of those words and actions. Religion, then, deep convictions that guide a person in the direction of exposing corruption, oppression, unfairness, imperial policies, etc., must move that person to actions which might provoke reactions on the part of those who profit from the status quo one way or another. Those reactions may vary in intensity from derision to public ridicule, to condemnation and, eventually for some, to assassination or execution.

While Gandhi did not elaborate on what he meant by the social sin of religion without sacrifice we can be sure that his own sacrifice must have been something he contemplated as a real possibility. He was someone who appreciated the basic truth implicit in all religions and particularly praised Christianity for giving to the world the perspective, indeed the commandment to love the enemy. He claimed to love Christianity even though Christians were not faithful to the teachings of Jesus, who for Gandhi exemplified religion with sacrifice. In one of the statements where he clearly connects his ideas to the sacrifice of Jesus he stated: "A man who was completely innocent, offered himself as a sacrifice for the good of others, including his enemies, and became the ransom of the world. It was a perfect act."

The language of ransom reflects a theological position within Christianity that Gandhi surely did not share, that is, that the death of Jesus was a payment offered to God in exchange of the forgiveness of all who would believe in Jesus. But there are other ways to understand the term ransom in a manner that is congruent with the actions of Gandhi and the possible actions of those who believe in the power of the sacrificial exe-

cution of Jesus. David Ray Griffin has lived exposing religion without sacrifice and urging all to follow the example of Jesus, Gandhi and Martin Luther King. He wrote the following in a book of essays published under the title of *American Empire and the Commonwealth of God*:

There is...a direct connection between the deaths of millions every year from starvation and lack of clean water, and policies intended to enlarge America's military-economic empire....For Christians in this country to denounce and work against the American empire will require courage, because we may be subjected to one of the many contemporary forms of crucifixion.

Griffin has risked an assassin's bullet every day by researching and writing 12 books exposing 9/11, and speaking out regularly.

**Ed. Note:** This essay concludes our commentaries on Gandhi's *Seven Social Sins*. For your reference, here is the whole set: Politics without Principle, Wealth without Work, Pleasure without Conscience, Knowledge without Character, Commerce without Morality, Science without Humanity, Worship without Sacrifice.

**Biographical Note:** Years ago theologian author Ignacio Castuera introduced me to Liberation Theology (see article, page 4) and to Dietrich Bonhoeffer (see article, page 1). Based in Claremont CA, he is extending Process Studies to Nicaragua, Brazil, and elsewhere in Latin America.

## Calling All Engineers

### Re-engineer the Internet to Prevent Spying

by Bruce Schneier, *The Guardian*, 5 September 2013

**G**OVERNMENT AND INDUSTRY HAVE BETRAYED THE INTERNET, AND US. By subverting the internet at every level to make it a vast, multi-layered and robust surveillance platform, the NSA has undermined a fundamental social contract. The companies that build and manage our internet infrastructure, the companies that create and sell us our hardware and software, or the companies that host our data: we can no longer trust them to be ethical internet stewards.

This is not the internet the world needs, or the internet its creators envisioned. We need to take it back. And by we, I mean the engineering community.

Yes, this is primarily a political problem, a policy matter that requires political intervention. But this is also an engineering problem, and there are several things engineers can—and should—do:

- One, we should **expose**. If you do not have a security clearance, and if you have not received a National Security Letter, you are not bound by federal confidentiality requirements or a gag order. If you have been contacted by the NSA to subvert a product or protocol, you need to come forward with your story. Your employer obligations don't cover illegal or unethical activity. If you work with classified data and are truly brave, expose what you know. We need whistleblowers.

We need to know exactly how the NSA and other agencies are subverting routers, switches, the internet backbone, encryption technologies, and cloud systems. I already have five stories from people like you, and I've just started collecting. I want 50. There's safety in numbers, and this form of civil disobedience is the moral thing to do:

- Two, we can **design**. We need to figure out how to re-engineer the internet to prevent this kind of wholesale spying. We need new techniques to prevent communications intermediaries from leaking private information.

We can make surveillance expensive again. In particular, we need open protocols, open implementations, open systems—these will be harder for the NSA to subvert.

The Internet Engineering Task Force, the group that defines the standards that make the internet run, has a meeting planned for early November in Vancouver. This group needs to dedicate its next meeting to this task. This is an emergency, and demands an emergency response.

- Three, we can **influence government**. I have resisted saying this up to now, and I am saddened by saying it, but the US has proved to be an unethical steward of the internet. The UK is no better. The NSA's actions are legitimizing the internet abuses by China, Russia, Iran, and others. We need to figure out new means of internet governance, ones that make it harder for powerful tech countries to monitor everything. For example, we need to demand transparency, oversight, and accountability from our governments and corporations.

Unfortunately, this is going to play directly into the hand of totalitarian governments that want to control their country's internet for even more extreme forms of surveillance. We need to figure out how to prevent that, too. We need to avoid the mistakes of the international Telecommunications Union, which has become a forum to legitimize bad government behavior. We need to create truly international governance that can't be dominated or abused by any one country.

Generations from now, when people look back on these early decades of the internet, I hope they will not be disappointed in us. We can ensure that they don't only if each of us makes this a priority, and engages in the debate. We have a moral duty to do this, and we have no time to lose.

Dismantling the surveillance state won't be easy. Has any country that engaged in mass surveillance of its own citizens voluntarily given up that capability? Has any mass surveillance country avoided becoming totalitarian? Whatever happens, we're going to be breaking new ground.

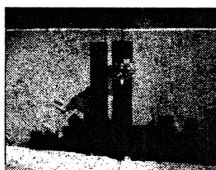
Again, the politics of this is a bigger task than the engineering, but the engineering is critical. We need to demand that real technologists be involved in any key government decision making on these issues. We've had enough of lawyers and politicians not fully understanding technology; we need technologists at the table when we build tech policy.

To the engineers, I say this: we built the internet, and some of us have helped to subvert it. Now, those of us who love liberty have to fix it.

*Bruce Schneier's latest book is Liars and Outliers: Enabling the trust that society needs to thrive.* ■

## Provocative Art in NY Streets

British satirical artist Banksy spent the month of September in New York City painting culturally provocative graffiti on buildings and fences. His notoriety drew crowds like these amateur photographers snapping the World Trade towers (left) with a rose marking the explosions. Here (right) a dog shows his displeasure. Wee-wee!





## Three 9/11s

In Boston, a chill 11<sup>th</sup> of September brings the first turning of leaves, presaging the cold winds of Winter. But in South Africa 9/11 ushers in Spring. It was on that day in 1906 that Mohandas Gandhi, an Indian educated in England and then practicing law in Johannesburg addressed a crowd of 3000 mostly Hindus and Muslims, and created the concept—and imperative—of *satyagraha*: Truth Force.

Cold August had brought a Whites-über-alles law requiring all "Coloreds"—brown people—to register, be fingerprinted, and carry an ID card to confirm their secondary status. Gandhi was incensed and determined to defy this regime of *apartheid*. In a carefully prepared speech he analyzed and condemned this system, and called for all Indians to stand up for non-violent resistance—non-cooperation—then and there. The entire audience quickly rose, and *satyagraha* was launched, and after eight years of Indian refusal, forced the British and Afrikaaner overlords to rescind the law. Carrying the movement to India, Gandhi further realized the power of *satyagraha*, in 1947 driving the British rulers out of the "crown jewel" of their empire.

The second momentous 9/11 of the century came in 1973 when foreign agents instigated the killing of Chile's democratic-socialist president Salvador Allende and installation of the fascist General Augusto Pinochet. Those instigators were CIA agents providing money, information, connections, and technology to Chile's military conspirators as part of the US cold-war effort to negate alternatives to capitalism and extend US hegemony around the world.

1973 was the same year in which Council on Foreign Relations' historian Samuel Huntington declared an "excess of democracy" in the US and kick-started the current neoliberal regime globalizing jobs and money, flattening the earnings of American workers and fattening incomes of big business share holders, while promoting the spread of US warriors, subversion, and arms around the world. However, nonviolent opposition to neoliberalism continued in South and Central America for roughly twenty years when Pinochet and other dictators were overcome, providing space for the many socialistic regimes now evident south of Mexico.

The third momentous 9/11 event was, of course, the attacks on and disintegration of three World Trade Center (WTC) buildings in New York and part of the Defense Department's Pentagon building in Washington DC, nine months (gestation? preparation?) after George W. Bush took office as president. A mostly prepared omnibus anti-terrorism bill titled "Provide Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism (PATRIOT) Act" was rushed through Congress and signed the next day by Bush, who—without any criminal investigation—had immediately blamed Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda Muslim militants for the attacks. No denizen of the Pentagon or WTC officer has been prosecuted despite massive gaps in protective behavior.

The PATRIOT act has enabled the President with his intelligence and military agencies to surveil, capture, torture, or destroy anyone, foreign or domestic, suspected to be or officially labeled as "terrorist" or terrorist associate or helper, without the usual investigation or due process of law. The Act, or many parts of it, are clearly unconstitutional, providing the president with broad terrorist potential.

Ignoring limits imposed by the War Powers Acts, the president proceeded to send an army and air force to Afghanistan to vanquish terrorists—"better to destroy them over there than to fight

them here." Thus started the putatively unlimited "War on Terror" which has been extended to Iraq, Pakistan, Libya, Somalia, Yemen, and now any defenseless place on earth where drones—unopposed by any fighter plane—can kill people by remote control. And of course the whole American population and any other users of phones or the internet—including "friendly" heads of state—are now under indiscriminate surveillance by the secretive giant National Security Agency.

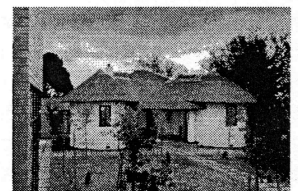
If the War on Terror is meant to protect American interests (governmental, corporate, and citizen) abroad, it is doing the opposite—beyond the short term. It is widely suspected in the US and understood in Europe that the 9/11 attacks and official reports were fraudulent and need to be properly investigated and reported, with policy and operational officials held accountable, prosecuted, and punished. The painstaking research by philosopher David Ray Griffin, historian Webster Tarpley, chemist Niels Harrit, and others, and the opinions of over 2000 engineers, architects, and scientists as well as airline pilots, make clear that the WTC towers and WTC Building 7 were destroyed by controlled demolition from the inside—not by aircraft hijackers. This comports with anyone who has taken half an hour to explore the web site [www.ae911truth.org](http://www.ae911truth.org), among others, viewing the videos.

We focus this final editorial of the *BCA Dispatch* on 9/11 because it is the crucial issue of our time—the consequences a disaster for democracy, humanity, and the earth—depending on perception and subsequent policy making. In this issue we are featuring the enduring heroism of Bonhoeffer and the insight of Lovelock's Gaia rather than political events, but it is amazing how our supposedly enlightened people can swallow—or fail to perceive or to correct—the massive hypocrisy and corruption of our government and mindless corporate (especially media) elite placing avaricious control and neoconservative ideology over survival of people and the earth.

Surveys show that the American public, as well as European and other, want to rein in corporate and military privilege, as well as indiscriminate surveillance and control of the internet, at home and abroad. But so far we lack the coherent vision and organization to realize "another possible world". Willful ignorance? We are dumbfounded by propaganda—official and corporate.

Many avenues need to be tried in order to winnow out distractions, lies, and omissions, but a key one may be *media literacy* and the genesis of public opinion. What if school children—and adults—were to learn on field trips how advertising works, how corporate and political campaign money works, strategy and tactics of propaganda, even the simple contrivance of teleprompters where children and the unwary see "spontaneous" speech? To be aware of the false impression of universality or inevitability given by TV overload and cherry-picking, misleading headlines, misleading video editing, and bogus experts? And at another level, to know how so-called trade agreements—TPP, TAFTA—incorporate legalistic bombs to devastate our social and environmental laws and our internet? How surveillance, military, and covert terror agencies constitute a fourth, temporarily unaccountable, branch of government?

Another world is waiting, indeed.



Gandhi's house  
in Johannesburg

—D.L. 6 Nov 2013

## Indict Real Traitors at NSA and FISA Court

by William R. Nugent, Engineer, Cape Cod, October 2013

**T**HE NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY (NSA), A TRUSTED ARM of the U.S. government since its founding in 1952, was permitted by the 2001 USAPATRIOT Act to use police-state processes in an unconstitutional attempt to control the expressed thoughts and actions of more than 200 million innocent and unsuspecting U.S. citizens. Such total surveillance is an established form of control by tyrannical regimes. If the U.S. Congress does not immediately act to forcefully and thoroughly halt these unconstitutional programs, the United States is on a dark and slippery slope to becoming a police state.

The FISA (Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act) Court, originally (1978) intended as a check on overzealous and unconstitutional acts by the intelligence community, has instead become a docile lapdog. It has aided and abetted NSA's crimes by passing secret and unconstitutional findings that seemingly served to permit intelligence agencies to ignore the binding restrictions of the U.S. Constitution. The eleven learned judges on the FISA court could be replaced by one high school dropout with a rubber stamp saying "Approved": Is the box "Related to National Security" checked on the application for wiretap? If so, apply the rubber stamp.

The FISA court is, in effect, a shadow Supreme Court that creates secret and unconstitutional laws for the exclusive use of the intelligence community. This court must be disbanded and its Chief Judges, past and present—currently Reggie B. Walton—should be indicted for directing the court's unconstitutional acts.

The Fourth Amendment of the Constitution is expressed in language so simple and clear as to make it immune to learned explications by scholars or scoundrels as to its true or hidden meanings: "The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched and the persons or things to be seized."

If the U.S. Congress, or any secret court has passed bills, findings, or amendments that violate the Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, then the U.S. [Supreme Court or] Congress must immediately invalidate these.

The major culprit for NSA's crimes against the U.S. Constitution and the American people is the Director of NSA, General Keith Alexander, who must be indicted for directing these crimes. General Alexander directs the NSA with an annual budget of \$10.8 billion, a staff of about 4,000, and a vast but unknown number of outside contract employees. He is also Commander of the United States Cyber Command and Chief of the Central Security Service, all in Fort Meade, Maryland. Beyond Maryland, he directs secret signal interception posts all over the U.S. and the world. General Alexander should be indicted and fired for his misappropriation of vast NSA financial resources and its hundreds of expert cyber specialists from the urgent and unmet task of stopping Chinese government hackers from stealing high technology secrets from U.S. industry and stealing top-secret U.S. government data from privileged internet sites. General Alexander has diverted these NSA resources to the specific crime of warrantless spying on all American citizens.

The secret 10.8 billion dollar "black budget" of the NSA, combined with its thousands of highly skilled cyber specialists,

has been diverted to convert the United States into a surveillance and police state modeled after the former cold war Stasi-controlled East German state. Stasi was a secret police and intelligence organization which kept extensive dossiers on all its people, and used a vast network of informants, even rewarding children to report on suspicious conversations of their parents. Dissidents were considered "enemies of the state" and were whisked off for indefinite detention in secret Stasi prisons, or in some cases simply "disappeared".

General Alexander has also established a secret and highly fortified 2 billion dollar, million square foot, facility in the Utah desert, near Bluffdale, filled with high density storage devices and servers said to be eventually capable of holding a yotta-byte (a trillion terabytes) of digital data, specifically for holding NSA spy results on all American citizens.

This finding was not a result of anything Chelsea Manning or Edward Snowden leaked, but was reported, with photographs, nearly one year previous to recent leaks in the April 2012 *Wired* magazine by author and expert on the NSA, James Bamford. The U.S. Congress must insist that this facility be razed with all the data stored there.

In Alexander's zeal to "collect everything" he has also by code-breaking destroyed the encrypted protections used by U.S. consumers, banks, and businesses to provide secure financial transactions. A "follow the money" branch of NSA has been collecting and storing banking and credit card transactions of VISA and others. It was never considered that one of the many holders of high security clearances might decide, instead of becoming a whistleblower, to profit heavily by selling this credit card information to the Mafia or a U.S. equivalent.

NSA spying has also cost Silicon Valley firms, seeking to market secure "cloud services", potentially tens of billions of dollars in lost sales overseas. No one in Europe trusts the security of U.S. electronic services of any form anymore.

General Alexander's thinking is revealed, in part, by his personal war room created by a Hollywood movie set designer and modeled after the bridge of TV-serial *Star Trek's* Starship Enterprise. Alexander calls it his "Information Dominance Center". As he sits in his leather Captain's chair, gloating on his power, it is unlikely he thinks of himself as another benevolent "Captain Jean-Luc Picard", but rather as Chief of a U.S. Secret Police, like another Heinrich Himmler, Hitler's head of the SS and Gestapo.

General Alexander should be indicted for his crimes against U.S. citizens and against the U.S. Constitution. I think his punishment should be no less than that inflicted on patriotic whistleblowers. And while we have known for ages that "military justice is to justice as military music is to music", General Alexander, like Chelsea Manning, should be subject to military court martial, charged under the 1917 Sabotage Act, demoted to buck private, given a dishonorable discharge, and sentenced to 35 years in prison.

A statement attributed to Thomas Jefferson says "The two enemies of the people are criminals and government, so let us tie the second down with the chains of the Constitution so that the second will never become the legalized version of the first."

These chains have been hacksawed apart by NSA. It is urgent that The U.S. Congress reapply such chains before the U.S. becomes the police state that General Alexander seemingly seeks. ■



## The Prison-Industrial Complex

### Changing A Self-Perpetuating System

by Chuck Turner, Boston Councilor, 6 September 2013

**A**FTER TWO AND ONE HALF YEARS IN A PRISON WORK CAMP for a crime I didn't commit, I am now at home. However, I am still under the supervision of a half way house. This means that I have to give them a schedule each week that accounts for my location at every hour during the day and evening. Their supervision system also includes periodic home and work visits by their monitors as well as calls between 9 p.m. and 11 p.m. as well as 3 a.m. and 5 a.m. every day. In addition, I have to call in once a day between two and four. While the rigorosity of the monitoring is frustrating and tiring, I am thrilled to be home. In November, I will move into the probation stage of my sentence which will be significantly less rigorous but will last until March 25, 2017.\*

I also am fortunate to have been able to work out a volunteer relationship with the Black Community Information Center at 516 Warren Street in Dorchester (617-427-2527). This has enabled me to spend Monday through Friday reestablishing relationships as well as developing organizing projects. I have also secured a contract to work part time with the Boston Workers' Alliance on a Greater Roxbury based recruitment, training, and placement center for community based construction workers. This enables me to again focus on the critical area of employment as well as supplement my social security since my pension was taken away.

While I feel blessed in terms of my reentry process, I recognize that my successful experience is very different than the experience of the majority of those returning from federal and state prison as well as county jail. There are 2.3 million Americans now residing in federal, state, and county jails. We have a larger percentage of our people in jail than any other country in the world. Over 40 percent of those in jail are black.

While there are some reentry programs in operation across the county, there is no systematic approach to the issue of reentry. Without a systematic approach to the need for jobs and housing for those returning from prison, the majority of those returning will return. Let me be more specific about the nature of the problem. Those returning to their communities with felony convictions are ineligible for public housing as well as the federal Section 8 housing voucher program. In fact, if a friend or relative in public housing or in an apartment subsidized by a section eight voucher allows a returning felon to stay in their apartment, they have violated their lease and will be evicted.

Not only is the person returning from prison in nomadic situation in terms of housing moving from shelter to shelter but also faces a significant barrier in terms of employment. On the one hand employers in general are very open about their unwillingness to hire those with prison records. In addition with the unofficial unemployment rates at the 30% to 40% levels in communities of color, even those returning with skills are at the end of the unemployment line, given the huge pool of surplus labor created by the policies of the One Percent.

I was pleased to hear that Attorney General Holder was attempting to organize a more rational approach to the Justice Department's prosecution and incarceration policies. Unfortunately, I do not hear any public officials or elected officials, including President Obama and Governor Patrick pursuing employment policies and strategies designed to eradicate the human chaos created by the economic policies of the One Percent.

It is clear to me that those returning from prison and those of us seeking justice cannot look to the corporate economy for economic opportunities and justice. Those who control the economy are growing richer by the day as their policies create a poorer and poorer working class and a growing surplus labor pool. The Boston-based Liberty Mutual Insurance Company which paid its recently retired president 50 million dollars a year during his last four years recently reduced the pension benefits for its workers. The stock market soars to its highest level in history while our economy is experiencing minimal growth and the real wages of employees are in a continual downward spiral.

I believe that the only answer is a nonviolent economic revolution focused on the creation of an economy where those who choose to work can secure a living wage. It is time for the unemployed, underemployed, and their allies rise up and not only demand change but also begin to create the type of economic justice that it necessary for any society that claims to be civilized. In other words, those of us who claim to seek economic justice must take responsibility for developing and implementing strategies that enable the economically oppressed to free themselves from the One Percent's surplus labor pool.

Such a movement in Boston would have three essential components:

- The demand that all the corporations of Boston develop recruitment, hiring, and training policies designed to have Boston workers representing 50% of their labor force at every level. These corporations are paying their executives millions of dollars a year. It's time that the workers of Boston receive a fair share of that wealth.
- Unemployed and underemployed skilled Boston workers must be organized and assisted in the development of democratically-owned businesses (worker cooperatives) to not only give themselves a respectable means of labor but also to give the Boston area consumer an alternative to foreign made products sold in this country by corporations that ship our jobs overseas and then don't want to pay taxes.
- Given the large number of those in Boston not ready to enter the labor market, we need to initiate the formation of land-based communities of 500-800 people where the residents would have the opportunity to rebuild themselves while building an economy.

Ed. Note: \*Chuck is no longer under daily "supervision", but may not travel out of state without permission.

*Before a packed hall in Brookline MA on 7 November, Chuck pinpointed ending the "War on Drugs" as key to ending virtual slavery and racism in the US. As explicated in Michelle Alexander's The New Jim Crow, the WoD enables mass incarceration of Blacks and Latinos, intimidation and exploitation of their families and neighbors, and perpetuation of the post-Civil-War way of economic and social subjugation of a hundred million Americans of color. Considering prison, economic, and legislative statistics Massachusetts, among all states, is clearly racist.*

Ed. Comment: Especially in these days of tight money, a publicly-owned Public Bank of Boston mandated to provide low-interest loans to new businesses organized by or hiring persons disadvantaged by prison records would be a boon. Such a bank would benefit all small and medium-sized businesses and the public at large by boosting the Boston area money supply and speeding its circulation, expanding employment, and reducing prison and post-prison despair and recidivism.

## Ireland—Exit Euro and Default!

### Adopt Irish Banking, End ECB/IMF Leeching

by Ellen Brown, Global Research, 2 November 2013

**T**HE IRISH HAVE A LONG HISTORY OF BEING TYRANNIZED, exploited, and oppressed—from the forced conversion to Christianity in the Dark Ages, to slave trading of the natives in the 15th and 16th centuries, to the mid-nineteenth century “potato famine” that was really a holocaust. The British got Ireland’s food exports, while at least one million Irish died from starvation and related diseases, and another million or more emigrated.

Today, Ireland is under a different sort of tyranny, one imposed by the banks and the troika—the EU, ECB and IMF. The oppressors have demanded austerity and more austerity, forcing the public to pick up the tab for bills incurred by profligate private bankers.

The official unemployment rate is 13.5%—up from 5% in 2006—and this figure does not take into account the mass emigration of Ireland’s young people in search of better opportunities abroad. Job loss and a flood of foreclosures are leading to suicides. A raft of new taxes and charges has been sold as necessary to reduce the deficit, but they are simply a backdoor bailout of the banks.

At first, the Irish accepted the media explanation: these draconian measures were necessary to “balance the budget” and were in their best interests. But after five years of belt-tightening in which unemployment and living conditions have not improved, the people are slowly waking up. They are realizing that their assets are being grabbed simply to pay for the mistakes of the financial sector.

Five years of austerity has not restored confidence in Ireland’s banks. In fact the banks themselves are packing up and leaving. On October 31st, RTE.ie reported that Danske Bank Ireland was closing its personal and business banking, only days after ACC-Bank announced it was handing back its banking license; and Ulster Bank’s future in Ireland remains unclear.

The field is ripe for some publicly-owned banks. Banks that have a mandate to serve the people, return the profits to the people, and refrain from speculating. Banks guaranteed by the state because they are the state, without resort to bailouts or bail-ins. Banks that aren’t going anywhere, because they are locally owned by the people themselves.

Ireland was the first European country to watch its entire banking system fail. Unlike the Icelanders, who refused to bail out their bankrupt banks, in September 2008 the Irish government gave a blanket guarantee to all Irish banks, covering all their loans, deposits, bonds and other liabilities.

At the time, no one was aware of the huge scale of the banks’ liabilities, or just how far the Irish property market would fall.

Within two years, the state bank guarantee had bankrupted Ireland. The international money markets would no longer lend to the Irish government.

Before the bailout, the Irish budget was in surplus. By 2011, its deficit was 32% of the country’s GDP, the highest by far in the Eurozone. At that rate, bank losses would take every penny of Irish taxes for at least the next three years.

“This debt would probably be manageable,” wrote Morgan Kelly, Professor of Economics at University College Dublin, “had the Irish government not casually committed itself to absorb all the gambling losses of its banking system.”

To avoid collapse, the government had to sign up for an €85 billion bailout from the EU-IMF and enter a four-year program of

economic austerity, monitored every three months by an EU/IMF team sent to Dublin.

Public assets have also been put on the auction block. Assets currently under consideration include parts of Ireland’s power and gas companies and its 25% stake in the airline Aer Lingus.

At one time, Ireland could have followed the lead of Iceland and refused to bail out its bondholders or to bow to the demands for austerity. But that was before the Irish government used ECB money to pay off the foreign bondholders of Irish banks. Now its debt is to the troika, and the troika are tightening the screws. In September 2013, they demanded another 3.1 billion euro reduction in spending [as on social services and infrastructure —Ed.].

Some ministers, however, are resisting such cuts, which they say are politically undeliverable.

In *The Irish Times* on October 31, 2013, a former IMF official warned that the austerity imposed on Ireland is self-defeating. Ashoka Mody, former IMF chief of mission to Ireland, said it had become “orthodoxy that the only way to establish market credibility” was to pursue austerity policies. But five years of crisis and two recent years of no growth needed “deep thinking” on whether this was the right course of action. He said there was “not one single historical instance” where austerity policies have led to an exit from a heavy debt burden.

Austerity has not fixed Ireland’s debt problems. Belying the rosy picture painted by the media, in September 2013 Antonio Garcia Pascual, chief euro-zone economist at Barclays Investment Bank, warned that Ireland may soon need a second bailout.

According to John Spain, writing in *Irish Central* in September 2013:

The anger among ordinary Irish people about all this has been immense. . . . There has been great pressure here for answers. . . . Why is the ordinary Irish taxpayer left carrying the can for all the debts piled up by banks, developers and speculators? How come no one has been jailed for what happened? . . . [D]espite all the public anger, there has been no public inquiry into the disaster.

#### Bail-in by Super-tax or Economic Sovereignty?

In many ways, Ireland is ground zero for the austerity-driven asset grab now sweeping the world. All Eurozone countries are mired in debt. The problem is systemic.

In October 2013, an IMF report discussed balancing the books of the Eurozone governments through a super-tax of 10% on all households in the Eurozone with positive net wealth. That would mean the confiscation of 10% of private savings to feed the insatiable banking casino.

The authors said the proposal was only theoretical, but that it appeared to be “an efficient solution” for the debt problem. For a group of 15 European countries, the measure would bring the debt ratio to “acceptable” levels, i.e. comparable to levels before the 2008 crisis.

A review posted on *Gold Silver Worlds* observed:

[T]he report right away debunks the myth that politicians and mainstream media try to sell, i.e. the crisis is contained and the economic outlook positive for 2014. . . . Prepare yourself, the reality is that more bail-ins, confiscation and financial repression is coming, contrary to what the good news propaganda tries to tell.

A more sustainable solution was proposed by Dr Fadhel Kaboub, Assistant Professor of Economics at Denison University in Ohio. In a letter posted in *The Financial Times* titled “What the Eurozone Needs Is Functional Finance,” he wrote:



The eurozone's obsession with "sound finance" is the root cause of today's sovereign debt crisis. Austerity measures are not only incapable of solving the sovereign debt problem, but also a major obstacle to increasing aggregate demand in the eurozone. The Maastricht treaty's "no bail-out, no exit, no default" clauses essentially amount to a joint economic suicide pact for the eurozone countries. . . . Unfortunately, the likelihood of a swift political solution to amend the EU treaty is highly improbable. Therefore, the most likely and least painful scenario for [the insolvent countries] is an exit from the eurozone combined with partial default and devaluation of a new national currency. . . .

The takeaway lesson is that financial sovereignty and adequate policy co-ordination between fiscal and monetary authorities are the prerequisites for economic prosperity.

### Standing Up to Goliath

Ireland could fix its budget problems by leaving the Eurozone, repudiating its blanket bank guarantee as "odious" (obtained by fraud and under duress), and issuing its own national currency. The currency could then be used to fund infrastructure and restore social services, putting the Irish back to work.

Short of leaving the Eurozone, Ireland could reduce its interest burden and expand local credit by forming publicly-owned banks, on the model of the Bank of North Dakota. The newly-formed Public Banking Forum of Ireland is pursuing that option. In Wales, which has also been exploited for its coal, mobilizing for a public bank is being organized by the Arian Cymru 'BERW' (Banking and Economic Regeneration Wales).

Irish writer Barry Fitzgerald, author of *Building Cities of Gold*, casts the challenge to his homeland in archetypal terms:

The Irish are mobilising and they are awakening. They hold the DNA memory of vastly ancient times, when all men and women obeyed the Golden rule of honouring themselves, one another and the planet. They recognize the value of this harmony as it relates to banking. They instantly intuit that public banking free from the soiled hands of usurious debt tyranny is part of the natural order.

In many ways they could lead the way in this unfolding, as their small country is so easily traversed to mobilise local communities. They possess vast potential renewable energy generation and indeed could easily use a combination of public banking and bond issuance backed by the people to gain energy independence in a very short time.

When the indomitable Irish spirit is awakened, organized and mobilized, the country could become the poster child not for austerity, but for economic prosperity through financial sovereignty.

*Ellen Brown is an attorney, president of the Public Banking Institute, and author of twelve books, including the best-selling Web of Debt. In The Public Bank Solution, her latest book, she explores successful public banking models historically and globally. Her blog articles are at EllenBrown.com.*

## Stop Girl-Cutting in Mali

### BCA Is Sending \$100, Can You Spare \$15?

by Susan McLucas, *Healthy Tomorrow*, October 2013

OUR FRIENDS IN MALI AT SINI SANUMAN held a week-long meeting of excisers in August. All 11 practitioners of female genital mutilation (FGM) at the meeting decided to stop excising and turned over their knives to the mayor of District I of Bamako. I'm attaching a photo of one of the excisers giving her knife to the mayor and his assistant.

One of the leaders of the workshop was the chief physician at the medical center run by the very famous preacher Ousmane Cherif Haidara. He has recently convinced Haidara of our point of view about FGM and was given the go-ahead to spread the

word. A few months ago, Haidara brought many Muslim leaders to a meeting led by this doctor at the Islamic Center and many who attended were convinced to start preaching against FGM.

Our album, "Stop Excision", has been given to 8 radio stations recently and they are playing the songs frequently on the radio. If you'd like to hear these songs, please send \$15 and I'll send you a copy. There are 8 songs in 5 local languages encouraging people not to have their daughters cut. It was the stations themselves who approached Sini Sanuman for CDs so that they could broadcast them.

Sini Sanuman continues to help women who are fleeing sexual violence. Recently a woman came to their office who had been raped and seriously burned. They are helping her get care through UNICEF and the local doctors. There is a new government in Mali so we expect things to be more stable and we will get back to our lobbying efforts to pass a law against FGM. Mali is one of the few remaining countries where FGM is practiced that does not have a law outlawing it. Our staff people, leading meetings through the UNICEF project in District I of Bamako have been continuing to collect signatures on the Pledge Against Excision. We can use these to show the legislature that there is serious public sentiment to abolish the practice.

In Boston, Healthy Tomorrow is now a non-profit and can accept tax-deductible donations. At our last meeting, we decided to do a fund-raising push to put the movie "Moolaade" on TV in Mali. The movie tells the story of one brave woman who withstands pressure from her village and protects four girls who are fleeing FGM. In the end she turns the whole village against the practice. It's a great movie made in the main local language of Mali, Bambara, and had never been on TV in Mali until we took it upon ourselves to buy the rights to play it twice in 2010. We even had it edited to take out a love scene that many Malians found offensive. To read more about it, go to: [www.rogerebert.com/reviews/great-movie-moolaade-2007](http://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/great-movie-moolaade-2007).

We need \$2,000 to pay to put Moolaade on TV two times. (They won't make a contract for showing it once.) We already have \$800, so we need \$1,200 more. Might you be able to help us raise this amount of money? It will be seen by at least 4 million people in Mali and we think seeing the film will turn a lot of people against FGM. Please help, if you can. You can give online at <http://goo.gl/gvEMCH> or send a check, made out to Healthy Tomorrow, to 14 William St, Somerville, MA 02144.

I will be one of the speakers at a presentation at the American Islamic Congress, "Myths and Facts about FGM" on October 22 at 6:30 at 38 Newbury Street in Boston. You are welcome to attend. Our friend and colleague Tobe Levin, president of FORWARD-Germany, is circulating a petition to counter efforts by people who want to soften the discussion of FGM. Please sign it, if you agree with it. It is at: [www.change.org/en-GB/petitions/fgm-abolitionists-internationally-support-the-feminist-statement-on-female-genital-mutilation](http://www.change.org/en-GB/petitions/fgm-abolitionists-internationally-support-the-feminist-statement-on-female-genital-mutilation).

We are looking for groups to present our work to. If you can think of a group that might want to hear about our efforts in Mali, please let me know. . . . Thanks for caring what happens to girls and women in Mali and around Africa.

*Susan McLucas (aka Mariam Sacko), a long-time friend of BCA, is president of Healthy Tomorrow, and Secretary General of Sini Sanuman. She lives in Somerville MA, teaches adults to ride bikes, and regularly demonstrates for peace when she isn't in Mali. [www.StopExcision.net](http://www.StopExcision.net)*

## Secret TPP? Add Secret TAFTA! US-Euro Deal Bigger Than Pacific Deal

by Colin Todhunter, *Global Research*, 4 October 2013

**T**HE TRANSATLANTIC FREE TRADE AGREEMENT (TAFTA) between the US and EU intends to create the world's largest free trade area, "protect" investment and remove "unnecessary regulatory barriers". Corporate interests are driving the agenda, with the public having been sidelined. Unaccountable, pro-free-trade bureaucrats from both sides of the Atlantic are facilitating the strategy.

In addition to the biotech sector and Big Pharma, groups lobbying for the deal have included Toyota, General Motors, IBM and the powerful lobby group the Chamber of Commerce of the US. Business Europe, the main organisation representing employers in Europe, launched its own strategy on an EU-US economic and trade partnership in early 2012. Its suggestions were widely included in the draft EU mandate.

An increasing number of politicians and citizens groups have criticised the secretive negotiations and are demanding that they be conducted in an open way. This is growing concern that the negotiations could result in the opening of the floodgates for GMOs and shale gas (fracking) in Europe, the threatening of digital and labour rights or the empowering of corporations to legally challenge a wide range of regulations which they dislike.

One of the key aspects of the negotiations is that both the EU and US should recognise their respective rules and regulations, which in practice could reduce regulation to the lowest common denominator. The official language talks of 'mutual recognition' of standards or so-called reduction of non-tariff barriers. For the EU, that could mean accepting US standards in many areas, including food and agriculture, which are lower than the EU's.

The US wants all so-called barriers to trade, including controversial regulations such as those protecting agriculture, food or data privacy, to be removed. Even the leaders of the Senate Finance Committee, in a letter to U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk, made it clear that any agreement must reduce EU restrictions on genetically modified crops, chlorinated chickens and hormone-treated beef.

The public in Europe does not want such things. People want powerful corporations to be held to account and their practices regulated by elected representatives who they trust to protect their interests, the public good. However, the TAFTA seems an ideal opportunity for corporations to force wholly unpopular and dangerous policies through via secretive, undemocratic means. They have been unable to do this in a democratic and transparent manner, so secret back room deals represent a different option.

Corporate demands include an "ambitious liberalisation of agricultural trade barriers with as few exceptions as possible." Food lobby group Food and Drink Europe, representing the largest food companies (Unilever, Kraft, Nestlé, etc.), has welcomed the negotiations, with one of their key demands being the facilitation of the low level presence of unapproved genetically modified crops. This is a long-standing industry agenda also supported by feed and grain trading giants, including Cargill, Bunge, ADM and the big farmers' lobby COPA-COGECA. Meanwhile, the biotech industry on both sides of the Atlantic is offering its "support and assistance as the EU and the US government look to enhance their trade relationship."

### New Critical Report

If the pro-free-market bureaucrats and corporations get their way and successfully bar the public from any kind of meaningful

information input into the world's biggest trade deal ever to be negotiated, Europeans could end up becoming the victims of one of the biggest corporate stitch ups [framing] ever. Left unchallenged, it will allow huge private interests to dig their profiteering snouts into the trough of corporate greed at the expense of ordinary people.

And that's not hyperbole. Such a view is confirmed by the release of a new report on the eve of the second round of negotiations that are due to begin in Brussels next week [mid-October]. The report, published by the Seattle to Brussels Network (S2B), reveals the true human and environmental costs of the proposed TAFTA. "A Brave New Transatlantic Partnership" highlights how the European Commission's promises of up to 1% GDP growth and massive job creation through the EU-US trade deal are not supported even by its own studies, which predict a growth rate of just 0.01% GDP over the next ten years and the potential loss of jobs in several economic sectors, including agriculture.

The report also explains how corporations are lobbying EU-US trade negotiators to use the deal to weaken food safety, labour, health and environmental standards as well as undermine digital rights. Attempts to strengthen banking regulation in the face of the financial crisis could also be jeopardised as the financial lobby uses the secretive trade negotiations to undo financial reforms, such as restrictions on the total value of financial transactions or the legal form of its operations.

Luis Rico of Ecologistas en Acción, a member of the Seattle to Brussels network says "We hope that the disturbing evidence we provide will show why all concerned citizens and parliamentarians on both sides of the Atlantic need to urgently mobilise against the proposed EU-US trade deal. We have to derail this corporate power grab that threatens to worsen the livelihood of the millions of people already seriously affected by the financial crisis and by the crippling consequences of Europe's austerity reforms."

Do we want increasingly bad and unhealthy food, our rights at work being further eroded, the environment being damaged in the chase for profit, ever greater reckless gambling in the financial sector or our elected representatives being by-passed via international tribunals? Of course we don't.

Where is the democracy surrounding this proposed TAFTA? Where is ordinary people's protection from the 'free' market corporate-financial cabals that ultimately drive global economic policy and geo-political strategies? By translating corporate power into political influence at the G8, G20, WTO, NATO or elsewhere, whether it is by war, threats, debts or coercion, secretive and undemocratic free trade agreements are but one tool that very powerful corporations use in an attempt to cast the world in their own image.

The TAFTA is little more than an attempt at a corporate power grab masquerading as something that promotes growth, freedom, harmony and job creation. Those claims are bogus. It must be stopped. ■

## Protesting Fukushima Re-start Business Suits Get Into the Street

by Abby Zimet, *Common Dreams*, 31 October 2013

**W**ITH A GOVERNMENTAL TASK FORCE REPORTEDLY URGING that the grossly inept, widely criticized TEPCO be stripped of the responsibility for shutting down and cleaning up the crippled Fukushima plant—with "a clear and realistic organization" created in its place—business workers

in Tokyo have joined the growing nuclear power protests in Japan. Hundreds in business suits marched last night in Tokyo, deliberately passing by TEPCO offices with signs reading "No to Restarts" and "Stop Contaminated Water."



## PeePoo—A Toilet of One's Own

### 2.6 Billion People Have No Bathroom

by John Collins, *In These Times*, 30 October 2013

**M**ANY WOMEN DON'T EAT OR DRINK THROUGHOUT THE DAY so they can go out in the cover of darkness [to defecate, avoiding assault and rape]. This is a reality in many parts of the world. Our urge to put as much distance as possible between ourselves and the shit we generate appears built-in—and for good reason. The diseases excrement can spawn, once it reaches a water supply, have spent centuries wiping sizable chunks of us off the map. The stuff doesn't smell good, either. The flushing toilet allows those of us in the West the several-times-a-day satisfaction of sending whatever our bodies expel on a one-way trip to Oblivion-land...

For the millions who live in the world's slums—informal, infrastructure-poor communities—an acceptable distance between the individual and her feces is a different ball game. Literally. For residents in settlements like Kibera, 3 miles from the center of Nairobi, Kenya] achieving this separation requires squatting over a plastic shopping bag and a good throwing arm. Some Kibera landlords provide shared latrines for residents, but they are filthy and overfilled. The most popular alternative—but only during the day—is a precarious walk to the outskirts of town. Women must be careful when using either option. The unmonitored surroundings leave them vulnerable to assault.

Kibera dates back to 1904 and officially is home to 170,000, though some estimates put the population as high as 1 million. Health risks compound exponentially in such densely populated areas.

#### Fecal Technology, Business Acumen

Enter Swedish architect Anders Wilhelmson. From 2000 to 2005, while teaching at Stockholm's Royal Institute of Art, he and his architecture graduate students traveled to slums in developing countries to study living conditions. On a trip to Mumbai, Wilhelmson was confronted by a particularly outspoken resident. He recalls her saying: "We don't need architecture, because we know how to build. Unsafe sanitation is the greatest threat we face." (The World Health Organization reports that 2.6 billion of the Earth's 7 billion people have no access to flush toilets.) Wilhelmson refers to this encounter as "a decisive moment" and in 2005 he took on that challenge.

Whatever the solution, it needed to be inexpensive and work in the absence of any existing infrastructure. The result is known as the Peepoo—a single use, biodegradable bag. Peepoos contain 6 grams of urea, an organic chemical that neutralizes pathogens and, depending on climate variables, converts excreta to a usable fertilizer in a matter of weeks.

In late 2006, Wilhelmson and his wife, Camilla Wirseen founded Peepoople AB. The Peepoo design was finalized in 2007, and in 2008 they began field-testing the Peepoos in Kibera. By 2009,

positive results from the test market drew interest from investors...

Micro-entrepreneurship is central to the Peepoople business model. Each salesperson is the owner of a Peepoo franchise. And because women are typically the primary caregivers in communities like Kibera, they are the sales force responsible for distributing the disposable toilets and educating the population about the importance of basic sanitation.

Peepoos are provided in what's called Peepoo Personal Packs, each of which contain 28 bags. Once trained, representatives are given a carton of 20 packs. The profits they receive from then on allow them to purchase more packs, continue selling and expand operations. To better build each market, sales reps provide support through meetings called Community Engagement Sessions. The sales reps are responsible for arranging these gatherings and they get a small compensation depending on how many people participate. The meetings are a way to build their customer base, but also inform the community about how to protect against excreta-borne bacteria...

"For people in urban slums and extremely poor communities, it's not a matter of living—it's a matter of surviving. So it's a challenging environment to work in," says Peepoople CEO Karin Ruiz. "We do it by engaging the community and gathering acceptance. Elders are often the informal leaders of these communities and we need to get them on board before anything else. If you have their support, they will help in the work..."

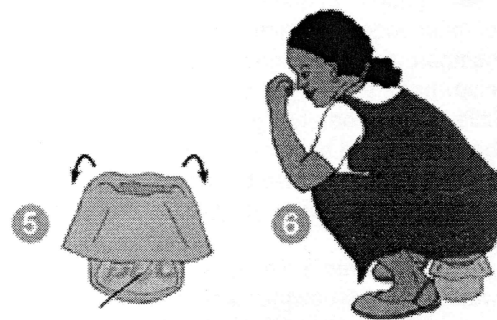
To find and train the right women for the job—individuals who possess the skills and entrepreneurial drive to successfully distribute the disposable toilets—Peepoople formed a selection committee in Kibera. The company initially included priests and elders on this committee to assure that the women would be internally supported in their efforts.

#### Social Benefit

Anne Ndunga, a 31-year-old mother of four, works as a Peepoo saleswoman. "People want more all the time," she says. "I have customers who buy whole boxes of Peepoos. Sometimes people want it for free, but I tell them that if Peepoo is for free, I would have no job. One customer came to me to buy Peepoos. She was so happy that she had them the night before because she had diarrhea. To go out at night—you know, that is very dangerous for women to do." Peepoos have also been given to schools, which serve as a hub to introduce safe sanitation practices to parents...

Roughly 20,000 [Kibera] residents are regular users of the disposable toilets. A network of "drop points" has been established where people can take their used Peepoos and receive another small sum for the

deposit. In an environment where any and every opportunity for income is seized, this financial incentive guarantees used Peepoos won't end up on the street. Recently, side businesses have sprung up in which residents go door to door collecting used Peepoos and take them to the nearest drop point, where they can redeem a bulk sum for their efforts. At the





drop points, individual Peepoos are then placed into a larger bag to prevent leakage while the urea neutralizes the bacteria.

Figuring out how best to use the resulting fertilizer is being worked out. But direct application—where gardeners put the fertilizer on their existing plants—is already underway. According to Ruiz, a study has found that Peepoos increase the yield from both coffee trees and cornfields. The bags are also used to encourage reforestation, since trees planted with Peepoos demonstrate stronger growth when compared to those without. Still being developed is an initiative to explore the drying and mixing of used Peepoos with other organic materials to make compost that could be available on a commercial scale.

Implementing similar efforts in other slums in the developing world will take time. And while Peepoople's origins and mission are built around improving the quality of life for residents in informal [unincorporated] cities, the company faces the same financial realities as any other business... Natural disasters and large-scale emergencies frequently compromise sanitation infrastructures. There is a market for Peepoos in crisis situations all over the world.

This business model relies on selling directly to NGOs and UN organizations that distribute the Peepoos as needed, with Peepoople providing basic training and implementation support. So far, Peepoople has distributed the product to NGO first responders following recent earthquakes, including in Pakistan, Haiti and New Zealand.

Wherever there are people without access to a water-based sewage system, there is a potential market for the Peepoo toilet. In places where water is only available seasonally, like parts of Australia, the Peepoos can be used in the dry season...

Peepoos may not be the ideal answer to the lack of public sanitation, but until a more comprehensive solution presents itself, the disposable toilets offer both a safer and a more environmentally sustainable way to go to the bathroom.

Ed. Note: *Gandhi considered sanitation a top priority.*

## Back to PreCambrian Era

### After Our Folly, Jellyfish Are Taking Over

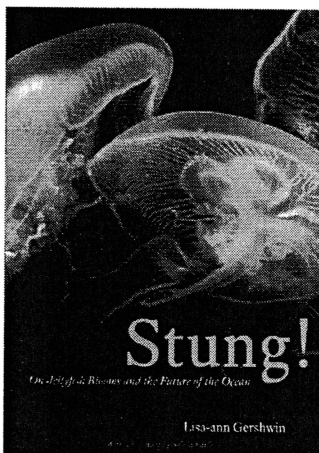
from Tim Flannery's review in *NY Review of Books*, May 2013  
of *Stung! On Jellyfish Blooms and the Future of the Ocean*  
by Lisa-ann Gershwin, (excerpts, thanks to our Janet Eaton)

**S**ALMON SWIMMING IN PENS CAN CREATE A VORTEX THAT SUCKS JELLYFISH IN. Tens of thousands of salmon can be stung to death in minutes, and repeated attacks can kill hundreds of thousands of the valuable fish. But those losses are small compared with the financial devastation jellyfish have inflicted elsewhere. Would you believe, Gershwin asks, that "a mucousy little jellyfish, barely bigger than a chicken egg, with no brain, no backbone, and no eyes, could cripple three national economies and wipe out an entire ecosystem"? That's just what happened when the Mnemiopsis jellyfish (a kind of comb jelly) invaded the Black Sea.

The creatures arrived from the east coast of the US in seawater ballast (seawater a ship takes into its hold once it has discharged its cargo to retain its stability), and by the 1980s they were taking over. Prior to their arrival, Bulgaria, Romania, and Georgia had robust fisheries, with anchovies and sturgeon being important resources. As the jellyfish increased, the anchovies and other valuable fish vanished, and along with them went the sturgeon, the long-beloved source of blini toppings....The Black Sea had become effectively jellified...

Jellyfish are almost ubiquitous in the oceans. As survivors of an earlier, less hospitable world, they can flourish where few other species can venture. Their low metabolic rate, and thus low oxygen requirement, allows them to thrive in waters that would suffocate other marine creatures...

Jellyfish reproduction is astonishing, and no small part of their evolutionary success: "Hermaphroditism. Cloning. External fertilization. Self fertilization. Courtship and copulation. Fission. Fusion. Cannibalism. You name it, jellyfish [are] 'doing it'..."



One of the fastest breeders of all is Mnemiopsis. Biologists characterize it as a "self-fertilizing simultaneous hermaphrodite,...Mnemiopsis is able to eat over ten times its own body weight in food, and to double in size, each day. They can do this because they are, metabolically speaking, tremendously efficient, being able to put more of the energy they ingest toward growth than the more complex creatures they compete with. ...

The question of jellyfish death is vexing. If jellyfish fall on hard times, they can simply "de-grow." That is, they reduce in size, but their bodies remain in proportion. That's a very different outcome from what is seen in starving fish, or people. And when food becomes available again, jellyfish simply recommence growing. ...

It's clear from Gershwin's book that it has taken a mighty effort by other living creatures to hold jellyfish down. An important part of that effort has involved the maintenance of complex ecosystems, with their abundant predators and competitors of jellyfish. It's no accident that prodigious jellyfish blooms have occurred in areas like the Black Sea and off South Africa, where anchovies once swarmed.

Overfishing anchovies, which compete with jellyfish for food, has doubtless helped them take over. That alone might not have been enough to allow the jellyfish to gain the march on us, but we've overfished virtually every resource in the oceans, causing the outright collapse of many ecosystems, thus opening vast new resources to the jellyfish...

Jellyfish may have the capacity to accelerate climate change. This can happen in two ways. Jellyfish release carbon-rich feces and mucus (poo and goo) that bacteria prefer to use for respiration. As Gershwin puts it, "jellyfish blooms turn these bacteria into carbon dioxide factories." But jellyfish also consume vast numbers of copepods and other plankton. These creatures migrate vertically through the water column, taking in carbon-rich food at the surface and releasing it as fecal pellets, which fall to the sea floor and are buried. The plankton are thus a major means of taking carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere and oceans. If their loss occurs on a large enough scale, it will hasten climate change...

At the same time that Gershwin asserts that jellyfish are taking over the oceans "one bite at a time," she offers a slender hope that we might eat our own way through the problem. Ancient Chinese texts show that jellyfish have been part of the human diet for over 1,700 years... Americans may shudder, but if we are to survive we must adapt. (More)>>

Lisa-ann Gershwin is "a scientist, conservationist, and public conscience" who, having toured and studied the world's oceans, lives and writes in Australia. Read the full book review at <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2013/sep/26/jellyfish-the-tyre-taking-over/?pagination=false>

## Swiss Demand Minimum Income Law Will Also Vote to Limit CEO Pay

by Common Dreams staff, 5 October 2013

**S**WISS ACTIVISTS SUBMITTED MORE THAN 100,000 SIGNATURES needed to get a vote on a guaranteed income Friday, October 4, 2013. In a symbolic gesture, they dumped a truckload of 8 million five-cent coins outside the parliament building in Berne, one for every Swiss citizen.



There's a growing movement in Europe against pay inequality and the right for a basic income. Switzerland is one of Europe's richest countries but does not

have a minimum wage law. But growing public activism over pay inequality since the 2008 financial crisis has already led to two referendum drives on CEO pay.

In March 2013, Swiss voters overwhelmingly passed one of the world's strictest controls on executive pay, forcing public companies to give shareholders a binding vote on compensation. Voters ignored the business lobby's claim that such curbs would undermine the country's investor-friendly image.

Next month, November 24, a separate proposal to limit monthly executive pay to no more than what the company's lowest-paid staff earn in a year, the so-called 1:12 initiative, faces a popular vote.

Now, on Friday, Swiss activists submitted over 130,000 signatures to the Swiss Parliament likely forcing another referendum—this one to create a new law guaranteeing all Swiss nationals a basic income of CHF 2,500 (\$2,756 US). Under Swiss law, citizens can organize popular initiatives and the Swiss Parliament must address or hold a referendum over any issue which has gathered more than 100,000 signatures.

After submitting the signatures to Parliament, the activists dumped a truckload of 8 million five-cent coins outside the Parliament building in Berne, one for every Swiss citizen.

Enno Schmidt, founder of Generation Basic Income Initiative, said that he believes the Swiss government should be concerned about the groundswell of support for income equality. He opines that the country's politicians are angry "because now they have to look into this initiative."

The date of the vote has yet to be announced.

**Ed. Comment:** The US government giving each person nearly \$3000 a year gratis (\$12,000 per family of 4) would do two good things: Take tens of millions of people out of poverty; and put lots of money into small businesses through increased sales, enabling business expansion and hiring—good for local econ-

omies and the un(der)employed. It would also test the notion, on those who remain unemployed, that handouts are bad. People suffering minimum wage jobs would no longer be on the edge, and might not resent "welfare" so much for others. Note: those others are largely single moms caring for little kids and unable to take full time jobs, or any job. The guaranteed minimum income would also help millions of college students and dropouts unfairly burdened with debt. Perhaps the greatest effect would be a boost to Americans' rethinking our deadly governmental and economic paradigm.

## Situation According to Ralph Nader

*What will be Obama's legacy?*

He's extended his predecessor's maturation of corporate power. Wall Street collapses the economy and it ends up stronger. That didn't happen in the 1930s. They ended up weaker. So he's no FDR, let me tell you. And he's no LBJ. He hasn't gone after corporate welfare subsidies. Military budget? Bloated as ever. Obamacare? It's going to collapse of its own complexity—its main contribution will be to set the stage for single-payer because there will be no illusions.

Consumer protection? Terrible. Drug regulation? Food regulation? Auto regulation? Never talks about it. His Justice Department is totally understaffed—it's pathetic—to deal with the corporate crime wave, the economic crime wave and the anti-environmental crime wave.

And then his last legacy is one the Democrats cannot deny. He is the most egocentric presidential campaigner in modern times. He doesn't campaign with the Democrats in the House and Senate the way Clinton did. He loses the House in 2010. And he loses the House again in 2012. He rarely campaigns with anyone. What did he get? He got John Boehner and Eric Cantor. He got gridlock. He got government shutdown. He got debt-limit intimidations, and all the rest of it that distracts America from paying attention to the real problems of the country—crumbling public works, a healthcare system that's brutal and broken, an inadequate number of jobs, low pay, the flight of industry and jobs to repressive regimes abroad, a grotesque tax system.

*What do you make of the optimism coming out of the AFL-CIO convention in Los Angeles, in regards to new alliances among progressive groups?*

The test is, number one, will Trumka provide resources for full-time organizers to make this new alliance work? Because if he doesn't, nothing's going to happen. So I didn't see that. The second thing he's got to demonstrate is—what's the agenda? He came out with no agenda, not even a minimum wage agenda, not even campaign finance reform. So it's nothing but an exciting time in L.A. It doesn't have to reform the world. It could be an agenda to cut back on the military budget and put the money back into job-producing public works—maintenance repair and renovation, bridges, public buildings, schools, clinics, libraries, highways, mass transit. They didn't even come up with that. All the groups would have agreed on that.

I've talked to some old labor hands who say they've seen this before. This is a way to make the convention a little bit more exciting. Although I would like to see it happen.

—Ralph Nader, interviewed by Cole Stangler, *In These Times*, November 2013 (excerpt)

**Ed. Comment:** Pleading for reforms appears not to be enough. Can we envision and bring about system change? ■

## We Are Many

Of the many men who I am, who we are,  
I cannot settle on a single one.  
They are lost to me under cover of clothing  
They have departed for another city.

When everything seems to be set  
to show me off as a man of intelligence,  
the fool I keep concealed on my person  
takes over my talk and occupies my mouth.

On other occasions, I am dozing in the midst  
of people of some distinction,  
and when I summon my courageous self,  
a coward completely unknown to me  
swaddles my poor skeleton  
in a thousand tiny reservations.

When a stately home bursts into flames,  
instead of the fireman I summon,  
an arsonist bursts on the scene,  
and he is I. There is nothing I can do.  
What must I do to distinguish myself?  
How can I put myself together?

All the books I read  
lionize dazzling hero figures,  
always brimming with self-assurance.  
I die with envy of them;  
and, in films where bullets fly on the wind,  
I am left in envy of the cowboys,  
left admiring even the horses.

But when I call upon my dashing being,  
out comes the same old lazy self,  
and so I never know just who I am,  
nor how many I am, nor who we will be.  
I would like to be able to tap a bell  
and call up my real self, the truly me,  
because if I really need my proper self,  
I must not allow myself to disappear.

While I am writing, I am far away;  
and when I come back, I have already left.  
I should like to see if the same thing happens  
to other people as it does to me,  
to see if as many people are as I am,  
and if they seem the same way to themselves.  
When this problem has been thoroughly explored,  
I am going to school myself so well in things  
that, when I try to explain my problems,  
I shall speak, not of self, but of geography.

—Pablo Neruda

## United Attitudes of America

### New Federation Brings Democracy At Last

by Rave Lewit, *Massachusetts Onion*, November 2023

**B**ACK IN 2013 MORE THAN A DOZEN SECESSION MOVEMENTS surfaced in addition to the old standbys—Vermont Second Republic, Texas, California Second Republic, Deep South, Upper Northwest Evergreen, and so on. The new secessionists were mostly rural, white Tea Party advocates who would have been happy to have their counties break away from Maryland, Colorado, or whatever. They were sick and tired of having to pay taxes for abortions, salaries of gun control congressmembers, environmental protection, socialistic State U professors, long-term death row prisoners, UN dues, and so on. On the other hand, democratic regionalists had been fed up with federal corruption, corporate control, militarization, blowback from imperialist adventures, domestic spying, pipelines, degradation of national forests and parks, border arrests, and so on.

Secessionist fever spread, and finally in 2019 caught fire—or backfired—with Students for Social Devolution (SSD), a futurist, pro-democracy group. Rather than secede by districts, they sought a new kind of identity politics. Led by American U sociology professor I. C. Echance, the group surveyed a randomly selected 3000 Americans for their attitudes on a wide range of issues, including various conceptions of the system itself. Using state-of-the-art cluster analysis, the group identified 20 constellations of attitude, one or another representing 99.9 percent of the voting public. Each constellation was given a party name by cluster-member survey participants—and those new parties were off and running.

Echance's students were a grown-up, diverse lot, including not only many local town officials, but also a number of police officers subsidized by Homeland Security's Social Infiltration Legion, who were fascinated by the reality of subversives just like some of their sisters and their cousins and their aunts. Returning to their ranks, grads persuaded many of their fellow officers to leave Social Devolution advocates alone, which helped to build the movement across state lines. SSD energized the movement, and brought in parents and others to the point where the popular new Director of Homeland Security mandated dual ballots across the nation—voters could choose between ballots of the old geographic districts, or be part of one nationwide proportional representation system for Congress with new "attitude parties" up for voter choice. As we know, the new system was enthusiastically adopted by a large majority of voters.

Thus—bingo—we have our new, democratic nation. And it wasn't just the People who were pleased. A party of Attitudeniks went over to Arlington National Cemetery and danced on the grave of President Ronald Reagan. Out he came, floating and swirling around with his big Genial Smile and twinkle in his good eye. "Darn," he croaked, "if it isn't our pesky Party poopers finally come to cheer your Uncle Ron and folks Mourning in America. Gosh-darn media forgot to put the 'u' in 'mourning'". Seeing the sun high in the sky, he winked "Nap time," and slithered back under the turf.

So the Attitudeniks returned to their computers to work on programs for counting ranked choices for all 20—now 50—popular parties.



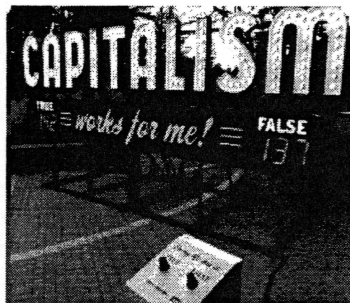
## "Capitalism Works For Me!"

Vote : ✓True? ✓False? Explain.

Go to: [visitsteve.com](http://visitsteve.com), 10 October 2013

**F**OR 50 YEARS IT HAS BEEN UNACCEPTABLE, politically, in the United States to ask what is basically a straightforward question. We have a particular economic system. It's called capitalism. We have every right as a society to ask of that system— is it working?

Seeking to take on what for most Americans is a taboo or nonexistent subject, artist and activist Steve Lambert has planted a huge sign in cities across the country asking people to vote—and more importantly think—about whether global capitalism works for them. Lambert—who helped



create 2008's *New York Times* [fake] "Special Edition" offering good news set in the future—views his current project as "a public conversation," a deceptively simple conduit (the vote) to examine our economic system, and how to improve or replace it. It ends its run today (October 2013) in Times Square. Cool video wherein many people actually, thoughtfully, eloquently talk about it.

### SAMSON (Continued from Page 1)

socializing. But it takes on a special characteristic now, precisely because we are in the throes of a structural crisis in our capitalist world-system. In a structural crisis, we may expect there to be two massive phenomena—enormous intellectual confusion and, as a consequence, wild swings in sentiment, which in turn leads to even wilder swings.

As there are more and more groups ready to pull the temple down, even as they themselves are crushed, the people who are most confused and uncertain about what to do are the so-called Establishment. Gone are the days when they could cynically maneuver and get their way. No longer is it true that "*plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*." Or, no apparent change is real; it's all window-dressing, a mere change in personnel.

So, what can we do, if we are searching for real change, a different kind of world-system from the one in which we have been living for at least the past 500 years? The first thing we should do is not get caught up in the debates and wild swings between the Samsons and the Establishments. It doesn't really matter which of them wins out in the short run.

The second thing we should do is not spend all our energy bemoaning the fact that those who want fundamental change (sometimes called the world left) do not seem to be unified, or clear in their objectives, or engaging in urgent organizing. The fact is that they are caught up in the confusion themselves, at least at the moment.

That the temple is crumbling is a reality far beyond our efforts to hold it up, even if we wanted to. But we are not required to stand under the downpour of rocks. We have to try to escape them. You may be assured that the most powerful members of the Establishment are trying to do so.

But how do we escape them, and to what end? Once again, I insist on a sense of timing, the difference between the short-run (three years or less) and the middle run (the next 20-40 years).

In the short run, people everywhere (the 99%) are suffering. We must struggle to minimize their pain, a struggle that can take multiple forms. It can be pressing for immediate legislation or executive decisions by state agencies that will aid immediately the underclasses, or prevent further damage to the environment, or safeguard the rights of indigenous peoples or so-called social minorities.

But in the middle run, we must try to clarify the nature of the structures we hope to institutionalize if we manage to tilt the bifurcation in our favor. We must try to understand not only the middle-run objectives of the world "right" but the nature of their profound internal splits. The so-called world left is profoundly split too. We must work to overcome this.

Nothing is easy in this time of transition from one world-system to another. But everything is possible—possible but far from certain. ■

## Don't Feed Cars—Feed People Another Feature of A Post-Capitalist World

by Janet Eaton, Wolfville, Nova Scotia, October 2013

**G**LOBAL DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT'S NEW REPORT, "Rising to the Challenge: Changing Course to Feed the World in 2050", shows that many of the public pronouncements calling for a doubling of global food production by 2050 are based on outdated or flawed economic forecasting and misleading characterizations of this research.... In fact, the failure to distinguish food production from agricultural production obscures the largest single contributor to recent food price spikes: the massive expansion of agricultural biofuel production....

Few models adequately account for current trends. Even fewer offer policymakers the information they need to understand the food-security impacts of policies such as the US Renewable Fuel Standard, which contains national mandates that drive bio-fuels expansion. Their report points out that recent economic forecasting and analysis fails to adequately reflect several other key variables:

- Inadequate and poorly targeted agricultural investment
- Climate change
- Food waste and spoilage

The report also makes clear that hunger, now and in the future, is less a matter of inadequate production than inequitable access to food and food-producing resources. The developed world's myopic focus on increasing production is obviously misguided as we simultaneously waste one-third of the food that is produced and pursue a course to devote another 13% of cereals to feeding our cars instead of our people.

*Ed Comment: Feeding livestock for meat is even more of a problem. Switching from corn for animals to grains for people will not only provide more food for people, but will cut the huge amounts of methane that animal belching and farting contributes to climate change—no joke, major economics and ecology. Of course scraping monocropping and chemical dousing of crops will prevent soil destruction and restore nature's balance—if we do it before our farmland is permanently dried up... So what will we do with all the slaughterhouse workers and the chemical/ biological corporate officers and employees, and advertisers, and soldiers (who enforce the old system)—thus out of work? There will be plenty of work to be had in converting from suburbs to neighborly cities, and from sales to clean energy, public works, and cultural enhancement.*

## TPP Free Zones: We Will Not Obey!

The Alliance is on the front lines of resistance in the fight to stop the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a trade agreement between the US and Pacific Rim countries—from Malaysia and Japan to Canada and Peru. The TPP is a global disaster in the making, from thwarting efforts to stem climate change to keeping the banksters in power and their derivatives gambling casino intact. And as with NAFTA, it sets up a system for corporations to protect their "rights" to future profits by suing TPP-member governments for violating rules the corporations wrote. (See May-June 2013 *Dispatch*.)

The "TPP-Free Zone" concept, described in the last issue of the *Dispatch*, is inspired by "MAI-Free Zones" which helped derail the Multilateral Agreement on Investment, an earlier agreement to promote the interests of global investors. As the *Dispatch* goes to press, Madison WI just passed a TPP-Free Zone resolution, following on the heels of Dane County where Madison is located, and Berkeley CA has drafted a resolution for its Peace and Justice Commission to forward to the City Council.

To keep up with the fast-breaking campaign and to get on board yourself, go to [www.tppfreezones.org](http://www.tppfreezones.org). "First we analyze, then we organize!"

—Ruth Caplan



## What's "left" after the *Dispatch*?

Yes, it's true, nothing can quite replace the *BCA Dispatch* with its incisive views on the world around us, but we are confident you will want to read *Justice Rising*, the Alliance for Democracy's news journal. Each issue looks at "Grassroots Solutions to Corporate Rule" from the vantage point of a particular issue, laying out the problem from global and local perspectives and providing solutions grounded in replacing corporate power with people power.

The latest issue focuses on the TPP, which is being negotiated in secret with 600 corporations at the table and Congress barred at the door. The Alliance is spearheading local resistance by promoting TPP-Free Zones. It also reviews Dave Lewit's updated vision for a new society: "A Common Agreement on Investment and Society."

We are mailing this issue of *Justice Rising* as a complementary gift to all *BCA Dispatch* subscribers, so be sure to watch for it in the mail. And you won't want to miss the next issue on how the movement to create public banks can be used to crack open the stranglehold Wall Street has on our economy and our lives, and how they can be used to build economically vibrant communities.

We are confident you'll find *Justice Rising* informative and inspiring. We encourage you to join the national Alliance for Democracy to receive a free subscription and to join together in promoting alternatives to corporate domination of our government, environment, communities and media. Membership information can be found in *Justice Rising* or join online at [www.thealliancefordemocracy.org/join.html](http://www.thealliancefordemocracy.org/join.html).

For more information on the national Alliance please visit [www.thealliancefordemocracy.org](http://www.thealliancefordemocracy.org), or call 781-894-1179. We want to be sure to stay connected with you as we work to tear down the walls of corporate oppression and build a just and sustainable future.

—Barbara Clancy

## COMMUNITY NOTES (Continued from Page 1)

are Steve Snyder, Nancy Goldner, Barbara Clancy, Joanna Herlihy, Richard Krushnic, Tim Havel, Ethan Scarl, and Dave Lewit. We meet as "MA Public Banking Working Group." Call any of us for info—Barbara can give you phone numbers, overview and details. Call her at Alliance for Democracy office, 781-894-1179. Join us and get stuff done!

Folks in Maine should know about AfD's fight to sink plans for an East-West Supercorridor to split Maine and carry fossil fuels from Canada for export, and Chinese imports to Midwest markets. Ruth Caplan co-directs organizing; urges all readers to watch the video at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vNEsNONRa4>.

BCA stalwart Mary Rossborough hopes readers will go to <http://www.journalof911studies.com/volume/2009/WhatHitPentagonDrLeggeAug.pdf> for Dr. Frank Legge's paper about possible flight paths of an airplane hitting the Pentagon on 9/11. She rejects the idea of a missile, offered by Thierry Meyssan—reported in *BCA Dispatch* of May 2002. However, the more authoritative account by Barbara Honegger, reported in the Jan-Feb 2012 *Dispatch*, opines that not a missile but a military remote-controlled A-3 Sky Warrior might have hit the Pentagon. But Honegger's main finding was critical explosions there 6 minutes before any reported aircraft collision. In any event, we commend Mary for alerting all to the web site [journalof911studies.com](http://journalof911studies.com).

**MA ALERT!** Call office of State Rep. Jay Kaufman 617-722-2320 for info and support of several bills requiring Instant Runoff Voting.

**HELP!** To make *BCA Dispatch* more useful for researchers, please volunteer to help create an INDEX for issues archived at [www.newenglandalliance.org](http://www.newenglandalliance.org). Call Dave at 617-266-8687.

## 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"

\_\_\_ \$500/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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