

# BCA Dispatch

Hot BCA Projects  
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Newsletter of the  
Boston-Cambridge Alliance for Democracy

February  
2005

*What does the tyrant?*

*Great Dunsinane he strongly fortifies:*

*Some say he's mad; others, that lesser hate him,  
Do call it valiant fury: but for certain,  
He cannot buckle his distemper'd course  
Within the belt of rule.*

*Now does he feel*

*His secret murders sticking on his hands;  
Now, minutely, revolts upbraid his faith-breach;  
Those he commands move only in command,  
Nothing in love; now does he feel his title  
Hang loose about him, like a giant's robe  
Upon a dwarfish thief.*



—Macbeth, V, ii

## ALLIANCE NEWS (Continued on Page 7)

### Chapter Calendar

#### \* \* *Big Brother in Space* \* \*

Boston-Cambridge Alliance for Democracy will meet on **Wednesday, February 16 at 7:00 p.m.** at **Cambridge Friends Meeting house**, 5 Longfellow Park (9-minute walk from Harvard Square T station, west on Brattle St.)

— Agenda —

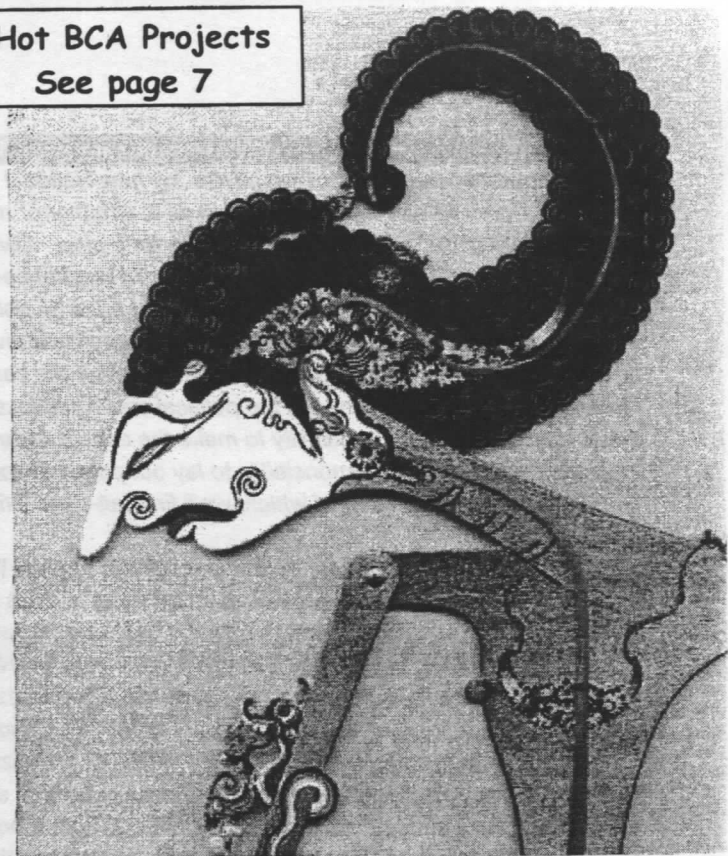
You have read in these pages how a US Space Command has been set up to rival the US Army, Navy, and Air Force. Now you can see in vivid color the generals who perpetrate this, their weapons, and their concealed actions. Their plan is to dominate Earth by dominating space with earth-aimed, high-energy lasers and nuclear devices. The video is Bruce Gagnon's "**Arsenal of Hypocrisy**". Also see the documentary trailer "**Mothers' Day at the War Show**" wherein tots are thrilled at playing with the latest hi-tech weapons... Discussion with notes by Bruce Gagnon.

— Refreshments —

## unSOCIAL inSECURITY Hurry, Hurry, Bush's Giant Confidence Game

by Hendrik Hertzberg, *The New Yorker*, 24 Jan 2005

**T**he Administration's campaign to do something about, or to, Social Security will get its prime-time launch next month in the State of the Union extravaganza, but President Bush is already busy softening up the battlefield. Last week, he granted his first newspaper interview since the election, to the Wall Street Journal, the parish bulletin of the nonevangelical wing of his political base. The first question was about his agenda for Social Security, and whether he would just be laying out general principles and leaving the details to Congress. "No, not necessarily so," he said, adding: **(Continued on Page 2 >>)**



a classic Indonesian puppet

## Confessions of an Economic Hit Man How the US Covertly Expands Its Empire

by John Perkins, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2005

*This true story is like a James Bond movie revealing with first-time intimacy the US strategy of using private consultants, the World Bank, and USAID to set up the ever-expanding, shadowy US Empire, silence opposition, replace traditional cultures, build corporate infrastructure, and bleed the world of its resources. Where corporate adventurers like John Perkins fail, the CIA "jackals" step in with assassination and provoked riots, and if they fail, local and US armed forces. Saddam Hussein, for one, refused to cooperate with US economic hit men, and the rest followed.*

*Here is a snippet from Perkins' "Confessions of an Economic Hit Man" (p. 43ff). The scene is Bandung, Indonesia, 1971:*

**T**he music started—the hauntingly magical sounds of the *gamalong*, an instrument that conjures images of temple bells.

"The *dalang* plays all the music by himself," Rasy whispered. "He also works all the puppets and speaks their voices, several languages. We'll translate for you."

It was a remarkable performance, combining traditional legends with current events. I would later learn that the *dalang* is a shaman who does his work in a trance. He had over a hundred puppets and he spoke for each in a different voice. It was a night I will never forget, and one that has influenced the rest of my life.

After completing a classic selection from the ancient texts of the Ramayana, the *dalang* produced a puppet of Richard Nixon, complete with the distinctive long nose and sagging jowls. The US president was dressed like Uncle Sam, in a stars-and-stripes top hat and tails. He was accompanied by another puppet, which wore a three-piece, **(Continued on Page 3 >>)**

*That's part of—that's part of the advice my new National Economic Council head will be giving me as to whether or not we need to—here is the plan, or here is an idea for a plan, or why don't you just fix it. I suspect given my nature, I'll want to be—the White House will be very much involved with—I have an obligation to lead on this issue—I think this will be an administrative-driven idea—to take it on. And therefore, that that be the case, I have the responsibility to provide the political cover necessary for members, I have the responsibility to make the case if there is a problem, and I have the responsibility to lay out potential solutions. Now, to the specificity of which, we'll find out—you'll find out with time.*

Even a professional actuary might have trouble parsing that one. But the initial thrust of the Bush approach—as laid out in his own comments, in speeches and memos by various assistants, and in material put out by groups such as the Alliance for Worker Retirement Security—is clear enough. It has two big themes. First, Social Security is in crisis, running out of money, about to go bankrupt unless something drastic is done. Second, privatization—eliminating part of Social Security and replacing it with a system of individual private investment accounts financed from a portion of workers' payroll taxes—is somehow the key to avoiding the catastrophe, and is also a fine thing in its own right.

"This is one of my charges, is to explain to Congress as clearly as I can: the crisis is now," Bush proclaimed at an "economic summit" a month ago. He does indeed have some 'splaining to do. This year, the Social Security system—the payroll tax, which brings money in, and the pension program, which sends money out—will bring in about \$180 billion more than it sends out. It will go on bringing in more than it sends out until 2028, at which point it will begin to draw on the \$3.5 trillion surplus it will by then have accumulated. The surplus runs out in 2042, right around the time George W. Bush turns ninety-six. After that, even if nothing has changed, the system's income will continue to cover seventy-three per cent of its outgo.

That's using the Social Security Administration's economic and demographic assumptions, which are habitually pessimistic. Using the assumptions of the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, the surplus runs out in 2052. And if one uses the economic growth assumptions that Bush's own budget office uses when it calculates the effects of his own tax cuts, the surplus runs out in—er, maybe never.

The "crisis," therefore, is not "now." It's as bogus as the Alliance for Worker Retirement Security—which, in reality, is an "astroturf," or fake-grassroots, front for the National Association of Manufacturers. There is no Social Security crisis, and there is not likely to be one. At some point over the next couple of decades, of course, some adjustments will have to be made. There are many reasonable possibilities: a modest rise in the retirement age, to reflect increases in health and longevity; a rise in the cap on wages subject to the payroll tax, which now cuts out at ninety thousand dollars a year; adding a bit to the progressivity of the benefits. One can even imagine a national decision to devote a larger proportion of national resources to the care of the old, given that a larger proportion of the population will be old—preferably to be paid for by taxing something we'd like to see less of (like

fossil-fuel consumption) instead of something we'd like to see more of (like jobs).

Administration spokesmen have been suggesting that privatization will solve Social Security's future financing problems. They're fibbing, though. The much-hyped "crisis" looks suspiciously like the Social Security equivalent of W.M.D.s. This time, though, we have better intelligence. "White House officials privately concede," the Times reported last week, "that the centerpiece of Mr. Bush's approach to Social Security—letting people invest some of their payroll taxes in private accounts—would do nothing in itself to eliminate the long-term gap." The Comptroller General of the United States, David M. Walker, agrees. "The creation of private accounts for Social Security," he said in a speech last month, "will not deal with the solvency and sustainability of the Social Security fund." The solvency and sustainability of Social Security, when and if it requires shoring up, will have to be dealt with the old-fashioned way: by increasing revenue and/or reducing guaranteed benefits.

The cynical, or maybe just the political, interpretation of the rush to privatization is that private accounts would, as David Brooks, the Times' freshman columnist, wrote the other day, "create Republicans. People who have them will start thinking like investors." (They won't actually be investors, not in any meaningful sense—they'll still be workers for hire. But, come election time, they'll take their cue from the Dow, not from wage scales or income gaps or the unemployment rate.) The really cynical explanation is that privatization is a nice, clean way to transfer gigantic sums to Wall Street brokerage houses.

A third explanation—and, who knows, maybe a more accurate one—is that the true impetus to privatization is ideological. To say that is not to say, "How awful!" It's actually a compliment. Ideology is less depraved than crude self-interest, even when it gets you to the same place. And one person's ideology is another person's "values." The values behind Social Security privatization are not terrible. It is good to save. It is good to be self-reliant. It is good to plan ahead. It is good to be the little pig who builds his house of brick rather than straw.

But it's not as if these values were not being taught in hundreds of other ways in our lives. And there are other values, too—values that are suggested by the words "social" and "security." Yes, self-reliance is good; but solidarity is good, too. Looking after yourself is good, but making a firm social decision to banish indigence among the old is also good. Market discipline is good, but it is also good for there to be places where the tyranny of winning and losing does not dominate. Individual choice is good. But making the well-being of the old dependent on the luck or skill of their stock picks or mutual-fund choices is not so good. The idea behind Social Security is not just that old folks should be entitled to comfort regardless of their personal merits. It is that none of us, of any age, should be obliged to live in a society where minimal dignity and the minimal decencies are denied to any of our fellow-citizens at the end of life. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house"—that's a good admonition to keep in mind when making social policy. But so is "Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." ●



## Inaugural Protester Hates Fur Coats Angry, Vulgar Republicans Take Over D.C.

by Jamila Larson, [CommonDreams.org](http://CommonDreams.org), 23 Jan 2005

**W**ASHINGTON D.C. Inauguration Day 2005. I feel nauseous... I spent six hours today carrying these signs with my friends:

- “The homeless suffer from your vote. Why not give them your fur coat?”
- “25,000 children in DC are poor and we have to pay for your party?”
- “20,000 killed in Iraq and you're having a party?”
- “Bush Stole My Boyfriend!” (Gina's boyfriend is being sent to Iraq)...

First of all, the number of fur coats I saw today absolutely cannot be exaggerated. The city looked like it was being invaded by bears coming out of hibernation. There were white fur coats and black fur coats, spotted fur coats, and striped fur coats. There were brown mink coats that must have taken a hundred animals to make. There was big hair and stretched skin and a cowboy hat or two bobbing in and out of the crowd, but it was the ubiquitous fur coats that really felt like a slap in the face. WE'RE HERE, WE'RE RICH, WE'VE TAKEN OVER THE COUNTRY...

They even took over the homeless people's sidewalk! My friend Gina and I spoke with a few homeless men who barely had enough energy to laugh appreciatively at our signs as they lay on steam grates in the frigid temperatures. It is an out-of-body experience to silently stand on a street corner and see these two worlds clash; a man just trying to survive, and a parade of fur coats yelling, “They need to *get a job!*”...

We thought it was common knowledge that DC taxpayers were being asked to foot the \$12 million security bill for the first time in inauguration history. We thought our sign referencing this fact was the most benign sign in the bunch but oddly enough, it attracted the most virility from the crowd. Dozens of people shouted, “you are not paying for our party!” and I rattled off the stats, encouraging them to read the paper. “Oh yeah, everything you read in the newspapers is true you know,” one woman snickered to her smiling husband. “Check out yesterday's editorial in the Washington Post...” I recommended helpfully as they shook their heads and walked away. “Where do they get their news? From Paul Revere riding through the streets on his horse?” Gina mused. Even those who believed our sign said that “your stinking city” deserves to foot the bill!..

I don't remember ever being called so many names before; I think today surpassed even what my brother could dole out growing up. People also treated us to the finger and one man actually elbowed our signs as he walked past. Another Republican reveler angrily tried to take another protester's sign. One woman pushed the flash down on my camera, and I'm not even going to get into the million dirty looks and scowls. I expect to show up in a lot of Republican's nightmares tonight. As they will certainly be in mine!..

Where does all this anger come from? I am here to testify that there is a whole lot of repressed RAGE underneath that stretched skin. I really don't know where it comes from. After all, TODAY WAS THEIR PARTY! We were merely providing a “public service” as Gina explained, to educate our visitors about the city we know and love. We were not screaming, we were not shouting. We literally stood and chatted with each other, holding our signs, smiling, saying hello. We were decidedly nonpartisan and managed to satisfy a few ruffled feathers agreeing that Clinton

didn't do enough to help the homeless either. When a man didn't believe us that homelessness has risen under Bush, we asked for his business card to send him some more information. “Don't, Stu,” his panicked wife warned— I assured her I wasn't a terrorist. If you ever need a Real Estate Financial Consultant in West Lake Village, CA, I can hook you up...

*Jamila Larson is a social worker at an elementary school in southeast Washington, DC. She is a “yuppie-looking white girl”. Contact her at [jamilalarson@yahoo.com](mailto:jamilalarson@yahoo.com).*

### Economic Hit Man (Continued from Page 1)

pin-striped suit. The second puppet carried in one hand a bucket decorated with dollar signs. He used his free hand to wave an American flag over Nixon's head in the manner of a slave fanning a master.

A map of the Middle and Far East appeared behind the two, the various countries hanging from hooks in their respective positions. Nixon immediately approached the map, lifted Vietnam off its hook, and thrust it to his mouth. He shouted something that was translated as, “Bitter! Rubbish. We don't need any more of this!” Then he tossed it into the bucket and proceeded to do the same with other countries.

I was surprised, however, to see that his next selections did not include the domino nations of Southeast Asia. Rather, they were all Middle Eastern countries—Palestine, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Syria, and Iran. After that, he turned to Pakistan and Afghanistan. Each time, the Nixon doll screamed out some epithet before dropping the country into his bucket, and in every instance, his vituperative words were anti-Islamic: “Muslim dogs,” “Mohammed's monsters,” and “Islamic devils.”

The crowd became very excited, the tension mounting with each new addition to the bucket. They seemed torn between fits of laughter, shock, and rage. At times, I sensed they took offense at the puppeteer's language. I also felt intimidated; I stood out in the crowd, taller than the rest, and I worried that they might direct their anger at me. Then Nixon said something that made my scalp tingle when Rasy translated it:

“Give this one to the World Bank. See what it can do to make us some money off Indonesia.” He lifted Indonesia from the map and moved to drop it in the bucket, but just at that moment another puppet leaped out of the shadows. This puppet represented an Indonesian man, dressed in batik shirt and khaki slacks, and he wore a sign with his name clearly printed on it.

“A popular Bandung politician,” Rasy explained.

This puppet literally flew between Nixon and the Bucket Man, and held up his hand.

“Stop!” he shouted. “Indonesia is sovereign.”

The crowd burst into applause. Then Bucket Man lifted his flag and thrust it like a spear into the Indonesian, who staggered and died a most dramatic death. The audience members booed, hooted, screamed, and shook their fists. Nixon and the Bucket Man stood there, looking out at us. They bowed and left the stage.

“I think I should go,” I said to Rasy. He placed a hand protectively around my shoulder. “It's okay,” he said. “They have nothing against you personally.” I wasn't so sure...

...Several days later the popular Bandung politician, whose puppet stood up to Nixon and was impaled by Bucket Man, was struck and killed by a hit-and-run driver. ●

## U.S. Empire—1900 “Boxer” Model Sec. John Hay a Former-Day Dick Cheney

Small Planet Communications, [smplanet.com](http://smplanet.com), Jan 2005

Throughout the nineteenth century, China's emperors had watched as foreigners encroached further and further upon their land. Time and again, foreigners forced China to make humiliating concessions. Foreign regiments, armed with modern weapons, consistently defeated entire imperial armies. Now, as a new century was about to begin, Tsu Hsi, empress dowager of the Ch'ing Dynasty, searched for a way to rid her empire of foreign parasites.

Austria, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, and Russia all claimed exclusive trading rights to certain parts of China. They were dividing China into "spheres of influence." Some even claimed to own the territory within their spheres. By acquiring the Philippines, the United States became an Asian power too. Now, with a strong base of operations just 400 miles from China, American businesses hoped to take advantage of China's vast resources. The foreign spheres of influence, however, threatened their ambitions.

So while the empress was hoping to close China to foreigners, Americans were looking for a way in. John Hay, now Secretary of State, had an idea. Since public opinion, strained by the Philippines war, would never support the use of force, he decided to negotiate. He sent letters to all the foreign powers and suggested an "Open Door" policy in China. This policy would guarantee equal trading rights for all and prevent one nation from discriminating against another within its sphere.

The nations replied that they liked the concept of the Open Door, but that they could not support or enforce it. Hay's plan had been politely rejected. Nevertheless Hay announced that since all of the powers had accepted the Open Door in principle, the United States considered their agreement "final and definitive."



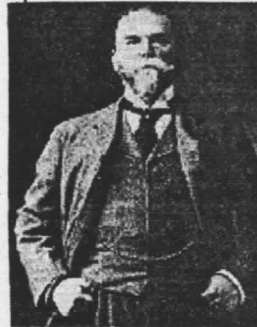
Empress Tsu Hsi

While the outside powers bickered over who would control China, Tsu Hsi issued an imperial message to all the Chinese provinces. The present situation is becoming daily more difficult. The various Powers cast upon us looks of tiger-like voracity, hustling each other to be first to seize our innermost territories...Should the strong enemies become aggressive and press us to consent to things we can never accept, we have no alternative but to rely upon the justice of our cause. . . . If our hundreds of millions of inhabitants . . . would prove their loyalty to their emperor and love of their country, what is there to fear from any invader? Let us not think about making peace.

In northern Shandong province, a devastating drought was pushing people to the edge of starvation. Few people there were thinking about making peace. A secret society, known as the Fists of Righteous Harmony, attracted thousands of followers. Foreigners called members of this society "Boxers" because they practiced martial arts. The Boxers also believed that they had a magical power, and that foreign bullets could not harm them. Millions of "spirit soldiers," they said, would soon rise from the dead and join their cause.

Their cause, at first, was to overthrow the imperial Ch'ing government and expel all "foreign devils" from China. The crafty empress, however, saw a way to use the Boxers. Through her ministers, she began to encourage the Boxers. Soon a new slogan -- "Support the Ch'ing; destroy the foreigner!" -- appeared upon the Boxers' banner.

In the early months of 1900, thousands of Boxers roamed the countryside. They attacked Christian missions, slaughtering foreign missionaries and Chinese converts. Then they moved toward the cities, attracting more and more followers as they came. Nervous foreign ministers insisted that the Chinese government stop the Boxers. From inside the Forbidden City, the empress told the diplomats that her troops would soon crush the "rebellion". Meanwhile, she did nothing as the Boxers entered the capital.



Sec. John Hay

Foreign diplomats, their families, and staff lived in a compound just outside the Forbidden City's walls in the heart of Beijing. Working together, they threw up hasty defenses, and with a small force of military personnel, they faced the Boxer onslaught. One American described the scene as 20,000 Boxers advanced in a solid mass and carried standards of red and white cloth. Their yells were deafening, while the roar of gongs, drums and horns sounded like thunder. . . . They

waved their swords and stamped on the ground with their feet. They wore red turbans, sashes, and garters over blue cloth. [When] they were only twenty yards from our gate, . . . three volleys from the rifles of our sailors left more than fifty dead upon the ground.

The Boxers fell back but soon returned. Surrounded, the foreigners could neither escape nor send for help. For almost two months, they withstood fierce attacks and bombardment. Things began to look hopeless. Seventy-six defenders lay dead, and many more were wounded. Ammunition, food, and medical supplies were almost gone. Then, shortly before dawn, loud explosions rocked the city. Weary defenders staggered to the barricades, expecting a final, overpowering Boxer attack. But as a column of armed men approached them, they began to cheer. Help had arrived at last.

After a month of no news from their diplomats, the foreign powers had grown worried. They assembled an international relief force of soldiers and sailors from eight countries. The United States, eager to rescue its ministers and to assert its presence in China, sent a contingent of 2,500 sailors and marines. After rescuing another besieged delegation in Tientsin, the international force marched to Beijing, fighting Boxers and imperial soldiers along the way.

The international troops looted the capital and even ransacked the Forbidden City. Disguised as a peasant, the empress dowager escaped the city in a cart. She returned to the Forbidden City a year later, but the power of the Ch'ing dynasty was destroyed forever.

Because it had participated in the campaign, the United States participated in the settlement that followed. Hay called for an expanded "Open Door," not only within the spheres of influence, but in all parts of China. He also recommended that the powers preserve China's territory and its government. Other powers agreed, and the Open Door policy allowed foreign access to China's market until World War II closed it once again.



## Kennedy: "Fascist" America RFK Jr Calls Bush Corrupt, Immoral

by Russell Mokhiber & Robert Weissman,

*Focus on the Corporation*, 21 Jan 2005

**R**obert F. Kennedy, Jr. wants to run for Attorney General of New York State. He might announce his candidacy within the next two weeks. [Note: Citing family reasons, RFK Jr withdrew from the race. —Ed.] He's the son of Robert F. Kennedy, the former Attorney General under his brother, John F. Kennedy.

In 2001, President Bush named the Justice Department building after RFK. The young Kennedy attended the ceremony. We asked him what he thought of President Bush naming the building after his dad. He said he wouldn't comment on the record. But he did call President Bush "the most corrupt and immoral President that we have had in American history."

Not that he was enamored with Senator John Kerry. Early in the campaign, Kennedy endorsed Senator John Kerry for President, but last month he expressed disappointment in Kerry's campaign and in the Democratic Party.

"The Republicans are 95 percent corrupt and the Democrats are 75 percent corrupt," said Kennedy. "They are accepting money from the same corporations. And of course, that is going to corrupt you."

He has spent the last 18 years as a sort of private attorney general—suing polluters to clean up the Hudson River. Kennedy says that in the late 1960s, the Hudson River was "a national joke." "It was dead water for 20-mile stretches north of New York City and south of Albany. It caught fire. It changed colors," he said. "Today, it is the richest water body in the North Atlantic. It produces more pounds of fish per acre and more biomass per gallon than any other waterway in the Atlantic north of the equator. It is the last major river system left in the North Atlantic, on both sides, that still has strong spawning stocks of all of its historical species of migratory fish."

He is seeking to close down the Indian Point nuclear power plant 22 miles north of New York City. "After Chernobyl, 1,000 miles around the plant were uninhabitable. One hundred miles around the plant are permanently uninhabitable," he said. "One hundred miles around Indian Point would be all of New York City. So, imagine a world without New York City. Well, the terrorists already have. According to the 9/11 Commission, Mohammed Atta cased Indian Point before deciding to bomb the World Trade Center. But he believed, erroneously as it turned out, that the plant must be so heavily guarded, that it would be impossible to crash an airliner into it."

Kennedy charges that his appearance on MSNBC's Charles Grodin show in November 1996 got Grodin fired. Kennedy was invited on the show to talk about his book and group by the same name—Riverkeepers. On the show, Kennedy ripped into GE, an owner of the network, for polluting the Hudson with PCBs. On the show, Kennedy claimed that "every woman between Oswego and Albany has elevated levels of PCBs in her milk because of GE." Grodin was soon thereafter fired.

Kennedy wrote a book last year that he hoped would change the direction of the country. It didn't. But it's a great book, nonetheless. It's called *Crimes Against Nature: How George W. Bush and his Corporate Pals Are Plundering the Country and Hijacking Our Democracy* (HarperCollins, 2004).

For the past couple of years, he's been giving 40 or so speeches a year, mostly in the red zone, mostly to conservative groups. He speaks about the corporate attack on the country. "There is no difference between the reaction I get from Republicans and Democrats, because Americans share the same values," Kennedy told us. "If you talk about these issues in terms of our national values, everybody understands it."



John F. Kennedy, Jr.

In the book, Kennedy implies that we live in a fascist country and that the Bush White House has learned key lessons from the Nazis. "While communism is the control of business by government, fascism is the control of government by business," he writes. "My American Heritage Dictionary defines fascism as 'a system of government that exercises a dictatorship of the extreme right, typically through the merging of state and business leadership together with belligerent nationalism.' Sound familiar?"

He quotes Hitler's propaganda chief Herman Goering: "It is always simply a matter to drag the people along, whether it is a democracy, or a fascist dictatorship, or a parliament, or a communist dictatorship. The people can always be brought to the bidding of the leaders. That is easy. All you have to do is tell them they are being attacked, and denounce the peacemakers for lack of patriotism and exposing the country to danger. It works the same in any country." Kennedy then adds: "The White House has clearly grasped the lesson."

Kennedy also quotes Benito Mussolini's insight that "fascism should more appropriately be called corporatism because it is the merger of state and corporate power."

"The biggest threat to American democracy is corporate power," Kennedy told us. "There is vogue in the White House to talk about the threat of big government. But since the beginning of our national history, our most visionary political leaders have warned the American public against the domination of government by corporate power. That warning is missing in the national debate right now. Because so much corporate money is going into politics, the Democratic Party itself has dropped the ball. They just quash discussion about the corrosive impact of excessive corporate power on American democracy."

### EXIT POLLS (Continued from Page 8)

only, say, half the turnout battles, the renormalization of all the exit polls to include extra Republicans would have no valid basis, would in fact be a fudge: this is important not because we give a damn what was done to the fudged exit polls, but because the "actual" vote count which those polls were fudged in order to match could not have happened (in the absence of across-the-board Republican turnout victories, which we have determined to be highly implausible).

The unfortunate reality is that there is still too much we don't know about the raw data and crucial things we may never know about nonresponse patterns. If exit polling should somehow not be banned, restricted, or thoroughly discredited in the conventional wisdom by 2006/2008, it should be a no-brainer to set up a high-end, independent exit polling operation (\$10-15 million required and well spent) with open methodology and no fealty to the media moguls.

—Jonathan Simon, Arlington

## Radiology Outsourced to India ...Where Doctors Are Paid \$25,000 a Year

by Samuel Bowles, Richard Edwards, and Frank Roosevelt  
excerpt from , Understanding Capitalism:  
Competition, Command, and Change. rev. 2005

**W**ho's afraid of globalization? Call-center employees. Auto and garment industry workers. Computer programmers. Data-entry personnel. People who compete with poorly paid workers in the rest of the world. How about doctors?

When a doctor at Massachusetts General Hospital began using radiologists in India to read X-rays and MRI scans in the fall of 2002, high-priced doctors started talking like auto workers. It's a "nail in the coffin of the job market," wrote one (anonymously) on the radiologists' website AuntMinnie.com. Another asked: "Who needs to pay us \$350,000 a year if they can get a cheap Indian radiologist for \$25,000?" Still others talked about the "radiology sweatshops."

There is an acute shortage of radiologists in the U.S. Advertised vacancies rose from less than 100 per month in the mid-1990s to well over 500 a month in 2001, and the Chairman of the Board of Chancellors at the American College of Radiology said of the shortage: "It's almost of crisis proportions." But there are many well-trained English-speaking radiologists in India. Add to this the fact that it is difficult to get U.S. radiologists to work nights, and nighttime in the U.S. is daytime in India.

X-rays, MRIs and other images can be beamed to medical centers in India instantaneously. The Indian radiologists are not licensed to do diagnosis, but they can perform non-diagnostic tasks such as converting two dimensional images from scans into the three dimensional images that surgeons find more informative. Arjun Kalyanpur is a doctor who had been on the faculty at Yale and moved back to India. He and a partner read about 100 scans a day, including some from the Centre Community Hospital in State College, Pennsylvania. The staff radiologist at the Community Hospital is entirely happy with Dr. Kalyanpur's work; but he did not know where it was done. "Is he actually in India?" the doctor asked when told that Kalyanpur worked in Bangalore.

Other areas of medical practice will also be globalized. Specialized firms in Ireland, India and other countries have long handled billing and the processing of insurance claims for U.S. hospitals. But now images of tissue can be transmitted electronically, to be analyzed by specialists at remote sites. Robotic microscopes allow the doctor or technician to be oceans away from the slide under the microscope. Even the monitoring of patients in intensive care units can now be performed at remote sites. While this off-site monitoring is currently done within the U.S., there is no technical reason why it could not be done anywhere in the world where there is the necessary expertise.

U.S. medical institutions not only buy radiology and other services from the rest of the world; they sell too. "I think the opportunities for U.S. health care internationally probably are very large," said Dr. Ronald Weinstein, head of pathology at the University of Arizona College of Medicine, where plans are underway to market diagnostic and other services around the world.

## Block the Bullies! "Fox TV Prepares to Attack Me"

by Prof. Shahid Alam, Economics Dept., Northeastern University

I published an essay, "America and Islam: Seeking Parallels," in Counterpunch.Org on December 29, 2004. A day later, I began to receive nasty and threatening emails, all at once. These were orchestrated by a www.littlegreenfootballs.com. Shortly thereafter, other right-wing websites got into [the] act, posting excerpts from the essay; these included ijihadwatch.org, campuswatch.org, frontpagemag.com, freerepublic.com, etc. The messages posted on these websites were equally vicious, and some of them, containing explicit death threats, were 'kindly' forwarded to me.

What did I say in this essay? I made two points. First, that the 9-11 attacks were an Islamist insurgency: the attackers believe that they are fighting—as the Americans did, in the 1770s—for their freedom and dignity against a foreign occupation/control of their lands. Secondly, I argue that these attacks were the result of a massive political failure of Muslims to resist their tyrannies locally. It was a mistake to attack the US.

I followed the first essay with a second one, "Testing Free Speech In America", where I elaborate on the points I had made earlier. This too was published in Counterpunch.Org on Jan 1/2, 2005.

The emails to me and the University continued for another two weeks, eventually tapering off. In the meanwhile, I was speaking to people at the ACLU, Boston, and the ADC, Boston. On the suggestion of the ACLU, I contacted the campus police and the police in my hometown to let them know about the death threats posted against me.

I had a feeling this was not the end of the matter. So yesterday, February 1, I received an email from Fox News asking for a TV interview; they were producing a program "on me." At this point, I spoke to people at ACLU who advised me against going on the program. I received the same advice from other friends. I wrote back to Fox saying I could not do the interview but would be glad to answer any questions. They did not take me up on my offer. Clearly, this would not help them in their designs against me.

It appears that **Bill O'Reilly is doing a series on 'unAmerican' professors on US campuses**. Last night, my wife tells me, he did a piece on Ward Churchill. Tonight will be my turn. I expect he will make all kinds of outlandish accusations that will resonate well with the left- and Muslim-hating members of his audience. This will generate calls and emails to Northeastern and to me—containing threats, calls for firing me, and threats to withhold donations. I am not sure how well NU will stand up against this barrage.

**If we can generate a matching volume of emails, letters and calls to NU supporting my right to free speech, it might be helpful.**

More info: Merrie Najimi (guest speaker, BCA) (617) 924-7393  
Professor (Economics) Shahid Alam (617) 373-2849  
Opinion to: N.U. President Richard Freeland (617) 373-2101  
N.U. Provost Ahmed Abdelal (617) 373-4517  
N.U. Dean (Arts&Sci) James Stellar (617) 373-3980

Thanks to Elisabeth Leonard for forwarding Prof. Alam's letter.



## 8 HOT BCA PROJECTS—Choose 1

BCA has initiated many projects—some successfully completed, some dropped, and some “on hold”. Here are status summaries of seven projects currently “on the table”, PLUS—You might want to add “Voting Integrity”, which we have delved into deeply, or your own pet project. How fast and how far any of these projects will go depends in large part upon your expressed interest and support. Please contact Dave Lewit, BCA co-chair, 617-266-8687, for more information, and for a possible role. Call also if you have a project you’d like BCA to take up, or to join.

### 1. Popular Governance in New England

BCA Dispatch for December 2004 reported the first roundtable conference, at UMass/Amherst, of 15 local movement leaders from 4 of the 6 New England states. Led by Dave Lewit, Ruth Caplan, and Gianpaolo Baiocchi, the goal is to share experience, promote local self-reliance, and promote regional integration. Among the topics discussed were protection of public water from corporate takeover, participatory budgeting, living wage, and structure of town government. We want this to be a rolling roundtable with conferences in each of the 6 NE states, drawing from local civic leaders as well as continuing core-member participation. We welcome your help in identifying new participants and making local arrangements at new sites.

### 2. Globalization Impact Commission

BCA drafted a “Globalization Impact Bill” modified and sponsored by state Rep. Byron Rushing and state Sen. Dianne Wilkerson in 2000. The bill will set up a commission to assess NAFTA, GATS, FTAA, CAFTA, and other/impending federal “trade and investment agreements” and recommend giving or withholding support. This will provide official state-level scrutiny, so far absent, which will stimulate public debate, promote legislative action, and influence Congress. With the help of CPPAX we began gathering legislative support, but put the project on hold when attention was lost after the World Trade Center attacks. Rep. Rushing has reintroduced the bill, as revised in 2002, with the joint support of BCA and Massachusetts Global Action (formed by three leaders of the Boston Social Forum). We are looking for house and senate co-sponsors, and need your help with legislator education and community group endorsements. Call Dave Lewit, 617-266-8687, or Jason Pramas, 617-338-9966.

### 3. New England Alliance Web Site

Two years ago BCA discussed and laid out specifications for a web site (*Dispatch*, April 2003) to provide public information, feedback, and facilitation of local and regional projects. Each AFD chapter in the Northeast would have a niche. Among other things, it would post current and archive back issues of *BCA Dispatch*. It would provide a virtual meeting place for working groups whose members are geographically scattered. Finding a designer and a webmaster proved difficult. Luckily, Stan Robinson has now volunteered to be webmaster, and Bhavin Patel and/or Sergio Reyes have volunteered to design data-base, with an experienced graphic designer still needed. Jesse Burkhardt, who educated BCA about building a site, will advise. Please call if you can help with any of these functions.

### 4. Boston Neighborhood Linkage

Around 1998 BCA became interested in the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI) because we value democratic local development and networking as the answer to corporate globalization. DSNI is a model grassroots citizens’ association for local

development and governance, started and run by Roxbury residents who rejected paternalistic initiatives of downtown bankers and city officials. We saw their film, and discussed local initiatives with their executive director (ED) and with the director of the associated Food Project. Departure of the ED and a year-long transition to a new ED (John Barros) cut short our bid to collaborate with DSNI. We have now reconnected, propose to view DSNI’s accomplishments at first hand, and negotiate a collaborative project. One proposal is to scout neighborhoods elsewhere in Boston with an eye to sharing their self-development concerns, publicizing, brokering, and working toward a democratic inter-neighborhood network, with DSNI as one successful model. Please call if you want to help decide and to participate.

### 5. The Listening Project

In last month’s *Dispatch* we ran an article called “Talking with a Republican”. What if we all listened to people not like ourselves, and they listened to us? Perhaps we would finally understand why many people voted for Bush—apart from stereotypes we share. Perhaps they would understand people with progressive attitudes, and perhaps we may make common cause. That’s on the social or political level. On the personal level, we and they may become genuinely compassionate—a spiritual realization. We don’t necessarily have to join a “public discourse” group or course, but we might consider that. BCA has linked with some MoveOn people who are interested in a Listening Project. If you want to connect with your neighbors “across town”, please call to form an exploring or support group.

### 6. Boston Newsletter Digest

For good reason, most of us complain about control of public information by the corporate media. We welcome the internet, but recognize its limitations. Meanwhile, hundreds of voluntary organizations in the Boston area publish newsletters and ‘zines, a potential goldmine of popular concerns, goals, and projects. What if we searched 100 local newsletters and published a monthly digest of the best ideas, projects, and writings—in paper and/or on-line? That might be a good way of (1) broadcasting what the corporate media shun, and (2) fitting together material and people from disparate fields, neighborhoods, and social classes. It might go a long way in building a democratic Boston. Please call to help form a working group.

### 7. Journalists Wake!

We all know that the media—TV, radio, big newspapers and magazines, and chain-owned local papers—keep us dumbed-down, distracted, and conforming, for the most part. Their producers and editors are controlled by advertising revenue and mass-circulation policies, and avoid news critical of their corporate employers or the governing establishment. Unlike old-time newspapers with their unschooled but curious and sometimes daring reporters, today’s working journalists generally have college specializations in journalism. What if we persuaded schools of journalism to work with editors, reporters and citizens, and set higher standards for honesty and populism in assignments, reporting, editing, and monitoring? Would media owners come to work with such standards? What if we regularly read FAIR’s *Extra!* and YOU attend the Media Reform conference in St. Louis, May 13-15? Could we then worm our way into the board rooms of Boston’s various graduate schools of journalism, and have an impact? Call BCA!

8. \_\_\_\_\_ Your Project Here! (Choose for systemic impacts.)

## CHAPTER NEWS (Continued from previous page)

**A record snowfall** forced cancellation of our January meeting, "Should We Secede?" So we plan to reschedule the event for Wednesday, 16 March. Same guest speakers, Jim Hogue and Ben Scotch, from Vermont. See Page 1 for our February meeting announcement, and stay tuned for details on March.

**Doris "Granny D" Haddock**, 95, is recovering from throat surgery in NH. Her voice may be affected, but her messages will be as important and eloquent as ever. Doris: Keep us focused and inspired! Visit her web site [www.GrannyD.com](http://www.GrannyD.com).

**A tularemia outbreak** (similar to plague) from a Boston U Level 2 lab stopped progress in the authorization of BU's proposed Level 4 "BioSafety" (bioterror) lab. The outbreak occurred several months ago, but kept quiet—except for internal reports—until after the city zoning board had held hearings and approved BU's request. Five city councilors are opposing the lab. Write or call your councilor, Council President Michael Flaherty at 617.635.4205, and Mayor Thomas Menino at 617.635.4500.

## LETTERS

### Create Independent Exit Polls

This is very old news; we know that the "final" exit polls were "forced" or "adjusted" or "renormalized" (whatever) to congruence with the actual vote data; this, if you read the methodology statements carefully, was not a secret. These exit polls were, quite simply, not intended to serve as a check mechanism on the election or an impediment to rampant fraud. They have served as such accidentally or incidentally, because we captured data which is revealing.

The real question comes down to whether there was a differential nonresponse factor (Bush voters hypothesized to have been less likely to respond). There is no hard evidence for this hypothesis and one could at least equally well propose a reluctant Kerry voter phenomenon. There is, however, some fairly convincing evidence that weighs against the differential nonresponse factor hypothesis.

It's a bit complex, but basically what we've seen is that the re-normalization of the "final" exit polls by party ID obtains congruence with the actual vote tallies by significantly overrepresenting Republicans in virtually every state (and nationally). The only reasonable justification for so doing would be if the Republicans won the turnout battle in virtually every state, but this advantage was masked to the exit polls by the reluctant Bush responder phenomenon. Not only does this introduce two unsupported assumptions both of which must bear out, but in fact the turnout component flies in the face of observational evidence (long lines in Dem precincts, short in Republican precincts; huge new voter turnout—people are far more likely to become voters for the first time to support a new candidate, not an incumbent; Bush's low approval rating) as well as the little available numerical evidence.

If Republicans in fact won (Continued on Page 5 <<)

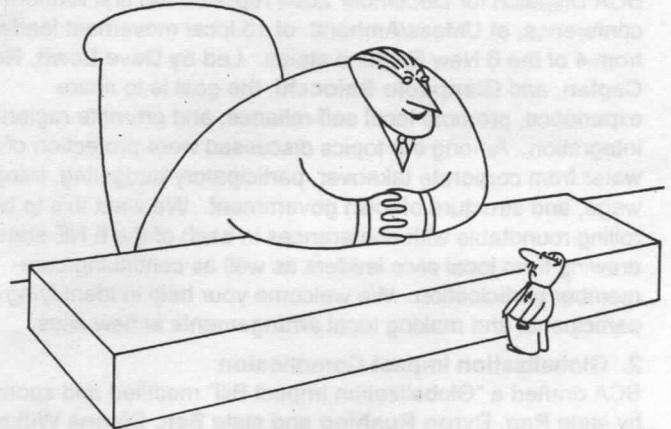
## ACTION ALERTS

**Thu. 17 Feb. 5pm, Cambridge. Election 2004: Did Media Fail?** with Terence Smith, PBS producer; Cathy Young, columnist. MIT bldg E15, Bartos Theater, Ames St. Info: 617.253.0108.

**Thu. 3 Mar. 7pm, Boston. After Capitalism: "Economic Democracy"** with David Schweickart, Loyola U of Chicago. Tellus Institute, 11 Arlington St. Info: 617.354.5078

**Thu. 10 Mar. 7pm, Cambridge. Beyond Agribusiness: New Models for Agricultural Production.** with Brian Donahue, Brandeis U, "Reclaiming the Commons"; Kathleen Merrigan, Tufts U; Frederick Kirschenmann, Iowa State U. MIT bldg 3, room 270 (enter main bldg on Mass Av under dome). Info: 617.253.0108.

Free copy of "A People's History of the US" by Howard Zinn. For **Social Justice Book Group**, Boston Public Library, 700 Boylston St, meeting Wednesdays 9 Mar, 13 April, & 11 May at 7pm. Go to Info Desk, 617.859.2270.



*Opportunity*

*"Just as your family means a lot to you, Henderson, power means a lot to me."*

## JOIN THE BCA

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

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

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

### BOSTON-CAMBRIDGE ALLIANCE for DEMOCRACY PLEDGE

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

Name : \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Street, No./Box/Apt: \_\_\_\_\_

Town and Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Day \_\_\_\_\_ Night: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

## COLOPHON

Dave Lewit Bill King (Please apply.)

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