

BCA Dispatch

Newsletter of the

Boston-Cambridge Alliance for Democracy

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2004

Genuine democracy is about power working its way up through institutions in which people have a real say at every level, and in which many little conversations cumulatively build control over local decisions. It involves a sharing of power, direct democracy and a proportional electoral system – both locally and nationally. Debates and differences ought to translate into power, not evaporate in endless consultations.

—Hilary Wainwright, formerly Greater London Council

ALLIANCE NEWS (Continued on page 8)

Chapter Calendar

** Localization, not Corporatization **

Boston-Cambridge Alliance for Democracy will meet on **Wednesday, January 21, from 7:00 to 9:15 p.m. at Cambridge Friends Meeting, 5 Longfellow Park (9-minute walk from Harvard Square T station, west on Brattle St.)**

— Agenda —

* Faced with a corporate-contrived “global” culture and a split society, more Americans are waking up to their democratic rights, which are best exercised locally. Come hear **Jonathan Leavitt’s** story of organizing the people of Lawrence MA to protect their water system, and other examples of municipal organizing. Talk with him and Boston City Councilor **Felix Arroyo** about renewing government of the people and for the people, at all levels.

* In the first half hour, hear **Jed Schwartz’s** commentary on former chief economist Joseph Stiglitz’ new book *The Roaring Nineties*, and join **Brit Eckhart** in naming BCA’s future.

— Refreshments —

Privatization

He’s Ba-a-ck! Portrait of Happy Capitalist Warrior Who Seeks Gold in NH Water

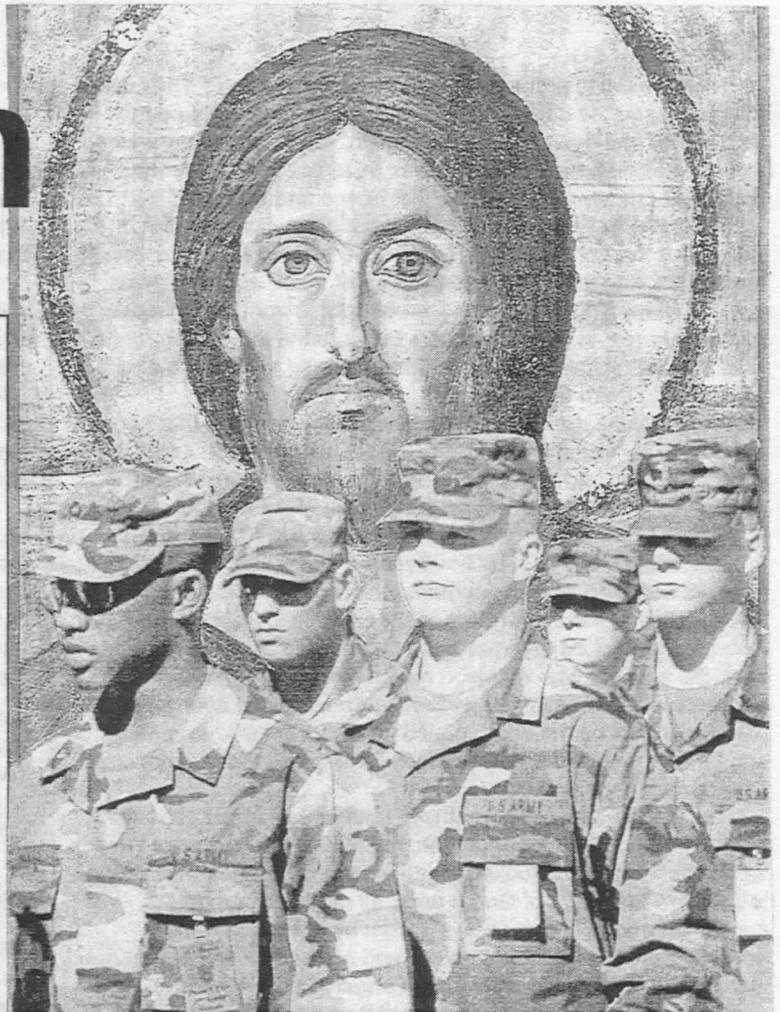
by Bob Sanders, *New Hampshire Business Review*, 18 Dec 2003

Francisco Rotondo is hoping to present a handcrafted Bowie knife next month to [Acting] President George W. Bush. Rotondo is a former Olympic marksman who will be representing the United States in the World Cup shooting competitions. He builds [antique] Ferraris from scratch, and imported them into the country. He even sold one to Ralph Lauren.

Yet Rotondo, after spending more than three years and \$3 million—cannot get a permit to allow his company, USA Springs, to pump water out of his land he owns that straddles Barrington and Nottingham in southeast New Hampshire. And he is now facing the daunting task of cleaning up a contaminated site that he never polluted.

While the controversial USA Springs water bottling project has lingered—hampered by state

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Youth and Empire

“Kill! Kill! Kill!” Soldiers At My Front Door

by John Dear, posted on *CommonDreams*, December 2003

I live in a tiny, remote, impoverished, three block long town in the desert of northeastern New Mexico. Everyone in town—and the whole state—knows that I am against the occupation of Iraq, that I have called for the closing of Los Alamos, and that as a priest, I have been preaching, like the Pope, against the bombing of Baghdad.

Last week, it was announced that the local National Guard unit for northeastern New Mexico, based in the nearby Armory, was being deployed to Iraq early next year. I was not surprised when yellow ribbons immediately sprang up after the press conference.

But I was surprised the following morning to hear 75 soldiers singing, shouting and screaming as they jogged down Main Street, passed our St. Joseph’s church, back and forth around town for an hour. It was 6 a.m., and they woke me up with their war slogans, chants like “Kill! Kill! Kill!” and “Swing your guns from left to right; we can kill those guys all night.”

Their chants were disturbing, but this is war. They have to psyche themselves up for the kill. They have to believe that flying off to some tiny, remote desert town in Iraq where they will march in front of someone’s house and kill poor young Iraqis has some greater meaning besides cold-blooded murder. Most of these young reservists have never left our town, and they need our support for the “unpleasant” task before them. I have been to Iraq, and led a delegation of Nobel Peace Prize winners to Baghdad in 1999, and I know that the people there are no different than the people here.

(Continued on next page >>)

The screaming and chanting went on for one hour. They would march passed the church, down Main Street, back around the post office, and down Main Street again. It was clear they wanted to be seen and heard. In fact, it was quite scary because the desert is normally a place of perfect peace and silence.

Suddenly, at 7 a.m., the shouting got dramatically louder. I looked out the front window of the house where I live, next door to the church, and there they were--all 75 of them, standing yards away from my front door, in the street right in front of my house and our church, shouting and screaming to the top of their lungs, "Kill! Kill! Kill!" Their commanders had planted them there and were egging them on.

I was astonished and appalled. I suddenly realized that I do not need to go to Iraq; the war had come to my front door. Later, I heard that they had deliberately decided to do their exercises in front of my house and our church because of my outspoken opposition to the war. They wanted to put me in my place.

This, I think, is a new tactic. Over the years, I have been arrested some 75 times in demonstrations, been imprisoned for a "Plowshares" disarmament action, been bugged, tapped, and harassed, searched at airports, and monitored by police. But this time, the soldiers who will soon march through Baghdad and attack desert homes in Iraq, practiced on me. They confronted me personally, just as the death squad militaries did in Guatemala and El Salvador in the 1980s, which I witnessed there on several occasions.

I decided I had to do something. I put on my winter coat and walked out the front door right into the middle of the street. They stopped shouting and looked at me, so I said loudly, publicly for all to hear, "In the name of God, I order all of you to stop this nonsense, and not to go to Iraq. I want all of you to quit the military, disobey your orders to kill, and not to kill anyone. I do not want you to get killed. I want you to practice the love and nonviolence of Jesus. God does not bless war. God does not want you to kill so Bush and Cheney can get more oil. God does not support war. Stop all this and go home. God bless you."

Their jaws dropped, their eyeballs popped and they stood in shock and silence, looking steadily at me. Then they burst out laughing. Finally, the commander dismissed them and they left.

Later, military officials spread lies around town that I had disrupted their military exercises at the Armory, so they decided to come to my house and to the church in retaliation. Others appealed to the archbishop to have me kicked out of New Mexico for denouncing their warmaking. Then, a general called the mayor and asked him to mediate "negotiations" with me, saying he did not want the military "in confrontation" with the church. Really, the mayor told me, they fear that I will disrupt the gala send-off next month, just before Christmas, when the soldiers go to Iraq.

This dramatic episode is only the latest in a series of confrontations since I came to the desert of New Mexico in the summer of 2002 to serve as pastor of several poor, desert churches. I have spoken out extensively against the U.S. war on Iraq, and been denounced by people, including church people, across the state. I have organized small Christian peace groups throughout the state. We planned a prayer vigil for nuclear disarmament at Los Alamos on the anniversary of Hiroshima this past August, but when the devout people of Los Alamos, most of them Catholic, heard about it, they appealed to the archbishop to have me expelled if I appeared publicly in their town. In the end, I did not attend the vigil, but the publicity gave me further opportunities to call for the closing of Los Alamos. I receive hate mail, negative phone calls and at least one death threat for daring to criticize our country. But New Mexico is the poorest state in the U.S. It is also number one in military spending and number one in nuclear weapons. It is the most militarized, the most in need of disarmament, the most in need of nonviolence. It is the first place

the Pentagon goes to recruit poor youth into the empire's army.

If we are to change the direction of our country, and turn people against Bush's occupation of Iraq, we are going to have to face the ire and persecution of our local communities. If peace people in every local community insisted that our troops be brought home immediately, that the U.N. be sent in to restore Iraq, that all U.S. military aid to the Middle East be cut, and that our arsenal of weapons of mass destruction be dismantled, then we might all find soldiers marching at our front doors, trying to intimidate us. If we can face our soldiers, call them to quit the military and urge them to disobey orders to kill, then perhaps some of them will refuse to fight, become conscientious objectors and take up the wisdom of nonviolence. If we can look them in the eye and engage them in personal Satyagraha as Gandhi demonstrated, then we know that the transformation has begun.

In the end, the episode for me was an experience of hope. We must be making a difference if the soldiers have to march at our front doors. That they failed to convert me or intimidate me, that they had to listen to my side of the story, may haunt their consciences as they travel to Iraq. No matter what happens, they have heard loud and clear the good news that God does not want them to kill anyone. I hope we can all learn the lesson.

John Dear is a Catholic priest, peace activist, lecturer, and former executive director of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. His latest books include Mohandas Gandhi and Mary of Nazareth, Prophet of Peace. See: www.johndear.org

Haven't You Heard?...

* 9/11-widow Ellen Mariani's attorney served personal subpoenas on **G W Bush**, Cheney, Rumsfeld, and eight others holding them **accountable for 9-11 attacks**. They must answer by early March.

* U.S. Senator John McCain (R-AZ) introduced his Joint Resolution No. 3 on 14 January 2003 in the Senate which declares that the governments of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan are **dictatorships** and tyrannies run by corrupt dictators, barbaric tyrants and savage human rights abusers who are being supported, promoted and financed by the imperialistic Bush junta.

* **Ralph Nader** decided not to run as a Green; says he'll decide this month (Jan) whether to run as an independent for President.

* Joseph Gerson explains some of the strategic rationales and missions of the estimated 702 **U.S. foreign military bases** and installations that are currently located in at least 40 nations. At root, the entire system serves as an integrated global infrastructure for imperial domination... See: www.afsc.org/newengland/pefp/foreignbases.htm

* Nevada has become the first state to demand a **voter-verifiable receipt printer** on new touch-screen voting machines being purchased for the 2004 elections.

* Dave Gorman, executive director of Disabled American Veterans, complained that the **DAV is being blocked** from carrying out its congressionally chartered mission. Gorman questioned measures that require hospital pre-screening and approval of all visits, and full-time escorts during those visits, according to the letter a copy of which CNN obtained. Gorman said because of those escorts there is a lack of privacy over matters the counselors discuss with patients and their families at Walter Reed.

King Kong—a Racist Legend Black Psychologist Makes It Transparent

by Yusuf Nuruddin, *Socialism & Democracy*, Winter-Spring 2003.

...More than by the *Sambo* of Southern folklore or the *Caliban* or *Friday* of classical literature, the image of black people in the white mind has been captured by *King Kong*, one of Hollywood's classic films. It dredges up from the collective white American psyche, the collective white unconscious, all of white America's most repressed and deeply-rooted fears and anxieties about black people. The great nightmare of white America, from its colonial beginnings up through the Civil War, has been a massive slave uprising; the Southern aristocracy created the image of *Sambo* to ease their own fears. They desperately needed to believe in *Sambo* so that they could sleep easy at night. But buried deep in the Southern white psyche was the fear that one night, while sleeping their throats would be cut—or worse that they would be awakened to witness that final moment of horror—by the people whom they had enslaved. In enslaving and oppressing black people, America slept each night with an uneasy conscience knowing that they were sitting on top of a volcano that could erupt at any moment. In modern times, the nightmare of an uprising took on the semblance of a black urban revolt—an inner city insurrection.

The nightmare of a black uprising is told in detail in this Hollywood classic. But it is a masterful work of cinema because the true import of the story is being communicated just below the threshold of our consciousness, and we all pick up the meanings on a subliminal level. As with any great myth or fairy-tale, the great psychological insights are veiled from our conscious perception as we are spellbound by the entertainment. Still, our emotional instincts "understand" the true meaning of the story—we feel it on a gut level. And it all becomes startlingly clear, once we have the interpretive key that brings the symbols to our conscious awareness. Here is that key:

Africans have always been derogatorily depicted as apes*, and a giant ape depicts millions of Africans, the masses of black people in America. The title of the movie itself suggests the great *Mani Kongo* or King of the Congo who has been captured from his homeland and shipped in chains to America. Once he reaches these shores, this great physical specimen is locked in chains, penned in a cage and placed on stage, thereby representing the four roles to which black men have been relegated in America—the slave (in chains), the prisoner (locked in a cage), the entertainer (a great spectacle on stage), and the athlete (great physical prowess). Kong breaks his chains and goes rampaging through the inner city (riots, insurrections, slave revolts). Having been guilty throughout slavery of the wholesale rape of black women (manifested by all of the mulattos and variations in skin tone in the black community), whites have always feared that black men would retaliate by raping white women. (Hence the violent history of lynchings in the South for even "looking the wrong way" at a white woman; and the present day "legal lynching" in the north of five innocent young men for the Central Park jogger rape.) Fay Wray represents the pure and pristine white womanhood that Kong supposedly lusts for.** The climb to the top of the Empire State Building is interesting on many levels, for the building embodies at once a phallic symbol and the peak cultural and technological achievement of Western Civilization. Hence Kong is challenging the white man's manhood and his technological and cultural

"superiority." Reaching the pinnacle of the building, Kong has reversed societal roles: in the ultimate "flippin' of the script," the black man is on the top and the white man is on the bottom looking up at him. (In a 1976 remake of the 1933 classic, Kong climbs to the top of the Twin Towers, which says a lot about the symbolism of white supremacy that was embodied in the World

Trade Center.)

The denouement, which ends the nightmare of the black uprising, is that Kong is shot down—just as Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, the Panthers and Nat Turner were shot down. End of threat, end of nightmare, white fears are assuaged. And the subliminal lesson to African Americans is, "If you ever rise up in rebellion, this will be your fate."

I like the story line: Gorilla Warfare in America. I just want to re-write the ending. Gotta keep flippin' the script. —Y.N.



From "The Sambo Thesis revisited: Slavery's impact upon the African-American personality." In *Socialism & Democracy*, #33, Winter-Spring 2003, 291-338. References include:

* Winthrop Jordan, *White Over Black: American attitudes toward the Negro, 1550-1812* (1969); Indus Khamit Kush, *What The Never Told You In History Class* (1983).

** Joel Kovel, *White Racism: A Psychohistory* (1984).

Bush-Cheney Putsch on Georgia Engineering Regime-Change for Oil

by Tom Wall, *Red Pepper* (UK), Jan 2004

Gorgia's "velvet revolution" may not have been quite the popular uprising it seemed. According to Gary Schmitt, the director of the influential neo-conservative think tank Project for the New American Century, which counts US vice-president Dick Cheney and defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld among its founders, it was an example of US-backed regime change.

Schmitt told *Red Pepper* that the Bush administration was "obviously interested in regime movement". "It expended political capital sending Ronald Regan's former secretary of state James Baker and others to Georgia. I wouldn't be so naive as to suggest that oil isn't somewhere down the list of motivations." (Cont'd>>)

Georgia sits atop the Caspian basin, the world's largest untapped energy reserve, and a US-backed oil pipeline that runs from Baku in Azerbaijan to the Mediterranean port of Ceyhan in Turkey is currently being built through the country. In a 1997 article in *The New York Times* Baker wrote: "Caspian oil may eventually be as important to the industrialized world as Middle East oil is today. Georgia's future security, therefore, is important to the US's security."

In July George W Bush sent Baker to Tbilisi to demand that the US be allowed to monitor Georgia's parliamentary elections in November. Over the summer, a string of special envoys warned former Georgian president Eduard Shevardnadze that he would lose US support unless he implemented measures to safeguard US interests. "The Bush administration should be given credit for trying to get Shevardnadze to do the right thing by all kinds of diplomatic means," Schmitt said.

Eventually, Shevardnadze resigned after weeks of protest at November's rigged poll culminated in the storming of the Georgian parliament. But in subsequent interviews, he accused the US ambassador to Tbilisi, Richard Miles, of involvement in his overthrow. Miles had been posted to Belgrade before the ousting of former Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic in 2000.

The Liberty Institute, the organizational driving force in Georgia's revolution, admits receiving funding from the US government and the financier George Soros. In February 2003 the institute's co-founder, Giga Bokeria, and director Levan Ramishvili even took a Soros Foundation-funded tour of Serbia to research how the *Otpor* student resistance movement had toppled Milosevic. As a result, some 1000 Georgian students were trained in *Otpor's* "revolutionary techniques".

New Hampshire Water (Continued from page 1)

environmental officials, town litigation, and public opposition---the 44-year-old Rotondo has let his lawyers do the talking. But early this month, a clearly frustrated Rotondo spoke out publicly for the first time, flanked by two partners in the USA Springs venture -- Armando Hyatt, a Salem attorney who also advises Rotondo on the project, and Jeffrey DeLucia, vice president.

In an interview with New Hampshire Business Review, Rotondo charged environmental officials---against the advice of his attorney---with "legal extortionism." He blamed an "invisible force" for holding up his permit---a move motivated by a mixture of racism and envy.

The interview took place shortly before Dec. 11, when the DES again denied the permit, but Rotondo said he will challenge that decision and that he wasn't going to go away.

"What does it take? Do you have to speak the Queen's English in order for you to get permitting the state of New Hampshire?" Rotondo asked. "Just because I'm blown in from Rome, Italy, it means that I shouldn't have the opportunity, or because you are jealous and envious that I have wonderful ideas ... and I have this gift from God."

Who Is Rotondo?

Water has become an increasingly economic and ecological issue in New Hampshire, but no other project in the state has been as contentious as USA Springs' request to withdraw more than 300,000 gallons per day out of the aquifer that runs beneath several communities dependent on well water. The proposal was one of the first large groundwater withdrawal proposals under new state regulations.

Then-Gov. Jeanne Shaheen, one of the architects of the 1998 groundwater withdrawal laws, pointed to the USA Springs project during her failed US Senate campaign as an example of those "who see water simply as a commodity, to be bought and sold without regard to the consequences for New Hampshire's people and environment."

Residents organized by Save Our Groundwater have held mass meetings and picketed the site, and the town of Nottingham has taken them to court.

While USA Springs' proposal only counts as a small portion of the 9 million gallons withdrawn daily by municipalities, industry (including beverage companies), agricultural and even golf courses in 2002, it would nearly double the amount of bottled water withdrawn in 2002.

But what exactly is USA Springs, and who is its president, Francisco Rotondo? Ironically, Rotondo said he got into the water business because he was looking for a company that was both environmentally friendly and patriotic.

Rotondo said he fell in love with the United States after he moving here at 12 while visiting with his father, who stayed despite a lucrative concrete business back home in Rome. Rotondo's dream was to join the Air Force, but at 17, he was not yet a citizen. (He became a citizen roughly 25 years ago.) Instead, Rotondo graduated from high school in Lawrence, Mass., to attend architecture school at ITT Technical Institute in Woburn, Mass. He later switched to mechanical metallurgy because he liked building things with his hands. Soon he was working for EG&G building cathode ray tubes used in nuclear tests in the late 1970s.

His technical abilities led him in vastly different directions. As a marksman, he entered shooting competitions for Beretta, who sponsored him on the 1984 Olympic team, which he made as an alternate. But he also suggested modifications for the firearms which earned him some "very nice royalties." Soon Perazzi, another Italian gun manufacturer was using his services and he boasted, "I invented what is today the best shotgun for American trap shooting: the MX15."

Ferrari was another one of Rotondo's passions, and he was soon rebuilding vintage cars from scratch and selling them -- a business that lasted four years. Rotondo designed the presidential Bowie knife as part of an Alamo presentation in New Hampshire for President George Bush by the New Hampshire Sportsmen Association, which Bush is supposed to attend in January.

Despite these eclectic interests, Rotondo only foray into a traditional business -- manufacturing women's clothing in Massachusetts -- ended in failure in 1990, when the economy turned sour. However, his association with another textile manufacturer from Italy -- Giuseppe Prevosti -- led Rotondo and Hyatt to purchase some real estate in Barrington, under such names as Golden Ponds Hunting and Fishing Corp. The idea was to import all sorts of exotic species and create a "hunter's paradise," in the words of Hyatt. It also would, said Rotondo, expand Prevosti's U.S. investment portfolio, easing the way for the Italian to gain U.S. citizenship.

The properties resulted in Rotondo's first run-in with the state Department of Environmental Services (DES), which fined Rotondo \$2,000 for wetlands violations in 1994 after a road was built through a wetland area. Prevosti abandoned the project, not because of DES oversight, but town opposition. "The man got fed up with all the hysteria from Barrington," Rotondo said.

Rotondo and Prevosti parted ways six years ago because of "personal differences," Rotondo said, and Prevosti took over the corporations in 1995. Prevosti is not sure what he plans to do with those properties, his attorney said last month.

A Bitter Battle

While Rotondo said that none of these properties -- contrary to opponents' speculation -- have anything to do with USA Springs, they did help Rotondo becoming familiar with the area. Still searching for an environmentally friendly business, Rotondo was told by an Italian doctor that the two best such businesses were

waste management and spring water. Rotondo saw the need for waste management, but knew of the high regulatory hurdles that would entail.

"I naively thought that this would be the easiest way to waltz through the bureaucratic factor," he said. "There can be nothing more cleaner than the spring water business." He quickly studied water-quality issues in New England, and under the name Garrison Place Real Estate Trust purchased the 100-acre lot 1998, just as the new law on water withdrawals was being enacted.

What attracted Rotondo was not only the land but an old barn "that was ready to fall down and kill you if you walk in it," Rotondo said. "A lot of people said it needs a match." But Rotondo thought it needed restoration, pouring, he said, \$250,000 of his own funds into the effort. "I always considered myself a Yankee, and I had a vision" of a big barn with a huge flag, he said "a showcase of an historical aspect of a Yankee-based American company."

The barn apparently did get a match. The fire marshal ruled arson, and Rotondo said the FBI is investigating. Rotondo suspects opponents of his plant torched it. Some opponents that Rotondo did it himself for sympathy. Both scoff at the other's suspicions, but the fire has given this contentious battle a bitter edge.

There are two major areas of contention -- quantity and quality. Opponents contend that the area can simply not support that kind of withdrawal Rotondo is seeking in times of drought. Rotondo contends that USA Springs passed a \$1.2 million pump test with "flying colors." However, DES didn't totally agree, saying in August that the report based on the tests was "not complete or correct" and "not assessed accurately."

Rotondo complained that he was subjected to such scrutiny under the new law while other bottling companies -- grandfathered in before the new regulations -- are so busy that they offered their water to USA to bottle at the plant he plans to build on site. "Why is it OK for me to bottle water down the street in Brentwood and Hampton and not OK to bottle my own water in the ground, which makes my business more feasible and makes my business more money?" he challenged.

Continued Cleanup

But the bigger issue now has to do with water quality, because the pumping test sucked in contaminated groundwater from a neighboring plot owned by K and B Realty Trust, a site that once housed a trucking firm. That caused DES to label the USA Springs site a potential Superfund site, much to Rotondo and Hyatt's chagrin.

First, they said, the levels on the land were not nearly high enough to be considered for the Superfund list. Second, DES should have used the name of the legal owner of the site, which is Garrison Place Realty Trust, not USA Springs. "They were trying to destroy the business name," exclaimed Rotondo. DES withdrew the listing, but wanted further testing to show that continual pumping would not cause contamination of the neighboring site.

In June, Just Cause Realty Trust bought a neighboring 14-acre property for \$250,000. (While the trust is not a "mirror image" of USA Springs, "there might be some overlap," said Hyatt.) In any case, the new owners of the land are pretty much giving USA Springs a free hand to clean it up, or at least contain it. At one DES meeting concerning Just Cause, instance, no one from Just

Cause even signed in.

DES officials said that it would cost at least \$250,000 and could take years to maintain the site. On the other hand, Tony Giunta, of the department's Water Supply Engineering Bureau, did acknowledge that thus far USA Springs was moving at a quicker pace than he has ever seen.

Taking on DES

So DES was in a quandary. On the one hand, the law called on the agency to make a 45-day decision on the permit, a time frame that has already been extended repeatedly, and there was no telling how long the clean up would take. On the other hand, if the department had to decide on a permit now, the answer would probably be no. So DES instead offered USA Springs the option to ask for a stay -- a way to put the process in suspended animation, and stop the clock from ticking.

This move, however, irked Rotondo who claimed to have already sealed the pollution off. He thinks that DES should grant his company a conditional permit. The latest offer amounts to "legal extortionism," he told the Business Review.

"Don't use that word," protested Hyatt.

"If I don't say it once, we are never going to say it. The truth must be told. This is legal extortionism." Those weren't Rotondo's only strong words.

"At this stage, that permit lawfully belongs to me, and I can't put my hands on it," said Rotondo. "It's been written conditionally to every other businessman in the state but me. Are they trying to make an example of me or what? You think they should be thanking me for what I'm doing instead of putting me down and killing me."

Rotondo's attorney did ask for a stay, but DES denied it anyway on December 11, arguing that Rotondo did not promise to meet the conditions necessary to continue the permit application. Then it denied the permit again. Rotondo said he will continue to fight for the permit, in court if necessary. "This is one Italian that isn't going to go away," he said.

Rotondo's environmental attorney, Greg Smith, says that the decision is "unfathomable" and a case of "moving the goal posts."

While Rotondo has been critical of DES, he had only praise for Governor Benson's appointees at DES, former acting Commissioner Bob Monaco and current Commissioner Michael Nolin. Rotondo said he strongly supports Benson and contributed to his campaign. "The new government is definitely more business-friendly for the state, which is what the state needs," he said.

But Rotondo thinks that in state government, there is some "invisible force who is trying to put a stop on a good man who is a good steward, who is trying to clean that site next door from achieving his permit." Still, he says he can clean up the site in half the time that DES predicts. "We proved them wrong again and again, and they hate us for it. When they say it takes us a year to clean up the site, we will do in six months, and we already started."

How much money can Rotondo keep pumping into a project to pump water out of the ground? And where will that money come from? Rotondo and Hyatt both said they will spend what it takes. Thus far, Hyatt said, all of the money -- some \$3 million -- has come from "friends and family members" of Rotondo, Hyatt and DeLucia, including Rotondo's brother, Marco, an engineer in Hampton.

But Hyatt declined to name any other owners or principals in USA Springs, citing the need to protect their privacy. He did say that there is no large international water company lurking in the background. It's just a company operating out of Rotondo's house.

"We are not acting as a front," Hyatt said. "It's people who believe in Francesco. He's the man who will put the needs of the situation ahead of his own needs. He's attracting the capital because you can't hold a good man down." #



Robin Hood Rides Again Defend Decimated Sherwood Forest

by Joanne Clarkson, *Red Pepper* (UK), Jan 2004 (excerpt)

In time-honored style the sheriff of Nottingham has given Bellway Homes [developer] permission to evict the eco-warriors. The activists are ready to take to the trees at a moment's notice, however. Removing them is likely to be a long and difficult process that could cost millions; they are a hardy crew. They have built 60-foot-high camps and walkways in tree branches. They have also tunneled deep into the earth, creating a bunker of resistance that is fully ventilated and stocked with enough food and water to sustain two people for more than a month.

Anti-roads protesters set up camp in one of the last remaining areas of ancient woodland in Sherwood Forest, Nottinghamshire



There is nothing idyllic about the Woodhouse protest site during these winter months; it is bitterly cold and next to a major road. The Sherwood deer are long gone, replaced by the ceaseless drone of cars—noise that is punctuated by occasional hoots of encouragement from car horns or derisive shouts of “get a real job”.

For the protesters, building and fortifying the site is a full-time job. Over the past few months sheltered cooking and living space has been constructed with donated timber to accommodate a growing community of on-site activists. Local residents make regular donations of food, water, clothes, and blankets. And the campaign received further encouragement recently when a miners' rescue center rejected a Bellway invitation to help the developer to evict activists from their newly dug tunnels.

See online *Red Pepper* at www.redpepper.org.uk #

Free On-Line Music Lessons With Love, Berklee College of Music

Info: www.berkleeshares.com

The prestigious Berklee College of Music has launched Berklee Shares, a program that offers more than 100 music lessons on the Web free of charge. Lessons – in text, audio and video – range from “Rhythm Guitar Basics” to “Basic Scratching for DJ’s” to “Warming Up Your Voice.” Berklee is encouraging users to share the lessons with as many people as possible through peer-to-peer networks like KaZaA, and in doing so is making a strong political statement about music file sharing. In an interview, Berklee associate vice president and program director Dave Kusek states:

Part of our mission at the college is to try and reach a global audience, and we find that there are so many people that want to come to Berklee that just can't move to the United States, for example, they can't uproot their families and come to college, so this is one of the programs that we have in place to kind of reach out and distribute some music education to a wide audience. In our view, the more people there are making music and enjoying music and involved in the music industry, the better.

Q: There must have been some resistance to the project, people saying, “You want to give our expertise away?” Did you run into that attitude anywhere?

KUSEK: *Not really. The faculty who are the source of all the lessons were very supportive of the idea, in that it got them exposure, which is always a nice thing... It's a form of publishing, electronic publishing. By making it free, it makes it so much more accessible. For example, high school music programs are in a real sorry state in the U.S., and kids just don't have access to the kind of music instruction that they sometimes are seeking. They want to play rock and roll, they want to play rap and hip-hop. They're into the new music, they don't necessarily want to play a big band arrangement or a marching band arrangement, and that's most of what's available in the high school and middle school programs. So these lessons are a way for kids to get a little bit of a music lesson from a sophisticated approach here at Berklee, and it's also something that we've seen picked up by music teachers who are interested in expanding their programs, but they have no money, so these lessons are free for them to use in their classrooms.*

Kusek says there's also some politics behind Berklee Shares. The school wants to show the music industry that file-sharing is a legitimate distribution model.

KUSEK: *It's not always a bad thing to give stuff away. In some regards, the more you give away the more you get back in a different context. Most musicians make most of their income off of performing, and publishing. Very little money actually flows to the musicians from recording. If file sharing is a great promotion that will help you get more gigs and make more money touring, and increase your exposure in the industry, then that's not necessarily a bad thing for musicians and performers. It may be a bad thing for the intermediary label, but that's something that I think is very important to the music business of the future, that they don't put their heads in the sand and they don't try and kill this phenomenon that is absolutely incredible.* #

The Purpose of the Aeroplane? Wright Brothers Proclaimed: "War"

by George Monbiot, *The Guardian* (UK), 16 Dec 2003

They will probably be commemorating the wrong people in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, tomorrow. Five months before the Wright brothers lifted a flying machine into the air for 12 seconds above the sand dunes of the Outer Banks, the New Zealander Richard Pearse had traveled for more than a kilometer in his contraption, without the help of ramps or slides, and had even managed to turn his plane in mid-flight.

But history belongs to those who record it, so tomorrow is the official centenary of the airplane. At Kitty Hawk, George Bush will deliver a eulogy to aviation, while a number of men with more money than sense will seek to recreate the Wrights' first flight. Well, they can keep their anniversary. Tomorrow should be a day of international mourning. December 17, 2003 is the centenary of the world's most effective killing machine.

Imagination and Reality

The airplane was not the first weapon of mass destruction. The European powers had already learned to rain terror upon their colonial subjects by means of naval bombardment, artillery and the Gatling and Maxim guns. But the destructive potential of aerial bombing was grasped even before the first plane left the ground. In 1886, Jules Verne imagined aircraft acting as a global police force, bombing barbaric races into peace and civilization. In 1898, the novelist Samuel Odell saw the English-speaking peoples subjugating eastern Europe and Asia by means of aerial bombardment. In the same year, the writer Stanley Waterloo celebrated the future annihilation of inferior races from the air.

None of this was lost on the Wright brothers. When Wilbur Wright was asked, in 1905, what the purpose of his machine might be, he answered simply: "War." As soon as they were confident that the technology worked, the brothers approached the war offices of several nations, hoping to sell their patent to the highest bidder. The US government bought it for \$30,000, and started test bombing in 1910. The airplane was conceived, designed, tested, developed and sold, in other words, not as a vehicle for tourism, but as an instrument of destruction.

Experimenting with Mass Killing

In November 1911, eight years after the first flight, the Italian army carried out the first bombing raid, on a settlement outside Tripoli. Then as now, aerial bombardment was seen as a means of civilizing uncooperative peoples. As Sven Lindqvist records in *A History of Bombing*, the imperial powers experimented freely with civilization from the skies. Just as the Holocaust was prefigured by colonial genocide, so the bombing raids which reduced Guernica, Hamburg, Dresden, Tokyo and parts of London to ash had been rehearsed in north Africa and the Middle East.

As the enemy was reduced to a distant target in an inferior sphere, greater cruelties could be engineered than any effected before. The British knew what they were doing in Germany. Directive 22 to Bomber Command in 1942 ordered that the "aiming points" for fire-bombing be "built-up areas, not, for instance, the dockyards or aircraft factories". The Americans knew what they were doing in Japan. Major General Curtis LeMay, who incinerated 100,000 civilians in Tokyo, admitted: "We knew we were going to kill a lot of women and kids when we burned that town. Had to be done." Japan sought to negotiate peace, but the Allies refused to talk until they had taken their firebombing to its logical conclusion, in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. LeMay later became chief of staff of the US air force. He was the man who, in

1964, promised to bomb Vietnam back into the stone age.

I doubt much mention will be made of all this at the centenary celebrations tomorrow. Instead we will be encouraged to concentrate upon the civil applications of this military technology.

A Corporate Amenity

We will be told how the airplane has made the world a smaller place, how it has brought people closer together, fostering understanding and friendship. There is something in this: the people of powerful nations might be reluctant to permit their leaders to destroy the countries they have visited. But commercial flights, like military flights, are an instrument of domination. As tourists, we engage with the people of other nations on our own terms. The world's administrators can flit from place to place enforcing their mandate. The corporate jet-set shrinks the earth to fit its needs. Those with access to the airplane control the world.

The men who attacked New York and Washington on September 11 2001 drove one symbol of power into another. The airplane, more precisely than any other technology, represents the global ruling class. In the past we raised our eyes to the men on horseback. Today we raise our eyes to the heavens.

Vapor Trails, CO₂, Global Warming, Death

Those hijackers had turned the civilian product of a military technology back into a military technology, but even when used for strictly commercial purposes, the airliner remains a weapon of mass destruction. Last week the World Health Organization calculated that climate change is causing 150,000 deaths a year. This figure excludes deaths caused by drought and famine, pests and plant diseases and conflicts over natural resources, all of which appear to be exacerbated by global warming. Flying is our most effective means of wrecking the planet: every passenger on a return journey from Britain to Florida produces more carbon dioxide than the average motorist does in a year. Every time we fly, we help to kill someone.

This morning, our government is expected to give a grand 100th birthday present to the airplane. Despite almost 400,000 objections to the expansion of airports in Britain, the transport secretary will announce new runways at Stansted and Birmingham, and more flights to Heathrow. This, the government hopes, will help accommodate a near-tripling of the number of journeys into and out of Britain by 2030. By then the 400,000 won't be the only ones wishing that Wilbur and Orville (if indeed they were responsible) had stuck to mending bicycles.

Air-Worship and Subsidies

The \$1,000 those men spent on developing their beast is just about the only expenditure on this doom machine that has not been state-assisted. All over the world, the aircraft industry was built by means of government spending. All over the world, it is sustained today through tax breaks and hidden subsidies. Mysteriously exempt from both fuel duty and VAT, airlines in Britain dodge some £10bn of tax a year. The airplane, in other words, is still treated by governments as a social good.

This might have something to do with the fact that prime ministers and presidents use it more often than anyone else. Or it might reflect the perennial male obsession with the instruments of control.

Just as Alexander the Great worshipped his horse, George Bush, the new conqueror of Persia, will tomorrow worship the airplane. Our societies are built upon these technologies of war: the current world order fell from the hatches of the airplane. At 10.35am, North Carolina time, George Bush and the other enthusiasts for domination will bow down before it. The rest of us should observe 12 seconds of silence, in commemoration of the deeds wrought by those magnificent men in their killing machines.

LETTERS

Albany Works for Kucinich

The enclosed check is from the Capital District Alliance. We all enjoy that well-produced newsletter and are happy to support it and your activities.

Most of us are Kucinich supporters and have been working to get him on the New York State ballot this March. This past fall we had joined in coalition in support of a people's assembly named "Confronting the Politics of Fear," sponsored by the Social Justice Center. Thirty-two workshops were presented. We wished we were triplets at least, so we could attend more of them.

—Ethel Silverberg, Albany NY

Meeting Kucinich, Kerry & Heinz

...Kucinich is my second choice for the Iowa caucuses. Actually, I was just with him last week at a farm. I was taking my daughter around to meet the next president (easy to do here in Iowa). There were only about 8-10 of us there with Dennis, but loads of media. I helped him on some questions related to mad cow disease when he was asked by the media.



Teresa Heinz

The same day we had a great lunch with Senator Kerry. This is who I am supporting in the caucuses. I have had an event at my house for Kerry's stepson Chris Heinz. I met Kerry's wife for the first time last week. She spoke at the luncheon and was great. Then there was another event at a coffee shop where my daughter and I were invited to meet her. She sat between Melissa and me as she talked to the whole group about environmental issues. She stayed and talked with us afterwards. She is really a good lady... I was interviewed by two reporters (USA Today and NT Times) at the luncheon. I'm not sure if I was ever quoted. Fun though.

—Susan Roberts, Ankeny, IA

CHAPTER & REGIONAL NEWS

The **Boston Social Forum (BSF)** is set for July 23-25 at UMass/ Boston, just before the Democratic National Convention, July 26-29 at Boston's Hynes Convention Center. **Jason Pramas** of Boston's Campaign on Contingent Work spoke at BCA's 17 Dec meeting, to explain the BSF and its relation to the anti-corporate globalization/Another World Is Possible movement. Spearheading BSF, **Basav Sen** of BankBusters and **Catherine Benedict** of Anti-FTAA are off to Mumbai (Bombay) for the current World Social Forum and business/pleasure in India.

On 12 Jan **Dave Lewit** and **Brit Eckhart** represented BCA at the first meeting of BSF's Program Working Group, where about 30 people from diverse organizations showed up. (The second meeting is scheduled for 2 Feb, 6pm, 33 Harrison St, 3rd floor, Boston's Chinatown—call Jason Pramas, 617-338-9966 if you want to participate, especially as a group representative, in BSF. Call Dave Lewit, 617-266-8687 if you want to contribute to BCA's part.)

BSF is a big deal. 3000 to 5000 participants are expected, with 400 panels, workshops, seminars, etc., in various rooms at UMB to be planned. Participants will be mainly from the east-central New England area, but some will come from Montreal, DC, and beyond, and speakers will be invited worldwide. **Jonathan Leavitt** heads the Forum's drive to raise \$150,000 for expenses.

BCA is proposing a Localization "track" or "theme" which would

include workshops on the likes of "Institutions for a Democratic World", "Impacts of Globalization on Local Economies", "Local Systems and Their Linkages", and "System Awareness". **Ali Hebshi** of the New Haven CT area, in conjunction with the Water Campaign of the national Alliance for Democracy, proposed a track or theme on Water, a key element in looming privatization and war. Two dozen "tracks" from Race to Media to Science/Technology were initially proposed by the meeting organizers, while participants added Prison-Industrial Complex, Localization, and others. Our first job will be to sharpen definitions and distinctions between (issue?) "tracks" and (overarching, cross-cutting) "themes", and to consolidate tracks.

BCA's other major project is **Voting Integrity**—preventing voting machine fraud and future stolen elections. Starting in March we will resume work on a film to promote hand-counting of paper ballots. Now, BCA—represented by **Jesse Burkhardt**, **Jed Schwartz**, and **Dave Lewit**—is partnered with ACLU-MA, LWV-MA, and IEEE to present a 9am-1:30pm conference on 28 Feb at Suffolk U Law School, downtown Boston, on "Electronic Voting—Are You Sure?" or some such title. We will examine such topics as e-machine vulnerability to manipulation, trade secrets and denial of public access to voting machine software, the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), hand counting, and legal considerations in returning machines for refund. Speakers will include **Rebecca Mercuri**, **Jonathan Zittrain**, and other notables; MA Secretary of State **Bill Galvin** may keynote the event.

ACTION ALERTS

Fri, 23 Jan, 7pm. Cambridge. **Noam Chomsky** speaks on "Iraq & US Foreign Policy". Kresge Auditorium, opp. 77 Mass Av. \$5-10 donation, UJP. #1 bus (Harvard/Roxbury).

Sun. 25 Jan, 9:30am—4:30pm. Boston. **United for Justice with Peace** (coalition) strategy conference—present and future campaigns. All P&J coalition members should attend. North-eastern U Law School, Cargill Hall room 97, 400 Huntington Av, Boston. Info: UJPcoalition@yahoo.com, pShannon@afsc.org.

JOIN THE BCA

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

Please help us as we fight to make a better future for ourselves and our children -- Join the Boston/Cambridge Alliance for Democracy. (Cut out this form and send it to Dave Lewit, 271 Dartmouth St., Boston, MA 02116.)

BOSTON-CAMBRIDGE ALLIANCE for DEMOCRACY PLEDGE

- \$26/Year - "Count me in!"
- \$52/Year - "Contributor" (We need to average this amount.)
- \$104/Year - "Sustainer" (Helping us thrive.)
- \$208/Year - "Community Steward"
- \$500/Year - "Realize the vision"
- What's fair for YOU? \$ _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

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