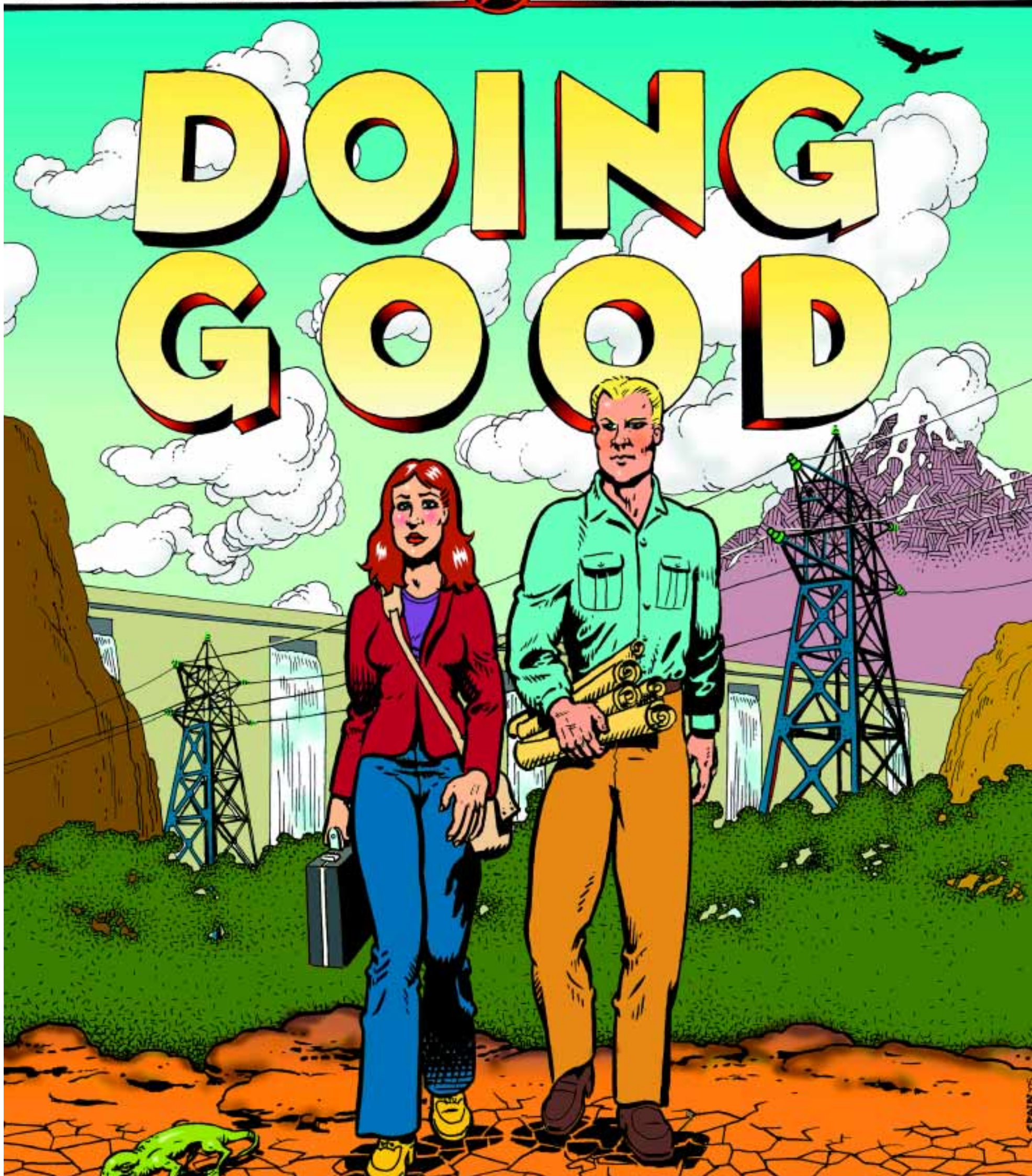


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SEPTEMBER 2005

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The Community Alliance is an independent voice for workers and progressive groups in the Central San Joaquin Valley. The goal of this monthly newspaper is to build a powerful progressive movement that will support social, environmental, & economic justice; immigrant rights; and a living wage for all working people. We seek to expose social and political injustices and to link the diverse network of activists working in our community.

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KFCF Fans: Listen Up!

Beginning September 5, 2005, there will be a change in broadcast times for some of the local public affairs programs on KFCF 88.1 FM. Programs that have been airing locally at 3:30 PM will move up a half-hour to 3 PM. The local programs that will change time slots are Valley Politics and the African-American Community on Mondays, Stir It Up on Wednesdays, and the environmental programs on Fridays: Sierra Earth First, Down in the Valley, Down on the Farm, and Clearing the Air. The time change was made to accommodate schedule changes at KPFA and still to be able to broadcast Free Speech Radio News on the local airwaves.



“EVIL” DOESN’T TAKE US VERY FAR IN EXPLAINING GLOBAL TERRORISM

By W. Daniel Garst

In a seminal 1976 *World Politics* article, “State Power and the Structure of International Trade,” Stanford University political scientist Steven Krasner, who presently directs policy planning in the State Department, famously declared, “Stupidity is not a very interesting analytic category.” The same could be said for “evil.”

Yet President Bush responded to the London bombing with the tired old line that the terrorists, or “evildoers,” were motivated by “evil” and “hatred.” This formulation has an obvious circular quality to it: terrorists do evil and hateful things, well . . . because they’re intrinsically evil and hateful individuals. As the two mad scientists on my favorite cult TV show, *Mystery Science Theater 3000*, once exclaimed in their pre-movie segment of the program: “We’re evil! Evil!!”

The more cerebral supporters of Bush’s war on terrorism, whose ranks include the Valley’s own Victor Davis Hanson, do of course have a ready explanation, which also appears in many of Bush’s speeches, for what motivates al-Qaeda and its supporters. Bin Laden’s followers hate Western civilization and its democratic ideals and seek to destroy this way of life and replace it with an Islamic theocratic brand of fascism.

This claim may get it right with respect to bin Laden’s beliefs. However, the view that terrorism is fueled by Muslim hostility toward the West is flatly contradicted by the empirical evidence from public opinion polls conducted in Muslim countries. These surveys consistently show deep popular admiration for Western political values but strong resentment of US policies in the Middle East, particularly the US alliance with Israel, the invasion and occupation of Iraq, and US backing for autocratic regimes in the region.

Indeed, the Pentagon’s own Defense Science Board noted last fall, “Muslims do not ‘hate our freedom,’ but rather they hate our policies. The overwhelming majority voice their objections to what they see as one-sided support in favor of Israel and against Palestinian rights, and the long-standing even increasing support for what Muslims collectively see as tyrannies, most notably Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Pakistan, and the Gulf States.”

This line of argument is also supported by the careful empirical work on suicide bombers done by Robert Pape, a University of Chicago political scientist. Pape’s new book, *Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism*, examined comprehensive data on the 462 consummated suicide-terrorist attacks carried out across the globe between 1980 and 2004. Pape found over 95% of such attacks had as their “central objective” ending occupation from foreign troops in countries the terrorist groups considered occupied.

Pape therefore concludes in the July 18 2005, edition of that well-known lefty organ, *The American Conservative* magazine (which has published numerous trenchant critiques of Bush’s foreign policy), “Since suicide terrorism is mainly a response to foreign occupation, the use of heavy military force to transform societies over there . . . is only likely to increase the number of suicide terrorists coming at us.”

The main wellspring of contemporary global terrorism, then, clearly is not Islamic fundamentalism, hatred of the west, or pure “evil,” but far more pedestrian motivations and political objectives. More important, not only is President Bush’s understanding of contemporary terrorism empirically flawed; but, even if his understanding were accurate, Bush’s strategy of spreading Western democratic ideals and freedoms to deal with terrorism would be logically incoherent. That is, if Middle Eastern terrorists hate the West because of its democratic freedoms, then bringing these political values to the region, especially if they are externally imposed by the United States, surely will only further inflame terrorism.

This contradiction—between the diagnosis of terrorism and the prescription for it—disappears once terrorism is seen as a reaction to such Western policies as American support of the region’s corrupt authoritarian regimes. And despite the president’s windy rhetoric about bringing democracy to the Middle East, the United States still massively subsidizes President Mubarek in Egypt and has until recently maintained cozy ties with Uzbekistan’s very repressive government.

The Bush war on terrorism thus boils down to the other main prong in the Administration’s strategy: tracking down and killing as many terrorists as possible. Indeed, a main justification Bush now offers for “staying the course” in Iraq is its new status as the “central front” in the war on terrorism. By killing lots of al-Qaeda terrorists in Iraq, the Administration claims that US troops are draining the global terrorism swamp and preventing terrorists from taking their jihad to the homelands of Americans and their allies.

Of course, Bush has never conceded that al-Qaeda had little or no presence in Iraq before the invasion, nor acknowledged the role his Administration’s failure to plan for the occupation played in enabling Zarqawi and other terrorists to establish themselves in the country after Saddam’s overthrow. An honest articulation of this policy justification (i.e., that we must stay the course because Iraq is the terror war’s central front) might run this way: “Yes, we got it wrong in arguing that Saddam and al-Qaeda were closely linked before the war. And we didn’t anticipate the postwar chaos and insurgency, which lured al-Qaeda operatives into the country. This is all very regrettable, but the infiltration of al-Qaeda supporters into Iraq, while not anticipated, at least makes it possible for the United States to use its military power to kill large numbers of these terrorists.”

But while force is certainly an important element in fighting terrorism, a one-sided emphasis on killing terrorists mistakenly presumes a finite number of bad guys. The insurgency in Iraq has demonstrated that the US military will never be able to physically eliminate every al-Qaeda operative and all other terrorists. In fact, for every one of these jihadists killed by American troops, many more are ready to take their place. The same can also be said for the scores of non-insurgents, including large numbers of women and children, killed at Fallujah and elsewhere during US efforts to suppress the insurgency and the numerous Iraqis wrongfully incarcerated and abused at Abu Ghraib and other prisons.

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Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

As usual, Mike, you are way out front in the issues of importance in the community. Thanks so much for the story on radio in the Fresno area. It was wonderful. We are so blessed to have you doing what you are doing here in Fresno.

-----Jim Compton-Schmidt

Dear Editor,

When doing an article on needle exchange, you might actually talk to people operating a needle exchange. If you had in last month’s *Community Alliance*, you would know that requiring people who use a needle-exchange program to undergo mandatory drug treatment will never work.

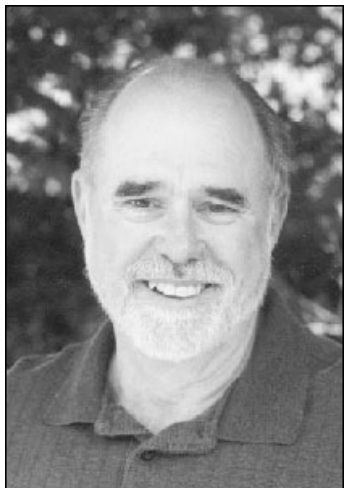
People will not participate in a needle exchange if there is mandatory treatment. There are not enough “beds” for those currently seeking treatment. Every treatment program I’ve ever heard of requires abstinence: “So here’s your needle—don’t use it.”

----Dallas Blanchard
10-year volunteer with the Fresno Needle Exchange Program

Fresno City Council Elections in 2006

What Role Will Progressives Play in These Races?

By Mike Rhodes



Do you care about air pollution, getting an independent police auditor that will hold local police accountable, making medical marijuana available for those who need it, paying a living wage to city workers, or seeing the homeless treated with dignity and respect? If you care about these issues, then the 2006 Fresno City Council elections will be of interest to you. What role,

if any, will the progressive community play in these elections? Is there a strategy for progressives to win political power and take this city back from the right-wing Republicans who currently dominate the political landscape, or will it be business as usual?

Fresno City Council Districts 1, 3, 5, and 7 will be up for election on June 6, 2006. With conservative city council members representing districts 2, 4, and 6, progressives will need to win all four seats in the 2006 elections to have a majority.

Tom Boyajian, who currently represents District 1, is a liberal and the only council member who can't run again. Boyajian is "termed out," and there is intense speculation about who will replace him. Among the likely candidates in District 1 are Green Party member Larry Mullen, Democrat Cary Catalano, and Blong Xiong, who is being supported by Susan Anderson and Juan Arambula. It is expected that the Republican party will also run a candidate in this district. The Republicans are not satisfied with the power they already have—they want more. Without a unified strategy, the progressive community could be so divided in this race that it gives the right wing an opportunity to divide the progressive vote and win the election.

The race in District 3, which is located in West Fresno and the Southern Tower district, will likely be between incumbent Cynthia Sterling, former City Council member Dan Ronquillo, and whoever the Republican party selects. Sterling, the only African American woman on the city council and generally viewed as a progressive, has had a difficult time in her first term on the council. She has not been welcomed into the good old boy network, and her ability to successfully support a progressive agenda has been affected by this exclusion. Ronquillo is seen by some as a viable Democratic candidate, who would also be a more effective council member. Analysts are concerned that scarce financial and human resources will pour into this race where there is already a viable progressive elected representative on the city council. That could mean fewer resources for progressive candidates in other races. Another question being asked: Is it possible that a battle between Sterling and Ronquillo would give the right wing an opportunity to divide and conquer the district, resulting in a victory for the Republican party?

Mike Dages, the incumbent in District 5, is a Democrat that often votes like a Republican. In fact, Dages was a Republican until recently. Dages voted against the in-

dependent police auditor, against full funding for the Human Relations Commission, and for an outdoor drunk tank for the homeless. District 5 is in Southeast Fresno and has a large Latino and Southeast Asian population. While it is too early to predict who will run against Dages in the June 2006 election, Brad Castillo's name has come up. Castillo, a former city council member, is a Democrat allied with District 7 council member Henry T. Perea. Castillo lost a 2004 city council race in District 4 to Larry Westerlund, a Republican. Castillo, who is a Democrat, would be a strong candidate in this district. Dages just squeaked to victory in his 2002 victory over Silvia Astorga Salcido. Dages had 50.5% of the vote.

Henry T. Perea is the incumbent in District 7 and is expected to run for re-election. In 2002, Perea won by only 55 votes and will undoubtedly be targeted by the right wing, which is seeking to increase its power on the city council. While Perea has not been a strong ally of the progressive community, he is probably better than whatever alternative the mayor and Republican Party have in mind.

Each Fresno City Council district has more than 60,000 residents. In 2002 only 5,852 votes were cast in District 3 and 4,654 in District 5. An astounding 90% + of the residents in these districts are not voting. While a rule of thumb is that about 1/3 of the residents in these districts are under 18 and therefore too young to vote,

that still means that fewer than 6,000 voters out of 40,000 adults are participating in the democratic process.

Many of the people who are not voting in these districts are poor working people. Reasons for not voting include the belief that one vote will not make any difference, the belief that there are no "good" candidates, or ineligibility to register to vote (for example, the person is not a US citizen). The Republicans and right wing don't have those barriers blocking them from voting. The fundamentalist churches, the business owners, and wealthy vote and their candidates get elected. The interests of the elite are well represented in Fresno city government because they get out and vote for candidates who they know will represent their interests. They are only getting 10% of the eligible voters in a district to vote for their candidates, but with such rampant apathy and disfranchisement, that is all they need. They get 10% and claim they have a mandate!

The candidates run by the elite and the Republican party in this community are funded largely by developers and builders, who will benefit from the decisions these elected officials make. A look at the public records will show you who is financially supporting the races of the City Council members. The names of developers like McCaffrey, Assemi, and Bonadelle come up time and time again. It costs more than \$100,000 to

Continued on page 21



To win a Fresno city council seat, the progressive community will need:

1. A good candidate that supports core values.
2. The financial support to run a viable campaign.
3. A GOTV campaign that can inspire and mobilize eligible voters

Picking the Public's Pocket

By Lloyd G. Carter

Every few years, American newspapers trumpet front-page stories about how federal farm subsidies are lining the pockets of big rich growers while driving small family farmers off the land. Politicians posture, think tanks point out the colossal waste of tax dollars, the Farm Bureau attacks the media for distortion, and the public collectively shakes its head and returns to more interesting subjects like whether O.J. stole cable TV or Michael Jackson stole children's innocence; the latest missing bride; or people eating worms so they can be fifteen-second celebrities. Meanwhile, the big growers deposit the checks (with a little kept out for campaign donations), and life goes back to "normal."

It happened again on August 3 with the *Fresno Bee's* top front-page story headlined "Valley Farms 'Double Dipping' Subsidies." The story highlighted a new report from the Environmental Working Group (EWG, <www.ewg.org>), which said 6,800 farms in the Central Valley Project (CVP), the great federal water works that dammed and re-routed rivers and plumbed the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys for agriculture from the 1930s to the 1960s, had been the recipients of \$538 million in crop and water subsidies in 2002, the latest year for which figures were available.

The EWG report said that during 2002, the latest year for which subsidy statistics are available, CVP farming took in a combined \$538 million in water and crop subsidies. Farmers were not only "double dipping," that is, using taxpayer-subsidized water to grow taxpayer-subsidized crops like cotton—some were "triple dipping," taking water subsidies and two or more crop subsidies.

Double and triple dipping, of course, in water and crop subsidies is only the beginning of the gravy train for agriculture. This report does not even address the many tax breaks for farming, including the Williamson Land Act, the energy subsidies for pumping water uphill into the western San Joaquin Valley, or the unpaid portion (87 percent) of the \$3.6 billion tab for the Central Valley Project construction costs. (Growers do not have to pay any interest on the construction costs.) Nor does it mention the many low-interest or no-interest loans to grower and water districts from the \$10 billion in water bond measures Californians have passed in the past decade.

The EWG report said more than one in four CVP farms received double subsidies for at least one year between 1995 and 2004. Crop subsidy checks to these farms in that period totaled more than \$891 million. These farms received more than \$152 million worth of water subsidies in 2002 alone, so their combined subsidy take over ten years could well top \$2 billion.

Who are the big winners? Cotton growers in the San Joaquin Valley and rice growers in the Sacramento Valley. Roughly one-third of the subsidized irrigation water the CVP delivered in 2002 went to grow crops eligible for subsidies. Cotton and rice growers received one-fourth of the irrigation water and 92 percent of the crop subsidies in the system.

As will be shown, even the phenomenon of "triple dipping" does not adequately describe the many federal blessings bestowed on certain segments of the food production industry in America, from farm to grocery shelf. Ironically, the ones who benefit the least are small family farmers of specialty crops.

EWG's Bill Walker said the purpose of the report was to restart an ongoing debate in Congress over the "absurdity of using subsidized water to grow subsidized crops."

Walker said what had started out as a support program for small farmers back in the 1930s Depression era had "turned out to be a corporate welfare program for big agribusiness operations."

Congressman George Miller of the Bay Area, a longtime critic of CVP water pricing policy, charged "California's megafarms are the most politically powerful welfare recipients in the world."

The response to the *Bee* story from agriculture was typical. With the vast Westlands Water District in western Fresno and Kings Counties containing many "double dipping" big farmers, Westlands spokesman Tupper Hull argued EWG had set up a flawed comparison between urban residential water prices and farm water prices.

"That is entirely false," Hull said. Riverdale grower Mark Borba charged that the Environmental Working Group believed large farms were "sinful" and that "they think 160 acres and a mule is where agriculture in the United States should be." Westlands grower John Harris said he was paying the "full cost" of his irrigation water. Of course the "full cost" of water in Westlands, around \$70 an acre-foot, is not the same as the true "retail" value of the water to urban Southern California, which is upwards of \$600 an acre-foot.

"They [EWG] have perfected the myth that this is about corporate farming," Hull claimed. "Yes, farmers on the west side are large; nonetheless *they are no less family farmers than anywhere in the U.S.* They go out and work on these farms and they employ a lot of people."

Well, yes, Wal-Mart is a family owned company too, and the Waltons are no less family store owners than all the mom-and-pop grocery stores across small town America.

First-term congressman Jim Costa, who now has as a constituent the biggest cotton farmer in the world, J. G. Boswell, predictably responded to Miller by claiming Miller's favorite "whipping boy" was agriculture and added

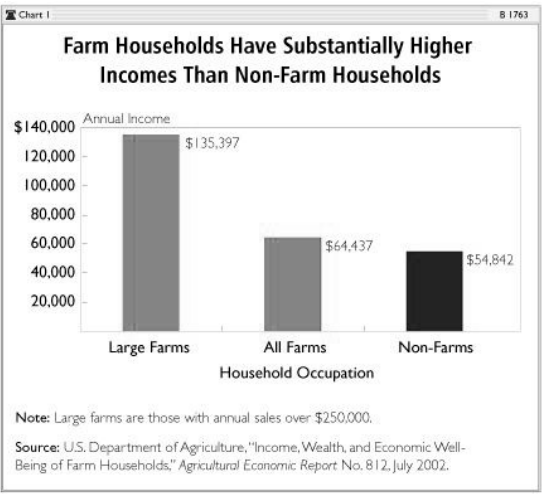


Table 4

Other Notables Receiving Large Farm Subsidies

Person	1995-2001 Subsidies	2002 Subsidy	Total Subsidies, 1995-2002	Subsidies as a percentage of the national median, 1995-2002
David Rockefeller	\$494,451	\$23,671	\$518,122	9975%
Scottie Pippen	\$184,205	\$26,315	\$210,520	4053%
Ted Turner	\$203,748	\$3,200	\$206,948	3984%
Sam Donaldson	\$81,592	\$3,150	\$84,742	1632%
Ken Lay	\$12,039	\$6,019	\$18,057	348%
Birch Bayh	\$16,751	\$910	\$17,562	338%
Kevin Appier (major league pitcher)	\$3,403	\$799	\$4,202	81%
TOTAL	\$996,188	\$63,964	\$1,060,153	2916%

Note: Amounts include properties in which the individual is only a partial owner. The median farm subsidy recipient received \$5,194 from 1995 through 2002.

Source: Environmental Working Group, at www.ewg.org.

partment of Agriculture.)

This trend toward larger and larger farmers has been a long time in the making, spurred by decades of federal subsidy policies, which reward large operators and squeeze small farmers.

According to USDA figures, by 1980 the largest portion of federal farm spending was going to large operators, not the small family farm. A mere 17 percent of farmers received 60 percent of all agriculture subsidies. By 1986, under President Reagan, the farm subsidy program was costing American taxpayers more than \$25 billion a year.

David Stockman, Reagan's director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), later wrote, "The worst nonsense of all . . . was farm subsidies. The nation's agriculturalist had never been the same after the New Deal turned the wheat, corn, cotton, and dairy businesses into a way of life based on organized larceny."

Reagan, who entered the Oval Office on a promise to cut waste, fraud, and abuse in government, initially proposed a farm subsidy program of only \$10 billion over five years. He ended up signing a five-year farm bill that would shell out \$60 billion over five years, only \$50 billion over his original target figure. So much for cutting waste.

The USDA says only 4 percent of farms in America are owned by corporations, with around 90 percent being sole proprietorships managed by a single individual.

Most of the corporate farms are indeed family owned. Thus, J. G. Boswell, with over 200,000 acres in the Tulare Lake Basin at the southwest corner of the San Joaquin Valley, qualifies as a "family farmer." Corporations have a separate legal existence from their owners, meaning if the farm corporation goes belly up, the true owner's personal assets are shielded from suit, and creditors are left holding the bill. Moreover, under the "three-entity rule," a single farmer is able to collect subsidies on three different farming businesses, be they corporate farms or partnerships.

The Heritage Foundation and Cato Institute, conservative think tanks in Washington, D.C., have sided with environmental and taxpayer groups in the debate over the wisdom of \$20 billion a year in farm subsidies, much of it to corporations or individuals who are not true farmers.

The Heritage Foundation points out that "family farmers" receiving farm subsidies in recent years include these men: David Rockefeller, the former chairman of Chase Manhattan and grandson of oil tycoon John D. Rockefeller, who received 99 times more in subsidies than the median farmer; former NBA star Scottie Pippen, who received 39 times more in subsidies than the median farmer; Ted Turner, the 25th wealthiest man in America, who received 38 times more in subsidies than the median farmer; and Kenneth Lay, the ousted Enron CEO and multimillionaire, who received 3 times more in subsidies than the median farmer.

According to a June 20 Web site article by Heritage Foundation president Edwin J. Fuelner, two-thirds of all farm subsidies now go to 10 percent of farms, most of which have annual household incomes greater than \$130,000. Fuelner says that if it wanted to, Congress could assure every farmer a decent income for a "mere" \$4 billion per year. Instead, lawmakers use subsidies to reward Big Ag in just a few commodities.

The current farm bill passed in 2002 will cost an estimated \$180 billion over 10 years. Members of Congress from farming areas, regardless of party affiliation, vote in lockstep with the desires of the Farm Bureau and farm lobby groups. Valley Republican congressmen George Radanovich and Devin Nunes have virtually identical voting records on subsidy issues with Democrat congressmen Costa and Dennis Cardoza.

Do you have a hazy memory that Congress and the White House were going to get rid of farm subsidies a decade

ago? On April 5, 1996, the *New York Times* ran a headline “Clinton Signs Farm Bill Ending Subsidies.”

The intoxicated euphoria of the *Times* headline writer stemmed from 1996 passage of the seven-year “Freedom to Farm” law, which was going to whittle down subsidies to just \$4 billion by 2002 and finally wean farmers from more than half a century on the public teat.

That never happened. The farm lobby, perhaps the most powerful lobbying group on domestic issues, geared up and supplemental spending bills in Congress soon boosted farm subsidies to the current \$20 billion a year. The ag lobbyists are already in full swing for the 2007 farm bill, despite complaints from the World Trade Organization that the United States is breaking the international rules on cotton and some other crops.

President Bush is the latest conservative Republican president blustering about scaling back farm subsidies, but with 5.9 million acres of cotton in Texas (ten times more than in California) we all know he’s about as accurate on that prediction as he was on weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

So who is being helped by the current \$20 billion a year in farm subsidies? The first 50 years of farm subsidies programs in America were marked by the rapid disappearance of the small family farm. By 1986 a small number of “superfarms”—the top 4% of farm operations—produced one-half of the food. Study after study showed the trend to fewer and bigger “managed” farms was having a negative impact on rural communities dependent on the family farm.

According to the USDA, the number of American farms declined from a peak of 6.5 million in the mid-1930s to 2.2 million by 1986. Average farm size doubled, while total acreage remained close to the mid-1930s level of one billion acres. Large farms (average sales of \$200,000 or more) doubled in number between 1960 and 1982; small farms (average sales of \$10,000 to \$40,000) fell from 1.2 million to 500,000.

Even Victor Davis Hanson, our local farmer/classicist/historian turned cheerleader for the war in Iraq, says in his 2000 book *The Land Was Everything* that “family farming is gone.” He says the multi-generational farm has almost disappeared and the only thing left will be “broke serfs and thriving corporations” tilling the soil. The average age of a San Joaquin Valley farmer is now over 60.

Currently, the USDA is attempting to reformulate the definition of the “family farmer.” (See the Federal Register, Vol. 69, No. 26, February 9, 2004). Billions of dollars in future farm subsidies are at stake. The Federal Register notice says “the proposed definition establishes that the typical year gross income of the operation cannot exceed at the greater of \$750,000 in annual sales or the 95 percentile of farms in the state with sales in excess of \$10,000 based on the most recently published farm data and survey of farm economic factors published by the national Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA.”

No, I don’t understand that last sentence either. But you can count on the corporate farm lobby having substantial input into the final definition so that the biggest growers either get a big piece of the pie or are able to break up their operations to qualify for a good piece of that federal pork. The farm lobby always finds loopholes in farm bills or gets a friendly member of Congress to write one.

Ten years ago, the *Fresno Bee* had another front-page story featuring a study by the Environmental Working Group. EWG reported Fresno was the nation’s highest-ranking city for federal farm subsidies and the biggest chunks were sent to farmers living in the 93711 zip code (the Van Ness Extension and bluffs on the San Joaquin River). Hull’s Westlands farmers, it turns out, do not live on their “farms,” better described by famed TV newsman Edward R. Murrow as “factories in the fields” in his classic documentary *Harvest of Shame*. The family farmers are urbanites living in mini-mansions.

EWG’s 1995 report said the Van Ness Extension area had 251 resident “farmers, absentee landowners, corporations, and partnerships” who had raked in over \$21 million in taxpayer subsidies in the previous decade for growing subsidized crops, primarily cotton. Growers living in the larger metropolitan Fresno area had hauled in \$103.4 million in crop subsidies.

Currently the Westlands Water District, with just 600 growers scattered over 942 square miles of land, much of it marginal and salty or selenium-tainted, are negotiating a sweetheart contract (worth billions of dollars

over the 25-year life of the contract) for 1.15 million acre-feet of water, enough to meet the domestic needs of 5 to 10 million domestic users. Cotton production costs on tens of thousands of acres in Westlands are 70 cents a pound while the world price hovers around 50 cents a pound. You taxpayers make up the difference year after year.

More amazingly, Westlands growers are also pushing a drainage water “solution,” which will cost three-quarters of a billion dollars to implement and \$25-50 million a year to operate. Because of local geology, Westlands growers need to dispose of toxic shallow groundwater generated by their irrigation activities. The current favored solution is to build the kind of evaporation ponds that destroyed the Kesterson National Wildlife Refuge 20 years ago. How these 600 growers can talk even farm district members of Congress into giving them nearly a billion dollars for such a foolish, expensive, and environmentally dangerous venture is incomprehensible.

But as Congressman Miller says, these are the “most politically powerful welfare recipients in the world.” How far can the Westlands “dip” into the deep pockets of the American taxpayer for yet another subsidy?

Attorney Lloyd G. Carter was a reporter for 20 years for United Press International and the *Fresno Bee* covering water and agriculture issues. He has taught water law at San Joaquin College of Law, is a director of Revive the San Joaquin, and continues to write occasional Op-Ed pieces for the *Fresno Bee*.



Pesticide Action Network

By Judy Stege

For the thousands of years that human beings interacted with this lovely earth environment, there were always predators—but only in the last century have we made imitation killers from chemicals. These formulas are new in the earth’s environment, and as we have discovered, do not disperse or change over the years.

DDT (first used 1939) and lindane (first used to kill pickleworm on cucumbers in 1951) are present today in our bodies and in animals in the Arctic Ocean, far away from the places they were used by humans. That means that even if we are not exposed directly to these chemicals (from our beauty, health, garden, and cleaning products), our bodies accumulate them from air, water, food, and the buildings and plastics surrounding us. Scientists and physicians are beginning to measure and study the effects of this “chemical body burden.” When too many toxins enter a living body, and the liver and excretory systems can no longer rid the body of the toxins, disease can happen—as can pain, costly medical intervention, and even early death.

The Pesticide Action Network North America (PANNA) is one of five regional centers of the International Pesticide Network, dedicated to replacing pesticide use throughout the world with safer ecologically sound and socially just alternatives. PANNA is a founding member of Californians for Pesticide Reform (CPR) which has been active in pesticide safety issues and legislation in California. Here at home, the group working for pesticide reform is The Fresno Coalition Against the Misuse of Pesticides (FresCAMP).

Our goal is to educate ourselves and the general public on pesticides and the safer alternatives. We work with CPR and other Central Valley organizations to watch for the use/misuse of chemicals in our environment. Pesticides, insecticides, and herbicides are all chemicals that kill living things—pests, insects, or plants.

On July 21, 2005, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued the Third National Report on Human Exposure to Environmental Chemicals, in which 148 environmental chemicals, including common metals, were measured. While there are over 1200 pesticides in use in products in the United States, only 43 pesticides were measured in this study. According to a press release from the PANNA Web site (www.panna.org/resources/newsroom/

cdcRelease2005.dv.html), more than 90% of the thousands of people tested carried in their bodies a mixture of pesticides, many linked to serious health problems. Some pesticides were found at higher levels in children, whose brains and growing bodies are vulnerable to chemical exposure. For example, the organophosphate pesticide chlorpyrifos was found at higher concentrations in children than adults, indicating exposures more than four times the level the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) considers “safe.” Home use of chlorpyrifos was banned in 2001 because of concern over health effects in children, but an estimated 10 million pounds continues to be used in agricultural fields every year. (Do we know how much is distributed here in the Central Valley?)

“Kids across the country carry a mixture of dangerous chemicals in their bodies every day,” said Kristin Schafer, program coordinator at Pesticide Action Network. “While the chemical industry will say this is the cost of doing business, we say risking our kids’ health is not acceptable, and it’s high time to shift to non-toxic ways of controlling pests.” PANNA recommends that corporations like Bayer CropScience, which distribute organochlorine pesticide products, should withdraw them immediately from the US market. Of course that will only happen if we consumers contact Bayer CropScience and other corporations and demand protection for our children. You can write: Bayer CropScience, Chairman of the Board of Management, Prof. Dr. Friedrich Berschauer at 8400 Hawthorne Road, Kansas City, MO 64120-0013 or (816) 242-2000.

PANNA also recommends that consumers choose organic food and pesticide-free household and hygiene products to protect their families and support the adoption of healthy alternatives. The more we buy pesticide-free, non-toxic products, the sooner prices will go down and manufacturers will give us more safe product options.

Just as each of our bodies carries a chemical body burden, our beautiful planet Earth has reached a toxic body burden of chemicals and can no longer cleanse the water, air, and soil of these substances. Check out entweb.clemson.edu/pesticid/history.htm for an enlightening list of the Achievements of Professional Entomology: “Fighting Our Insect Enemies” from 1854 to 1954. A list from 1955 to 2005 would probably be prohibitive, yet all these old and the new chemicals are mixing in our environment daily. Our government agencies, like the EPA, and our legislators cannot move quickly to make our environment safe for us. Therefore we parents and consumers need to learn about the chemicals we use in our daily lives and choose to change to safer products. Here in Fresno we do not use DDT, but doctors can still prescribe California-banned lindane in a lice prescription Kwell because our government has not joined other nations to completely ban the use of this neurotoxin. We often kill bugs and bacteria with strong pesticides and chemicals because we can conveniently buy them in the stores we frequent. But it is important that each of us use the least toxic product we can find, and take the time to demand that the products in our stores are safe for children and the future of all life on earth.

Sources: www.cdc.gov/od/oc/media/pressrel/r050721.htm
www.chemicalbodyburden.org/
www.panna.org/
www.pesticidereform.org/ (CPR)
www.panna.org/resources/newsroom/cdcRelease2005.dv.html
www.headliceinfo.com/book_sample.htm for more information on headlice and treatments

FresCAMP, The Fresno Coalition Against the Misuse of Pesticides, is a local community group working since 1999 to reduce the harmful presence of toxic chemicals in our air, water and food. We welcome new members. FresCAMP meets the fourth Monday of each month at 7 PM in the Barn at Margaret Hudson’s house, 4230 North Arthur. For more information e-mail ilsasso2003@yahoo.com

LABOR NOTES

AFL-CIO CONVENTION CALLS FOR TROOP WITHDRAWAL FROM IRAQ

By David Bacon



CHICAGO (7/26/05)—On the second day of its convention in Chicago, the AFL-CIO took a historic step, calling for the rapid withdrawal of US troops from Iraq and an end to the country's occupation. Public attention has focused largely on the split in US labor and the decision by two of the federation's largest unions to leave. Yet the impact of this call will reverberate for years, with as profound effect on the future of US workers and their unions. Brooks Sunkett, vice president of the Communications Workers of America (CWA), started a train of passionate speeches on the convention floor, saying that the government had lied to him when it sent him to war in Vietnam three decades ago. "We have to stop it from lying to a new generation now," he implored. Henry Nicholas, a hospital union leader in the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, told delegates that his son, who has served four tours of duty in Iraq, is now threatened with yet another.

Speaker after speaker rose to condemn the war and occupation and to demand the return of the troops. No one dared defend a policy that has caused revolution throughout US unions.

Watching from the visitors' gallery was a handful of Iraqi union leaders. One of them had traveled to the United States two months ago, with five other union activists, to plead the case of Iraqi workers. For 16 days they traveled to more than 50 cities, often speaking before hundreds of angry workers, demanding an end to the occupation. The Iraqis urged their US union counterparts to take action. The resolution at the convention was the answer to this call.

It was the culmination as well of an upsurge that has swept through US unions since before the war started two years ago. From the point when it became clear that the Bush administration intended to invade Iraq, union activists began organizing a national network to oppose it: US Labor against the War (USLAW). What started as a collection of small groups, in a handful of unions, has today to become a coalition of unions representing over a million members.

The network organized the tour of the Iraqi unionists to provide them a chance to speak directly to US workers. "We believed strongly that if unions in our country could hear their Iraqi brothers and sisters asking for the withdrawal of US troops, they would respond in a spirit of solidarity and human sympathy," said Gene Bruskin, one of USLAW's national coordinators. "We were right." Resolutions calling for troop withdrawal poured in from unions, labor councils, and state labor federations across the country. But as the convention began, AFL-CIO national staff tried to substitute another resolution that called for ending the occupation "as soon as possible." This was the same position as that put forward by the Bush administration.

Delegates at the convention, who belong to the USLAW network, then called for using the phrase "rapid with-

drawal" of the troops instead. At a strategy-planning session attended by over 150 delegates, US and Iraqi unionists joined together to plan a fight on the convention floor to win that language. Before it could take place, however, CWA vice president Larry Cohen went to the AFL-CIO executive council, the federation's ruling body, and asked them to accept the change.

Knowing that a fight was in store, and suddenly unsure of their ability to win it, the council agreed.

The resolution was put on the floor of the convention Tuesday afternoon, two days before the scheduled debate on Iraq. When the proposal for rapid withdrawal was introduced by Fred Mason, head of the AFL-CIO in Maryland, it was obvious what he meant by the words. His call to "get out now" became a chorus thundering from speaker after speaker. The new language was adopted with the votes of an overwhelming majority.

The resolution marks a watershed moment in modern US labor history. It is the product of grassroots action at the bottom of the US labor movement, not a directive from top leaders. The call for bringing the troops home echoes the sentiments of thousands of ordinary workers and rank-and-file union members, whose children and family have been called on to fight the war. A growing number, who now form a majority in US unions, believe the best way to protect them is to bring them home.

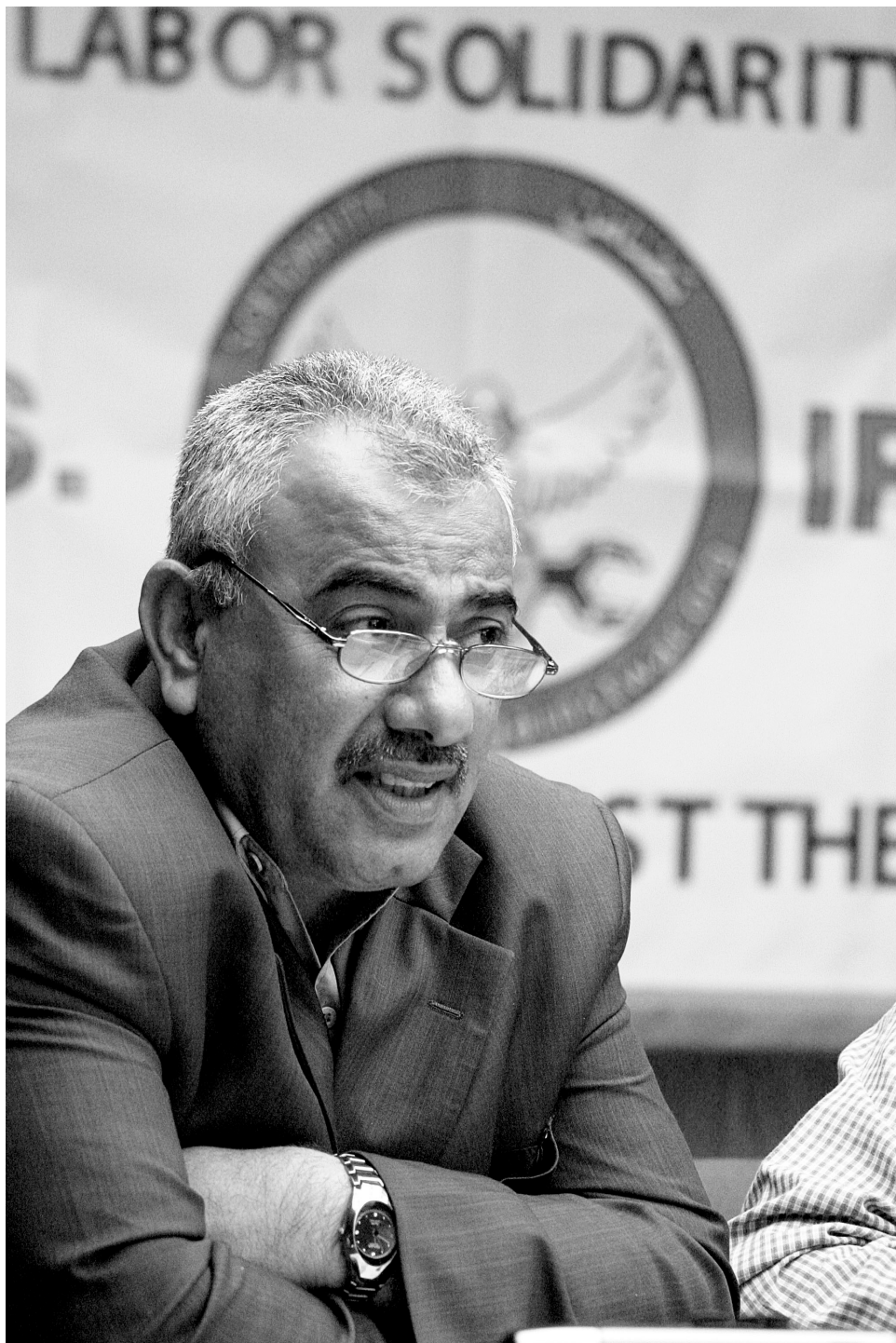
The resolution represents a deeper understanding that is making its way into thousands of discussions in workplaces and union halls. The war in Iraq never had much credibility as an effort to find weapons of mass destruction, since none were ever found. The administration's claim that it is fighting to bring democracy to Iraqi people inspired a similar disbelief. After five years of administration attacks on US workers and unions, none but the most diehard of its supporters have much faith left in its pro-democracy pronouncements.

Over the last year, however, the Iraqis themselves have provided a new understanding of the occupation's anti-democratic impact. American military authorities, they told US union members, have banned labor organization in oil fields, factories, and other Iraqi public enterprises. Meanwhile, Bush political operatives have begun to engineer the sell-off of those enterprises to foreign corporations, with a potential loss of thousands of jobs and the income needed to rebuild the country.

"This is not liberation. It is occupation," said Ghasib Hassan, a leader of the Iraqi Federation of Trade Unions, one of the unions that sent its members to speak in the US. "At the beginning of the twenty-first century, we thought we'd seen the end of colonies, but now we're entering a new era of colonization."

In the many meetings and discussions that finally led to the resolution, union members understood the purpose of the occupation in a new way: as the imposition, at gunpoint, of Bush administration free-market policies on Iraq. After the resolution's passage, the Iraqis called on delegates to act on that understanding, and asked the AFL-CIO to bring its members out to coming national demonstrations against the war.

Rapid withdrawal means more than just bringing US soldiers home. Calling for it puts American workers on the side of Iraqis, as they resist the transformation of their country for the benefit of a wealthy global elite. Brooks Sunkett, Vietnam vet turned union leader, spoke powerfully for this renewed unwillingness to wage wars based on lies and greed. His call for rapid withdrawal breathes new life into the Vietnam syndrome—so feared by US administrations intent on military intervention to defend their free-market policies around the world.



Interview with James Howard Kunstler, Author of *The Long Emergency*

from KFCF's *Wasteland of the Free* with host Rick Flores

What will life be like when we run out of cheap fossil fuel? It's already happening, right now, as we reach the peak of global oil production. The result will be *The Long Emergency*, which is the title of James Howard Kunstler's latest nonfiction book.

Have you ever wondered about the issue of oil, how much is left? Well if you have, James Kunstler's new book takes you by the scruff of the neck through every ramification of this inevitable event. He reviews the mounting evidence that the global peak of oil production is apparently already upon us. He explains how the earth's carrying capacity for the human population has been increased artificially for the last 100 years by the fossil fuel "fiesta." He painstakingly debunks every alternative energy source as a replacement for fossil fuels. Kunstler examines converging crises: financial, climatic, even pathological, which exacerbate this already bleak scenario. He presents a detailed vision of the future and it is as disturbing as it is inevitable.

Mike Beevers (MB):

Thank you for coming on the air. James Kunstler is the author of at least nine novels and at least three nonfiction works. He's appeared in many venues, including the *Rolling Stone* and others. The book today is *The Long Emergency*. James is there anything you would like to start with as far as just a general comment on the book?

James Kunstler (JK): This book is often misunderstood. People think that it's about when the oil runs out. But *The Long Emergency* really describes the period in history when the world will go over the slippery slope of the oil production peak, and we'll be dealing with a depleting supply of oil rather than the supply just running out. That will be enough to just destabilize the system that we depend on for daily life. And it will change everything.

MB: The production peak is something I've found very fascinating. Your book goes into the Hubbard Curve, which is a curve, as I understand it, that was come up with by an American oil specialist that actually predicted the decline of the American reserves and it was pretty much right on.

JK: Yeah, there was this character called Marion King Hubbard who worked for Columbia University and Colorado School of Mines. He was an engineer for oil companies and he produced a model for the oil industry and said that oil would peak and then deplete. He said that we were in the middle of an end and it was always said we had oil that was inexhaustible and unending. But it's a story that goes somewhere. Hubbard predicted a story that has a peak around 1970 and it was right on exactly. This is what brought on a lot of the disorders of the 1970s, through the fact that America lost control of the pricing power for the global oil markets because we couldn't produce any more than we were producing. Since 1970, we have gone from producing ten million barrels of oil a day to about five now.

MB: In the recent *Economist* there is an article that's saying that we are not going to run out of oil but the arguments in there don't seem to be terribly strong.

JK: They're not persuasive. Yet, there's a whole other group of people, who think that the earth has a creamy nougat center of oil and that it's actually refreshing itself from time to time. There's no instance of the American oil reserve spontaneously refilling

MB: I think very few people understand just exactly what sort of miracle oil is. This whole business of laying down all this stored energy for millions and millions of years has really no immediate alternative. Just a drop of oil creates something like ten thousand calories: it can do the work of a human being in a day and we've just come to accept all this.

JK: Yes, it's tremendously powerful but it is also tremendously versatile. That's one of the big problems

with the alternative fuels, is transport. You can move oil around at room temperature; it's a liquid so it stores easily and it moves easily. And that's one of the problems with the so-called hydrogen economy. Hydrogen is a very tricky element. It's very hard to move around; it doesn't store easily because it's so light that it takes up a tremendous amount of space. It can damage all the seals of the vessels that contain it in, and it's very, very troublesome.

MB: Is it energy efficient? In other words, does it take more calories of fossil fuel energy to make it than can be obtained from hydrogen itself?

JK: Yes. Hydrogen is entirely bound up with other elements and compounds such as water, which is composed of hydrogen and oxygen. Generally, we get hydrogen by using electrolysis to separate the oxygen atoms from the hydrogen atoms and it takes more energy to separate the atoms than you get from the atoms that you've separated so it comes kind of an act of futility.

MB: Does ethanol as generated by raising corn not result in the same energy-using equation?

JK: It has the same problems, in that it takes a tremendous amount of oil and natural gas fertilizers and pesticides and other things to grow the stuff and move it around and process it—more than you get

practical daily management. We live in a world of imagery and public relations and they do very well at it I'd say "

So he's saying essentially something we all know. That is that you can't tell the share holders "things are not looking too good this year". Now we're at a point where our government is not telling the public what is going on. Its been known recently that lobbyists are making our laws, we have no outside perspectives other than that which the companies are giving us.

JK: Well I'll put it differently, you know the dirty secret of the American economy is that it's based on the creation of evermore suburban sprawl and the furnishing of it and the accessorizing of it and the servicing of it. If you subtract sprawl building and car dependency or the real estate activity that is associated with it and the home building from the American economy there isn't a whole lot left besides hair cutting and open heart surgery. So its not a matter of whether I think of our leaders being necessarily evil, its that they don't have a clue what we would do if we were to have an economy if we subtract all the car dependency and the oil dependency and all the activities associated with that. So we continue to do more of that stuff and build more big box stories and there are more subdivisions and more real estate activity and you know its just going to end in tears.

MB: Its made very clear in your book in Chapter 6 called "Running on Fumes", the subtitle here is "The Hallucinated Economy", you refer to something that I'm very interested in, and in fact to quote here a little bit: "The entropic mess that our economy has become is the final

blow off of the late oil-based industrialism. The destructive practices known as "free-market globalism" were engendered by our run-up to and arrival at the world oil production peak. It was the logical climax of the oil "story". It required the breakdown of all previous constraints logistical, political, moral, cultural to maximize the present at the expense of the future, and to do so for the benefit of a very few at the expense of the many."

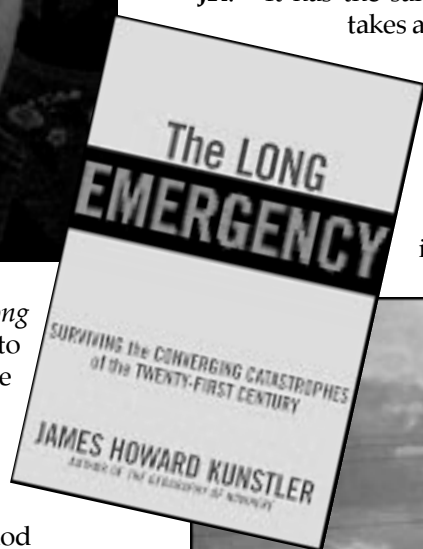
ture, and to do so for the benefit of a very few at the expense of the many."

This business of entropy, leading towards infinite disorder is the natural progression of all things, which is, I guess, the third law of thermodynamics. Now compare this to our economy, you see this as something that is actually irreversible, in other words there is a natural direction towards this infinite disorder which in reading your book I see the connection with oil dependency.

JK: Yeah, I think that entropy also is a protean force: by protean I don't mean protein I mean p-r-o-t-e-a-n in the sense that it changes its nature and characteristics and its manifestation. Entropy is a force that can manifest in something as simple as a cup of coffee cooling off, it never spontaneously heats up. A tire spontaneously deflates and doesn't spontaneously inflate. But I think that we also see the presence of entropy in things as different as the decay of lending practices in the mortgage business, our decaying cities. I think entropy manifests itself in the disintegration of the nuclear family. What's strange is the idea that is now normative in society is that its possible to get something for nothing. And that is a kind of a product of entropy embodied by Las Vegas and "Las Vegasization" of the American mind. The idea that riches can be accrued by luck or with no effort.

MB: The idea that Wall Street is the center commerce was not true when I was a kid. The emphasis used to be on industrial production with Wall Street playing a minor role. Now, the gambling casino basically became the main thing.

Continued on page 20



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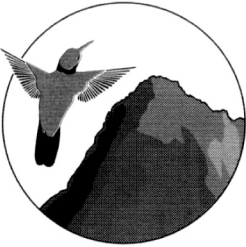
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Pacifism

By James Tyner

If this were a table, I'd invite you to sit and share a drink with me. But it's not; it's a newspaper. Still, there is a story I'd like to share with you.

In March of this year, my brother left for the marines. He finished boot camp in June. I drove the six hours to see him. He is currently stationed in Alabama, finishing up his training. I am very proud of my brother and love him very much. But on some small level, I can't help but feel that I failed somewhere—I am a pacifist. Have been for many years.

Now with the word *pacifist*, there come many expectations, preconceived notions. I probably fit none of these. I am no Gandhi. I play video games, love the Internet, love eating with a passion that most people reserve for a spouse, and smoke (yes, I realize that brands me as someone on a whole new level of evil.) I am no Martin Luther King. I love to watch boxing, enjoy the sportsmanship and technique of mixed martial arts (a sport many consider to be caveman-esque), enjoy cursing, and drink liquors that would pickle the liver out of most people.

My pacifism is rooted in violence, in life, in experience, in America. In many ways I am the ultimate American statistic. My parents were divorced. I was raised in a single parent home for many years. My mother remarried, giving me a stepfather. I am bi-racial, being of Irish and Mexican decent. We were homeless for a year when I was child, staying with family members until courtesy wore out. With no better way to say it, I grew up in some rough neighborhoods. Violence was normal. I fought a lot.

I first stumbled onto the idea of pacifism when I was eleven. I was in gang fight, being a new kid in the area. I wanted to prove how tough I was so the other kids would leave me alone. I made an example of this one boy by smashing his head into a wall until he stopped moving. After the fight was over, as I was being dragged away, the blood on my hands was like a knife to my soul. Not to sound overdone—that's just how it was: a knife. I cried, and I didn't know why. I just knew I didn't want this. There had to be something more than this, even for a kid like me. Even though I didn't know what pacifism was then, I can honestly say that was my first experience with it.

When we were younger, I tried to shield my brother from the violence. I took it upon myself. I tried to wear those bruises for him; every cut I ever got was fine in my eyes, as long as he himself didn't have to experience that.

We come from a military family. Every uncle we have was in the military, as was my father and stepfather. Every male. I was the first not to do this. I wanted to show what college could do. I wanted to show that there were other options. I was a monk for four years, living a monastic life in the mountains, trying to find peace. Trying to find what else was out there so I could show my brother. I feel that I failed somewhere. By the same token though, I know we all must make our own choices, and that is what he did. I still love him and still support him.

Yes, I am a pacifist. But at the moment I am an angry one. There are things that anger me about all of this. The way my brother was recruited—the use of video games and cool cars to get him to come in. The way my brother was recruited—the use of popular video games like Halo to get kids like Robert into the recruiters office, or the way the recruiters drove fancy sports cars and said they could get one too if they joined the military. I am angry about this war that I do not understand. I am angry about leaders that lie. And I am angry about my own inability to do much.

So here I am, sharing with you. It is too bad that this is paper—that we do not have a drink to share at this table. Lord knows I could use one now.



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POETRY CORNER

Here is a submission from Grace Longenecker. I usually look for a more overt political aspect to the poems we print, but this one resonates with an evolutionary sense of being human which, for me, underlies all political endeavor.

I DIDN'T COME HERE

I was put here by "life's longing for itself."
I have never been alone.
One caroms off, away from influence,
out of confluence.
One seeks solitude in a cave of isolation,
finds it crammed with memories,
flanked by human spoor.
I am still touched by you all, still pressed,
minted, stamped, fungible, most like a coin.
I didn't come here to be you.
I wish myself away.



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Iran and the “Experts”

by Sasan Fayazmanesh

On December 31, 1977, President Jimmy Carter made a speech in which he said, “Because of the greatness of the shah, Iran is an island of stability in the Middle East.” In January of 1979 “his highness,” the shah, fell out of his throne in a revolutionary upheaval that swept Iran. The revolution also made mincemeat of the shah’s own prediction. He had stated on March 6, 1978, that “Nobody can overthrow me. I have support of 700,000 troops, all the workers, and most of the people. I have the power.”

Later events concerning Iran also proved many other predictors to be dead wrong. A few months before the takeover of the US embassy in Tehran, Henry Precht, the head of the Iran desk at the US State Department, stated: “The threat to [the] US embassy is less now than it was in spring; presumably it will diminish further by the end of the year.” And immediately after the embassy was attacked and some employees were arrested, Hamilton Jordan, chief of staff to Carter, is quoted as saying, “It’ll be over in a few hours.” The event was, of course, not over for at least another 443 days!

The above samples of predictions appear in a book entitled *The Experts Speak: The Definitive Compendium of Authoritative Misinformation*, written by Christopher Cerf and Victor Navasky and published in 1984. The book, as the authors state in its introduction, is the “collection of unadulterated, fully authenticated, false expertise.” It contains, according to the authors, “thousands of examples of expert misinformation, disinformation, misunderstanding, miscalculation, egregious prognostications, boo-boos, and occasional just plain lies.”

I have not looked at the later edition of *The Experts Speak* to see if the authors have updated the section on Iran. But if they have not, they could have a field day with the many false predictions made about Iran in just the past few years alone: everything from when the Iranians will start a revolution and overthrow the rule of the clergy, how soon Iran will have a nuclear bomb, where nuclear weapons are actually made, when the United States and Israel will attack Iran, and who will get elected president of Iran in the latest election (which was supposed to be so rigged that the result was known in advance). These predictions would fill many pages, if not a whole chapter in a book.

The predictions about Iran are mostly due to the “unadulterated, fully authenticated, false expertise” that Cerf and Navasky speak of. They also fall within one of the categories of “misinformation, disinformation, misunderstanding, miscalculation, egregious prognostications, boo-boos, and occasional just plain lies.” Many of the “experts” are pathological or habitual liars with an agenda. This is particularly true of the self-promoting, Chalabi-like, Iranian exiles at the service of the United States and Israel (“USrael”).

On the other hand, a few “experts” are well-intentioned and honest individuals. But they unknowingly put forward false information that has been fed to them by masters of deceit.

Take, for example, Scott Ritter, the former UN weapons inspector in Iraq between 1991 and 1998. In a sensational essay entitled “Sleepwalking to Disaster in Iran,” written on March 30, 2005 for Al Jazeera and subsequently republished elsewhere, Ritter predicted that in June 2005 there will be a “massive aerial attack against Iran.” Ritter claimed that he received this information from “someone close to the Bush administration.” “Why June 2005?” Ritter asked his source. The answer was that the “Israelis are concerned that if the Iranians get their nuclear enrichment program up and running, then there will be no way to stop the Iranians from getting a nuclear weapon. June 2005 is seen as the decisive date.”

Well, June came and went and there was no “massive aerial attack against Iran.” And, while we are at it, it does not help much to write another article in June, a post mortem for Al Jazeera, and say “The US war with Iran has already begun.” So why did Ritter, a well-intentioned individual and a critic of US policy in the Middle East, make such a boo-boo?

The answer has partly to do with “false expertise.” Anyone who knows the history of the USraeli policy of “dual containment” of Iran and Iraq since 1979, and follows the news carefully, would know that a US attack on Iran at this point is highly unlikely. This is because (1) the United States has its hands full with the atrocious wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and simply can’t open another front anywhere else in the world; (2) “massive aerial

attack against Iran” by the United States or, for that matter, Israel is technically difficult; (3) such an attack is relatively useless, unless it is followed by a ground invasion and this, at least for now, is beyond the realm of possibility; and (4) such an attack will cost USrael dearly.

But above all, as the last election result showed, the Iranian government (in spite of all the wishful thinking of its opponents outside of the country or dissatisfaction of certain strata inside the country) still has quite a bit of following and can muster the kind of resistance against foreign invasion that would make the current Iraqi resistance pale in comparison. Given these and other problems, the policy choice of USrael is to have the UN impose economic sanctions against Iran. Once imposed, the hope is that the Iranian economy will be wrecked, popular discontent will rise and this, in turn, will lead to either a revolution or prepare the groundwork for a future invasion of Iran.

It is this scheme that lies behind all the USraeli noise about Iran’s development of nuclear weapons, a development which so far the International Atomic Energy Agency has been unable to verify, despite all the massive and intrusive inspections. The scheme is, of course, somewhat similar to what the USraelis did to Iraq. But one has to remember that the second invasion of Iraq took many years of preparation.

It therefore appears that some well-intentioned predictions of the United States or, for that matter, Israel attacking Iran in the past year simply have been due to “false expertise.” But there is more. Such predictions are mostly based on the “information” provided by those sources that are, to use Ritter’s expression, “close to the Bush administration” and Israel. But these sources are often engaged in planting misinformation. Indeed, one of the main objectives of USrael in the past few years has been to engage in psychological warfare against Iran. This means sowing the seeds of anxiety and fear to destabilize the country. In order to do this, “informed sources” are used to pass out misinformation to well-intentioned writers concerning such things as possible military operations against Iran by the United States or Israel.

Take for example, the celebrated essay “The Coming Wars,” by the well-known and well-intentioned writer Seymour Hersh, published in the January 2005 issue of *The New Yorker*. The essay argued that, in his second term, “Bush has an aggressive and ambitious agenda . . . against the mullahs in Iran and against targets in the ongoing war on terrorism.” In support of this contention, Hersh quoted an unidentified “intelligence official”



as saying, “Next, we’re going to have the Iranian campaign. We’ve declared war and the bad guys, wherever they are, are the enemy. This is the last hurrah - we’ve got four years, and want to come out of this saying we won the war on terrorism.”

Now, in the absence of knowing the identity of this “intelligence official,” one cannot say whether the news of the “coming wars” is well-intentioned or simply designed to suit the policy of USrael. But, another source identified by Hersh sheds light on how much of the story of the “coming wars” could be planted. Hersh identifies this source as “an Iran expert who is the deputy director of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy (and a supporter of the Administration).” The source tells Hersh that “if some kind of military action was inevitable, ‘it would be much more in Israel’s interest and Washington’s to take covert action. The style of this Administration is to use overwhelming force ‘shock and awe.’ But we get only one bite of the apple.”

What Hersh forgets to remind the reader of is something about the background of his source, his motivation, and the exact nature of his affiliation. The source (who has moved a long way since his Trotskyite days as the editor of the *Review of Radical Political Economics*, when he used to write about socialism) is one of the most notorious Iran bashers and propagandists for Israel.

As I wrote a few years ago in my “Politics of the US Economic Sanctions against Iran,” whenever a case against Iraq had to be made, this particular fellow was a “witness” in the US Congress. The same also holds for Iran. If I may repeat a passage from my earlier writing, this character’s testimony is often fraught with exaggerations, inaccuracies, and data that cannot be supported by hard evidence. But above all, his testimony on Iran is usually quite bellicose and is filled with belligerent expressions such as “Iranian misbehavior,” “inept thuggish-ness” of Iranian authorities, “Iran as a problematic country,” “aggressive foreign policy behavior” of Iran, “unacceptable Iranian behavior,” “rogue” state, “terrorist” state, and so on. But, this is all expected from the deputy director of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

The Washington Institute is an extension of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), the infamous Israeli lobby group, whose members and affiliates more than once have been subject of investigation by the FBI for spying for Israel. Indeed, the Washington Institute was set up originally as a “research” wing of AIPAC. Its first director, Martin Indyk, who apparently worked as an international media and communications adviser to former Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Shamir, was “once even a staffer at the American-Israeli Public Affairs Committee,” according to the *Jerusalem Post* of January 29, 1993. He then went on, with the joy and glee of the Israelis, to become the director for Middle East matters under Clinton at the National Security Council and, subsequently, the Ambassador to Israel. In his many influential positions in the 1990s, Indyk became the chief architect of a policy that he called “dual containment,” (i.e., the policy of demonizing, destabilizing, and isolating Iran and Iraq, and ultimately trying to overthrow their governments).

However, in September 2000 Indyk was accused by the FBI of mishandling classified material. His security clearance was suspended, and he was ordered to remain in Washington. But soon after, when Israel and AIPAC raised the usual specter of “anti-Semitism,” Indyk was back at his job doing what he does best, “containing” Iran and Iraq on behest of USrael. He is now the director of the Saban Center for Middle East Policy and regularly appears as an “expert” on Middle East matters, particularly Iran. (For an early introduction to Indyk and the Washington Institute, see “Clinton’s Indyk Appointment One of Many From Pro-Israel Think Tank,” by Grace Halsell, in *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs*, available at <www.washington-report.org/backissues/0393/9303009.htm>.)

It seems awfully dangerous to use as an “Iran expert” or “informed source,” a director of such Israeli fronts as the Washington Institute. The role of these fronts is to eliminate anyone or, for that matter, any country, who opposes Israel’s policy. Given this role, these fronts provide “experts” who plant misinformation. Such misinformation could, in turn, tarnish the reputation of the best or the most well-intentioned journalist.

But, Hersh and Ritter are not alone in using such “experts.” Almost the entire news media in the United States seems to be relying on one or another “expert” from various institutions whose job it is to propagate misinformation, disinformation, and just plain lies. A day does not go by without one hearing or reading about “infor-

mation” provided by an “expert” from the Hoover Institution, American Enterprise Institute, National Review, Weekly Standard, Project for the New American Century, Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs, Hudson Institute, Saban Center, and so on. (For an introduction to these centers of propaganda see <www.csmonitor.com/specials/neocon/spheresInfluence.html>.)

With these kinds of “experts,” the chances of the US public getting anything remotely close to the truth are nil. What is worse is that these media “experts” are usually the same ones who are, in the first place, formulating US foreign policy.

Given these “experts,” is it any wonder that for more than half a century US foreign policy toward Iran has been nothing but a series of blunders and blowback?

Is it any wonder that the CIA coup of 1953—led by such “experts” as Kermit Roosevelt—ultimately resulted in the “Islamic Revolution” of 1979?

Is it any wonder that the symbiotic relationship, nourished by the “experts,” between the shah, the United States, and Israel, during which the CIA and Mossad protected the shah and trained his notorious police force, Savak, in exchange for export of Iranian oil, purchase of arms from the US and Israel, and the shah’s anti-Arab policies resulted in the expulsion of Americans and the Israelis from Iran following the revolution? Is it any wonder that the insistence of some “experts,” such as Henry Kissinger, to allow the shah back into the United States led to the takeover of the US embassy?

Is it any wonder that the green light that some “experts,” such as Zbigniew Brzezinski, gave to Saddam Hussein to invade Iran, the subsequent arming of Saddam (including giving him chemical agents), the attempt by both the United States and Israel to prolong the Iran-Iraq War, resulted in the death of nearly a million people and hatred for the real architects of the war?

Is it any wonder that Israeli “experts,” such as Shimon Peres and his various cohorts of agents and merchants of death, led the United States into a tragicomedy known as the “Iran-Contra scandal”?

Is it any wonder that as a result of the policy of the “experts,” Saddam came out of the Iran-Iraq War militarily stronger than when he entered it and then invaded Kuwait?

Is it any wonder that the first US invasion of Iraq and the subsequent economic sanctions against Iraq, all designed by the USraeli “experts,” led to the death of hundreds of thousands of innocent Iraqis and increased animosity toward the United States in the Arab world?

Is it any wonder that the policy of sanctioning Iran, directed by the Washington Institute-AIPAC “experts,” was a massive failure, which caused the Clinton Administration, in a last-ditch effort, to reverse course to please the angry corporate lobby?

Is it any wonder that, as the result of the “expert” advice from the Machiavellian students of Leo Strauss and Irving Kristol, the United States invaded Iraq, for the second time, on false pretex

Is it any wonder that these same “experts” fooled an entire nation into believing that the war against Iraq would be a cakewalk?

Is it any wonder that these “experts” have caused, so far, the deaths of more than 1,750 US soldiers, and tens of thousands of Iraqis, in an atrocious war with no end in sight?

Is it any wonder that after the Iraq war fiasco these “experts” quietly moved away, set up camp elsewhere, and focused their attention on Iran, Israel’s main target?

Is it any wonder that, as a result of the “brilliant” policies of these “experts,” Iraq now has precisely the kind of Shiite-dominated government that the USraelis have been trying to overthrow in Iran, Iran has a more conservative government, and the two governments of Iran and Iraq are now closer to each other than at any time in the modern history of the Middle East?

With these “experts,” who needs amateurs?

Sasan Fayazmanesh is a professor of economics at California State University, Fresno.



Timeline

1953: A CIA-sponsored coup in Iran overthrows the nationalist government of Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh and restores the shah’s rule. Thereafter, a symbiotic relationship develops between the shah, the United States, and Israel. In exchange for the shah’s providing oil to the United States and Israel, purchasing arms from both countries, and pursuing anti-Arab policies, the CIA and Mossad protect the shah and train his notorious police force, Savak.

1979: The revolution in Iran ends the symbiotic relationship between the shah and the United States and Israel.

- Despite repeated warnings from Iran, the Carter Administration allows the shah to enter the United States, especially after pressure is exerted from the shah’s friends, such as Henry Kissinger and David Rockefeller.
- The US embassy is attacked by the Islamic students, and employees of the embassy are held in exchange for the extradition of the shah.
- The United States freezes Iranian assets and imposes sanctions against Iran, sanctions which have lasted to this day.
- The United States and Israel adopt what later becomes known as the policy of “dual containment,” a policy designed to overthrow non-friendly governments in Iran and Iraq.

1980: As part of the policy of “dual containment,” the Carter Administration, particularly the national security advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski, gives the green light to Saddam Hussein to invade Iran.

1980–1988: The Iran-Iraq War—which is estimated to have resulted in one million casualties and destroyed the economy of both countries—is fueled by the United States and Israel with the intention of prolonging it to cause maximum damage to Iran and Iraq.

- Even though the United States and Israel adopt the same policy of continuing the war, their policies differ somewhat: the United States mainly supports Saddam by providing him with credit, intelligence, weapons, and chemical agents. Israel sells weapons

to Iran. At some point, Israelis turn the United States into a double agent by engaging the United States in selling arms to Iran as well. This becomes known as the “Iran-Contra scandal.”

- Ultimately, the United States, fearing Saddam would lose the war, engages Iran directly in the war. The undeclared US war against Iran culminates in the *USS Vincennes* shooting down a civilian airliner, killing 290 on board, on July 3, 1988.
- Realizing that it cannot win the war against the combined forces of the United States and Saddam, Iran accepts a humiliating ceasefire.
- Saddam emerges from the war militarily stronger than when he invaded Iran, due to the massive arms supply from the United States and its allies.

1988–1991: The United States and Israel start a concerted campaign to contain “Iraq.” After the US ambassador April Glaspie misleads Saddam by telling him, “We have no opinion on the Arab-Arab conflicts,” Saddam invades Kuwait and the United States attacks Iraq. The United States, however, fearing a takeover of power by the Shiite forces in Iraq, decides to leave Saddam’s army intact. The United States imposes massive UN sanctions against Iraq to keep Iraq “contained.”

1992: Israel turns its attention to Iran and starts an active campaign in the United States to overthrow the Iranian government. Through its various lobbies in the US, such as the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), and its think tanks, such as the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Israel formulates and pushes forward three reasons for continued US sanctions: (1) Iran’s support for “international terrorism,” (2) Iran’s opposition to the “peace process” in the Middle East, and (3) Iran’s pursuit of “weapons of mass destruction.” The result is the imposition of numerous unilateral US sanctions against Iran.

1997: The US corporations, particularly oil and agriculture interests, which have been anxious to get back in Iran, and which are fed up with AIPAC formulating US sanction policies, band together. They form the lobbying group “USA*Engage,” an offshoot of the National Foreign Trade Council (NFTC). The lobbying effort of the US industries against US sanctions slows the advancement of Israeli forces in articulating the US foreign policy toward Iran.

2000: Madeline Albright tries to have a rapprochement with Iran by giving a speech in front of the oil lobby in which she states,

- In 1953, the United States played a significant role in orchestrating the overthrow of Iran’s popular prime minister, Mohammed Mossadegh. . . . The coup was clearly a setback for Iran’s political development and it is easy to see why so many Iranians continue to resent this intervention by America in their internal affairs.
- As President Clinton has said, the United States must bear a fair share of responsibility for the problems that have arisen in US-Iranian relations. Even in more recent years, aspects of US policy towards Iraq during its conflict with Iran appear to have been regrettably shortsighted, especially in light of our subsequent experience with Saddam Hussein.

2001: Immediately after September 11, the US State Department and the Iranian foreign minister start a courtship dance to improve relations between the two countries. But Israel, its lobby groups, and the neoconservatives within and outside the Bush Administration, end the courtship soon after. Ariel Sharon compares the attempt at coalition building by the US Department of State to Neville Chamberlain’s appeasement of the Nazis in the 1930s. Former Israeli prime minister Binyamin Netanyahu, testifying before the House Government Reform Committee, states that the US “war on terror” must not only include Iraq, but Iran, Syria, and the Palestinian Authority. The “neoconservatives” push for the war against Iraq.

2003: The United States invades Iraq to “contain” it. Israel, its lobby groups, and the neoconservatives turn their attention toward “containing” Iran. Iran’s weapons of mass destruction becomes that “bureaucratic”

reason, to paraphrase Paul Wolfowitz (one of the chief architects of the US invasion of Iraq) which everyone could settle on.

2005: “Dual containment” of Iran and Iraq continues.

Sasan Fayazmanesh is currently writing a book on the policy of “dual containment.”



The Pairs Project

By Richard Stone

The Fresno Center for Nonviolence is now initiating the 2005–06 edition of the Pairs Project. In this program we match two individuals across lines-of-difference that interest them (e.g., Jew/Muslim, gay/straight, fundamentalist/liberal, youth/senior) and give them one directive: over the next six months, get to know each other.

The Project staff provides guidance and support for making contacts and dealing with surprises or difficulties, and provides opportunities throughout the period of commitment for participants to meet informally and compare notes. The heart of the matter, though, is simply two individuals who want to leave their comfort zone and work through their fears and prejudices by coming together in whatever circumstances feel right for them.

You can obtain an information sheet and application by calling (or coming to) the Center for Nonviolence; or by logging on to the Web site <www.centerfornonviolence.org> and going to the Pairs project link under Center Programs. For more in-depth information, you can call Richard on a Monday or Libby on a Friday at the Center between 11 AM and 3 PM at 237–3223.

Out of East Africa

By Richard Stone

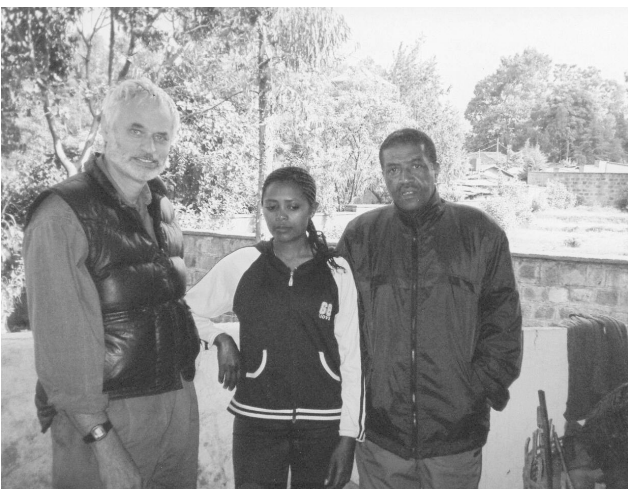
I spent most of July in a “country” called “Ethiopia,” in the Horn of Africa on the east coast of the continent. This was a return to the site of my Peace Corps experience 40 years ago.

The first thing to say is that, with the exception of a huge population increase, a change in the top layer of government control, a certain amount of high-rise urban construction, and the advent of the AIDS plague, not a lot had changed . . . especially outside the major cities.

Second (as a by-product of my meetings with a remarkable man) I learned that, despite the myth that the country had not been colonized, the existence of the nation-state Ethiopia with its certain borders is a colonial phenomenon that has terribly damaged the bases of thousand-year-old societies. The intense pain inflicted by the Western invasion is evident in every aspect of life there.

In one respect, the trip was a cardinal lesson in the opportunities and costs of Western technology and globalization. I was invited by an Ethiopian expatriate who used to live in Fresno but now teaches in New Jersey. It was facilitated by the possibility of air travel that got me from Fresno (via L.A., London, and Amman, Jordan) to Addis Ababa in 24 hours.

But hidden in this scenario are two things. First is the unrelenting cultural dislocation my friend lives with: it was a revelation to see my friend in his “natural habitat” —he was a different person, in constant con-



tact and communication with the people on the streets, not at all the cautious, insecure “foreigner” I have known here in the States. Second was the impact of the travel on me: when I got off the plane in Addis after a full day of travel, a time change of 11 hours, and (most crushingly) an 8000 foot rise in altitude, I was a wreck. I was overwhelmed by the crowds in the street and the absence of easy access to the basics of human comfort. I was breathless after a few minutes of walking. And I was beset by panic attacks and regrets for having placed myself in this situation. “Modern life” exacts a huge cost not included in the advertised price.

Meeting my new friend, Gemetchu Megerssa, rescued me. His resonant voice and narratives somehow calmed me and “brought me home.” His out-of-the-blue (for him, too) invitation for me to stay at his apartment gave me a home, and opportunities for deep conversation with someone who is simultaneously an initiate into (and spokesman for) a millenia-old culture of surprising intellectual sophistication, and a Ph.D. in cultural anthropology from the University of London. He is also a larger-than-life human being (think Zorba the Greek).

I was introduced to a way of thinking that is antithetical to the Western sense of history, progress, individual agency, material technology; and I was brought to understand that the survival of our universe depends on having to accommodate these two “incompatible” modes of intelligence. And I had the chance to sit with both my old and my new friend, and look concretely (for a proposal) at how insights from living between these two kinds of culture can be applied in a peace-making process to make real the aspirations expressed in Ethiopia’s new federal constitution—as yet just a piece of paper.

The stay there was extremely taxing for me. Not the least difficult was “doing the time” without the myriad meaningful connections (mail, friendships, shopping and cooking, work) and trivial distractions (daily newspaper, TV sports, buying clothes) of “normal life in the States.” In a country of 60% unemployment, where people mostly just get through the day, time lies heavy. I asked Gemetchu what gets people through. He replied, “They wake up alive.”

Occasionally people “invent life” out of nothing. There was, for example, on one corner a vendor selling french fries from a cart, a strikingly original idea on a street with hundreds of people selling look-alike gizmos made in China, or hawking lottery tickets, or simply begging.



One memorable occasion: I sat with Gemetchu and another acquaintance, Etafa, drinking the inevitable cup of coffee (25 cents a cup for prime Ethiopian espresso.) I asked Etafa how he seemed so benevolent in spite of having spent 7 years in a hideous prison where he was regularly tortured. Somehow my two friends converted this question into an outrageous outburst of hilarity including bravado challenges to a mano-a-mano chess match. Yet in the background were casual references to Gemetchu’s gunshot wound in the leg that still impairs his movement, and Etafa’s having been shot in the throat “one-thousandth of an inch from the aorta” . . . the matter-of-fact price of political dissent in a dictatorship.

I return, gladly, to my life of comfort and relative peace of mind in Fresno. But I am thoroughly humbled by what my new friends have survived and live with. I have discussed some small projects to partner with them that rest on their initiative. If there is follow-through, I will commit to trying to make them happen. And I will ask your help.

Note: While in Ethiopia I wrote a 20-page manuscript sparked by my discussions with Gemetchu, called “Why We Must Change: The State of the Human Project in 2005.” Copies are available for \$2 from me (tel. 266-2559; e-mail, richard2662559@yahoo.com.

Measure C Reauthorization Moving Forward: Progress Is Being Made

By Werner Lipton

A steering committee, composed of about 20 representatives of diverse interest groups and charged with proposing a draft expenditure plan for the reauthorization of the transportation tax (Measure C) for Fresno County, has met many times to build trust and to arrive at a common vision for the county’s future as a place to live for us and for future generations.

Each time you buy anything in Fresno County, except food or medicines, half a cent for each dollar you spend ends up in the Measure C kitty. This transportation-purposes tax was approved by Fresno County voters in 1986 and became effective in 1987. Over its 20-year life, the tax is expected to raise about \$800 million. The tax will expire at the end of 2006.

Crunch time came in late August (after press time) when the steering committee was to agree by consensus on the draft of an expenditure plan to be submitted to the electorate in 2006. This expenditure plan was to be guided by the results of a scientifically reliable survey of “high propensity voters” (those who have voted in at least the two most recent general elections). Here are some major results of this survey:

1. Air pollution and the condition of roads and streets were the number 1 and 3 concerns among a long list of possibilities (Crime was number 2). These responses were chosen unprompted by those surveyed.
2. When prompted by questions regarding specific items, the sequence was 1) unhappy with limited transportation services, 2) crime, 3) air quality and 4) street/road maintenance.
3. Over 80% of respondents believe that good public transit is important for economic prosperity, that is, to get people to work who don’t or can’t drive.

Clearly, poor air quality and local street and road conditions are a major concern of the population.

Also important are the provisions that each city and the county can spend the dollars to meet their particu-

SEPTEMBER 22, COHOUSING PRESENTA- TION: UPDATING OUR PROGRESS OVER THE PAST YEAR

by Larry Bassman

A year ago the *Community Alliance* published an article introducing cohousing to Fresno, and announcing a presentation where interested people could meet to learn more about it. Based on the surprisingly large turnout at that gathering, it seemed there might be enough interest to have a go at developing a cohousing community here. It's a year later now and we've come quite a way since then. *La Querencia* (Spanish for "a place that feels like home"), a 28-unit project being developed by Fresno Cohousing, LLC, is now recruiting new member households, and on Thursday, September 22, at 7:00 PM., at Alliant International University, we will be hosting a presentation where we will re-introduce the cohousing concept and unveil our design plans. The group has purchased 2.8 acres on Alluvial Avenue between Chestnut and Willow Avenues, located near an elementary school, a park, and retail areas. We have acquired the services of architects/developers Kathryn McCamant and Charles Durrett, and have submitted plans to city officials for review with completion anticipated in 2007.

Our cohousing community will cluster privately owned, self-sufficient homes around common facilities to provide an old-fashioned neighborhood feel where neighbors know each other and kids run and play in between the houses. The shared facilities will include children's play areas; a workshop; a pool, spa, and exercise facility; and a common house with a gourmet kitchen, a large dining room for community dinners and other gatherings, a sitting area, a guest room, kids' and teen rooms, a game room, a meditation/yoga room, and a shared laundry facility.



There will be three unit sizes: two-bedroom, 1¼-bath flats; three-bedroom, 2½-bath townhouses; and four-bedroom, 2½-bath townhouses. Prices are projected to range from the mid \$300,000s to the mid \$400,000s, competitive with new condominium construction costs. Each privately owned home is an independent unit, which includes kitchen, dining, and living rooms; bedrooms and baths; large front porches; and individual back yards. Our architect has worked with us to maximize efficiency of space and energy, and you will see evidence of sensitivity toward the natural environment including reduced home size, sharing of resources, and community recycling.

La Querencia will be a supportive, intergenerational community, with an emphasis on including families with young children. Residents will know their neighbors very well and there will be a strong sense of community that is absent in contemporary cities and suburbs. In addition to the obvious social advantages of living near friends, residents will have more free time because many of the routine activities of life will be shared such as dinners, gardening and yard work. Expensive or rarely used tools and recreational equipment owned by the group will be available to all. Car-pooling and childcare will be easier to arrange.

A central feature of creating community in cohousing is "breaking bread" together. Our cohousing community plans to have four dinners a week with teams of two to four people preparing each meal, and each adult

will be involved in meal preparation or cleanup once every four or five weeks. Common meals will be priced at cost, and special food requirements are respected, although not all of them will necessarily be accommodated at each meal.

La Querencia will function just like condominium developments in terms of its legal and organizational structure. It will have a homeowners association, shared grounds, and common facilities—but by giving careful consideration to the placement of residences, parking, walkways, swimming pool, play and garden areas, open spaces, and the common house, cohousing maximizes opportunities for neighbors to cross paths throughout the day. The private residences will be clustered on the site leaving more shared open space, the dwellings will face each other across a courtyard, and cars will be parked on the periphery allowing for pedestrian walkways and gathering spots between the homes. But more important than any specifics is the intent to create a strong sense of community with strategic design.

Our particular community has developed around a shared vision based on friendship, trust, and safety. Our commitment to living in close proximity to people we have chosen as neighbors and friends enriches our everyday lives. The values that we share include communication, acceptance, personal growth, privacy, fun, teamwork, interconnection, beauty, and a sense of fam-

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Grassroots Profile: Gary Dennis

By Richard Stone

Toward the end of 2004, Gary Dennis was in an accident that totaled his car. At about the same time, the grant money paying rent for his CHAANGE office at the Center for Nonviolence ran out; one of his student interns was found dead in her home; and his efforts to gain funding for educational billboards about AIDS were rebuffed by city officials. Gary looked noticeably deflated.

By the time this interview took place (August 2005), Gary had returned to his characteristic enthusiasm. He had 10 billboards freshly displayed (thanks to funding from Cynthia Sterling's office). While Gary's former student intern was still sadly missed, her work was being carried on by two new student interns. And he had a vision for the future. This is obviously one hard-to-keep-down fellow. Meet Gary Dennis, executive director of the Fresno branch of California HIV/AIDS Advocacy Network Grassroots Evolution.

CHAANGE is an unusual kind of AIDS organization—one that doesn't focus on providing services to infected people—and thus is not eligible for most governmental funding. Its main purpose is to create a coalition of people who understand what the epidemic is about, and care enough to become involved. It exists on the basis of one-on-one contacts that convince individuals—those infected, those affected, and those concerned—that the public needs to know the facts, and needs to convert that knowledge into legislative pressure. Its work is get the message (that AIDS is an equal-opportunity disease, not restricted to gays and drug users) out to those who don't want to hear it...work requiring the mixture of amiability, missionary zeal, and ornery determination that characterizes Gary Dennis.

Gary came to CHAANGE after working with a housing program for people with AIDS through the Fair Housing office. There he saw firsthand how the legislative process works—according to who gives money and



IDENTITY BOX

Place of birth: Detroit, Michigan
Primary identity: African American/Black
Religious affiliation: Christian
Political affiliation: Democrat
Parts of Fresno most visited: Central (City College and Tower districts)
Non-work interests: surfing the Net
Unlikely pleasures: dancing, bodybuilding
Motto "Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves and for the rights of those who are destitute" (Proverbs 31, verses 8-9)
Contact Information: <www.chaange.org>; (559) 268-1968

and/or who applies pressure—and saw how underrepresented the Valley is in Sacramento. When Jean Kennedy introduced him to the statewide CHAANGE, he decided this was where he wanted to devote his time and energy.

Besides Jean and Councilmember Sterling, Gary cites as key allies in his work the Fresno County Communicable Disease Division of the Health Department.; Jasmine Delgado of the State of California STD Control Board; Sharon Todd and Ali Shabazz, along with the folks at Good Citizens, Inc., who are doing important work in West Fresno; the Activities Department at Fresno City College who have provided access to students via tabling opportunities and volunteer recruitment; and the Center for Nonviolence, where Gary carries out business.

The urgent need to demystify the causes of AIDS—who gets it, and why it is still spreading rapidly, especially among people of color—drives Gary's efforts. "People still think of AIDS as a disease of white gay men. They think because they're of a certain class or race or sexual orientation they're immune. They don't realize that unless they know the complete sexual history of all their partners, they're at risk. They don't realize that unless they're regularly tested they probably don't know their own status and may be putting others at risk. Honesty is required here: there must be disclosure and discussion."

In doing work in which he faces so much denial and resistance to bad news, Gary says he is sustained by his Christian faith and by the example of Jesus as a healer and endurer of hardships. "This is not work; it is a mission. Of the one million people infected, probably a fifth don't even know it. This is a *preventable disease!*"

Gary is rightly proud of CHAANGE projects now in the works. Their 10 billboards are up for three months, giving information in English and Spanish. Partnering initially with the House of Hope, CHAANGE is assisting with a behavioral study of young people, aged 15 to 24, to assess at-risk activities. CHAANGE is also working with the police in the Central District to get information out to community groups connected with the Weed and Seed Program. And they're involved as a provider of information and volunteer opportunities for new parolees.

As for the long run, Gary dreams about a one-stop HIV/AIDS Institute ("there's a building for sale on O Street that would be perfect"), and—of course—finding a cure. In the meantime, he'll settle for donations to support the work of CHAANGE; and he requests from the public—including our readers—assistance in the form of spreading the word, inviting speakers, and making referrals.

SAN FRANCISCO MIME TROUPE OPENS 2005 SEASON WITH A FABLE BASED ON FACT, “DOING GOOD”

Fasten your seatbelts and get ready for another wild yet thought-provoking ride with the San Francisco Mime Troupe, which will open its new season with a brand new play, *Doing Good*, inspired by John Perkins’s *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man*. Loaded with history and a global perspective, *Doing Good* has a backdrop of US foreign policy since WWII. It is an epic work, in step with the Mime Troupe’s raison d’être, laced with laughter, tragedy, snappy dialogue, and live music.

The SF Mime Troupe’s 2005 play will break from a clear farcical style and present a drama that raises questions about the story’s main characters and the moral choices that each faces on his or her journey. The action centers on James and Molly, a young couple who meet in 1968 as the Tet offensive in Vietnam fills the TV screens. James is staring military service in the face, so they decide to join the Peace Corps so that James can avoid the draft. They’re sent to Ecuador where they fail to change anything. Molly’s uncle intervenes and offers James a “better way” to help the Third World countries. In Indonesia, James begins his new job as a corporate economist. He is drunk on success and a big income, but Molly begins to see the unmitigated suffering of the people underlying the big development projects. As Molly returns to the United States and an unexamined lifestyle, James heads to Iran. Deep in the desert, his old college buddy brings him face to face with the real cost of the “good” he has been doing around the world and warns him to get out while he still can.

“James has become, in effect, an ‘apostle’ of the free market, selling Third World governments a vision of

boundless riches that comes from Western-style economic development,” said dramaturge Joan Holden. “The free market gospel America preaches today is like the Christian gospel the Spanish friars preached in the New World. It cloaks a brutal pursuit of national economic self-interest.”

Holden, principal playwright for the Tony Award-winning Troupe from 1967 to 2000, left the company in 2000 to pursue other interests, but has returned to lead this year’s writing team.

Doing Good was inspired by Perkins’s book, *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man*. Dan Chumley, actor and principal director with the collective from 1968 to 2000, provided a scenario based on the book’s descriptions of Perkins’s work in foreign countries. Perkins’s job was to persuade countries that are strategically important to the United States to accept enormous loans for infrastructure development and then contract these lucrative projects out to US corporations. With that as the backdrop, the Mime Troupe writing team set off on its script creation. The writing team is led by collective members Keiko Shimosato and Ellen Callas, with Erin Blackwell and Jeffrey Morris. Collective members Bruce Barthol and Amos Glick are the lyricists. Designers are Callie Floor, Amber Miller, and I Made Moja. Victor Toman directs actors Christian Cagigal, Michael Carreiro, Lisa Hori-Garcia, Keiko Shimosato, Michael Sullivan, Noah James Butler, and Brian Rivera.

“The collective worked hard to find the kind of story we felt was relevant to who we are as Americans in the world today,” said the Mime Troupe’s general manager, Peggy Rose. “We wanted to tell a larger story of how America has earned the reputation it now has. It wasn’t enough for us to focus on Washington and the White

House. That was too easy.”

The San Francisco Mime Troupe creates and produces socially relevant theater of the highest professional quality, staging plays that dramatize the operation of giant forces in small, close-up stories that convey the impact of political events on personal life. Founded in 1959 by R. G. Davis, the company became the San Francisco Mime Troupe in 1961 and began performing in local parks in the classical Commedia dell’arte style, adapted and updated to satirize the present.

In 1963, the Park and Recreation Commission denied the Mime Troupe a permit and Davis was arrested for defying the ban. With the help of the ACLU, the Company won the right to perform in the parks, beginning more than four decades of free outdoor public performances. Original scripts took their place next to Commedia beginning in 1965. Since 1970, the Mime Troupe has operated as an artist-governed collective, composed of permanent members on the artistic side. Actors, musicians, writers, composers, directors, designers, and technicians create shows, make policy, assign writers and directors, and approve plans for tours, grant sources, expenditures, and special projects.

The Mime Troupe won its first OBIE Award in 1968 for “uniting theater and revolution and grooving in the park.” Since then, two more OBIEs, the coveted Tony Award (for Excellence in Regional Theater), the Bay Area Media Alliance’s Golden Gadget Award for Lifetime Achievement and numerous Bay Area Theatre Critics’ Circle Awards have been added to the list of the company’s many honors.

For more information call (415) 285-1717.



Mime Troupe does good job taking on capitalism, do-gooders

by Charles Brousse

Editor’s note: This review first appeared in the *Marin Independent Journal*, July 9, 2005.

Since it has been presenting summer seasons of free shows in public venues around the Bay Area and adjacent regions for more than three decades, most people probably know that the San Francisco Mime Troupe isn’t your usual standard brand acting company. It’s an entirely different breed of theatrical animal....

Its latest venture, *Doing Good*, which debuted [July 2] in

San Francisco’s Dolores Park, will visit [Fresno’s Roeding Park on Sunday, September 11, at 4 PM]. If you’re a Mime Troupe groupie, you’re in for a treat because this is one of the collective’s best shows in years. If you’ve never attended, be prepared for an enlightening, possibly confusing, almost certainly entertaining experience.

Like political street theater all over the world, the Mime Troupe’s mission is to get its message across. Instead of the usual theatrical values—carefully constructed scripts by leading writers, nuanced acting, artfully designed sets and costumes—it offers a free-wheeling, semi-improvised presentational style that is in keeping with its informal outdoor performance spaces. That approach also meets the needs of audiences who are more interested in the message’s content, and impressed by the messenger’s energy and passion, than in any aesthetic refinements.

And yet, the danger is always present that if production elements are too vestigial, content too muddled or too didactic, performances too sloppy, or—horrors!—an inadequate sound system breaks down, that all-important message can be lost. It’s a conundrum the Mime Troupe has faced since it began operations under that name in 1961. Since then, the record has been decidedly uneven, with some years being strong enough to warrant the company’s pride in receiving a Tony Award for Excellence in Regional Theater, while others came close to being an embarrassment.

Helped along by a reasonably coherent script that was stitched together by a quartet of writers (Kiki Shimosato, Jeffrey Morris, Ellen Callas, and Erin Blackwell) from a scenario by Don Chumley and longtime resident playwright Joan Holden, a trio of excellent songs in the Brechtian style (lyrics by Bruce Barthol and Amos Glick), and a riveting dance sequence staged by I Made Moja, *Doing Good* is among the group’s more effective

recent outings. Though still far from what it could be (and may become as the versatile ensemble gains confidence over the next few months), the production is already strong enough to fully engage anyone who is concerned about the direction of American foreign policy and willing to discard conventional preconceptions about what theater ought to look like.

Instead of following the Mime Troupe's normal practice of developing a completely original script, Chumley and Holden have given the project welcome structure by basing their concept on John Perkins's memoir, *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man*. The book describes the author's progression from altruistic young Peace Corpsman to cynical huckster for projects benefiting America's multinational corporations. In the process of adapting it for the stage, characters' names were changed and narrative sequences altered, but the general outline remains intact.

Fresh out of college in 1968, James (Noah James Butler) and his girlfriend Molly (Lisa Hori-Garcia) are at loose ends about what to do with their lives. At the suggestion of her Uncle Ray (Michael Gene Sullivan) and to avoid being sent to Vietnam, James marries Molly and the two enlist in the Peace Corps. Their first posting is in Ecuador, where they immediately are introduced to the plight of dirt poor farmers whose small plots are being taken over by wealthy elites competing to cash

in on the gathering scramble for oil rights. To get these potential troublemakers out of the way, they are transferred to Indonesia, just in time to participate in the events that led to Gen. Suharto's military coup. Molly helps coordinate a breastfeeding initiative sponsored by UNICEF but, becoming increasingly jaded, she soon abandons both job and marriage for a series of cushy jobs in the States.

Meanwhile, James considerably upgrades his pay packet by joining an economic development company called Games Corp. (think Bechtel), which teams with the American-sponsored World Bank and IMF to convince Third World countries like Iran and Afghanistan that they should incur massive debt for infrastructure projects they don't need, but which create immense profits for American multinationals. He quickly learns the tricks of the trade, from bribery to arm-twisting, until the inevitable payback occurs.

While most well-informed people who attend *Doing Good* won't find this account of international capitalism's shameless exploitation of poor countries surprising, its depiction of how easily youthful idealism can be corrupted—a process that is then rationalized by rhetoric about assisting people to be self-reliant—may prove disturbing. Which is, of course, exactly the Mime Troupe's intent.



15 COMMUNITY ALLIANCE SEPTEMBER 2005

Free Performance at Roeding Park in Fresno on Sunday, September 11



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Saturday September 3 - Full Circle Brewery Fresno, CA , Jim Rust's Birthday Bash.
Showtime 8:00 p.m.-Admission \$5

Saturday September 10 - Tower Theatre. Fresno, CA Opening for the Robert Cray Band. Showtime 8:00 p.m.

Artists Wanted!!

ArtWorks is looking for artists who are interested in entering a fine art show at Northwest Church on September 17, 2005, 5415 N. West Ave. (corner of Barstow and West), from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm.

For additional information, please call
Jean Preston @ 431 1012, or
Joanne Margosian @ 435 5259

ATTENTION: ARTISTS

Seeking artists for
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to be held Saturday, October 22, 2005 from
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Moon Gallery, 1756 W. Bullard.
Application deadline is September 22. For
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Karen Fries 449-9818
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WHEN: Exhibit runs: September 2 - December 23, Fridays, Saturdays & Sundays, 11am-3pm

WHERE: The River Center, 11605 Old Friant Road, Fresno

FEE: Free

For more information: 248-8480, ext 110



WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM

WILPF Fresno, PO Box 5114, Fresno, CA 93755
Vickie Fouts, Editor, (559) 658-8260 or socialjustice@sti.net

WILPF DATES:

Thursday, September 8: No WILPF Business Meeting due to WILPF Annual Retreat

Saturday, September 17, 10 AM-4 PM: WILPF Annual Retreat at the home of Sandra Iyall. Bring a potluck dish to share. **PLEASE** plan on attending as we review the past year and plan for the new year.

Wednesday, September 28, 3 PM: WILPF Stir It Up on KFCF 88.1 FM. See below for more info.

Another Young WILPFer Moves On— by Ruth Obel-Jorgensen: I have been hired as the organizing director for the UC Student Association and moved to Oakland in August. With this move I'll be unable to continue my position with WILPF as branch secretary. I have enjoyed the opportunity to grow as an individual with WILPF and within our community for the last two years. I truly thank all those WILPF members who have supported my efforts while with the organization. I especially thank Joan, Lynn, and Vickie for committing themselves to the internship program that brought me in and will continue to bring many new young women to WILPF.

I will be in touch and will continue to support the efforts and mission of WILPF, especially of our Fresno branch. There are many great women in this organization and I sincerely hope that we continue to strive. And with that being said, WILPF is still in need of a few great women to serve on the board as vice president, membership chair, fundraising chair, program chair and now secretary. Please consider volunteering your time.

WILPF Stir It Up Radio: WILPF member Wendy Russell has volunteered to become the new host of our radio show, which is moving from 3:30 PM to 3 PM this month. Wendy says she can be "political to a reggae beat!!!" She is already a radio DJ on Satellite Radio Bilingue, six California stations, and on www.radiobilingue.org. Wendy is editor, writer, and photographer with Reggae Festival Guide, www.ReggaeFestivalGuide.com and www.JahWorks.org, "Wendy's Perspective," and www.reggaereview with CD Reviews and column, "Fresno Runnings." She is also promoter, writer and photographer for Jah Guide and Protect. What a set of credentials. Welcome, Wendy!!

New WILPF Baby: Congratulations to WILPFer, Summer Gaston-Gehris, daughter of WILPFer Gail Gaston, on the birth of her son, Alexander James Gehris. Alexander was born on July 27, weighing in at 6 pounds, 5 ounces. It has been a couple of years since we have had a new baby WILPFer, not since former WILPF Stir-It-Up host Gabrielle Kirkland had a son in May 2003. May these sons grow up to be peacemakers, not soldiers and warriors.

WILPF Congress: Over 200 dangerous peace women from Maine to California, and even Sweden and New Zealand, attended the National WILPF Congress in San Francisco August 10-14. Several Fresno WILPF members attended: Marilyn Byrne, Vickie Fouts, Catherine Garoupa, Joan Poss, Meta Schettler, and our new social work intern Kris Smith. Kris also attended the Leadership Institute on August 8-9. Fun and learning was had by all. Thanks to Fresno WILPF's education fund for helping send some of us to the Congress.

Things started on Wednesday night with a social event called *Affirming the Dangerous Woman in Ourselves: Our WILPF Founders, Sponsors, and Sisters*. Assemblyman Mark Leno presented us a Resolution honoring WILPF, and San Francisco supervisor and WILPF member, Sophie



Maxwell, presented us with a Resolution from the Board of Supervisors and one from Mayor Gavin Newsom. Thursday started with a plenary on the new campaign *Women Challenge US Policy: Building Peace on Justice in the Middle East*, followed by eight break-out session on the topic. Next was a plenary on the new *Save the Water* campaign with eight breakout sessions.

Friday's plenary was *The Future of WILPF Part I* with four sets of eight workshops to choose from. Thursday evening there was a *Changing of the Guardians* where we thanked the current officers and welcomed the new. That was followed by the play *A Single Woman* performed by Nevada Shakespeare Company, about the life of Jeannette Rankin (1880-1973), WILPFer, suffragist, peace activist, and reformer. It was a very powerful play. The play included the playwright and creator, Jeanmarie Simpson playing Jeannette Rankin with her husband, Cameron Crain, as narrator. (See this month's Quote of the Month below by Jeannette Rankin).

Saturday was *The Future of WILPF Part II* with four sessions of workshops around WILPF organizational issues. Saturday evening was WILPF's 90th Birthday Party. Dynamic entertainment included the Korean Jamesori Women's Drumming Group and Friends, slam poet Shilja Patel and WILPF sponsor and member, poet Sonia Sanchez, followed by wild dancing to a DJ.

Things wrapped up Sunday morning with geographical meetings and a final plenary to share reports from those meetings on our commitments to carry on our work. There was also a report from the Leadership Institute who announced they were forming a new youth caucus of WILPF. We finished with lunch and fond farewells.

WILPF Members and 1000 Women for Peace: The group 1000 Women for Peace, www.1000peacewomen.org, has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. About 2% of them are WILPF members and 4% are from the United States. Below is a list of names and quotes from the US WILPF members involved, with the last four being from California. Yeah, California WILPFers!

Betty Reardon: "The ultimate goal of peace education is the formation of responsible, committed, and caring citizens who have integrated the values into everyday life and acquired the skills to advocate for them."

Betty Burkes: "We will succeed in building a strong base for transforming the politics of power when together we weave a vision that in practice offers a way of life so alive it is impossible to resist."

Grace Paley: "I think it's like a dark, dark cloud and a period of great anxiety. If we lose, it's horrible, and if we win, it's horrible. Those of us in this movement want every soldier saved and home."

Dorothy Rupert: "My dream is for all of the world's little girls to have access to a progressive education where their learning opens doors to whole new possibilities for them to live their dreams."

Elise Marie Biorn-Hansen Boulding: "The range of human activity that can be re-tuned to contribute to peace building is vast."

Barbara Lee: "Today we come together to say NO to the loss of innocent lives in a war that is totally unnecessary. And we are here to say YES to peace. George Bush has woken a sleeping giant in our country."

Aileen Hernandez: "Racism and sexism have made it possible to institutionalize mediocrity; by eliminating these evils we can free minds of all women and men to focus on the humane solutions to the world's problems."

Holly Near: "We are a gentle angry people. We are a land of many colors. We are gay and straight together. We are a peaceful loving people and we are singing, singing for our lives."

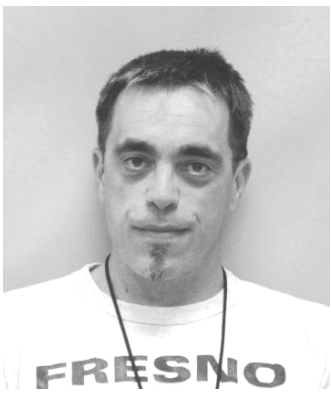
Medea Benjamin: "We in the US have to re-think our government's policies in Iraq. Changing course should not be interpreted as 'running way.' Running away is not the issue—getting it right is the issue."

Quote of the Month:

"There can be no compromise with war; it cannot be reformed or controlled; cannot be disciplined into decency or codified into common sense; for war is the slaughter of human beings, temporarily regarded as enemies, on as large a scale as possible."

--Jeannette Rankin, 1929

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QUEER EYE

"Ex-Gays"? Targeting Fresno Youth

by Dan Waterhouse

Early in August, a young Fresno man appeared on ABC's *The View* to promote the "ex-gay" movement. "Mike"—I'll use only his first name, so as not to embarrass him any more than he already was embarrassed on television—told a national audience that he had come out to his parents as queer at 15 years old.

He said he wasn't coerced into going—but he did admit that his parents (who evidently are fundamentalist Christians) demanded that he go if he wanted to continue living under their roof—Mike immediately got involved with the youth program offered by Exodus International. Several years later, he is still actively involved with Exodus, and was accompanied on *The View* by an Exodus handler.

Mike seemed very uncomfortable during his appearance on national TV. The group interviewing him didn't appear particularly impressed by what he was saying, and treated him politely but with a certain derision.

Exodus is one of several "ex-gay" ministries around the country. According to Wayne Besen (author of *Anything But Straight: Unmasking the Scandals and Lies Behind the Ex-Gay Myth*), Exodus has targeted young people for recruitment. Locally, Exodus is linked to New Creation Ministries.

According to Besen, the youth program that Mike is involved with is "dangerous." Besen said the methods Exodus uses to recruit young people are "increasingly sophisticated." Exodus has developed a CD-ROM, *The Map*, to "lure" teenagers.

As Besen describes it, the CD "first captures the imagination of youth with an MTV-style video. It puts the young viewer in a racing car that careens around corners while questions pop up on the screen: 'Where do these feelings come from?' 'What would my family think?' 'Can I change?' In the background is thumping dance music. At the end of the short video, against a black background, it reads: 'Welcome to *The Map*. Go ahead, take the journey.'

"Following the fast-paced opening, an ex-gay appears on-screen and tells of the 'eternal repercussions,' 'emotional consequences,' and 'physical ramifications' of homosexuality. The ex-gay host also offers his fundamentalist interpretation of scripture and dismisses gay affirmative theology by asking, 'Do you want the Bible to

fit your lifestyle, or do you want your lifestyle to fit the Bible?' *The Map* also includes more than 20 innovative minimovies that parade the requisite suicidal addicts who tell young people how dreadful gay life is."

Mike obviously bought *The Map's* message hook, line, and sinker. In his appearance on *The View*, Mike talked about how disillusioned he was about being queer. He told the watching audience that he is now "fulfilled" by repressing feelings he admits he still has.

Another group targeting queer youth in partnership with Exodus is Focus on the Family. Focus on the Family organizes the Love Won Out conference tour, featuring controversial psychologist Joseph Nicolosi (who in his book *Preventing Homosexuality* advises parents, among other things, to "correct" their children if they play with opposite-gender toys—for instance, taking away a doll from a boy, telling him it will be given to a little girl who needs it) and discredited Exodus poster boy John Paulk. Paulk was removed from his leadership role in Exodus after being caught by queer journalists cruising for sex in a Washington, D.C., gay bar in 2000. Nicolosi is the leader of the National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality. NARTH was formed in 1992 primarily, according to Besen, to protect the anti-queer "therapists" from attempts by more mainstream mental health organizations to ban "reparative therapy." As the APA Position Statement on Psychiatric Treatment and Sexual Orientation (adopted in 1998) states: "the American Psychiatric Association opposes any psychiatric treatment, such as 'reparative' or 'conversion' therapy, which is based upon the assumption that homosexuality per se is a mental disorder.

Besen says force and coercion have been used to get children as young as three into "Nicolosi's clutches against their will. (The religious right accuses gays of recruiting?) No health expert I spoke with could point to an example of a three-year-old who is unhappy with his or her sexual orientation or, for that matter, a three-year-old who was even *aware* he or she had a sexual orientation." This is, according to Besen, bad science.

Much of the material used by Love Won Out and Exodus comes from NARTH.

The Love Won Out circus came to town last year. The conference was held at Peoples Church. It targeted clergy, parents, teachers, and youth. It's suspected the conference came because of the success of the Gay Straight Alliance Network in forming clubs in local high schools. GSA frightens radical Christians.

Conference presenters touted NARTH's view that "there's an emotional source of homosexuality that occurs at 2 or 3 years of age." One woman who attended the conference claimed to have been shown "the truth" by the church about her lesbian partner. She said the conference helped her realize that she turned to homosexuality because her abusive father had turned her against men.

Fresno State faculty member Judith Scott attended the conference. She said the church auditorium was filled by people "filled with despair over the condition of the homosexual. Biased pieces of scripture and carefully selected pieces of 'research' were presented to the audience as truths, and those in attendance seemed to accept, as delivered, Focus on the Family's rationale for change."

Scott added, "the only positive outcome from a conference like this one is that Focus on the Family finds its financial business booming, while the pockets of the desperate and deprived shrink. The monetary gain by Focus on the Family can only be achieved on the backs of others' vulnerabilities and fears, and if this isn't a good enough reason to go to hell, then no one is going."

A Exodus representative was visibly upset by a sign saying "This Conference Promotes Suicide." He told organizer Baltimore Gonzalez the sign was "phony." Gonzalez, who works around teen suicide locally, disagrees. He says for teens struggling with issues of sexual identity and orientation, hearing all day from conferences like Love Won Out that you are sick, dirty, or need to change, promotes self-hate. Renowned clinical social worker Caitlin Ryan of San Francisco State University agrees. She had harsh words for Exodus and others like them, along the same lines as Gonzalez's comments.

Exodus founders Gary Cooper and Michael Bussee told writer Susan Christian of the *Los Angeles Times* in 1990 that they knew in the early 1980s they were "damaging people." Bussee told Christian he had said to Cooper, "I just pray to God that none of these people we counseled committed suicide because of something that we said."

"Indeed there was good reason to worry that people had been hurt by their efforts," writes Besen. "The two men claim they counseled 'hundreds' of people, many of whom 'became suicidal' or 'actually attempted suicide.' Some of their clients became despondent, while others resorted to self-mutilation when Exodus could not help them."

Cooper and Bussee acknowledged that they were, in fact, still gay and withdrew from Exodus, which they had founded in 1976, in the early 1980s. Exodus still insists the group can turn queers straight. Privately, prominent members of the "ex-gay" movement have admitted recently that their "ex-gays" are actually still queer, just not having gay sex.

KFCF/FFCF Membership Deadline

The Fresno Free College Foundation and KFCF Radio are grateful to all listeners who have become listener-sponsors over the past year. The FFCF and KFCF 88.1 FM derive virtually all their income from the contributions of our members. The Foundation is a membership-governed, public service organization serving Central California. Anyone who has contributed \$25 or more over the past year is considered a member and qualified to participate in Foundation elections and governance.

The FFCF will be holding an election for its Board of Directors in November 2005. In order to participate and vote, people must meet the deadline for membership: August 31, 2005. Membership is open to anyone who has subscribed to KFCF during an on-air pledge drive through KPFA, or made a direct contribution to KFCF or the Foundation. People who have not yet become listener-sponsors have until August 31 to pay their dues in order to vote in the election.

KFCF subscribers who are not certain about their membership status should contact the office. KFCF subscribers whose memberships have lapsed should renew by August 31 so they are kept current. Anyone with a question about the election or membership should get in touch with the office at (559) 233-2221 or kfcf@kfcf.org. To make a contribution or renew a subscription can send the money (\$25 or more) to KFCF, PO Box 4364, Fresno 93744.

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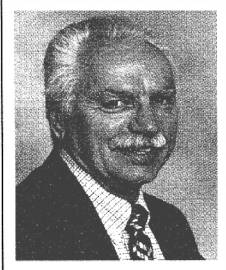




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lar needs (one size does NOT fit all) and that a citizens' oversight committee monitor the expenditures to make sure they conform to the expenditure plan that was presented to the voters.

Finally, of crucial importance to reach agreement from 2/3 of voters, is the requirement that the tax expires after 20 years, just like the present measure, not 30.

As a member of the Coalition for Livable Fresno County Communities, which has worked diligently for more than two years on its proposal, I am pleased that the proposal closely reflects the desires of the population at large. We have emphasized the importance of greatly improved public transit, including facilities for bicycles and pedestrians, road repair and maintenance, considerable local control, and the formation of a citizens' oversight committee.

So, where do you fit in? Where can you express your opinion?

The steering committee will hold public meetings in various parts of the county to obtain public input on the draft expenditure plan. After receiving and considering public comments, the committee will submit a final proposal to the Council of Fresno County Governments (COG). This most likely will happen in October 2005 to allow for all legal requirements to be met for a vote in November 2006.

Public meetings are scheduled for various dates in September. One good source of information, besides various county newspapers, is the COG Web site: www.fresnocog.org.

I trust that readers of the *Community Alliance* are "high propensity voters" who want to stay informed about the issue. Stay tuned. Become informed. Voice your opinion at the meetings. Vote in November 2006.

Werner Lipton, a retired research scientist, has been involved in transportation issues for nearly 20 years.

**Progressive Thursday
"Arsenal of Hypocrisy"**

The space program and the military industrial complex.


**September 15, 2005
6:30-9:30 PM**

Round Table Pizza • 5763 N. First Street • Fresno, CA
(SW corner of First and Bullard)

Doors open 6:30 Video 7:00 Discussion following

Progressive Thursday is hosted by the GROW working group of the Fresno County Green Party. It is a free, wheelchair accessible event open to anyone interested in discussing progressive topics.

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JK: Exactly, it's a major industry, it used to be and an institution that enabled industry to blossom. So now, the expectation is that Wall Street itself will just create wealth spontaneously.

MB: And the underlying reliance on fossil fuels is part of this scenario.

JK: Well, it has created a lot of background energy for us to squander. If it wasn't for really cheap oil than you wouldn't have the home builders of California going out to build another hundred unit subdivision every week and a half. It wouldn't be possible. I describe suburbia as the greatest misallocation of resources in the history of the world. It seems to be producing a lot of wealth at the moment, but I think that they will prove to be tremendous liabilities for us.

MB: You say "the loss of hallucinated wealth will be stupendous and the disruption of accustomed suburban logistics will be a nightmare for all those who are stuck there. Perhaps a greater question is this: Will the collapse of suburbia as a viable mode of living tear the nation apart, both socially and politically?"

That's an interesting question. It seems like many directions you point out in the book could spell potential chaos.

JK: At some point, you have got to think of it this way: There's going to be a huge battle to maintain the unmaintainable and unsustainable elements of suburbia, which are now so completely ingrained in our national identity and our collective beliefs. I think there will be this huge battle to sustain it no matter what reality is telling us. And that's bound to lead us to a lot of political mishaps or political extremists who promise to make the world like it was in 1997 whether its possible or not.

MB: James Kuntstler, we are at a point now where the issues you talk about transcend Republican or Democratic politics. We are so fundamentally addicted, and on that score we did hear George Bush sr. say that the "American lifestyle is not negotiable."

JK: I think about the implications about the end of cheap oil and one conclusion is that this event is going to produce a lot of economic losers in America. There is going to be a new group and it's going to be called the "formerly middle class" and they are going to be very angry and bewildered about the loss of their entitlements.

MB: Our local newspaper actually had an article in it about three weeks ago talking about how we have to get away from dependence on fossil fuel. It said that in Norway gas is \$6.75 per gallon, and apparently they had laid aside a bunch of reserves I believe it was over a hundred billion and I think they are involved with the North Sea reserves along with England which is

past peak.

JK: And the Norwegians probably realize that it is and it's a one-time endowment of energy and they are not just going to be sold off cheap. There are other things going on with the European countries. They did not permit their cities to be destroyed. They did not permit their public transportation to be destroyed.

MB: There used to be a trolley public trolley car in Fresno.

JK: And you probably had a pretty decent downtown in 1911 too. And after World War II all those things were destroyed. We made a choice in this country; we decided to build a drive in utopia as a present to ourselves for winning World War II. And it was a project that can be described as the greatest misallocation of resources in the history of the world and we ended up building a way of life that literally has no future.

MB: I agree and you make the point very unarguably here, but in your other books do they cover some of this.

JK: Well, I got into this whole issue and started discussing the short comings of suburban development plans. It seemed to me that suburbia was a tremendous social spiritual and ecological problem for America and this was quite a bit before I decided that I clued into the fact that we are in a global energy crisis, so my earlier discussion of suburbia showed it had tremendous shortcomings which are being confounded by the energy predicament.

MB: The immediate political situation focusing on this oil problem in this recent Economist they were talking about major problems for these major oil companies. Last year Shell fouled up its annual prediction of their own reserves and that got into the public eye. This prediction of reserves the current unstable nature of a country like Saudia Arabia and all of these different factors. Its seems like the first blowup is going to come somewhere in the Middle East

JK: We're having a war over there now (well at least we're occupying an unfriendly country) there are a number of topics that we've discussed here and one of them is the issue of how much oil remains. The public companies like Exxon Mobil and Shell, some of then did tend to greatly exaggerate their reserves for keeping their share price higher, with the nationalized OPEC countries like Saudi Arabia you get a different situation. The public cannot see what their figures are. We have to depend on what they say. The current production is in some cases being maxxed out that's the apparent situation, The Saudis said that they were able to increase their production, But now, all OPEC members have the tendency to lie about their reserves. On the basis of having higher reserves if you have more stuff in the ground and you are allowed to pump more

stuff.

The operant behavior in Saudi Arabia all these years is that they have been challenged to produce large amounts of oil and they have been able to do it. And now, there's suspicion that have maxxed out their reserves. Or damaged their oil fields by pumping so much sea water into them to keep their pressure up, which is new technology that seems to have a law of diminishing returns.

MB: In that regard, are we seeing the slide turn into the plunge with production here?

JK: Well, in the summer last year oil prices have been remarkably volatile, were just approaching the Memorial Day, commencement of the driving season. My guess is that you'll see a ratcheting type of thing; it will go up three clicks it will fall down two clicks, etc. etc. Sooner or later these pressures are really gong to thunder through out the American economy, the difference being that what was a temporary oil crisis this will be a permanent one.

JK: We are liable to be living in a very turbulent period. People owe it to themselves to understand there are going to be a lot of jobs that are going to disappear forever. There is going to be real trouble. The Southwest will have problems with water and food production as well. Las Vegas will not be the city of the future. Las Vegas is the poster child for all the disorder and negative results for living in an energy economy. And as I say the happiness in Las Vegas will go way down.

MB: One part that interested me. I'm a farmer, and the return to farming you describe is essentially the return to hand hoeing, which is something we've taken desperate flight from here.

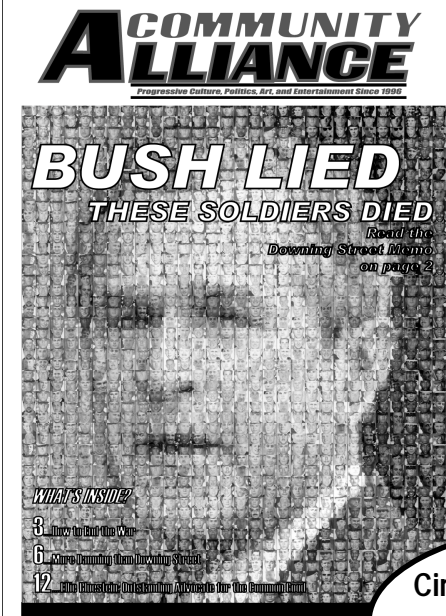
JK: So you know the fossil fuel input that our industrial model for agriculture is based on. That is going to change. Were gong to have to grow a lot more food near to where we live more.

MB: Thank you for being on the air with us.

Interviewer's note: If you are considering quitting drinking, you might want to post- pone it till after you read the "Long Emergency". In the future, even a stiff drink will be hard to come by.

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Michael Beevers, PhD does radio interviews on KFCF and works in agricultural research.



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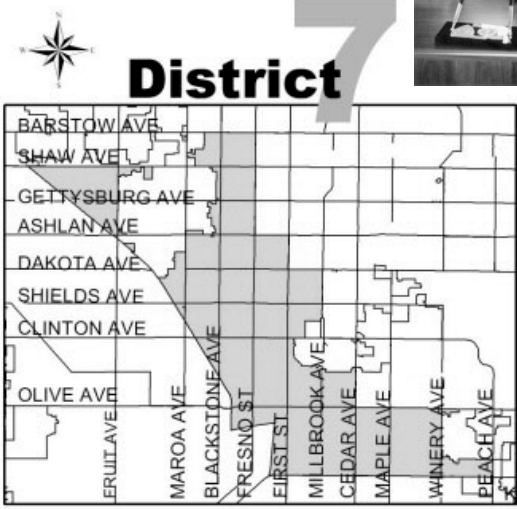
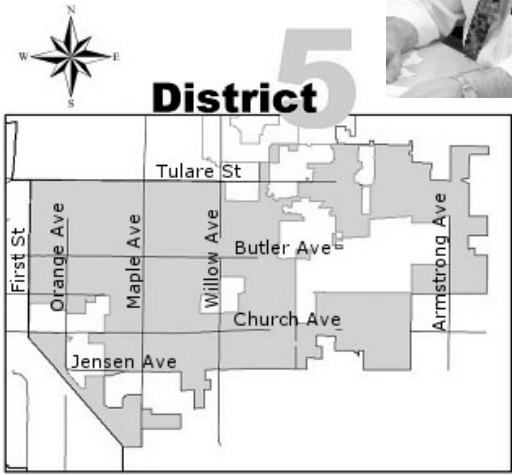
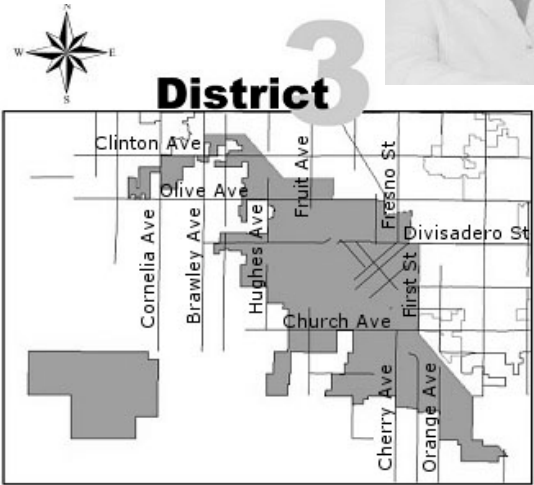
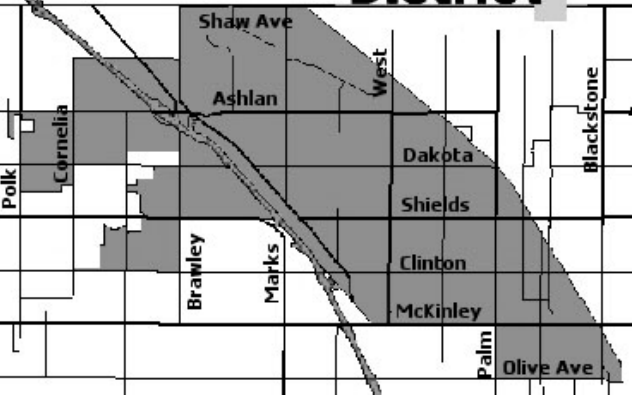
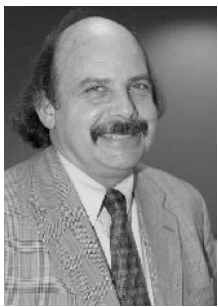
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City Council continued from page 3

run a viable campaign in a Fresno City Council race and the donations made to these campaigns are viewed as “investments.”

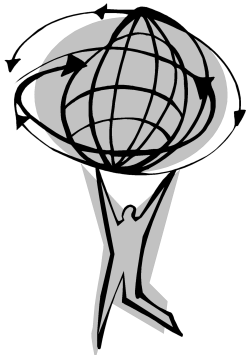
A few years ago, Operation Rezone revealed that Fresno City Council members were taking bribes from builders and developers for voting to rezone land in North Fresno. One city council member received a set of tires for his car for a favorable vote. Another council member got a cheap suit. One former city council member told me that the developers were so bold that one came in and handed him several hundred dollar bills in an envelope. This council member took the money out of the envelope, called his staff into his office, and counted the money. He said that the developer had just given him the money and he was returning it. Needless to say, that particular council member was not re-elected because his opponent, supported by the developers and builders, got all future campaign contributions.

Does the progressive community in Fresno have a plan to win political power in the 2006 city council elections? While there are some encouraging signs of movement in that direction, there is no visible strategy at this point. Individual candidates with progressive credentials are planning on running. A new progressive PAC is raising money and talking about a Get Out the Vote campaign, and an alliance of progressive groups who work on electoral campaigns is now meeting regularly to build the unity needed to develop a successful strategy.

If you are interested in working on Fresno City Council elections and developing a strategy that will lead to the progressive community winning political power, go to <www.cvppac.org> and get involved.

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Taking a Swing At “Three Strikes”

By *Boston Woodard*

One has to live inside a prison to actually understand that the “Three Strikes” law, AB971 (1994), has become an expensive embarrassment for the taxpayers of California.

Ten years after the fact, Three Strikes has been nothing more than a costly mistake, resulting in debt and confusion for this state. Three Strikes resulted in nothing more than a “definite maybe” regarding stopping or slowing down violent or serious crimes in this state. The law was heedlessly passed to appease a hysterical public outcry whipped into a frenzy by the news media.

To date, there is no evidence that the passage of the Three Strikes law resulted in reduced violence. In fact, the research predicted that it would not significantly reduce violent crime.

Ten years after passing the law, it still is not working, and Californians are beginning to feel even more cynical about the politicians’ inability to deal with crime.

The public must be made aware of the depletion of very important rehabilitation groups and programs behind prison walls. In the past, these rehabilitative measures resulted in prisoners who, after release from prison, never returned. These thousands of successful paroles were a direct result of programs that give a prisoner the opportunity to change. Without these programs, there will be little if any positive change in prisoners.

The fallout from the Three Strikes law has been the direct cause of the elimination of the only proven key to positive change behind prison walls.

California taxpayers have become the victims of a political system gone even more criminal. It’s criminal that politicians who are in cahoots with organizations such as the California Correctional Peace Officer’s Association (CCPOA) and other ultra-right-wing groups, have spent millions of taxpayer dollars ensuring their own futures at the expense of millions of unsuspecting, uninformed Californians.

The voters of California were duped by the politicians and special interest groups ten years ago, who set us on a course transforming California prisons into breeding grounds for the most violent atmosphere inside these prison walls. California cannot and will not ever build itself out of a “crime problem.”

The Three Strikes law is known popularly for its focus on third-time felons, but almost anyone arrested for a violent or serious felony, even a first offense, is feeling its effect. In general, the law counts earlier offenses as strikes that will add years to the length of sentences for subsequent convictions. It also requires felons to serve a longer portion of their prison sentences: a minimum of 80 percent of their sentence.

The public, motivated by fear and anger, was manipulated a decade ago by the politicians who feed on such emotions. The Three Strikes law was a shot in the dark that never came close to hitting its target. Do you think that former governors Pete Wilson and Gray Davis would now admit that their earlier vision of “preventative government” was but a pipe dream? I doubt it. Maybe criminal behavior cannot be prevented, only punished. Any attempt to understand whatever it is that creates gang-bangers and child molesters and bank robbers is just wasted time. Would it help to invest \$20 billion in schools or jobs programs or beat cops? Or how about prison rehabilitation programs, instead of new prisons and ridiculously harsh sentences for nonserious and/or victimless crimes?

Today, the state Department of Corrections is like the *Titanic*, with its stern sticking out of the ocean and with laws like Three Strikes pulling it down.

The Three Strikes law now on the books requires serious reevaluation and change. A good reason for dismantling and modifying one of the costliest mistakes made in recent years in this state has to do with common sense and logic: *Three Strikes simply has not worked.*

This law is inequitable and costly: a nonviolent crime or a non-serious felony can trigger a 25-to-life sentence. Stealing a bicycle, some video tapes, or a slice of pizza are not life-sentence crimes . . . no matter what kind of spin proponents of Three Strikes put on it. There are thousands of prisoners behind the walls, walking around aimlessly, who may possibly spend the rest of their lives there for committing a relatively minor crime. Many of these prisoners are merely teenagers who should have been committed to a youth facility for the groups and counseling they will never get in prison.

Fresno businessman Mike Reynolds, one of the sponsors of the Three Strikes initiative, was hell-bent on revenge after his daughter was shot during an attempted robbery, and rightly so. His many attempts to have Three Strikes voted into law never came to fruition until several years later when Polly Klaus was murdered. It was then that Mr. Reynolds rode that wave of public frenzy to insure that Three Strikes was voted into law.

When Three Strikes was voted into law, there were dozens of laws already on the books that would have sent anyone who committed a murder to prison for life if convicted. But during the Three Strikes campaign, the public was misled into believing that this initiative was the only way to go. This was premeditated duping of the highest order—and it went exactly as planned.

The legislature is seeking to amend the Three Strikes law. The Three Strikes initiatives specified that their provisions could be amended by a two-thirds vote of each house of the legislature. State Assemblyman Leno has submitted a bill, AB50, that would remedy much of what Proposition 66 would have cured had it not been bowled over by Governor Schwarzenegger and former Governor Jerry Brown. AB50 has a good shot at passing.

Assemblyman Leno’s bill would prevent a defendant with two prior serious or violent felony convictions, whose current offense is neither a serious nor a violent felony as defined, from receiving a Third Strike sentence of 25 years to life unless the current offense is a specified controlled substance offense, a felony sex offense, as specified, or possession of a firearm or other deadly weapon.

If passed, AB50 would also permit a defendant who meets specific criteria, and who was previously sentenced to at least 25 years to life, to make a motion for resentencing in accordance with the law.

The measure will first go to the Assembly Public Safety and Appropriations Committee, whose early voting will indicate its chances of success. The Governor’s office will then take a stance on the issue.

One must keep in mind the tens of millions of dollars being shoveled into the white-hot Three Strikes furnace. Keeping the coffers of special interest groups like the CCPOA fat—groups who continually moan and groan for more money from the taxpayers—is criminal. This is the same group that oversees a prison system on the verge of being taken over by the Federal Government. and who are under investigation by the same.

Parental Notification Puts Pregnant Teens at Risk: VOTE NO ON PROP 73

By *Michelle Colvin*

The November 8 special election brings with it a potentially deadly ballot measure that threatens the privacy and safety of young women in California. The Parental Notification Initiative, otherwise called “A Parent’s Right to Know,” is a proposition that seeks to amend the California Constitution, forcing desperate pregnant teens to notify their parents before they are allowed to obtain their constitutionally given rights to seek abortion services. It would also mandate a 48-hour waiting period before the abortion can be performed, even after the parents of the young woman have been notified. Further, it would criminalize young women who misrepresent their age in order to obtain an abortion.

Proponents of this initiative say that parental notification and consent laws “help foster family unity” by encouraging “greater communication between parents and their daughters.” Evidence from other states with similar laws indicates that this couldn’t be further from the truth. Research has shown that 50 percent of teenage girls who get abortions already seek counsel from their parents. However, the other half aren’t going to tell their parents anything, whether or not this draconian stricture is in place.

Do we really want a constitutional amendment that will tell a 16-year-old girl who was raped by her father that she has to tell him before she has an abortion? Do we honestly think it’s in a girl’s best interest to tell the mother who has been beating her unconscious since she was five that she’s pregnant and needs an abortion?

Young women who do not feel that they can tell their parents have very good reasons not to. They are afraid of the disapproval, rejection, and often abusive situations that they will encounter should they do so. This law is not only irresponsible and unsafe: it’s criminal. So criminal in fact that the California State Supreme Court over-

turned a similar law on the books in 1997 as unconstitutional, a violation of the right to privacy, and a threat to safety.

For that 50 percent who will avoid informing their parents no matter what the consequences, the only other legal option is a “judicial bypass.” Obtaining a judicial bypass is a daunting, unrealistic and humiliating process for young women, who during the process must share the most intimate details of their personal lives with dozens of strangers. The young woman is then forced to prove that she is mature enough to decide the fate of her own body. If it is decided by this judge (most often a white male, which definitely brings in race and gender issues) that she is not competent enough to make decisions for herself, her request is denied, and her only option (or rather, her option in other states) would be to appeal. However, because this ballot measure would be an amendment to the California Constitution, there is no appeal process on the state level. Just the time involved in getting this bypass can also endanger the lives of the women, as delays from days to sometimes weeks can push a woman into the second trimester of her pregnancy, where abortions become more dangerous to her health.

The chances of even getting a judicial bypass depend on the judge and the district. A young woman’s chances of being confronted by an anti-choice judge are great, and the humiliation of being denied her petition can be overwhelming.

Of course there are the girls who are so desperate to end their pregnancies that they will go to any lengths they can find to do it. This means back-alley and self-induced abortions, which can in many cases leave a woman incapable of bearing any future children, and which also have the potential to kill them. Botched abortions kill a woman every three minutes in countries around the world where abortions are illegal. In most countries where abortions are illegal, at least 50% of the beds in hospital wards are filled with women who either seek deadly back-alley methods or have taken crochet hooks, knitting needles, and coat hangers to their uteruses to end their pregnancies.

We’d like to think this can’t happen again in our country. We’d like to think that it was just a dark spot on our history, but it isn’t fully in our past: It is still in our present, and it will most likely be in our futures if we don’t stop legislative attempts to control women’s personal decisions. Parental notification initiatives are the first step to overturning Roe v. Wade. With the retirement of Sandra Day O’Connor from the Supreme Court, and the nomination of another pro-life Bush judge on the horizon, the threat of losing our constitutional right to safe and legal abortion is barreling towards us like a bullet train. This is not something we can wait for someone else to take care of, and it is our responsibility to stop it now.

Not one progressive organization in California supports this initiative. In fact, it is opposed by groups like Planned Parenthood, NARAL Pro-Choice California, the ACLU, the American Medical Association, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, and many more. The three major donors behind this initiative are hard-core conservative, big-business Catholics who spent more than \$1.5 million to get this measure on the ballot. Some say that they’re looking for a total annihilation of Roe v. Wade; what they’ve drafted is first step toward that goal, using language that is palatable to most of the public. For more information on these donors, visit <www.ppaction.org>.

Please join with me, the Feminist Majority Foundation, and Planned Parenthood to strike down Proposition 73 before it becomes part of the California Constitution. We need signatures, bodies, ideas, and donations so that we can spearhead a campaign on the CSUF campus to get the word out about the dangers of this proposition. We can stop this and keep California, the nation’s most pro-choice state, from being flattened under the steamroller of religious fundamentalism and right-wing-dictated morality. Of course healthy and open communication in the family is the best possible scenario. But many families fall short of this ideal, and this truth must be acknowledged. The government cannot legislate communication, nor should we let them get anywhere close to trying. The basic truth is this: women, no matter their age, will get abortions if they need them. They will seek them out and have them performed regardless of the risk. There is no law that can regulate or mitigate a women’s desperation when she is carrying a pregnancy that she doesn’t want or feels she cannot have.

If you can help, or would like to start a campaign on your own campus, please contact Michelle Colvin at mveritycolvin@sbcglobal.net or (559) 804-1660. All information obtained from the Feminist Majority Foundation <www.feministmajority.org> and Planned Parenthood <www.ppaction.org>. To view the initiative for yourself, you can see the pdf version at <www.parentalnotification.org>.

THOUGHTS ON THE MIDDLE EAST

*By Barbara Rhine, Congregant
Kehilla Community Synagogue (First synagogue in the United States to endorse a “Two-State Solution”)*

As an American, since I came to adulthood I have been upset about my country’s foreign policy, which relies on continuous war to “secure the peace.” In Vietnam Americans killed millions of people and poisoned the countryside with Agent Orange, still causing birth defects today. We’ve aided vicious violent right-wing dictatorial forces in Guatemala, El Salvador, Haiti, Chili, Iraq (yes, because we supported Saddam Hussein when he was fighting the Iranians), Iran (yes, because we supported the Shah against more progressive forces before the Ayatollah came to power)—the list goes on and on.

I am proud of my country’s professed values, and even prouder of the times we actually live up to them. I have never considered myself anything other than American, but I insist on my right—nay, my obligation—to speak out against the damage America does to forces of peace and generosity (AKA sharing the wealth, at least a little bit) throughout the world.

Similarly as a Jew, I simply cannot ignore the policies that the Israeli government has used and continues to rely upon to suppress the Palestinians. These include initial forced evictions from their lands, foreign occupation (Lebanon), collusion in massacre of refugees (Lebanon), targeted assassinations of leaders, reprisal demolitions of homes, a system of checkpoints that trammels all free movement of Palestinian citizenry, confinement in ever-smaller, noncontiguous pieces of territory as the (illegal) settlements proliferate under both Labor and Likud governments—again, the list goes on and on.

I consider these measures to be both immoral and, in the long run, ineffective, in that they strengthen, rather than weaken, the will of the people to resist. I don’t see any slackening of Palestinian determination to fight as a result of all this intimidation. Even more important, I simply do not believe the world will get to be a better place for Jews or anyone else by use of these techniques.

I can barely make a place in my hierarchy of values for war itself, but the state of Israel was fashioned out of the remnants of a vibrant Jewish culture throughout Europe that was virtually destroyed by the Nazis, so personally, I justify it is a form of self-defense, conducted by refugees for their own survival in a largely indifferent world. As such, I support the “right of Israel to exist,” though I am personally uncomfortable with the fact of Israel as a theocracy, particularly when it rewards fundamentalist settlers.

All right. So be it. Israel exists. Now it is time to work on living with the other Semitic inhabitants of those lands, and fashioning peace. There is no excuse for not engaging in ongoing peace talks. Even if one must wage war for self-defense, where is it written that peace is found by refusing to negotiate with the enemy? Why is there an automatic equation of negotiation with appeasement? Wasn’t it good that lines stayed open between Mandela and De Klerk, and that civil war was averted? Wouldn’t it have been better if European Jews had been able to negotiate *from a position of military strength* with the Nazis, even? Is there really any rational reason to believe right now that Israel, propped up by its ongoing stream of American military aid, is not in a position of strength? (And by the way, while we’re at it, what exactly is wrong with those Geneva Accords, negotiated between Israelis and Palestinians with the help of interested neutrals, outside the governmental forum?)

Too many question marks. Too much suffering. This is a war that has gone on way too long. I want nothing I say here to be taken to justify suicide bombings or other right-wing fundamentalist nihilistic military measures. My biggest fear, in fact, is that religious fundamentalists of all stripes are going to keep this world headed ever more blindly into ongoing and spreading war, in the name of mythic beliefs. I can name three that particularly scare me:

1. 73 virgins in heaven for those martyrs who wage jihad;
2. Heaven for all good Christians once the Jews retake Jerusalem, a necessary pre-condition for the Rapture, the basis for right-wing Christian support of Israel; and
3. Judea and Samaria (defined to include the whole City of Jerusalem, huge swaths of the West Bank, the best land and most of the water) as G-d’s gift to the “Chosen People.”

This three-sided tilt toward religious war in a world armed with nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction is the biggest risk to the lives of my children and grandchildren. Furthermore, it is an extremely dangerous distraction from the fundamental task of our time, which is to figure out how to make this planet, with its finite resources, serve expanding humanity in a sustainable fashion. Let Jewish ingenuity be put to this task, rather than to the work of more destruction, so that we and our children, and all children, and the children’s children, may live.



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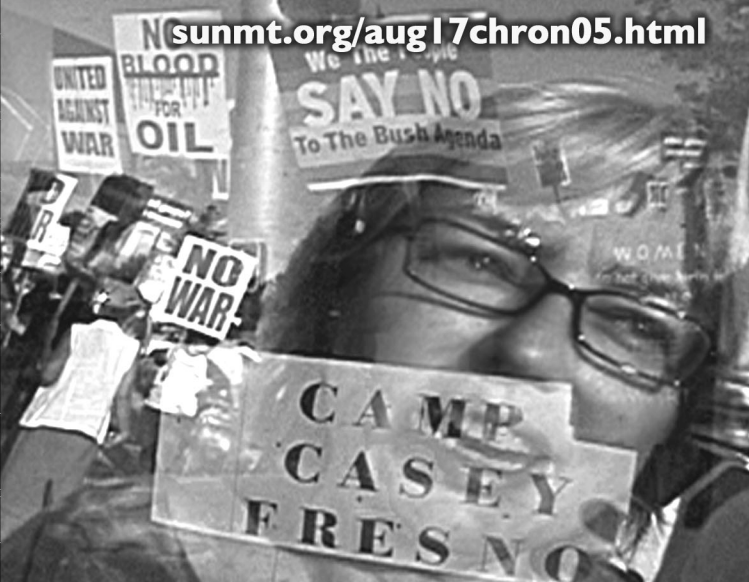
Military Money for College: Mainly a fantasy

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At Livermore Robin focuses us toward our new world

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We speak for all Maribels abused by cops

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The London bombing further underscores the bankruptcy of Bush’s anti-terrorism strategy. This attack shows that far from being pinned down in Iraq by the US military, al-Qaeda, or groups affiliated with it, are still quite capable of mounting deadly terrorist strikes against American allies. Indeed, a recent CIA report notes that the ongoing conflict in Iraq has provided al-Qaeda supporters with invaluable experience in urban combat and terrorism, skills some of them will certainly be able to deploy in future terrorist attacks against the United States.

President Bush’s good-versus-evil approach to dealing with global terrorism thus condemns the United States and its allies to an unending war against al-Qaeda. A purely military victory in this struggle will remain elusive, and further terrorist strikes on American soil, possibly involving weapons of mass destruction, are inevitable. The next 9/11-type attack is also certain to bring about further government curtailment of Americans’ civil liberties and other democratic freedoms. Democratic freedoms in America are threatened not just by al-Qaeda terrorists, but also by President Bush’s one-sided, simplistic Manichaeian understanding of what motivates these terrorists.

W. Daniel Garst holds a Ph.D. in political science from the University of Minnesota. His published work has appeared in Comparative Political Studies, Theory and Society, and The International Studies Quarterly. He has taught at Fresno State, UCLA, Cornell, and the University of Michigan. He is presently living in China to teach English and see firsthand the country The Economist magazine says is running the world economy.

ily. Our community has no political, religious, or ideological orientation. The only philosophical expectations are agreement with the principles of cohousing and with our vision and values statement. As in any healthy community, people will be tolerant and respectful toward others. Members value privacy as well as social contact, and our neighborhood design reflects a respect for each other’s needs for privacy.

Our re-introductory presentation will take place on Thursday, September 22, at 7:00 PM, at Alliant International University, 5130 East Clinton Way, across the street from Fresno Yosemite International Airport. Admission is free, and childcare will be available. For driving directions or for more information, contact Larry Bassman at 244-0562 or lbassman@pacbell.net. For more information on this cohousing community, visit www.querencia.org.

Help Prevent Future Casey Sheehans: Counter-Recruit!

By Lisa Solomon & Ken Hudson

Cindy Sheehan finished her first week encamped outside Bush’s ranch as of this writing, trying to get him to explain the “noble cause” he refers to regarding the Iraq war. There have been more than 1800 military deaths in Iraq, including the death of Sheehan’s son, Casey. Locally the Central Valley Counter-Recruitment Coalition is in place to help prevent future Casey Sheehans. It is geared up to provide an alternative to military recruiters. On July 26, it countered the recruiters at Fresno City College, with members passing out flyers in front of the recruiters’ Humvee warning students, “Don’t buy the hype!” Several members covered the day in shifts and reported a total of only seven students stopping at the recruiters’ table. In fact, the recruiters gave up two hours early. Counter-recruitment events at local high schools are planned for opening week. Contact Dan Yaseen at (559) 432-3445 or danyaseen@sbcglobal.net.

Opt-Out March: “Military Recruiters, Leave My Child Alone!” Saturday, September 10, 11:00 AM-12:00 noon, from the Fresno Unified School District office at Tulare & M to the military recruitment office at 2020 Tulare Street at Van Ness (less than a mile). This is a media event to publicize the right to OPT OUT of having the schools release student address and telephone information to military recruiters. Demilitarize our schools! Protect your privacy from military recruiters; march on September 10! For more information: contact Vincent Lavery at (559) 455-0821 or vjlavery@yahoo.com. Download a flyer in Spanish and English from www.peacefresno.org. People in other school districts are encouraged to hold a media event on that day (or near the date). To let us know what you plan to do, or if you would like help, contact Vincent.



Eddie Contreras counter-recruiting at Fresno City College.
photos by Ken Hudson

Ken Hudson teaches seventh and eighth grades at Orange Center Elementary School. He can be reached at kenhudson@sbcglobal.net.

FUSD Update—Release of Information Delayed until January 2006: Peace Fresno and the Central Valley Counter-Recruitment Coalition submitted their Opt-Out Policy Proposal (see *Community Alliance*, Aug. 2005) on July 28, 2005, to the FUSD board office for placement on the school board agenda. The main points of the proposal call for ending the release of information on students younger than juniors in high school and also to honor opt-out requests from students themselves. FUSD administrator Robert Pankrantz responded on August 9, saying that the board had “kicked it back to administration.” When Peace Fresno members met with him the next day, he agreed that a request for a delay of the release of the student list until January 2006 was reasonable. It had been scheduled to be released October 1, 2005. The delay was deemed necessary due to the validity of the points of our proposal and the time it would take to implement them. However, bureaucratic procedures and snafus have delayed further action and placement on the agenda as of this writing (August 15). To encourage school board members to support the Opt-Out Policy Proposal, contact them at (559) 457-3727 or schoolboard@fresno.k12.ca.us. We hope to have the full proposal available at www.peacefresno.org soon.

As was noted in last month’s article, Peace Fresno is not the only group involved in making people aware of the opt-out option, nor is FUSD the only target. In New Mexico, the ACLU sued the Albuquerque Public School District in May 2005, charging that it was not adequately informing parents of the opt-out provision. An increasing number of parents, students, and community activists are noticing that the military recruiters are, in the words of Representative Jim McDermott (D-Wash.), “not going to all the schools. They’re going to the schools where they figure the kids will have less chance to go to college.” Unfortunately, this fact applies to many schools in FUSD and other parts of the Central Valley.

National Mobilization to Stop the War on Iraq and Bring the Troops Home Now, Saturday, September 24, in Fresno, 10:00 AM-noon. March from Shaw & First to the Peace Corner at Shaw & Blackstone. This local event, sponsored by Peace Fresno, is in solidarity with events in Washington, D.C., San Francisco, Los Angeles, and elsewhere. Call Peace Fresno at (559) 487-2515.

Clip and turn in to school office or mail to school administration:

OPT-OUT FORM

To: Administrator at _____ School District

Re: Release of student directory information

I do not want this student’s directory information released to **military recruiters**.

Student name (print): _____

School: _____ District: _____

Student I.D. number or Date of Birth: _____

Parent/guardian signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed name of person signing: _____



A Call to All Central Valley Activists: VOTE NO ON PROP 73

By Michelle Colvin

The November 8 special election brings with it a potentially deadly ballot measure that threatens the privacy and safety of young women in California. The Parental Notification Initiative, otherwise called “A Parent’s Right to Know,” is a proposition that seeks to amend the California Constitution, forcing desperate pregnant teens to notify their parents before they are allowed to obtain their constitutionally given rights to seek abortion services. It would also mandate a 48-hour waiting period before the abortion can be performed, even after the parents of the young woman have been notified. Further, it would criminalize young women who misrepresent their age in order to obtain an abortion.

Proponents of this initiative say that parental notification and consent laws “help foster family unity” by encouraging “greater communication between parents and their daughters.” Evidence from other states with similar laws indicates that this couldn’t be further from the truth. Research has shown that 50 percent of teenage girls who get abortions already seek counsel from their parents. However, the other half aren’t going to tell their parents anything, whether or not this draconian stricture is in place.

I am the mother of a five-year-old girl. We have a wonderful relationship that is full of conscious dialog and thoughtful communication. My hope is that we are able to maintain this level of trust throughout our entire relationship. The reality is, however, that there will come a time when I don’t know every aspect of my daughter’s life as I do now. She will keep secrets from me that I will probably never know of. The thought of her being in a position where she felt that she might have to hide a pregnancy incites tremendous fear in me. I would like to think that she’ll be able to tell me anything, but I also realize that I don’t have the luxury of being that naive. My desire to know that my daughter will be safe, and will be able to access health care that will keep her that way, is more important than my need to know whatever it is she might eventually do in my absence.

Young women who do not feel that they can tell their parents have very good reasons not to. They are afraid of the disapproval, rejection, and often abusive situations that they will encounter should they do so. This law is not only irresponsible and unsafe: the California State Supreme Court overturned a similar law on the books in 1997 as unconstitutional, a violation of the right to privacy, and a threat to safety.

Planned Parenthood Clinic Under Attack in Merced

By Amy Cobb

Driving along Highway 99, one is confronted with symbols of various local political stances. Gracing the fields adjacent to the long stretch of road, signs reject Los Angeles’s claims to water from the north; demand an end to US involvement in the United Nations; and shout loud and clear that “pro-life” is the way to be. While newcomers may be surprised and wonder how this part of California became so decidedly right-wing, those of us who claim this stretch as our home can say that’s just how it is here in the Valley. But is it more than billboards now? Are the statements made along Hwy 99 becoming the norm?

In Merced, a highly vocal, extremely anti-choice group opposes the building of a new Planned Parenthood clinic in that city. The new clinic proposed will be twice the size of the old one and is necessary to provide services to the more than 1400 patients seen there each month. With UC Merced opening this fall, the clinic should see even greater numbers. The existing Planned Parenthood facility in Merced simply cannot handle that many people.

But the supporters of Planned Parenthood are now dealing with some serious static from right-wing extremists trying their hardest to see that the clinic’s progress is halted and that their beliefs are imposed upon the rest of the community. Over the last several weeks of city council meetings, this group has made itself known by attending en masse, wearing anti-Planned Parenthood stickers on their chests, and making its views known from the speaker’s podium. It would be difficult to count how many times Planned Parenthood was actually called “evil” during the last city council meeting by citizens speaking at the podium.

For that 50 percent who will avoid informing their parents no matter what the consequences, the only other legal option is a “judicial bypass.” Obtaining a judicial bypass is a daunting, unrealistic, and humiliating process for young women, who during the process must share the most intimate details of their personal lives with dozens of strangers. The young woman is then forced to prove that she is mature enough to decide the fate of her own body. If it is decided by this judge (most often a white male, which definitely brings in race and gender issues) that she is not competent enough to make decisions for herself, her request is denied, and her only option (or rather, her option in other states) would be to appeal. However, because this ballot measure would be an amendment to the California Constitution, there is no appeal process on the state level. Just the time involved in getting this bypass can also endanger the lives of the young women, as delays from days to sometimes weeks can push a woman into the second trimester of her pregnancy, where abortions become more dangerous to her health.

The chances of even getting a judicial bypass depend on the judge and the district. A young woman’s chances of being confronted by an anti-choice judge are great, and the humiliation of being denied her petition can be overwhelming.

Of course there are the girls who are so desperate to end their pregnancies that they will go to any lengths they can find to do it. This means back-alley and self-induced abortions, which can in many cases leave a woman incapable of bearing any future children, and which also have the potential to kill them. Botched abortions kill a woman every three minutes in countries around the world where abortions are illegal. In most countries where abortions are illegal, according to the documentary, *Abortion Denied*, a film distributed by the Feminist Majority Foundation, at least 50% of the beds in hospital wards are filled with women who either seek deadly back-alley methods or have taken crochet hooks, knitting needles, and coat hangers to their uteruses to end their pregnancies.

We’d like to think this can’t happen again in our country. We’d like to think that it was just a dark spot on our history, but it isn’t fully in our past: It is still in our present, and it will most likely be in our futures if we don’t stop legislative attempts to control women’s personal decisions. Parental notification initiatives are the first step to overturning Roe v. Wade. With the retirement of Sandra Day O’Connor from the Supreme Court, and the nomination of another anti-choice Bush judge



If it were just as ridiculous as that, it wouldn’t be something that Planned Parenthood would bat an eye about. But it doesn’t stop there. At one city council meeting, the daughter of a Planned Parenthood employee was approached by a man unknown to her and asked if she was having sex. Later that week, a threatening fax was sent to the employees of the Merced clinic telling them that Planned Parenthood was not wanted in Merced. A woman told a television reporter that their group was willing to do anything to stop Planned Parenthood from building. A couple of teenage boys in the lobby of the city hall joked about bombing the clinic and getting rid of it. Their parents did not reprimand them. In fact, their jokes didn’t seem to faze the parents at all.

At the August 1, 2005, meeting, a 15-year-old boy spoke as a member of Generation Joshua, a conservative youth organization committed to promoting Christian conservative ideologies in politics, saying, “We have concluded that Planned Parenthood is unhealthy and morally detrimental to the community.” The moral detriment he speaks of is the so-called encouragement of teens to have sex that emanates from Planned Parenthood. Though many patients and employees of Planned Parenthood have spoken to the contrary, those opposing the clinic are convinced that having a Planned Parenthood in the community encourages teens to seek services that they would not otherwise seek. This group continues to ignore the testimony of patients, endorse-

on the horizon, the threat of losing our constitutional right to safe and legal abortion is barreling toward us like a bullet train. This is not something we can wait for someone else to take care of, and it is our responsibility to stop it now.

Not one progressive organization in California supports this initiative. In fact, it is opposed by groups like Planned Parenthood, NARAL Pro-Choice California, the ACLU, the American Medical Association, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, and many more. The three major donors behind this initiative are hardcore conservative, big-business Catholics who spent more than \$1.5 million to get this measure on the ballot. Some say that they’re looking for a total annihilation of Roe v. Wade; what they’ve drafted is first step toward that goal, using language that is palatable to most of the public. For more information on these donors, visit <www.ppaction.org>.

This article is an emergency call out to all young women in the Central Valley to help strike down Proposition 73 before it becomes part of the California Constitution. We need signatures, bodies, ideas, and donations so that we can spearhead a campaign on the CSUF campus to get the word out about the dangers of this proposition. We can stop this and keep California, the nation’s most pro-choice state, from being flattened under the steamroller of religious fundamentalism and right-wing-dictated morality.

Of course healthy and open communication in the family is the best possible scenario. But many families fall short of this ideal, and this truth must be acknowledged. The government cannot legislate communication, nor should we let them get anywhere close to trying. The basic truth is this: women, no matter their age, will get abortions if they need them. They will seek them out and have them performed regardless of the risk. There is no law that can regulate or mitigate a women’s desperation when she is carrying a pregnancy that she doesn’t want or feels she cannot have.

If you can help, or would like to start a campaign on your own campus, please contact Michelle Colvin at mveritycolvin@sbcglobal.net or (559) 804-1660. All information was obtained from the Feminist Majority Foundation <www.feministmajority.org> and Planned Parenthood <www.ppaction.org>. To view the initiative for yourself, you can see the pdf version at <www.parentalnotification.org>.

ments from doctors, ministers, and parents, and the descriptions of all of the great programs that Planned Parenthood offers in addition to family planning.

The point emphasized repeatedly by the anti-choice group is that the proposed new Planned Parenthood clinic will be built close to a high school. Some people find this unsuitable and claim that Planned Parenthood purposely chose the site to corrupt the youth. This couldn’t be further from the truth. The site that Planned Parenthood eventually purchased next to the high school was low on a list of possibilities. Many of the sites under consideration turned out to be too expensive, lacking access to mass transportation, or not centrally located. Yes, it is near the high school, but the way that the anti-Planned Parenthood group describes the location, one might think that the entrances butt up to each other and students could take two steps out of their high school and be in the clinic. This is a gross exaggeration. The proposed clinic will actually sit in a cluster of other medical and office buildings against the back fence of the schoolyard, facing in the opposite direction.

At the city council meeting on August 1, 2005,, Cathy Bright, the services director at the Merced Planned Parenthood, noted that this isn’t about location at all as the group has been spouting. Rather she asserted it is about wanting Planned Parenthood out of town altogether. This was met with applause from the opposition group to confirm that, yes, they want Planned Parenthood out of town, and no, it’s not about location. The group didn’t realize that they had just proved Bright’s point. One thing continues to be true of extremist groups like these: nobody has to point them out to be extremists. They tend to prove it themselves. Planned Parenthood’s strategy from this point on? Continue to behave with dignity, intelligence, and concern for the community and let the extremists dig their own hole.



