

# Washington Free press

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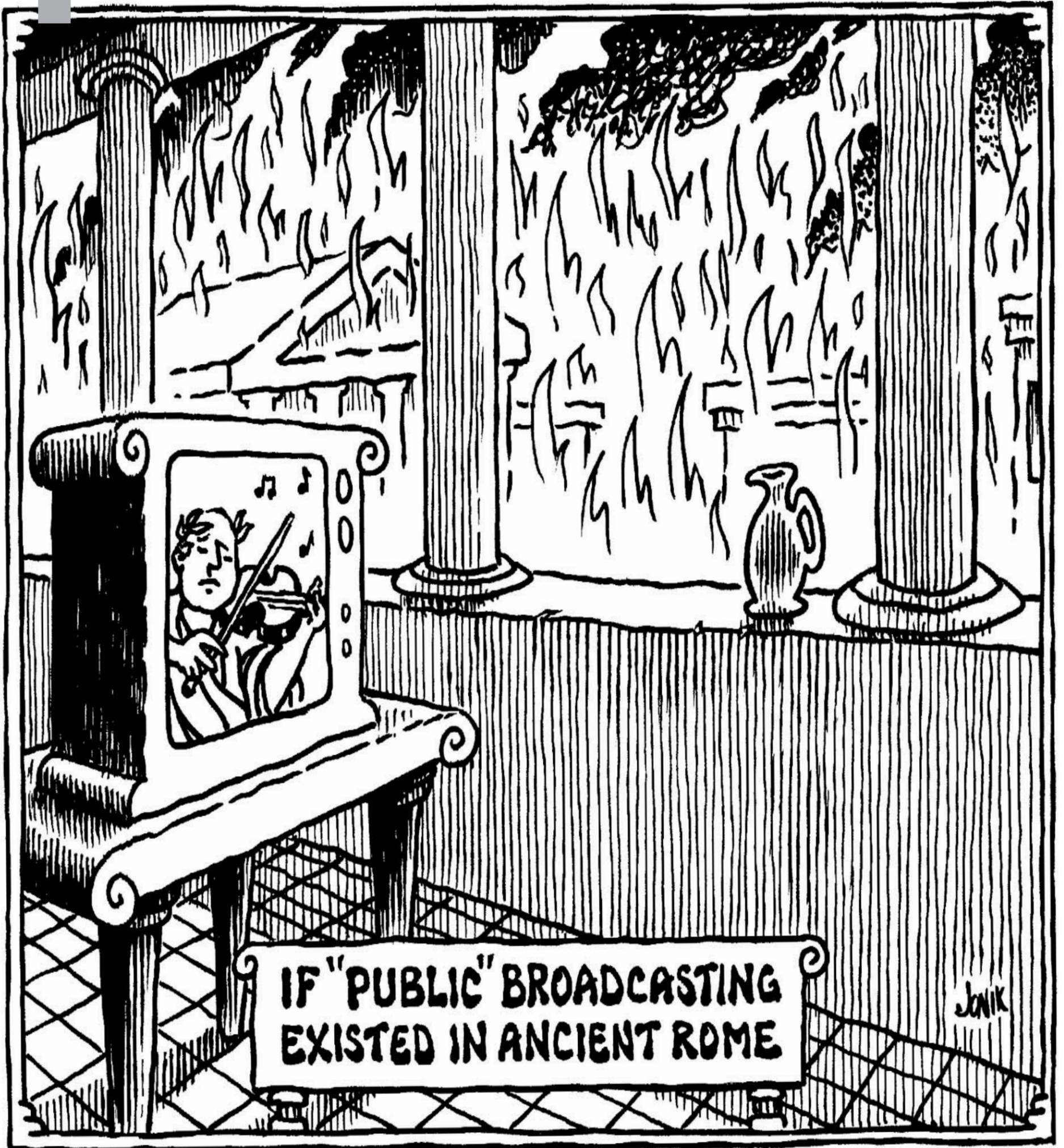
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## READER MAIL

### Don't Tax Medical Marijuana

Supporters of medicinal marijuana initiatives often use the selling point that it could produce tax revenues. A cartoon in a recent issue of this paper even incorporated that idea [May/June 2009]. This tactic seems to be done to appeal to greed-ball public officials who might be tempted to do anything to get regressive tax money to help their corporate golf partners evade legitimate progressive income taxation.

Medicine, medical supplies like wheel-chairs and crutches and so forth, along with basic foods and other necessities, ought never be thought of as taxable. The progressive step of legitimizing medicinal cannabis is incompatible with letting the idea of regressive taxes into the picture.

John Jonik

### Questions About Asbestos?

As you may know, there has recently been a lot of coverage surrounding the EPA announcing a Public Health Emergency in Libby Montana, with a movement to aggressively clean up and assist the area residents. In Libby, around 274 people have died from asbestos exposure related diseases, and that number is only growing as 17% of the population there have pleural abnormalities because of asbestos exposure. It's a problem that's not just centralized in Montana, either, as Vermont has recently been in the news for asbestos issues, and it is becoming a world wide issue as we begin to understand the devastating effects it can have.

Many people are just beginning to hear about asbestos and may not truly understand the dangers surrounding it, as it is the cause of a deadly cancer where there is no known cure, mesothelioma. Asbestos.net (The Asbestos & Mesothelioma Cancer Resource Center) provides people with in-depth information regarding asbestos and all of the issues that surround it. We are an Oncologist-reviewed site, and have accompanying videos on many of the pages to help people understand more about treatment options and other asbestos related information.

Molly MacIntyre

The Asbestos & Mesothelioma Resource Center

### THANKS FOR YOUR RECENT DONATIONS

We've lapsed in sending out thank-you cards in the past few months to the people who have "kicked in something extra" on top of their subscription. We want to let you know that your donations have been received and much appreciated. Here's the honor roll:

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Sincere apologies if we have missed any names.

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## Robert Pavlik looks at Wooden Boxes Think About the Box

We have all heard that now well-worn phrase, "think outside the box." California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger is a great proponent of "blowing up the boxes." (If you have seen any of his Terminator movies you know where he got that idea from.) These phrases imply a disdain for boxes.

As for me, I like boxes. I am not sure why we blame boxes for bad ideas or dysfunctional government. Boxes beat bags for carrying and storing stuff. They are strong, secure, well suited to the task. They protect their contents. You can label them. They keep out dust and dirt.

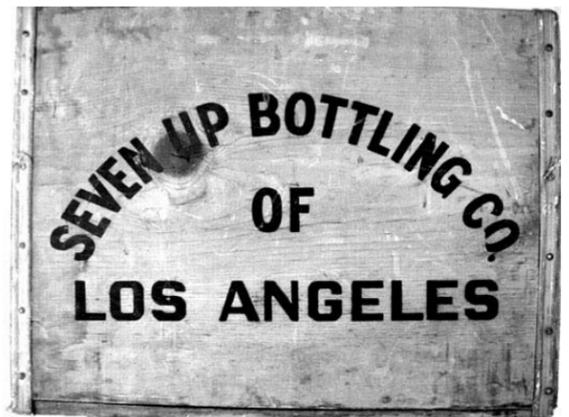
In the case of the boxes pictured here, I have owned some of these for over 35 years. They have served as book cases, stereo stands, held albums and knick knacks. I have loaded and unloaded them numerous times over the years. Stacked one on top of another, with a sturdy board or a lightweight hollow core door, they make a great desk. When your needs change, simply grab the handles and go.

I also like to think about their original function, who made them, and who handled them before they came into my possession. Built to carry oranges or fragile glass bottles of milk or Seven-Up, they were carefully put together and made to last. The Arden-S box, for example, comes from Seattle and was made 45 years ago [if anyone knows the background of it, please write us].

Where did these boxes travel, who packed, lifted, stacked and stored them? And how did they end up at the swap meet for me to purchase for nominal amounts? I will never know, but I do honor their history and their utility. Think *about* the box.



the "Arden S" is from Seattle



side label reads "Laverne Orange Association"



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first words  
ideas we couldn't  
keep to ourselves

## GIMME THAT SWINE FLU!

The best public health involves neither vaccines nor quarantines

BY DOUG COLLINS

As of July 3, 2009—fully three months into the outbreak of the new H1N1 “swine flu” strain—the World Health Organization (WHO) is reporting 382 confirmed worldwide deaths due to the swine flu ([www.who.int/csr/don/2009\\_07\\_03/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/csr/don/2009_07_03/en/index.html)). At that rate, there would be only about 1500 deaths in a year due to the much-feared virus.

Curiously, also according to the WHO, the three main seasonal flu strains—H3N2, old-fashioned H1N1, and type-B—cause 250,000 to 500,000 deaths a year globally.

Given that the normal three flu types apparently have a kill rate more than 100 times greater than swine flu, many people should question the news hype.

In Mexico, at the height of the scare in late April, officials reported some 159 suspected swine flu deaths, but it turned out only a handful of those were due to swine flu. A lesson should be learned by news readers: suspected cases in the early stages of a disease outbreak are typically overstated.

Skeptics should also take heart in their everyday experiences: the fact that my neighbor's kid had a confirmed case (with nothing more than some sniffles and a mild fever), the star of Harry Potter had a confirmed case (he'll be back on set shortly), and many of us have probably had it and don't even know. Seems like almost all the people dying from this extremely mild flu are those that have serious underlying health issues, the same as for the normal flu strains.

Heck, I had a fever and some sniffles a months ago. Would I have gone to the doctor and let public health officials make a big deal out of nothing? No way.

In fact, I'm hoping it was swine flu that I had. If, as some health officials suggest, the new H1N1 strain could mutate into something more effective, then there's a darn good chance that my body has developed immunity to it by contact with the pre-mutated strain. That's a natural vaccine, which I'd guess is probably more effective than any swine flu vaccine they'll come up with.

Think I'm crazy? Well, apparently the experts at the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) are crazy, too. They're saying that older people seem to be immune to the new H1N1 strain due to past exposure to other H1N1 viruses (<http://abcnews.go.com/Health/SwineFluNews/story?id=7647943&page=1>).

Of course, you'll never hear public health agencies (or their close cousins, pharmaceutical corporations) trumpet this finding very loudly. It might put them out of a job.

Moreover, the success rate of flu vaccines in the past has been... well, I don't want to be impolite. Suffice it to say that I avoid them. And if you're too young to remember the last swine flu scare in the 1970s, read about that virus and the considerably more fatal vaccine at [www.capitalcentury.com/1976.html](http://www.capitalcentury.com/1976.html).

In fact, I'd guess the debacle of the swine flu vaccine in 1976 is perhaps the reason that public health officials have been trying so hard to steer people away from using the term “swine flu.” This will assist their PR campaign for selling a new “H1N1” vaccine to us in the fall.

Ineffective—and sometimes harmful—public health practices need to be replaced by natural, common sense. So if you've got the flu, please sneeze on me now. It's probably the healthiest thing for me.

# Tsunami of Toxic TVs

Digital conversion results in yet more pollution in developing countries

FROM BASEL ACTION NETWORK (SEATTLE)

*Numbered references appear at the end of this article.*

Consumers should be extremely careful about where they take their old TVs for recycling following the nationwide conversion from analog-to-digital broadcasting. The Basel Action Network (BAN) is urging consumers to only use qualified “e-Steward” recyclers, the only list identifying electronic waste recyclers that will not export toxic TVs and other electronic waste to a developing country.

Because of the digital transition, many Americans have recently made the choice to upgrade their old cathode-ray tube TV to a slick new flat screen TV. Their old TV is obsolete and now a waste object for disposal, and smart consumers may believe that recycling is a better choice than placing it in a dumpster or at the curbside.

But BAN warns that currently, due to a lack of legislation forbidding such trade, about 80% of those companies calling themselves “recyclers” in North America will simply export your old TV to countries like China, India, or Nigeria where the toxic leaded glass, cadmium, and brominated flame retardants—which are found in materials in old TVs—will poison villagers using primitive technologies to recover some materials, and then dump or burn the rest of the electronic waste.(1)

“There are few regulations in place and the ones that do exist are easily circumvented. So many of these so-called recyclers take your TV or computer for free, or pocket your environmental fee, and then just turn around and ship your old TV to China or Vietnam,” said Sarah Westervelt e-Stewardship Director at BAN. “There, our old entertainment devices end up causing misery and disease, and ultimately contaminate the entire planet, distributing lead, mercury, and cadmium into the ecosphere—not a good plan for anyone, anywhere.”

It has been conservatively estimated by some recyclers that due to the digital conversion, about one in four households will get rid of a TV this year. If that is true, it would mean 27,790,564 TVs, each containing an average of five pounds of lead, will be disposed or recycled. And with 80% of this total shunted offshore to developing countries, about 56,000 tons of toxic lead alone would be transferred and dumped on some of the world's poorest communities.

In 2002 and 2005, BAN released two documentary films, *Exporting Harm* and *The Digital Dump*, shining a spotlight on the horrors of the global e-waste trade and its very damaging impacts of toxic constituents in electronic products on the workers and environments of communities in Africa and China.

Last year they went with CBS's 60 Minutes program to China and found the devastation of the environment from imported e-waste had gotten far worse. Recent studies in Guiyu, China, ground zero of the international waste trade, show some of the highest levels of

dioxin, lead and other cancer-causing pollutants ever recorded. Lead in the blood of 80 percent of the Guiyu's children is dangerously high and already demonstrable brain impairment has been recorded.

A 2008 report by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) condemned the EPA for not having comprehensive rules to control e-waste exports and poorly enforcing the one law that does exist for TVs and Computer monitors known as the “CRT Rule”.(2)

Since then, the EPA has begun welcomed enforcement of that rule, but unfortunately the law contains loopholes, exempting much of the leaded glass from regulation.

BAN, together with the Electronics TakeBack Coalition (ETBC), is currently seeking national legislation to ban the export of all toxic e-waste (not just CRTs) to developing countries as all European countries have already done.(3) And BAN has created the e-Stewards Initiative—a list of responsible e-cyclers\* that have agreed not to export hazardous e-wastes to developing countries.

“The current legislative landscape is a haven for ‘waste cowboys’ that use developing countries as global dumping grounds when there is a profit to be made,” said Jim Puckett, BAN's Executive Director. “The e-Stewards are ethical recyclers that will not export toxic e-Waste under the false pretext of recycling or reuse.”

For a list of e-Steward Recyclers: [www.e-Stewards.org](http://www.e-Stewards.org). The e-Stewards recyclers are currently subject to significant desk audits, verifying all of their downstream destinations throughout the recycling chain of toxic wastes, as defined internationally. However, the program will soon become an accredited, third party audited, certification program. For more information check the website above.

*For more information on illegal and irresponsible e-waste export: [www.ban.org](http://www.ban.org).*

### References

- (1) Just in June, BAN blew the whistle on EarthECycle, a Tulsa, OK., based recycler operating free takeback events in Pittsburgh and claiming that the waste would be processed locally. BAN tracked their containers to Hong Kong and to South Africa. Last year BAN assisted CBS's 60 Minutes program in exposing another exporter known as Executive Recycling in Denver. For more information on these incidents visit [www.ban.org](http://www.ban.org).
- (2) [www.gao.gov/new.items/do81044.pdf](http://www.gao.gov/new.items/do81044.pdf)
- (3) A bill introduced last month by Congressmen Jim Thompson and Gene Green is unfortunately insupportable as it allows a massive loophole for exports claimed to be sent for “reuse,” a common ruse of unscrupulous exporters.

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*Editor's note: David Swanson below argues that the fate of the war rests in the US House of Representatives. On June 16, 2009, the House voted to approve another \$106 billion dollars in supplemental money for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Although President Obama and Nancy Pelosi were leaning heavily on House members to vote yes, the vote was just nine short of failing, which would have been a major milestone. Unfortunately, two WA state Democratic House members were big disappointments to the antiwar movement. **Jim McDermott** (Seattle) had leaned no on the vote, but voted yes. **Jay Inslee** (Bainbridge Island) had promised a no vote to antiwar activists, but broke his promise. Not a single WA state Democrat voted no on the bill. You can let your congressperson know what you think by going to [www.votesmart.org/official\\_congress.php?dist=bio.php](http://www.votesmart.org/official_congress.php?dist=bio.php) or calling 202-225-3121.*



# A Plan to End the Wars

BY DAVID SWANSON

There are a million and one things that people can do to try to end the US wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, and to prevent new ones in Iran and elsewhere, as well as to close US military bases in dozens of other nations around the world.

Certain people are skilled at or interested in particular approaches, and nobody should be discouraged from contributing to the effort in their preferred ways. Far too often proposals to work for peace are needlessly framed as attacks on all strategies except one.

In my analysis, we should be focusing on three things: Communications, Congress, and Counter Recruitment. Of course, some well-timed mass-rally action can also help.

## COMMUNICATIONS

Our task is to communicate that:

- the wars are ongoing and will not end without our efforts,
- the wars must be ended,
- the peace movement has had many successes already and should by no means give in to frustration,
- the wars can be ended if a small fraction of the majority that wants them ended makes an effort,
- we have to choose between warfare and healthcare / other social goods,
- minimizing US casualties will not satisfy the demands of the US public,
- neither maximizing nor minimizing foreign casualties will satisfy the demands of the US public,
- there is a personal cost to those who support wars and war crimes,
- Congress members will face opposition through negative communications, disruption of their lives, and electoral challenges if they fund wars.

We don't have to communicate all of that in one interview on cable television, or violate any other laws of physics, but we DO have to communicate ALL of that. And getting our spokespeople on TV has to be part of how it is done. But primarily we need to create our own media and work with decent independent media outlets. Online media has developed to the point where it can influence broadcast and print media. And yet we are still quite capable of creating powerful online media. We cannot overlook the need to work with communities that lack internet access, or the need to use the internet to generate offline activities. But it is very hard to overestimate the importance to our efforts of the internet, and working to get more people access to it might be one of the most helpful efforts we can make.

We stopped Bush-Cheney from invading Iran. They intended to do so, and we prevented it, largely by exposing the grounds for invading Iraq to be lies. There was no press conference at the White House to announce this failure of theirs and success of ours, but that should have no impact on our claiming a victory and making it known to those who require encouragement and optimism.

On the other hand, we have allowed the wars to be spread to Pakistan with barely a peep of recognition, and by proxy to Gaza with only a weak and muddled response. And the push to attack Iran directly or by proxy remains.

We dominated the news and the elections in the United States and shifted power in the House, Senate, and White House to a different political party. And we ended up with a House, Senate, and White House that all favor continuing or expanding wars.

But we compelled President Bush to agree to withdrawal from Iraqi localities by June of 2009, complete withdrawal from the nation by the end of 2011, and a treaty that the Iraqi people have the right to reject by a vote.

The other advantage of our having shifted the partisan balance in our government, even without fundamentally altering our government's approach to war, is that we no longer have to do so. We can now move on to replacing pro-war Democrats with pro-peace

Democrats (or Independents, Greens, Republicans, Libertarians, etc.) The false claim that we should keep quiet about peace in order to elect Democrats who will then give us peace can no longer be made and can no longer get in the way.

And the advantage of having elected a president of a different party, who hasn't fundamentally changed anything, is that the claim that a new president will give us peace can now be replaced by consideration of whether we should look to presidents at all, or Congress instead, to do such things.

We kept the occupation of Iraq smaller than it would have been and prevented other invasions through the success of counter-recruitment efforts and resistance within the US military. Bush-Cheney having pushed the military to the breaking point is not a story of their incompetence or love for war and empire. It is a story of our efforts pushing back against theirs.

The United States will always push the military to the breaking point until we succeed in countering the current militaristic agenda, but our job (one of them) is to make what is available to be pushed smaller.

We need to discuss our successes because nobody else will, and because 70 percent of Americans basically agree with us and do nothing about it, largely because many people do not believe they have the power to change anything. We have been building organizations and websites and Email lists for these past several years, and we have been achieving some successes and coming very close to more.

Yet, a common response to "Will you gather signatures on this petition for peace?" is "We've tried that before and it didn't end the war." But it did expose the war lies. It did force Alberto Gonzales out. It did come recently within seven votes of—at least temporarily—stopping the war funding. And while doing all of these things, the same old tired tools can also build larger organizations, and have been doing so.

I'm sure people told abolitionists not to print another newspaper because they'd printed one before and slavery was still around. Yet abolitionism was advancing despite not a single slave yet being freed.

Just as we should continue to push the corporate media while focusing on building our own, we should continue to push the pseudo-peace organizations to do better, but we should focus on building those organizations that have consistently taken a principled stand and pushed with skill and intelligence (even if not with success) for peace.

"Healthcare Not Warfare" should be our cry (following the example of Progressive Democrats of America), along with "Housing Not Warfare," "Jobs Not Warfare," "Schools Not Warfare," etc. We have to force recognition of the financial choice before us. In that choice we find a solution to the healthcare debate that is almost too easy to be believed, but deadly real. And we find a solution to the misconception that war does not impact the "Homeland."

This is a discussion of the current wars as part of an expansion of military bases around the world, bases that make us less safe but cost us over \$100 billion every year. The discussion should include the non-war military budget and the trade-offs involved. We should work harder to build alliances with people and groups focused on advocating for all the things we cannot pay for because we pay for weapons and wars.

But our communications strategy should be dominated by our true central reason for opposing wars, not any secondary reason that we imagine will move someone else. If wars are made cheaper and more efficient we will still oppose them, and that is a real possibility. If American casualties are reduced, we will still oppose wars, and that is the case at the moment. If smart decisions in military terms replace comical blunders, we will oppose wars all the more, and that may be happening.

Fundamentally, we oppose wars because they kill people and they are part of hostile occupations that make people around the world hate and resent our nation. When a group like Brave New Films documents the impact of our war on the people of Afghanistan, we should promote those films as far as we are able. When an election leads to the corporate media humanizing the people of Iran, we should highlight that and ask why, if we do not want them killed by riot police, we

should want them killed by bombs.

There is enormous potential, but uncertain, value in seeking to end and discourage wars by holding war criminals accountable for their crimes. Those working to end torture are right to emphasize that we tortured in order to generate false justifications for war, even after the war had begun. Those working to end war should emphasize that we tortured people in order to support the lies that at least one of the wars, and arguably all of them, is based on.

Every war crime for which we are able to hold anyone accountable by exposing their crimes, unelecting them, impeaching them, finding them liable in civil suits, and prosecuting them at home or abroad, should be discussed as part of the ongoing wars. Congress members should understand that we consider their funding of wars to constitute a war crime. And they should understand that we require them to place peace before party.

One useful tool for mass communications is mass rallies. As argued below, our targets should be Congress members. National mass actions should be focused on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. Local actions should target local Congress members.

An action on the eighth anniversary of the invasion of Afghanistan, on Wednesday, October 7th, strikes me as the most obvious way to send a powerful message of opposition to wars. Combined, of course, with lobby meetings and in-district actions. And backed by lots of money and staff time.

There are no limits on contributions to peace and justice groups, and almost no limits on what we could accomplish if funded. More importantly, there are ways to influence Congress that do not require putting anyone on a bus and can be done largely by volunteers—yes, in their pajamas in the basement eating Cheetos. Read on.

## CONGRESS

While we have relatively little in the way of carrots or sticks with which to influence a president or a weapons maker (influencing the military is discussed below), we have the ability to influence Congress members, at least those who represent districts rather than large states. And we have the ability to end the wars by succeeding only in the House of Representatives. We do not need to persuade a single senator or the president or any cabinet secretaries or any news producers. If we can do so, great. But we can end the wars by winning in the House of Representatives alone. This is because it takes two houses and the president to make a bill a law, but it only takes one house to prevent a bill from becoming law.

The House of Representatives is supposed to represent us and yet, on matters of war as on most other things, does not. Why not? Well, many flaws weaken our elections system, but on any given vote three major corrupting factors can usually be pointed to: party, media, and dollars.

On an issue like healthcare, as on many issues, these factors should be listed in the opposite order. It is the dollars of corporate interests that do the greatest share of the corrupting. But on matters of war, party is the greatest corruptor. Of course, political parties are the largest funders of campaigns, so money is still right at the top. Members of Congress in both political parties have voted to fund these wars, over the wishes of their constituents, because their party leadership has told them to do so.

Parties can promise money, committee memberships, chairmanships, votes on bills and amendments and earmarks, and press events in a member's district with cabinet members and presidents. Parties can threaten to withhold money, back a challenger, block measures from reaching the floor, and withhold chairmanships. It is very difficult and very rare for Congress members to oppose their parties' strong demands.

But it is also rare for citizens to press them to do so, in part because many citizens and the groups through which they approach activism also take their orders from political parties.

The experience of opposing the most recent war supplemental bill, which was combined with funding

see next page

from previous page

for the International Monetary Fund, is instructive, especially as Congressman John Murtha has already indicated that there will be another war supplemental bill this year.

Because all the Republicans in the House opposed the bill due to the IMF measure (five of them switching their votes to yes only after it had passed), 39 Democrats could have stopped the bill. This would have forced separate votes on the war and the IMF, and both might have passed. Certainly the war would have. But it would have created a serious block of peace votes in the House willing to vote for peace even when it mattered and the Democratic Party commanded otherwise.

In the end, we persuaded 32 Democrats to vote No (two of them only in opposition to the IMF, 30 of them in opposition to at least the war). And of those 30 people, three, Dennis Kucinich, Jim McGovern, and Lynn Woolsey actually urged their colleagues to vote No. This gives us 30 votes we can count on if we work like hell to hold them, and three leaders we can work with to whip together a larger caucus.

And while we lost this vote, we exacted a price. We compelled the White House and the Democratic Party leadership to spend a week working on little other than bribing and blackmailing Congress members. And it will take many weeks to fulfill all the promises made.

Over the past years, we have—more often than not—lacked the coordination and ability to push back hard against such intense lobbying from the other side. This time we surprised Congress and ourselves. Key to this effort was public whipping. We didn't have eight different peace groups keeping their own whip lists of who had promised them what. We had 8,000 citizen lobbyists feeding their reports to one website where the whip count was kept public, and where we promised to thank or spank people as appropriate once they had voted for peace or war.

Sadly, we've barely followed through on our promises to thank and spank, activities for which the Backbone Campaign offers tools and assistance. We should be celebrating and denouncing those who came through and those who let us down with at least as much energy as we promised.

Disturbingly, even some who seemed willing to threaten repercussions to Democrats for voting yes appeared to decide afterwards that it would be inappropriate to follow through, especially since some other Democrats, not to mention most of the Republicans, were worse and never even pretended to be with us. But we're not handing out prizes in the afterlife here. We're trying to move those who might be moved.

Now, there is another reason why the next time is almost guaranteed to be harder. Unless the Democrats choose to include something else as strongly opposed by Republicans as the IMF, most of the Republicans can be expected to vote Yes.

But if most of the Congress members we have on our side found five more who would vote with them, we'd have a comfortable majority. We need to develop a system to whip Congress members to whip other Congress members. We also have the advantage of being able to tell them this time that when they told us last time that they were voting for the last war supplemental it was a lie.

This strategy of cutting off the funding for war, which can and should be used against standard military/war budget bills as well as supplementals, has always struck some people as a harder hill to climb than passing bills and amendments and resolutions that we approve of, steps that move us somehow in the direction of peace even while funding war.

But this thinking ignores the existence of the United States Senate. While we can block a bill in the House, we have to pass a bill in both the House and Senate, and the chances of a good bill passing the Senate are smaller than Dick Cheney passing through the eye of a needle.

Bills that we might want to move in the House for communications purposes might include Rep. McGovern's bill requiring an exit strategy for Afghanistan, or legislation that turned the slogan of "Healthcare Not Welfare" into policy. A bill requiring that for every dollar spent on wars and military at least 25 cents must go into a fund for single-payer healthcare would be rhetorically useful.

Bills that we might slip something very useful into and conceivably still get passed include House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer's "paygo" bill, which has 159 cosponsors and the support of the Democratic leadership and the White House. This bill requires that any expense be paid for by a tax increase or a cutback elsewhere. But the bill makes an exception for "emergency" legislation, which is of course what war supplementals are claimed to be.

An amendment to the paygo bill stipulating that no war already in progress for over five years is an "emergency" would, I think, effectively impose a paygo requirement on war supplementals. And suddenly you'd be unable to pass a war supplemental without explaining where the money was going to come from. In such a situation, it's conceivable that Blue Dogs and Republicans would join us faster than Progressives.

We should also be working to sign incumbent and challenger candidates in the 2010 congressional elections onto a platform committing them to voting no funds to continue wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, or Pakistan. It's not that we can trust them to keep their word. Only intense immediate pressure can control them. The point is to begin shaping the election in terms of how they will vote on war money between now and the election.

## COUNTER RECRUITMENT

I've gone on at too much length to burden you with a detailed discussion of counter-recruitment and resistance when others can provide more expertise than I. The National Network Opposing Militarization of Youth at <http://nnomy.org> provides excellent resources on the crucial work of keeping recruiters out of schools.

Courage to Resist at [www.couragetoresist.org](http://www.couragetoresist.org) provides up-to-date information on efforts within the US military to refuse illegal orders.

Marjorie Cohn and Kathleen Gilberd's new book "Rules of Disengagement: The Politics and Honor of Military Dissent" is good background, as is "Army of None: Strategies to Counter Military Recruitment, End War and Build a Better World," by Aimee Allison and David Solnit.

As Rumsfeld said, you go to war with the army you have, not the army you want. We must deny them the army they want. If we succeed beyond our wildest dreams for the next decade, at some point it might make sense to take into consideration the actual defense needs of the United States. At this point, the best thing our military could do to defend us would be to stop endangering us by doing everything it is doing.

## ACTION PROPOSAL

Organize a mass protest march and civil resistance against war funding at the House side of Capitol Hill on the 8th anniversary of invading Afghanistan, on Wednesday, October 7th. The House of Representatives is where we have the greatest chance of ending these wars. If we cut off the funding there, nothing else is needed. We can influence House members with activities in districts, online, in the media, and on Capitol Hill. But not on a weekend when they aren't there.

We need to be present on a weekday and lobby them before and after we march. There was an action earlier this year on Capitol Hill aimed at cleaning up the local power plant and raising the demand for action on the climate. While that struggle is far from over, the march and protest suggested a useful approach. A large number of people, including young people, were organized to march and to risk arrest. But additional people were invited to march without risking arrest, thus boosting the crowd size and reducing the chances of anyone being arrested. This action was held on a weekday with Congress in session, and marched adjacent to the House office buildings.

An action like this one on the eighth anniversary of the invasion of Afghanistan, on Wednesday, October 7th, could send a powerful message of opposition to wars. Combined, of course, with lobby meetings and in-district actions. Some members of Congress would even JOIN us.

*David Swanson is the author of the upcoming book "Daybreak: Undoing the Imperial Presidency and Forming a More Perfect Union" by Seven Stories Press. You can pre-order it and find out when tour will be in your town: <http://davidswanson.org/book>. To receive updates from After Downing Street register at <http://afterdowningstreet.org/user/register>.*

McConnell



IRAQI TROOP WITHDRAWAL

media

# ABSTRACT QUALITY JOURNALISM FOR WAR

## Media Beat

BY NORMAN SOLOMON

The New York Times used three square inches of newsprint on Tuesday to dispatch two US Army soldiers under the headline "Names of the Dead." Their names—Peter K. Cross and Steven T. Drees—were listed along with hometowns, ranks and ages. Cross was 20 years old. Drees was 19.

They were, the newspaper reported, the latest of 706 Americans "who have died as a part of the Afghan war and related operations." There wasn't enough room for any numbers, names or ages of Afghans who have died as a part of the Afghan war and related operations.

That's the way routine death stories go. But of course no amount of newsprint or airtime can do more than scratch the human surface. Reporting on life is like that, and reporting on death is like that: even more so when the media lenses are ground with ideology, nationalism and economic convenience.

But real grief isn't like that. It twists and burns and has only names and adjectives unworthy of itself. That doesn't stop many journalists or politicians from claiming to describe what's beyond description.

A week before Peter K. Cross and Steven T. Drees were buried in a three-square-inch box on page A9 of the national edition, the New York Times editorialized about the war that killed them and 704 other members of the US military. Years from now, media researchers and historians will view the date of that lead editorial, June 23, 2009, as a time when the American deaths in Afghanistan had not yet reached four digits and when the uncounted Afghan deaths were a lower uncounted number.

Beginning with its headline—"Afghanistan's Failing Forces"—the editorial was replete with erudite lamentation (not to be confused with grief). The war has been managed so badly. Two authoritative sentences bookended the editorial: "The news from Afghanistan is grim." And, "There is no more time to waste."

The words in between were consistent with a grand tradition of press demands for more effective warfare. ("President Obama was right to send more American troops to fight. ... The Taliban must be confronted head-on. ... Building an effective Afghan Army is critical...") Peering into their computer screens in Manhattan, the editorialists would have been more concise to simply write: "Let's you and them fight."

Some who went into battle have a very different perspective. "As an infantry rifleman in the Marines Corps, I saw so much of these wars through nightly patrols," says Rick Reyes, a former Marine corporal who fought in Afghanistan and Iraq. "We worked with translators whose sole interest in supplying us intelligence was to earn money and other forms of aid. We gathered information that often proved faulty. During a raid, we would ransack homes, breaking windows, doors, families, lives, chairs and tables, detaining and arresting anyone who seemed suspicious. In one case, we detained, beat, and nearly killed a man, only to realize he was merely trying to deliver milk to his children."

Reyes speaks of a routine with "unconscionable acts of violence" and awful harm to civilians, whatever the differences in terrain: "These patrols were all the same, whether I was in the desolate desert terrain near Camp Rhino, the US-led coalition's first strategic foothold in Afghanistan, or stationed outside Basra in Iraq."

When the Senate Foreign Relations Committee heard from Rick Reyes on April 23, he did a lot to shatter illusions with six minutes of testimony (see [www.youtube.com/watch?v=ypwrq4mbiQw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ypwrq4mbiQw)).

But the conventional wisdom of press and state insists that the US war effort must do more than go on—it must escalate—in the name of human decency. The political rhetoric in Washington is close to 100 percent humanitarian, while the new supplemental see Media Beat on page 8, bottom

# Le Cout de Sa Vie (The Cost of His Life)

BY JOEL HANSON

Roughly 8,000 Nigerian Naira not only buys a roundtrip ticket between Lagos and Cotonou on ABC Transport but unsolicited sermons, too. “Our journey is in the hands of God!” a zealous minister shouts into his microphone. Like most Biblical sermons, the preacher has very little to say but endless ways of saying it.

The passengers, however, don’t seem to mind this call and response approach—even if it delays our journey to Benin by another 30 minutes. “Tell your neighbour, ‘You can relax, the Lord is in control.’” They respond with cries of “Yes” and “Amen!” as if God will descend from heaven and enter the bus if they shout loudly enough.

I have other thoughts on my mind, mainly a message I’d like to share with my fellow passengers. You threw off the shackles of the colonizer who claimed to bring a religion of love while forcing your people into slave ships. His religion was wielded against you as an instrument of social control. Why not eliminate it from your lives as well, particularly when there’s far more to be learned from the subtler forms of good and evil which surround you every day?

The purpose of my journey between Nigeria and Benin is not to sermonize against the self-evident evils of European colonization, but to meet my dear friend, Spero, in Cotonou. He was once a student in my Intermediate 4 class at the American Language Center in Casablanca. When the class ended, Spero asked me to tutor him before we discovered a mutual interest in contributing—and thereby validating—the regions of our personalities undervalued in our respective cultures. He is now a physician and medical administrator for a large district about 40 kilometers away from Cotonou. We haven’t seen each other in five years.

On the morning after our joyful reunion, Spero introduces me to his colleagues while giving me a tour of the entire medical facility. Before we walk into his air-conditioned office, he directs my attention to two soldiers in green uniforms.

**“They’re my bodyguards,” he remarks as though men with guns are a doctor’s most common accessory.**

Before I have the chance to ask him why the men are necessary, we’re inside the building and Spero’s inundated with the business of the day. There are questions to answer, patients to see, and forms to fill out and sign, but eventually I receive an indirect answer to my question.

Spero attends to his last three visitors in the early afternoon: a father, his brother, and his son. The father sits down next to me, shakes my hand, and does most of the talking. His brother sits on a chair to the left of Spero. His son stands between them and remains taciturn throughout the meeting. I can’t follow the conversation, so I wait until the men leave, the father departing with a slow deferential bow, before asking Spero for an explanation.

The day before, while his father was away, the boy fought with his neighbour in a dispute over a goat. Eventually, he became so enraged that he grabbed a machete and cut his opponent in half with one mighty stroke. Unqualified to judge the mental condition of the accused, the police chief of the Kpomasse district ordered Spero’s armed bodyguards to escort him to the hospital so he could receive the opinion of a medical professional.

The family pinned its hopes on convincing—or bribing—Spero to write a medical certificate stating the boy was clinically insane at the time of the murder and therefore not responsible for his actions.

The boy remained silent for most of the conversation and Spero could distinguish immediately that he was not deranged. Much to the family’s dismay, no amount of money—the initial bribe was 200,000 CFA (about \$500)—was going to persuade Spero to change his opinion.

My first question: “Couldn’t they try to get the certificate from another doctor?”

“I don’t think it’s possible,” Spero responds, although he admits that he can’t be entirely sure, “because the crime occurred in his district and he’s the only doctor in the area authorized to issue a certificate of this kind.

Sure enough, the father calls Spero about 15 minutes later and increases the bribe to 400,000 CFA. “I won’t do it for any amount of money,” Spero assures me, “but I bet the offer will be 1,000,000 CFA by tonight.” My mouth opens in surprise and Spero laughs. “This kind of thing happens all the time around here.”

Now I know why the bodyguards are necessary. Spero has been threatened in the past by individuals—or families like this one—that can’t accept the finality of the answer “no.”

We spend the remainder of the afternoon visiting two, half-finished outpatient clinics in the bush. Spero must check on their progress and report to the Minister of Health. Getting there is the most arduous part of the job. The reddish dirt paths, carved with ruts and rivulets from torrential rains, are at times virtually impassable.

Tall plants grow in the middle of the road. This is the wet season after all and automobiles are rare in these parts. Our driver skilfully guides the vehicle over the exposed rock and around the craters, but my conversation with Spero is frequently interrupted by spine-crunching jolts.

On the way to the first clinic, we make an unscheduled stop in a village where three men are building a latrine. I watch one man pouring cement into four large square molds while Spero converses with the others. We stay long enough to look at the large rectangular hole they’ve made in the red earth and to ask a few questions. “It’ll be finished in three months,” Spero informs me as we drive away, “but they’ll never use it.”

“Why is that?” I ask. He pauses with an audible sigh. “Because it’s very difficult to change old habits.” Illness in this part of the country, Spero reminds me, is caused not by infection but by spells and curses cast by one’s neighbors. Thus, when a person becomes ill, the family typically spends its money on the services of a local doctor who’ll concoct some herbal mixture to reverse the curse. They only resort to modern methods when they’re bankrupt and have no other choice. “By then,” Spero laments, they’re usually on the brink of death and there’s very little I can do for them.”

We eat lunch beneath the shade of some palm trees by a massive lake called Les Alizées du Lac. The sound of waves washing up on shore is peaceful and it’s mesmerizing to observe the silhouettes of men propelling their long wooden boats with long wooden staffs. But I feel a sense of guilt eating a mildly expensive lunch by the shore while destitute fisherman cast their nets into the shallow water less than 50 meters away.

Two boys notice me reading a book and swim up to the shore to beg for money. I have 15,000 CFA in my pocket in two large notes. But even if I had smaller bills, giving the money to them presents an obvious problem: the boys are naked and laying in water. Where exactly would they put it?

The depth and importance of our conversation over lunch has the effect of making the idyllic setting disappear. Spero’s ready to make sweeping changes in his life. He wants to leave the medical profession to become a teacher even though he’s the only doctor in a district of 80,000 people. Benin itself has just a few hundred qualified physicians to serve a country of 7 million people. He wants more time to travel, more time to pursue other interests, like his writing. He’s also weary of the inexorable cycle of suffering and death he witnesses on a daily basis.

Spero will get his first opportunity to try his new profession in about two weeks when he takes a short vacation from his current job in order to teach a biology class at a local university.

The man is talented in many subject areas—physics, biology, and French among them. He’s benevolent, passionate, articulate, and skilled in the fine art of improvisation. That’s what makes doctors excel in jobs with limited resources. It’s also the foundational clay that enables teacher trainers to shape people like Spero into effective instructors. What he lacks is extensive teaching experience and a network of supportive friends. And I tell Spero that these absences work in tandem to contribute to his fear of the unknown.

On a whim, Spero decides to stop at Ouidah Hospital. Patients from local clinics with life-threatening situations are sent here for further treatment. Those that can’t be treated here are transferred to Cotonou. Spero offers to show me the morgue—the man who was severed at the waist by his neighbor’s machete is still interred here, but I politely decline. That simple choice as well as the decision to visit the pediatric wing may be ultimately responsible for saving a life.

The first person I notice in the pediatric building is a young woman pacing up and down the corridor, clutching her malnourished five-year-old son—her first and only child—in her arms. The child’s face is gray, his face impassive. Spero gently opens one of the boy’s half-closed lids with the tip of his index finger and we watch with horror as his eyes roll into the back of his head. The final face of death, I decide, is not terror, but indifference. This boy’s glassy eyes are proof that if he hasn’t already left us, then his departure is imminent.

That child has malaria,” Spero informs me. And he’ll

medicine

probably die within the hour.” He’s tearing up as he reveals the diagnosis, but I can hear a trace of lethargy in his voice. And it frightens me to discover that the repetitive act of watching children die has hardened a portion of Spero’s compassionate nature.

“Isn’t there anything that can be done for him?” I ask. “Not really,” Spero answers. “A blood transfusion, perhaps, but there’s no available blood in the entire hospital and the mother can’t afford to pay for it.”

Spero pauses to shake the hand of an emaciated woman with AIDS who thanks him for the simple act of befriending her, of treating her humanely after she’d been ostracized by her friends. Spero and I continue down the hallway and all he can tell me about is the futility he feels when he’s done all he can for a patient and ultimately realizes how small his contribution has been.

**Immediately, we return to the subject of the boy’s fate. “How much does a blood transfusion cost?”**

**“At least 10,000 CFA (about \$20) for the first treatment. Do you have any money?”**

I reach into the pocket of my shorts and pull out a 10,000 CFA bill and put it into Spero’s hand. “Here’s 10,000...” and Spero jogs down the halfway to inform the boy’s mother. I follow.

We hear shrieks of pain coming from the room where the boy is being treated. Spero motions me into the room and I reluctantly acquiesce. The child is now lying on his back, stomach slightly bloated from malnutrition, waiting to die. The cries, however, are coming from another boy next to him who could be his brother. Two female doctors are holding him down while another tries to clear the phlegm from his throat so he can breathe. The boy struggles for air, his body contorting with the effort. He’s trying to fight off the nurses, but his agonizing screams are strangled by the mucus in his nose and throat.

Another nurse is talking to Spero about the logistics of the other boy’s blood transfusion. Spero calls another hospital for a blood donation and requests an ambulance. I leave the room, tormented by frustration and a formless rage. All I can think about as I stand in the hallway is the futility of human life, the maddening inequality that persists in the world, and human beings’ unflappable indifference to preventable suffering and death.

The US donates hundreds of million dollars to an African malaria fund but clearly it’s not enough. Another sportscaster for ESPN started a program called Nothing But Nets that accepts private donations in order to provide mosquito netting to West African countries. So why are so many people dying of a treatable illness? Is it a question of inadequate funding and a lack of resources, or are the money and supplies simply siphoned off by corrupt government officials? I suspect that it’s a combination of the two.

Every year, tens of thousands of people die from

## We Need Fishmongers

**The WA Free Press is a volunteer publication. We need help from fishmongers, dogcatchers, manicurists and practical jokers to keep the paper alive and out there. Really! We ask that all volunteers also be current subscribers and help with distribution three times a year. There is also great need for proofreading and mailing help, if you live in the Seattle vicinity.**

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malaria in Africa. These statistics always depressed me but, until now, they'd remained little more than numbers on paper and therefore intangible. Seeing this boy's suffering face, though, has made the crisis indelibly real for the first time.

I return to the building to ask Spero for an update. He's found blood at a nearby hospital and called an ambulance, but it'll take 30 minutes to arrive.

"Can't we just put him in our truck and take him over there ourselves?"

"No, because it would take too long to find the appropriate people and sign the forms to release him. And we'd be legally liable if he died on the way."

"Well, has anyone checked his blood type?" I continue.

"Not yet," Spero answers.

"One of us must have the same blood type and then he could get the transfusion from one of us."

Spero follows my logic but he can tell that I haven't yet become habituated to the limitations imposed by the medical bureaucracy. "They don't do direct transfusions without testing the blood for HIV first and the hospital doesn't have the equipment to do the transfusion."

"But can't they waive those rules if the boy's going to die anyway?"

Spero shakes his head and I notice other people slowly exiting the pediatric building behind him.

"Spero, before we leave, I want to see the boy one more time. What's going on?"

"The boy just died," Spero answers.

"Which one?" The boy with the tube down his throat or the boy who's dying of malaria?

"They're both dying of malaria but the boy who was screaming. As soon as he died, the mother started crying and they ordered everyone out of the room."

I begin to ponder the prosaic sequence of events that brought us here. If Spero hadn't suddenly decided to visit the main hospital in Ouidah, we never would have discovered there were two children dying of malaria.

If we had visited the morgue as planned, that child we're trying to save would surely have died. And if I hadn't had the money to give to Spero, the boy's death would have haunted me for the rest of my life.

**Later, I asked Spero what happened when he gave the money to the mother.**

**"She cried," he answered. "She thought we were messengers from God."**

If that were true, I silently ponder, then who did the mother of the dead child think we were? Shouldn't we have been allowed to save both children? Or the innumerable multitudes who die from malaria—and malnutrition—every day?

Why would an omniscient god allow innocent children to suffer? It's a timeless philosophical dilemma dogmatic believers have difficulty answering: either God is incapable of intervening in human life or he simply doesn't want to. Presuming that God exists, it's easier to accept the idea that he's not all-powerful than to believe he's cruel or that deaths like this one are due more to mismanaged political systems than from a dearth of supplies.

An hour later, before driving the final 15 kilometers to Spero's village, the driver stops for gasoline. Spero gives him a 10,000 CFA coupon (he receives from the government) to half-fill the tank of his pickup truck. As he signs the receipt, my mind is still on the boy on his way to the hospital and I remark: "C'est le cout de son vie," and Spero turns to me and nods. "Oui."

We've been in the house for less than 20 minutes when Spero receives another call. A close friend of his named Elizabeth has just died, even though he saw her just the day before. "C'est pas vrai," he tells me absently. "She was happy to see me and we made plans to get together next month." "So it couldn't have been a suicide," I remark.

He calls her husband for more details but none are forthcoming. We also rule out a heart attack but can't help wondering

if she was killed in an accident—or murdered. I don't know what else to say. Words are incapable of mollifying Spero's pain and I've silently decided that now is a time for listening to whatever he wants to say. I put my hand on his shoulder and offer him a beer.

Then, when he's recovered from the shock, I share a story about my cousin who died in a snowmobile accident back in 1997. I tell Spero how I declined the opportunity to see him one last time in the morgue, how I didn't want the image of his corpse to usurp my memories of him in life nor did I want to know about the minute details of his painful drowning.

But I can't imagine what Spero's feeling right now. Knowing a friend has died but not knowing how she died makes it easier to deny the finality of what just happened. Elizabeth's husband promised to call in the morning but, as of now, Spero knows nothing more about her mysterious death.

At breakfast the next day, Spero reports that the boy in question is still alive at nearby Comé Hospital but remains in critical condition. Nevertheless; I can't help wondering if we've really helped him by prolonging his life. Our unexpected intervention may save his life in the short-term, but it can't change the fact that his mother still lacks the money and resources to ensure his long-term health. And it can't spiritually compensate for the loss of the boy next to him—or for the thousands of other children who die from the same disease each year.

Most deaths are outside the realm of our control, but every now and then we do have the means to directly impact the lives of those around us. And we have to do more to prevent senseless deaths from treatable illnesses, even if getting to the source of the problem requires solutions that are exponentially more complicated.

For example, should we first deal with the social conditions that encourage parents to produce large families which contribute to unemployment and increased competition for limited resources? Instead, perhaps our efforts should be focused on battling the corruption of the local government which lacks the organization to adequately distribute donated supplies. Or maybe we should fight to change the political priorities of governments like the US that value military spending far more than humanitarian aid.

Nevertheless, I'm reluctant to return to the hospital in Ouidah. I fear that there'll be another child dying of malaria in the pediatric wing and I won't be able to do anything about it. In the meantime, I wonder if the 400,000 CFA bribe Spero was offered yesterday is still on the table. I can see at least one advantage to accepting it. Of course, the act will exonerate a guilty man, but just imagine how many children it could save.

*Joel Hanson is a former Seattle resident who in recent years has been teaching English language in a variety of countries.*

# THE COSTS AND COMPLICATIONS OF UNIVERSAL HEALTH

## Perhaps we should begin instead with a universal preventive system

BY JANICE VAN CLEVE

Michael Moore does not live in a gray area. Critics and the film-watching public either love him or hate him. And that's the way he likes it. His movies do not pretend to be balanced or fair. He's out to make a point and drive it home. So it is no surprise that his 2007 film *Sicko*, is still drawing praise and anger. *Sicko* takes on the American health care system with all the delicacy of a lumberjack.

President Obama doesn't have that luxury. He can't just highlight the flaws—he has to win support for a solution. That's why in June he addressed the American Medical Association in Chicago. He drew lots of praise, but now the difficult questions begin about how to design a universal—or even a fairly comprehensive—system.

### 1. Who to cover

Universal health care advocates say everybody should be covered. However, throwing open the doors—and the treasury—to everyone for health care is burdening even the most experienced and sophisticated European health care systems right now. Sweden, Germany and France have been at this for awhile and even with income taxes above 50% they are barely paying for it.

Anyone designing a healthcare system has to make some judgments about who to include and when to include them.

For example, should an undocumented alien be able to tap into a universal health care system just like a citizen? What about self abusers? Smokers? People who work in hazardous occupations? Should universal care be based on judgments about a person's work or lifestyle? What about rich people? Should they also be eligible for universal health care or should it only be available to those of lower income?

What about the very young and very old? Modern medicine goes to extreme lengths to salvage barely viable premature births and it devotes even more effort and expense to extend the lives of barely viable elderly patients. In fact it is estimated that most medical expenses are incurred in the last two years of the average person's life.

### 2. Treatable illnesses

It's easy to justify offering universal vaccinations free of charge against contagious diseases. Other sorts of conditions might be debatable. For example, what about sexually transmitted diseases? What about pregnancies, fertility treatment, birth control and abortion? Plastic surgery? Sexual reassignments? Life support for people in vegetative states?

### 3. Drugs

The Bush administration cobbled together a complicated bill that benefited no one except the pharmaceutical industry. Seniors are penalized for not joining it and officials are forbidden to negotiate for lower prices. What drugs should be included in a universal health care formulary? Anything a doctor prescribes, or only generic drugs? Should Viagra, hormones, anti-depressants, and pain killers be paid for by the public?

In the case of vaccinable illness, should people be forced against their will to get inoculated? Should universal health care ever be mandatory? These questions lead to very basic ethical dilemmas that—if not considered—will cripple any system that tries to be 100% universal.

### 4. Providers

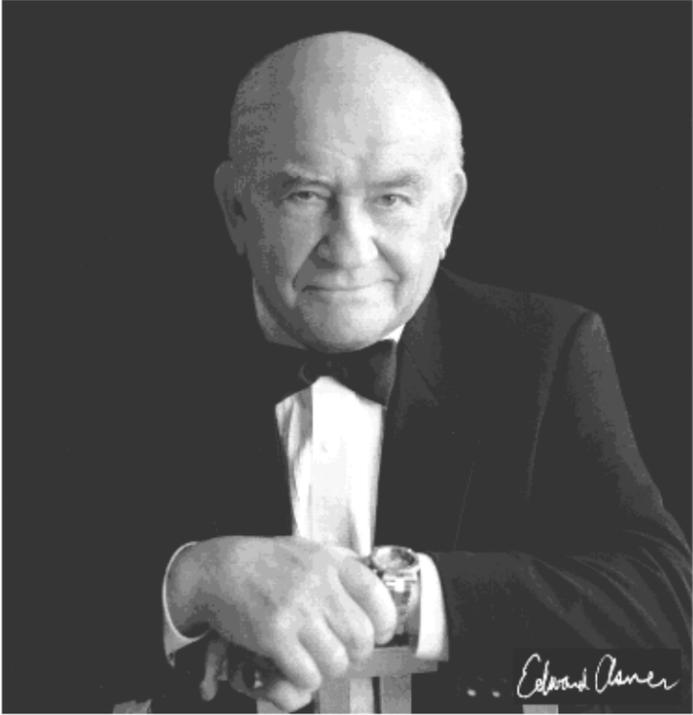
Certainly the American Medical Association and the American Psychiatric Association would promote their members as the primary health care givers under a universal system. We can count on the American Dental Association to jump in, too.

But what about alternative medical providers, massage therapists, hospice nurses, home health care pro- see next page

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viders, or fire department medics? We don't even license some of these caregivers.

## 5. Legal costs

Lawsuits drive a major portion of the inflation in health care costs. Some states have made progress in the latter area with so-called iGood Samaritan Lawsí which shield ordinary people from liability when they help out in emergencies, but much more needs to be done to protect health care providers from lawsuits.

## 6. Funding

Then comes the big question: how is universal health care supposed to be funded? Should universal health care be a federal program or should it be up to the states? Should basic costs be shouldered by employers? Should tax incentives be involved? Should there be any financial limits on how much should be spent for any one person?

And what role should private insurance play? Currently, the health of many Americans is in the hands of for-profit corporations. With co-pays, deductibles, non-allowances, exclusions, prior conditions, denials, and the like, customers are once again bearing many of the costs individually while the insurance company or HMO focuses on investments and stock options. Underwriters and accountants are making decisions that only medical professionals and patients should make.

## 7. Leadership

Congress is obviously front and center in fixing America's health care system, but look what they did to the prescription drug benefit. They cowed to the pharmaceutical corporations and specifically disallowed negotiating for lower prices. President Reagan politicized health care by simply ignoring AIDS in the 1980's when it was ravaging the gay community. Can the US government really be trusted to fix the American health care system? And who will decide the ongoing issues once any system is set in place by Congress?

Until Americans can answer these questions, there will be no universal health care system in the United States. Politicians can stomp and promise but their speeches are just so much hot air blowing in the wind. Perhaps it would be more realistic to approach health in America from a less grandiose place than iuniversal health care.í Perhaps starting with a few basics at the grass roots would be more reasonable and more achievable.

## A first step: preventive care

A better, simpler, and cheaper route to universal care would be a government-funded system of preventive care, with free annual physical exams and relevant testing, regardless of citizenship. It could include free annual dental exams and teeth cleaning, as well as eye exams. Just this alone would make a huge difference in the health of all Americans. It would:

1. Provide the basic necessary first step to any health care program.
2. Provide everybody access to a doctor and a dentist for basic care, to talk about health concerns, to find out what's wrong, if anything, and to receive advice for healthier living choices.
3. Make possible a genuine assessment of the nation's health.
4. Alert patients and doctors to health concerns early when they are still curable instead of waiting until they are an unavoidable and much more expensive emergency.
5. Reduce insurance costs for care by providing preventative screening early and free up front.
6. Be understandable and acceptable to all Americans.
7. Be a good start.

The next step up would be free immunizations and free prescription drugs. Providing prescription drugs is not a one size fits all proposition. New drugs are coming on the market all the time and each patient's condition and tolerance is different. Pharmaceutical corporations are constantly advertising to the public and promoting to doctors to push their individual products. Michael Moore claims that there are four pill lobbyists for every member of Congress!

President Obama still faces the fear mongers who warn of the so-called idangersí of socialized medicine. They claim that the free market is the best way to deliver health, the same free market that delivered Enron, Worldcom, Wall Street banks, Washington Mutual, AIG, General Motors, Chrysler, etc. But that's not the point. The real point is that health is a basic human right that should never be patented or sold. It should be provided like the preamble of the Constitution says: ito establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity.í

A grand universal health care system may not be

achievable in the United States anytime soon, but a universal preventive care system along the lines suggested here would go a long way toward improving the health of all Americans, which could be a first step.

And then maybe the United States could reach a higher health care rating than Slovenia.

*Janice Van Cleve had to pay over \$700 for her physical exam, despite being completely healthy. She supposedly has one of the better individual health insurance plans in WA. Copyright 2009.*

# Washington Atty. Gen. Rob McKenna Defends Israel's Military Action in Gaza

BY DOUG COLLINS

In May, attorneys general from ten states—including WA state's Rob McKenna—defended Israel's military action in the Gaza Strip in a letter sent to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

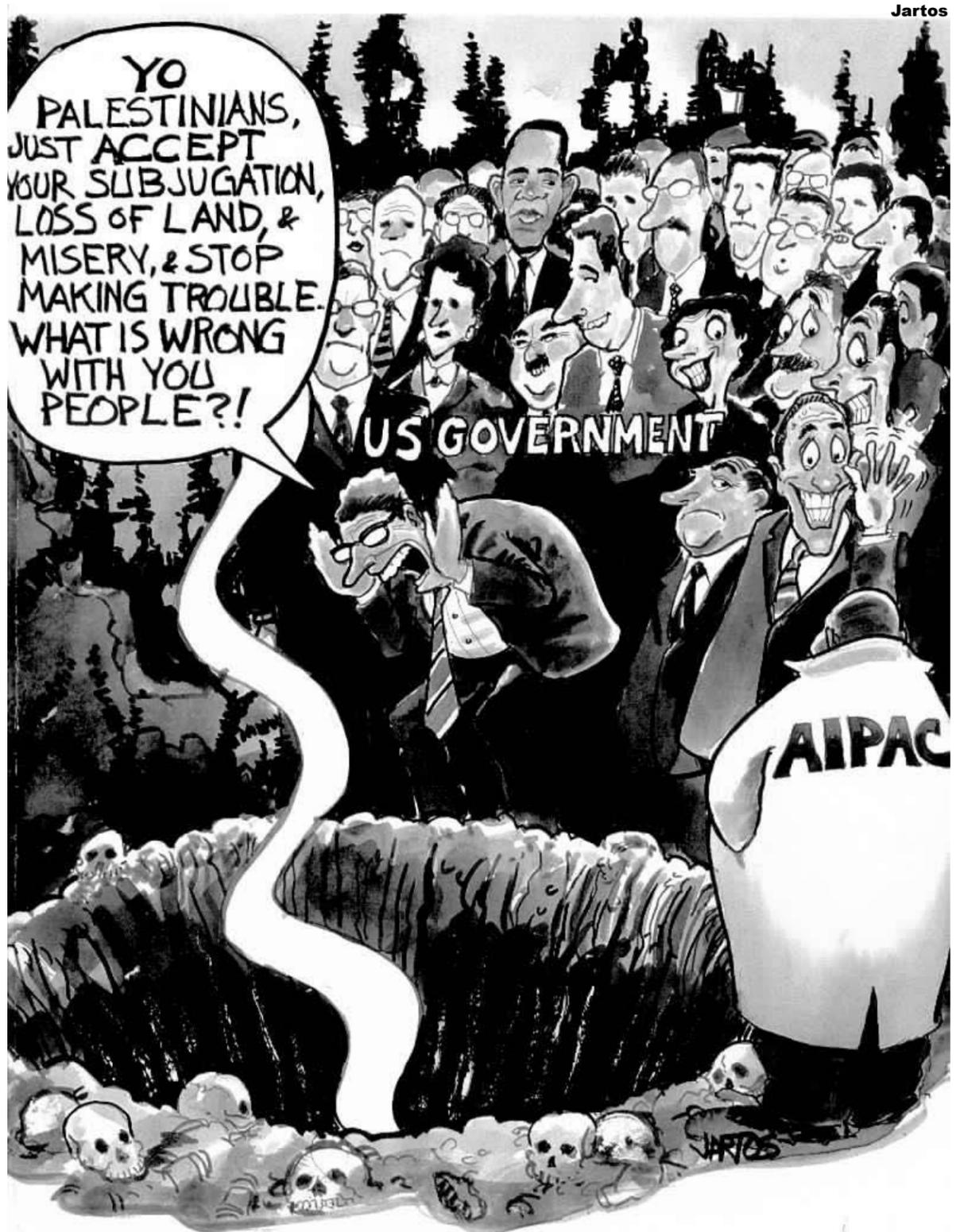
The attorneys general wrote that "By intentionally targeting 6,300 rockets against Israel's civilian population, Hamas is guilty beyond a reasonable doubt of a war crime in that it has violated... the Geneva Convention of 1949." The Geneva Convention states that parties in a conflict must distinguish between civilians and combatants, and civilian and military objectives.

In an open letter to WA Attorney General Rob McKenna, Seattle residents J. Glenn Evans and Barbara Evans, state that McKenna's support "displays a willful

ignorance of the state of affairs in Palestine." The letter further mentions,

"The Palestinians have no army, air force, navy, Apache helicopters, missiles, nuclear weapons, white phosphorus, DIME or other secret weapons, or enormous aid supplied by the US. You cite the number of rockets fired into Israel but ignore the disparity in casualties that is so enormous that Israel's claims of being threatened are ludicrous. Those crummy rockets have caused very little damage and few casualties. See [www.ifamericansknew.org](http://www.ifamericansknew.org) for the results of a study of media coverage."

You can contact Attorney General McKenna with your views on the subject at [www.atg.wa.gov/contactus.aspx](http://www.atg.wa.gov/contactus.aspx).



## Media Beat from p5

military.

Inside a contrived news frame, destruction can nurture life. In media myth, we can be well-informed and ignorant of war's realities. Along the way, the benefits of numbed quiescence and muffled dissent are vastly overrated.

Norman Solomon, co-chair of the national Healthcare NOT Warfare campaign, is the author of many books including "War Made Easy: How Presidents and Pundits Keep Spinning Us to Death." For more information, go to: [www.normansolomon.com](http://www.normansolomon.com).

# Why No Protests About US Missile Tests?

BY BRUCE GAGNON

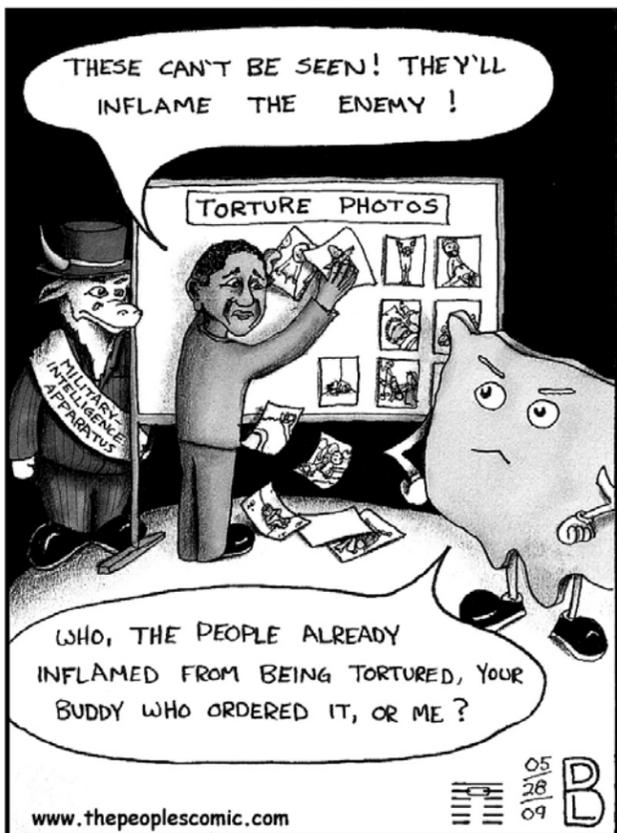
The United States lectures and threatens Iran and North Korea about the evils of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). But the US routinely tests our own WMDs from Vandenberg Air Force Base in southern California. Soon there will be another test firing of a Minuteman III nuclear missile from that base. It is likely to proceed with little note from the corporate dominated media.

We must become dehypnotized so we can see things as they are. The US uses the fear of other nuclear pipe-squeak nations to get our own citizens to support massive US military buildups that are all about dominating the world.

If the US was genuine in wanting other nations to stop the development of their nuclear capability then we'd lead by example, as is required by the United Nations Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and we'd get rid of our own evil WMDs. But alas we don't do the honorable thing and the world looks at our mad ramblings and says, "You are a hypocritical nation." And they are right.

For further info, see [www.space4peace.org](http://www.space4peace.org).

## THE PEOPLE'S COMIC BY DAVID LOGAN



# WIRELESS TECHNOLOGIES CAUSE HARM TO CHILDREN AND ADULTS

Portland, OR, city council is among those asking for more health oversight

BY DR. MAGDA HAVAS & CAMILLA REESE, NISLAPP

The following article has been excerpted from a longer report sent to public officials on June 30, 2009. Havas is an Associate Professor of Environmental and Resource Studies at Trent University in Canada, and Rees is the founder of [www.ElectromagneticHealth.org](http://www.ElectromagneticHealth.org).

Globally, public health officials and health advocacy groups are increasingly concerned about symptoms people are associating with rising levels of indoor and outdoor microwave radiation, known as 'electrosmog', including sometimes debilitating symptoms experienced near cell phone towers (<http://sn.im/kt6pe>). In addition, they are troubled by the impact this radiation may be having on children, who are more vulnerable.

Schools increasingly use wireless networks to access the internet, instead of hard-wired connections, and many schools are being paid to place cell phone towers and antennas on school property. Several countries, but not the United States, recommend limited cell phone access for children, including Germany, Russia, India, Belgium, and Finland. Last month France banned cell phones in primary schools (<http://sn.im/ktfa2>).

There is concern, as well, about involuntary, chronic radiation exposure in workplaces, and also that home equity values can drop precipitously if a cell phone tower is erected nearby.

Symptoms people experience in the presence of microwave radiation from wireless technologies, which get progressively worse during or following exposure, include irritability, insomnia, fatigue, chronic pain, difficulty concentrating, poor short-term memory, depression, anxiety, cardiovascular irregularities, nausea, skin disorders, as well as eye and ear disorders.

State and local governments and advocacy groups in the US are disturbed to be learning of the vast body of independent science showing biological effects from electromagnetic fields, well below federal exposure guidelines, and of the connection between these fields and many chronic illnesses, as documented in The BioInitiative Report in 2007 ([www.BioInitiative.org](http://www.BioInitiative.org)).

Because of a provision in the Telecommunications Act of 1996, state and local governments have been prohibited from limiting cell towers and antennas on health or environmental grounds, despite symptoms residents may be experiencing.

Over the past four months, governments have increasingly acknowledged electromagnetic field-related health concerns and taken stands to protect health:

- Three US Governors declared May 2009 "Electromagnetic Hypersensitivity Awareness Month" (<http://sn.im/ksv30>).
- Los Angeles Unified School District called for the return of state and local governments rights to limit antennas (<http://sn.im/j05ag>).
- The European Parliament's Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety voted overwhelmingly to recommend precautions be taken to protect human health with regard to mobile phones, Wi-Fi/Wi-Max, Bluetooth, DECT portable phones and cell towers. (<http://sn.im/ksrev>)
- The City Council of Portland, OR asked its Congressional delegation to recommend the FCC "work in cooperation with the FDA and other relevant federal agencies to revisit and update studies on potential health concerns arising from RF wireless emissions in light of the national proliferation of wireless use". (<http://sn.im/ipl16>)
- L.A. County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to seek and support federal legislation that would repeal Section 704 of the Federal Telecommunication Act of 1996, the provision which has prevented state and local governments from influencing siting of telecommunications towers and antennas on health or environmental grounds (<http://sn.im/ksx2i>)
- Queens, NY City Council Member Peter Vallone, Jr. introduced a bill requiring phone companies to give advance warning of their intent to install new antennas before the permit is issued, the Buildings



Department commissioner to establish rules for how and where antennas can be erected and cell phone companies to demonstrate efforts to locate antennas in non-residential areas. (<http://sn.im/kw94a>)

• The US Fish & Wildlife Service issued a "Briefing Paper on the Need for Research into the Cumulative Impacts of Communications Towers on Migratory Birds and Other Wildlife in the United States" (including crop pollinators, such as bees). (<http://sn.im/kw96a>)

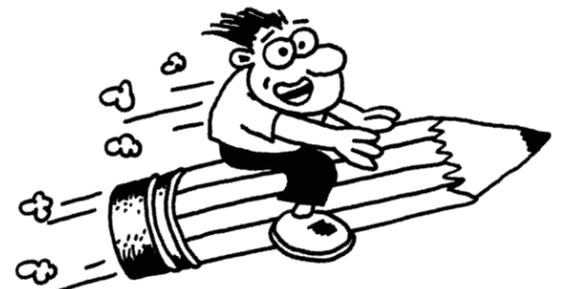
But the US Congress has not taken any steps to protect the health of American citizens from wireless radiation, though some consider this issue as important to the future of life as global warming.

An EMF Petition to Congress, signed by Americans in 47 states and citizens in 25 countries (<http://sn.im/j4c8a>), calls for Congress to:

- 1) mandate the Federal Communications Commission revisit its exposure guidelines for radiofrequency radiation (RF), in light of the independent science showing current standards are not protective;
- 2) repeal Sec. 704 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which prevents state and local governments from limiting antennas on health or environmental grounds;
- 3) declare a national moratorium on further wireless infrastructure build-out, including the coming "Wi-Max", the wireless components of the National Broadband Plan being supported by the Obama Administration and new wireless utility technologies; and
- 4) to establish cell phone and wireless-free zones in neighborhoods, government buildings, schools, public spaces and places of employment.

Jennifer Armstrong, MD, President of the American Academy of Environmental Medicine, states, "The concerns raised... regarding adverse health effects associated with exposures to electromagnetic radiation (EMR) from cell phone towers, cell phones, and other wireless technology are understandable given the strength, consistency, and dose response of the associations reported in the scientific literature."

The National Institute for Science, Law and Public Policy (NISLAPP) was founded in 1978. Its overriding objective is to bring practitioners of science and law together to develop intelligent policy that best serves all interested parties in a given controversy. For further information, see [www.ElectromagneticHealth.org](http://www.ElectromagneticHealth.org) and [www.Citizens.org](http://www.Citizens.org).



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# Ten Reasons Why FDA Cigarette Regulation is Bad News

Where are pesticide activists on the safety issue?

BY JOHN JONIK

*Editor's note: The author, John Jonik, has been a pioneer in revealing how cigarette regulation unfoundedly blames tobacco, rather than chemical adulterants, for the ill effects of most commercially sold cigarettes. Now, the FDA, with support from president Obama, is poised to undertake much stronger regulation of cigarettes, leading possibly to a prohibition. According to Jonik, the real culprits, the chemical companies, would escape unharmed.*

We have to wonder if Congress or president Obama read the recently enacted wholesome-sounding Food and Drug Administration (FDA) bill to "regulate tobacco," and whether they considered its consequences. If they knew what they were doing, that has troubling implications regarding the nation's vital scientific, health, and regulatory system.

1) This law will make typical cigarettes more dangerous: FDA is empowered to lower nicotine levels to make all cigarettes "light," a long-used cigarette industry trick which creates more smoking (and more sales and "sin" taxes), deeper inhaling, and more exposures to many non-tobacco toxins and cancer-causing substances.

2) It retains the worst past and present harms: The FDA is required to ignore the 450 or so registered tobacco pesticides (chlorine, organophosphate, carbamate, etc.) and the extremely harmful residues they deposit on tobacco and in unwitting smokers' lungs. It is also forbidden to address the phosphate fertilizers that contaminate typical products with carcinogenic PO-210 radiation. The bill considers these as "farm" issues to be left to the USDA, which has long approved those substances.

3) It ignores and will remove nicotine benefits, and threatens prohibition: The FDA, a drug agency, ignores the medicinal drug effects of nicotine for stress relief, alertness, digestive relief, appetite suppression and symptomatic relief for Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, and other pathologies. It ignores that those benefits are produced in spite of hosts of government-approved industrial toxic and cancer-causing contaminants inside of typical cigarettes. This bill will leave uninformed, insufficiently-warned smokers with the worst, most deadly contaminants—pesticides, dioxins, and PO-210 radiation—while virtually eradicating the beneficial components. This threatens that, in the future, the FDA will find "no medicinal value in tobacco" (because the FDA removed those values itself), and will find "significant harms" (because the FDA tolerated those avoidable harms itself), and will call for outright Prohibition.

4) False claims: The bill wrongly and absurdly describes nicotine as "harmful". It is not. Even the FDA deems it safe in many nicotine-delivery products. The law claims that "tobacco kills" though most cigarettes are in fact industrially-contaminated products that are not even examined to affirm that they contain tobacco, and even though tobacco itself has by itself not yet been studied for harms.

5) Use of colloquial and marketing terms: The FDA accepts the cigarette industry's deceptive term for itself, "tobacco companies", as if the products are automatically just tobacco, or tobacco at all in some cases. Cigarettes, though they may appear to be stuffed with shreds of tobacco, though they contain nicotine and are made by "tobacco companies", are not required to contain any tobacco at all—unless their voluntary labeling says so. Many labels say nothing one way or the other. "Tobacco" is also often processed out of the waste parts of the tobacco plant (stems, roots, dust, etc.) rather than the more valuable leaves. After processing and extensive adulteration, it is absurd, deceitful, widely confusing, unscientific, fraudulent and liability-dodging to maintain the name of the base material. A typical newspaper, ultimately from tree pulp, is no more a pine tree than a typical cigarette is tobacco.

6) Though the law is about tobacco, no evidence is cited about harms or benefits of tobacco itself: "Tobacco control" is the cover-girl, so to speak, of this legislation, but no studies of tobacco itself—without adulterants or contaminants—have been presented to justify any unqualified claims about tobacco causing deaths or diseases. The FDA bill accepts studies about highly contaminated cigarettes that ignore those contaminants, and then concludes that tobacco is the villain. This is like blaming a

car for a drive-by shooting, rather than the occupants and their guns.

7) Serious child harms ignored, and allowed: The bill ignores dioxin which, in cigarette smoke, comes from still-legal use of chlorine tobacco pesticides and chlorine-bleached cigarette paper. Dioxins do not come from tobacco or any plant. Dioxins in smoke from typical cigarettes come from any of the many added non-tobacco crop products. They are especially harmful to young people, fetuses, pregnant women, and cause damage to sperm. The FDA's "solution" is to get unwitting, unprotected victims, be they young people or mothers or fathers or anyone, to "just say no," to seek what it calls "cessation." Big Chlorine may be the biggest and worst member of the corporatocracy's "too-big-to-fail" community.

8) Medical Science ignored: The legislation ignores that many if not most so-called "smoking related" diseases are impossible to be caused by smoke from any plant, but that most or all of those diseases are known effects of exposures to pesticides and dioxins. The FDA ignores the evidence of Agent Orange, Love Canal, Times Beach and other chlorine-dioxin calamities. Even worse, the FDA does not prohibit chlorine interests, or chemical and pharmaceutical makers of tobacco pesticides, or their insurers and investors, from participating in "tobacco" regulatory committees.

9) First Amendment problems: The bill makes it virtually impossible for alternative cigarette makers to exercise speech rights to truthfully communicate that their cigarette is organic or additive free—or free of pesticides, free of radiation, free of burn accelerants, or free of chlorine adulterants. To the FDA, to do so would suggest that products had "reduced risk." The FDA does not acknowledge that such products would be automatically, by definition, reduced risk. One would have to spend unaffordable fortunes to prove the negative: that the products are less harmful. The bill does not require labeling that says, for example, "Warning: Maximized and inevitable risk and harm due to FDA-approved pesticide, chlorine, radiation and burn accelerant contamination." Without such a warning, complicit parties in this cigarette cartel are duly saved from PR disasters, liabilities, and prosecution.

10) It creates crime escalation: The bill acknowledges that it will create prohibition-style crimes of illicit trade and smuggling and so forth. The bill incredibly says that this trade will even support "terrorism." Smokers, apparently, un-patriotically, threaten some future 9/11. The law will require cigarette makers to pay millions of dollars for the regulatory program, but it does not forbid the firms from simply passing costs to their customers: their victims. This will raise prices and the value of cigarettes to illicit traders, including those endlessly-useful "terrorists," and will escalate crimes of theft and smuggling. The law itself will create funding for the very "terrorists" that we are to dread. Bad laws often cause more crimes and harms than they prevent, as we know from 62 years of Reefer Madness laws aimed at that other smokable and medicinal public-domain natural plant (and it's non-smokable cousin, hemp).

A solution is available, but it is so far off-the-table of our corporate-controlled government and media that it is invisible to the naked eye. Sensible, justifiable, socially-beneficial law would not impose costly and socially-disruptive regulations and burdens on millions of people, including non-complicit bars, restaurants and other businesses, or on continually-harassed sovereign Indian lands.

It would simply prohibit the relatively few cigarette manufacturers from contaminating smoking products with untested and known-harmful non-tobacco components. That radical idea would instantly spread to foreign lands.

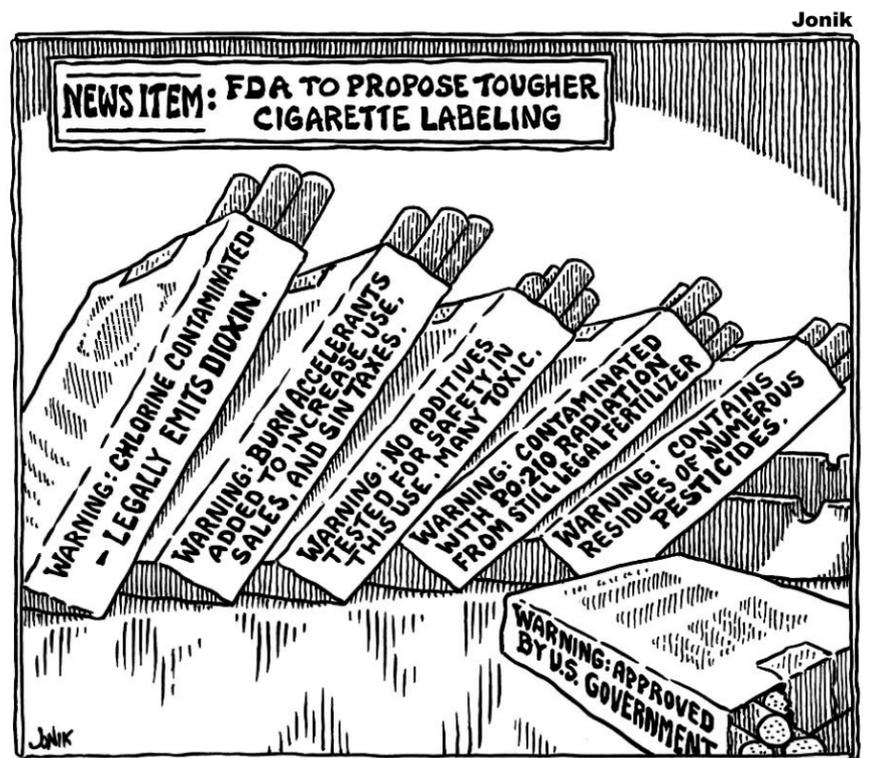
This simple tactic would cut tobacco use, make cigarettes less appealing to young people, reduce

substances

risk of fires (because artificial burn accelerants would not be used), eliminate harms from pesticides and dioxins and radiation, remove justification for many of the smoking bans and regressive taxes, open up a long-overdue flood of civil suits against the chlorine-drenched cigarette cartel (including ingredient suppliers), inspire public demand to remove private industry influence from public governing, and even—ideally—lead to publicly subsidized replacement of pesticide-intensive tobacco farms with organic tobacco farms—right next to re-legalized hemp farms, perhaps. Even wildlife would benefit. And peacepipes would be again legal in public places.

People have until Sept. 29 to submit Public Comments on the FDA's "tobacco regulation" law. Go to the following website to comment, paying attention to all the requirements. Click on an icon to see the whole law. You have to see it to believe it. Mainstream media have not been informative about this. Trust the mainstream version at your, and everyone's, peril.

The comments website can be found by googling "regulation of tobacco products site:regulations.gov" or by going directly to <[www.regulations.gov/search/search\\_results.jsp?css=0&&Ntk=All&Ntx=mode+matchall&Ne=2+8+11+8053+8054+8098+8074+8066+8084+8055&N=0&Ntt=tobacco&sid=122375715857](http://www.regulations.gov/search/search_results.jsp?css=0&&Ntk=All&Ntx=mode+matchall&Ne=2+8+11+8053+8054+8098+8074+8066+8084+8055&N=0&Ntt=tobacco&sid=122375715857)>.



If cigaret labels were honest, smokers would probably be growing their own tobacco.



Could this be the real reason the FDA is poised to ban cigarettes?

# A DOSE OF REALITY

## The case for legalizing drugs

BY MEGAN CORNISH

The war on drugs is a catastrophic failure. In Mexico last year, 6,290 people died in government battles with drug cartels. In the US, harsh anti-drug laws are filling prisons with millions of people. Yet global production of illegal drugs is higher than ever. How can the blights of addiction and the international illicit drug trade be stopped?

Not by military or police action, as is current policy. Drug abuse, like alcoholism, is a social and public health problem. Driving drugs underground, like alcohol prohibition during the 1920s, only pushes prices up, and brings crime and police crackdowns to poor communities. Prohibition also feeds organized crime through the huge profits reaped off the black market.

Drug legalization and support services to communities are the real cure. This includes full funding for treatment. In 2002, only one-fifth of anti-drug money went toward rehabilitation. Equally important is ending the widespread poverty and lack of opportunity that make drugs attractive in the first place.

### US role in the international misery trade

The illegal market that arises from drug prohibition also creates profound social injuries globally. Today's drug war in Mexico is only the most current example.

The US fueled the mayhem last year, when Congress passed the Merida Initiative. This measure gave \$1.3 billion to Mexico and Central America for arms, military equipment and police training to battle drug cartels. Merida has funded horrific bloodshed, and the dispatch of 45,000 federal troops throughout Mexico. Residents of border regions have charged these troops with torture, rape, and forcing confessions.

The US has fed organized crime in Mexico and Central America with a policy begun in 1996 of deporting noncitizen immigrants, including legal residents, convicted of some crimes. Besides victimizing ordinary people, especially youth, authorities export the drug problem and violent gang culture that is created in the US to countries unprepared to deal with these crises.

And while the US government publicly preaches against drugs, it secretly deals in narcotics. The US has a long history of manipulating drugs as cover for politi-

cal power plays abroad, and social control at home.

Many carefully researched books expose US drug pushing. One is *Whiteout: The CIA, Drugs and the Press* by Alexander Cockburn and Jeffrey St. Clair. Here are a few items:

- During the Vietnam War, the CIA participated in the Southeast Asian heroin trade, which supplied US troops (an effort to blunt GI opposition to the war).
- In the 1980s, the CIA traded cocaine for weapons and cash to the contra rebels fighting Nicaragua's left-wing Sandinista government.
- During the former Soviet Union's intervention in Afghanistan, the US aided right-wing Muslim fundamentalist groups (some of whom became the Taliban) by trading their heroin for arms.

Repeatedly, the US has used drug wars to target radical groups. For instance in the 1990s, President Clinton launched "Plan Colombia." This supposed anti-cocaine campaign funded military and paramilitary death squads, who killed guerilla revolutionaries and poor peasants. An estimated 3,000 people a year were murdered, while right-wing cocaine trafficking went undisturbed.

In Colombia and Afghanistan, the US has sprayed tons of herbicides. These poisons destroy not only drug plants, but food crops, the Amazon rain forest, and the Afghan countryside. And they cause serious health damage.

But the flow of illegal drugs continues because of the huge profits to be made from selling them — as well as weapons to protect the trade. Legalizing drugs would eliminate this huge market for organized crime. In underdeveloped countries, many poor farmers depend on illegal drug crops for survival. Only giving them alternatives will change the equation.

Meanwhile, even though the US government professes a war on drugs, the CIA has shielded large scale US and international dealers from prosecution. And has helped get drugs onto the streets, especially in people of color communities.

### The racist "war on drugs"

People of all colors and income levels in the US use illegal drugs, for recreation or medical purposes or out of addiction. But enforcement is grossly unequal. For example, Blacks are arrested on drug charges up to five times more often than whites. The drug crusade is a war on the poor, especially Blacks and other people of color.

In low-income communities, jobs, education, and opportunity are severely limited. Street drugs can provide a form of self-medication for those with bleak futures. But poverty and inequality also spark revolt.

Controlling rebellion was the original goal of the "war on drugs" declared by President Richard Nixon in 1970. African Americans were rocking the power structure with struggles for civil rights and social justice. Their fights inspired other movements. Nixon was quoted as saying, "The whole problem is really the Blacks. The key is to devise a system [of squashing protest] that recognizes this while not appearing to."

Today, Nixon's "system" has spawned the highest imprisonment rate in the world. For Black men between 20 and 24 years old, it is one in nine. Eighty percent of all arrests are for drug possession, 40 percent of drug arrests are for marijuana.

The drug war has also put eight times more women in prison since 1980, most of them women of color.

Women with drug convictions, many of them mothers, also typically get longer sentences than men.

Prisoners who are released are set up to fail. They are excluded from subsidized housing, college loans, and often jobs. Most lose their voting rights. These policies sabotage rehabilitation and punish the families of ex-felons too.

The anti-drug campaign is also used as a pretext to further criminalize immigrants and militarize the border. The Obama administration has said it favors treatment over

incarceration, yet drug rehab is still unavailable to most people who need it. Instead, money is going for beefed-up border patrol.

The failure of drug laws is so clear that Law Enforcement Against Prohibition (LEAP) was launched in 2002 to call for legalization. Founder Jack Cole believes that drug prohibition should be ended, as was the prohibition of alcohol in 1933. "The day after we ended that terrible law, Al Capone and all his smuggling buddies were out of business."

### What can be done

The good news is that the legalization movement is growing. More people are calling for an end to police measures against street drugs, and for treating addiction as the health problem it is. In that light, here are effective ways to address the drug issue:

- End drug prohibition! Provide free rehabilitation for all who want it, with no waiting.
- Release prisoners convicted of petty drug crimes. Redirect money from prisons to job training, drug treatment, education and social services for ex-offenders. End punitive policies against ex-felons and restore their voting rights!
- Redirect the billions spent for drug wars to education, jobs and human services for poor communities, especially for young people.
- No US military intervention abroad. Stop covert US drug-dealing!

*The above article originally appeared in the Freedom Socialist newspaper (Seattle), June-July 2009, see [www.socialism.com](http://www.socialism.com).*

## notable quotes

"Problems cannot be solved by the same level of thinking that created them"  
*Einstein*

"The opposite of a correct statement is a false statement. But the opposite of a profound truth may well be another profound truth."  
*Niels Bohr*

"The fantasy that we can sustain our influence nine thousand miles away, when we can't even get our act together in Ohio is just a dark joke. One might state categorically that it would be a salubrious thing for America to knock off all its vaunted 'dreaming' and just wake up."  
*James Howard Kunstler*

"Most people would sooner die than think; in fact, they do so."  
*Bertrand Russell*

"Common sense is very uncommon."  
*Horace Greeley*

"Many students, especially those who are poor, intuitively know what the schools do for them. They school them to confuse process and substance. Once these become blurred, a new logic is assumed: the more treatment there is, the better are the results; or, escalation leads to success. The pupil is thereby 'schooled' to confuse teaching with learning, grade advancement with education, a diploma with competence, and fluency with the ability to say something new. His imagination is 'schooled' to accept service in place of value. Medical treatment is mistaken for health care, social work for the improvement of community life, police protection for safety, military poise for national security, the rat race for productive work. Health, learning, dignity, independence, and creative endeavor are defined as little more than the performance of the institutions which claim to serve these ends, and their improvement is made to depend on allocating more resources to the management of hospitals, schools, and other agencies in question."  
*Ivan Illich*

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## ACTIVIST CALENDAR

The calendar entries below have mostly been chosen from Jean Buskin's email Peace and Justice Calendar. To post activism events on her email/web version, send event notices to Jean Buskin at [bb369@scn.org](mailto:bb369@scn.org). To receive updates of the complete calendar, have Ms Buskin add you to her email list by contacting her at the same address, or view her full calendar anytime at [www.scn.org/activism/calendar](http://www.scn.org/activism/calendar).

### PLEASE CONFIRM ALL EVENTS WITH CONTACTS LISTED

THURS JULY 16, 7:30 pm, at New Freeway Hall, 5018 Rainier Ave. S., **Seattle**; STAND UP TO FASCIST CREEPS: How to Stop 'Killers for Life,' Gay-Bashers and White Supremacists. Feminist writer Guerry Hoddersen, a founder of United Front Against Fascism, presents causes and cures for ultra-right murder and mayhem. Dinner, with vegetarian option, available at 6:30 pm for a \$7.50 donation. Hosted by Radical Women. Everyone welcome. Wheelchair accessible. info, rides or childcare 206-722-6057 or 722-2453

FRI JULY 17, and subsequent Fridays, 7 - 9:30 p.m., at Keystone Church, 5019 Keystone Pl., West of I-5, just North of 50th, Metro Bus Routes 16, 26 & 44, **Seattle**; Friday Night At the MEANINGFUL MOVIES and Wallingford Neighbors for Peace and Justice present A Film: FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION: Resistance & Repression In The Age Of Intellectual Property. info [www.meaningfulmovies.org](http://www.meaningfulmovies.org)

SAT JULY 18, SOUND TRANSIT'S LIGHT RAIL LAUNCH. the light rail line from Westlake to Tukwila opens with a daylong celebration! Sustainable Ballard's Undriver Licensing Station will be at the **Columbia City** Station, hosted by our friends from Sustainable South Seattle and Transportation Choices.

SAT JULY 18, 10 a.m., Meet at Tully's at N 45th & Meridian, **Seattle**; WALLINGFORD WALKS. Visit several retail stores and a restaurant that have gone deep green. They will talk about why and how they have done it. A 3rd Saturday project of Sustainable Wallingford.

SAT JULY 18, 11 am - all day, on the campus of Meridian Park School, 17077 Meridian Ave N, Shoreline; SOLAR FILM FESTIVAL Special Screenings at the 6th Annual **Shoreline** Solarfest. 11 am, The History Of Oil (46 min, Robert Newman, 2007); 12:30 pm, Kilowatt Hours (65 min, Jeff Barrie, 2004), 2 pm Blind Spot (86 min, Adolfo Doring, 2008); Plus a number of short films! And don't miss the incredible selection of alternative energy displays and workshops! info [www.shorelinesolar.org/](http://www.shorelinesolar.org/)

SAT JULY 18, and subsequent 3rd Saturdays, 12:30 - 4:30 p.m., Meet at 8799 19th Ave NW, a few blocks west of 15th NW in **Ballard**, **Seattle**; Crown Hill Natural Area NEIGHBORHOOD WORK PARTY PROJECT. We hope to host a crowd of interested neighbors to weed & mulch! Come meet us, volunteer a while, and learn about this wonderful neighborhood park! Sponsor: Friends of Crown Hill Glen, rsvp 3 days in advance please! info Joyce Ford, Plumis Park Advocates, 206-789-1394

SAT JULY 18, 3 - 11 pm, at St. Demetrios Church, 2100 Boyer Avenue E, in **Montlake** neighborhood, **Seattle**; the Community Alliance for Global Justice 3rd Annual STRENGTHENING LOCAL ECONOMIES, Everywhere Fair & Dinner. Fair 3 - 6 pm: free & open to the public. info Heather Day 206-405-4600 or [www.seattleglobaljustice.org/slee-dinner/](http://www.seattleglobaljustice.org/slee-dinner/)

SUN JULY 19, and subsequent 3rd Sundays, 2:30 pm, in the Horizon House Forum at 900 University St., **Seattle**; HEALTH CARE FOR ALL Board Meeting, all welcome, info Mary Margaret 206-382-3785

JULY 20, 22, 27 AND 29, 10 am - 4 pm, at Reel Grrls New Media Lab, **Central District**, 1409 21st Ave, **Seattle**; REEL QUEER: A VIDEO PRODUCTION AND MEDIA LITERACY training course for LGBTQ teens (ages 13-19) of all genders. This is a program of Reel Grrls. No cost, thanks to generous support from the Pride Foundation. info [reid@reelgrrls.org](mailto:reid@reelgrrls.org) or [rq@reelgrrls.org](mailto:rq@reelgrrls.org), info or to apply [www.reelgrrls.org/reelqueer](http://www.reelgrrls.org/reelqueer)

TUES JULY 21, and subsequent 3rd Tuesdays, but please confirm, 6 - 8 p.m., at Boards & Commissions room, Floor L2, City Hall, 600 4th Avenue, downtown **Seattle**; Public Meeting on POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY held by the Office of Police Accountability Review Panel (OPARB), info 206-684-8146 or [opareviewboard@seattle.gov](mailto:opareviewboard@seattle.gov). Listen to meetings in progress on the Boards & Commissions Listen 206-684-4718

TUES JULY 21, and most subsequent 3rd Tuesdays, please phone or check website to con-

firm, 6:15 p.m., in the cafe at Elliott Bay bookstore in **Pioneer Square**, S Main St & 1st Ave S, **Seattle**; monthly board meeting of NICA, Northwest INTENTIONAL COMMUNITIES Association, a networking and education organization for intentional communities in the Pacific Northwest; info [www.ic.org/nica](http://www.ic.org/nica) or Fred 425-481-8044

WEDS JULY 22, and subsequent 2nd & 4th Wednesdays, 5:15 to 6:15 pm, on Pacific Avenue in front of Union Station at S. 19th St., Park at the Tacoma Dome and take the light rail, **Tacoma**; TACOMA WOMEN IN BLACK PEACE VIGIL. We stand beside the vigil of United for Peace of Pierce County (5 - 6 pm every Wednesday) for three quarters of an hour and stay on another quarter hour after they leave. Please wear black or plain dark clothes, and do not bring signs. info Barbara 253-380-0164, or [Bmadsen61@hotmail.com](mailto:Bmadsen61@hotmail.com) or [www.speakeasy.org/~loris/twib.html#vigil](http://www.speakeasy.org/~loris/twib.html#vigil)

WEDS JULY 22, 7:30 p.m., at Town Hall **Seattle**, 1119 8th Avenue at Seneca Street, downstairs, enter on Seneca; Town Hall presents Chris Hedges on OUR DYING CULTURE. Newspapers are folding across the country, but we can't get enough 140-character Twitter Tweets. Presidential debates and political rhetoric are delivered at a sixth-grade reading level. Serious film, theater, and books are pushed to the margins of society. Tickets are \$5 at [www.brownpapertickets.com](http://www.brownpapertickets.com) or 800-838-3006, and at the door beginning at 6:30 pm. Town Hall members receive priority seating. info [www.townhallseattle.org](http://www.townhallseattle.org)

THURS JULY 23, and subsequent 4th Thursdays, 7 p.m., at Holy Family of Jesus Church, 1427 E 40th St., just off Portland Avenue, **Tacoma**; Citizens for Responsible Justice (C4RJ) - Tacoma Support Group for FAMILIES AND FRIENDS OF INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS and any interested person. Come around to the back. We meet in the basement. Sign over basement entrance reads "Indochina Cultural and Service Center."

JULY 24 - 26, at ITRON Inc. in the Spokane Valley, **Spokane**; LGBTQ Youth Conference for Hope Hosted by Odyssey Youth Center. Participation is expected from youth and adults in Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, California, Alaska and Canada. In addition to a series of workshops for youth, there will be workshops for teachers, leaders, community members, service providers, and parents. We are excited about the possibility that over 500 LGBTQ INDIVIDUALS AND STRAIGHT ALLIES will join us in Spokane to network, learn and support each other. It is truly going to be an amazing event. info [www.odysseyyouth.org/](http://www.odysseyyouth.org/) or 509-325-3637

SAT JULY 25, 8 a.m., at Holy Cross Lutheran of Bellevue, 4315 129th Place SE, **Bellevue**; Holy Cross Lutheran of Bellevue invites you to their July Round Table discussion, ENDING U.S.-SPONSORED TORTURE FOREVER: a study of people of faith. Can torture be justified in any circumstances? Can cruel, inhumane, and degrading treatment be morally justified? The Round Table will begin by viewing "Ending US - Sponsored Torture Forever: a study of people of faith," a film produced by the National Religious Campaign Against Torture, info on the National Religious Campaign Against Torture, [www.nrcat.org](http://www.nrcat.org)

SAT JULY 25, and subsequent 4th Saturdays, 11 am, meet at Westlake Park, 4th & Pine in downtown **Seattle**; Join Veterans For Peace in its monthly walk-against war. END THE U.S. OCCUPATIONS OF IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN! Prosecute War Criminals, Not War Resisters! Walk to Pike Place Market. Demonstrate and pass out flyers until 1 pm. info 206-499-1220 or [projectsafehaven@hotmail.com](mailto:projectsafehaven@hotmail.com)

SAT JULY 25, 7 pm, at Trinity United Methodist Church, 6512 23rd Avenue NW, **Seattle**; CINDY SHEEHAN, who, after her son oldest son Casey was killed in Iraq in April 2004, camped out, along with a contingent of Veterans for Peace, on GWB's doorstep in Crawford, Texas. It was called 'Camp Casey' - in honor of her son - and soon burgeoned into a whole village of supporters. info [www.cindysheehanssoapbox.com](http://www.cindysheehanssoapbox.com). info 206-784 2227 or Jerry Riley [lilnjer@earthlink.net](mailto:lilnjer@earthlink.net)

TUES JUL 28 - TUES AUG 4, on **Vashon Island**; NONVIOLENT COMMUNICATION NVC FAMILY CAMP. Our overall vision is to live in NVC consciousness with our families and each other in a community setting. Family Camp is a place where everyone's needs matter: - playing - learning - growing - loving ... A place to explore the realm of com-

passionate strength and connection. info Northwest Compassionate Communication [info@nwcompass.org](mailto:info@nwcompass.org) or [www.nwcompass.org](http://www.nwcompass.org) or 206-382-8576

TUES JULY 28, and subsequent last Tuesdays, noon - 1 pm, at Offices of Washington State Bar Association, 1325 4th Avenue, Suite 600, **Seattle**; forum on a topic of LAW & PEACE. This month topic: TBA. 1 CLE credit usually available. Sponsor: Washington State Bar Association World Peace Through Law Section. Members: Free, Non-Section members: \$25, Law students: \$10. Pre-Registration required. info [www.wsba.org/lawyers/groups/world-peace](http://www.wsba.org/lawyers/groups/world-peace) or WSBA 800-945-9722

TUES JULY 28, and subsequent 4th Tuesdays, 7 pm, at **Phinney Ridge** Center, Blue Bldg, Room 6, **Seattle**; NW BIODIESEL MEETING. Alternating months between special topic and Biodiesel 101, see website for details. info Aaron Kahn [akahn@windermere.com](mailto:akahn@windermere.com) or [www.nwbiodiesel.org](http://www.nwbiodiesel.org)

FRI JULY 31, and subsequent last Fridays, 5:30 p.m., at **Westlake Park**, downtown, 4th & Pine, **Seattle**; CRITICAL MASS, an organized coincidence of bicyclists who ride around the streets of Seattle en masse. Come join the fun! info <http://students.washington.edu/spiegel/cmss.html> or <http://catalyst.washington.edu/webtools/epost/register.cgi?owner=sah5&id=8002> a discussion board for people to discuss things like ride routes and how to deal with traffic lights and police, or anything else related to Critical Mass

SAT AUG 1, and subsequent 1st Saturdays, 11 a.m. - noon, on the east side of Bothell Way at the corner of Ballinger Way, **Lake Forest Park**; Lake Forest Park for Peace MONTHLY VIGIL FOR DARFUR. Join us for our monthly vigil to call attention to the genocide in Darfur. All are welcome. Bring signs and banners. info Hallie Condit 206-365-5053 or [hj\\_3246@hotmail.com](mailto:hj_3246@hotmail.com)

SAT AUG 1, and subsequent 1st Saturdays, 3 - 5 p.m., at the Keystone Congregational Church, 5019 Keystone Place N, just north of N 50th and Sunnyside N, **Seattle**; regular meeting of the merged Citizens Concerned for the People of Iraq and the Interfaith Network of Concern for the People of Iraq, since 1996 challenging the US embargo which killed thousands of children per month, now reassessing how to PROMOTE PEACE AND SUPPORT IRAQIS; INOC is a program unit of the Church Council of Greater Seattle, info Rev. Rich Gamble, [spambles@yahoo.com](mailto:spambles@yahoo.com) or 206-632-6021 or [www.concernforiraq.org](http://www.concernforiraq.org)

SUN AUG 2, and subsequent 1st Sundays, 1:30 pm, at **Westlake Park**, 4th Ave. and Pine St., downtown **Seattle**; Silent Vigil to STOP HUMAN TRAFFICKING. info Louise 206-306-1312

SUN AUG 2, and subsequent 1st Sundays, 4 - 5 p.m., at the intersection of Park St. & North Bend Blvd. next to the Snoqualmie Valley Historical Museum and the Visitor's Center in **North Bend**; SNOQUALMIE/ NORTH BEND CITIZENS FOR CHANGE will hold a PEACE VIGIL to honor our troops in Iraq and to encourage their safe return home. Join us. Bring candles or flashlights. info [rubin51@comcast.net](mailto:rubin51@comcast.net)

MON AUG 3, and subsequent 1st Mondays, please confirm by phone, 7 pm, at Horizon House, 900 University Street across from Virginia Mason Hospital, downtown **Seattle**; Jubilee Northwest meeting. Organization works on in cancelling unconscionable DEBTS OF THE WORLD'S POOREST NATIONS. info 206-382-3785

TUES AUG 4, and subsequent 1st Tuesdays, but please confirm, noon - 2 p.m., at Al Rochester Room, Floor 2, City Hall, 600 4th Avenue, downtown **Seattle**; Public Meeting on POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY held by the Office of Police Accountability Review Panel (OPARB), info 206-684-8146 or [opareviewboard@seattle.gov](mailto:opareviewboard@seattle.gov). Listen to meetings in progress on the Boards & Commissions Listen 206-684-4718

TUES AUG 4, and subsequent 1st Tuesdays, 6:30 pm, at Mosaic Coffee House, 4401 2nd Avenue NE, **Seattle**, located in the Church of the Nazarene, directly behind the Dick's Drive in on N. 45th in **Wallingford**, near bus routes 16, 26 and 44, parking is available behind Dick's Drive In; meeting of Amnesty International Group 4, working to PROTECT HUMAN RIGHTS WORLDWIDE; info [www.scn.org/amnesty](http://www.scn.org/amnesty) or [airgroup4@gmail.com](mailto:airgroup4@gmail.com) or 206-622-2741

WEDS AUG 5, and subsequent 1st Wednesdays, 5:30 - 7 p.m., at Labor Temple, Hall 8, 2800 1st Ave, **Seattle**; JOBS WITH JUSTICE Seattle Organizing Committee meeting, info 206-441-4969

WEDS AUG 5, and subsequent 1st Wednesdays, 6 pm, at Whatcom Peace & Justice Center's offices in the Anything Grows building, 100 E. Maple Street, **Bellingham**; NONVIOLENT DIRECT DEMOCRACY OPEN DISCUSSION GROUP facilitated by local activist Ellen Murphy. Ellen is on the national non-violence training committee of The Declaration of Peace. info 360-734-0217

WEDS AUG 5, and subsequent 1st Wednesdays, 7 p.m., at Burien Library, 14700 8th Ave. SW, **Burien**; SOUTHDEND NEIGHBORS FOR PEACE & JUSTICE presents the Wednesday Night at the MEANINGFUL MOVIES. This film TBA. If library parking lot is full, please park at nearby church parking lot. Sponsored by Southend Neighbors for Peace & Justice, info rdare2@yahoo.com

WEDS AUG 5, and subsequent 1st Wednesdays, 7:30 pm, at the KBCS studios, **Bellevue**; COMMUNITY RADIO VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION. KBCS is growing a volunteer-powered and social justice-focused newsroom, where reporters and producers are community members committed to skill sharing and facilitating media making of, by, and for our communities. To get involved, come to one of our monthly public affairs volunteer orientations. info at www.kbcs.fm, RSVP to Joaquin Uy 425- 564-6195, or juy@bcc.ctc.edu

THURS AUG 6, 6 - 9:30 p.m., just south of the Bathhouse Theater on the northwest shore of **Green Lake**, **Seattle**; FROM HIROSHIMA TO HOPE is an annual peace event honoring the victims of the BOMBINGS AT HIROSHIMA AND NAGASAKI and all victims of violence. This year's ceremony commemorates the 64th anniversary of the bombings. The program ends with the Toro Nagashi lantern floating ceremony. Photos from previous ceremonies www.myspace.com/fromhiroshimatohope

THURS AUG 6, and subsequent 1st Thursdays, 6 - 8 pm, in the City Hall, Boards & Commission Conference Room CH L280, 601 Fifth Ave between Cherry and James Streets, downtown **Seattle**, phone or check website to confirm date, time and place; Seattle HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETING. SHRC is made up of 15 citizen representatives who advise the Mayor, the City Council, & all City of Seattle Depts in matters regarding human rights. info Marta Idowu marta.idowu@seattle.gov or 206- 684-4540 or www.seattle.gov/humanrights/meetings.htm

THURS AUG 6, and subsequent 1st Thursdays, 6 - 7 p.m., at the downtown branch of the Seattle Public Library, 1000 4th Ave, **Seattle**; The Newcomers Resource Project at the King County Bar Association and the Seattle Public Library present a monthly LEGAL WORKSHOP series geared to IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES living in King County. Each installation of the series will feature a presentation given by community advocates and attorneys, immediately followed by the opportunity for questions and feedback. info Arielle 206-267-7027 or arieller@kcba.org

FRI AUG 7, at Landmark's Varsity Theatre, **Seattle**; Film opening. "Warning: Don't watch 'THE END OF POVERTY' (or read about it) if you want to preserve your contentment with your lifestyle and the web of structures that make it possible." -Kaitlin Barker, Sojourners Magazine. info www.TheEndofPoverty.com or info@cinemalibrestudio.com

FRI AUG 7, and subsequent 1st Fridays, 5:30 - 7:30 pm, at Bellingham Dharma Hall, 1101 N. State Street, third floor, corner of Maple, **Bellingham**; MEDITATION FOR PEACE 5:30 - 6, Sponsored by the Bellingham Buddhist Peace Fellowship and Bellingham Dharma Hall. Followed by BUDDHIST PEACE FELLOWSHIP meeting, 6:15 - 7:30. All community members welcome. info 360-527-9101

FRI AUG 7, and subsequent 1st Fridays, 7:30 pm, at 911 Media Arts Center, 402 9th Ave N, **Seattle**; 911 Media Arts Center and Hazel Wolf Environmental Film Network present a monthly showcase of progressive documentaries called the GREEN FILM SERIES. The HWEFN opens up its extensive film library to showcase documentaries of all shapes and sizes on environmental issues. This evening features topic TBA. Admission \$5. info www.911media.org or www.hazelfilm.org/greenfilms.html#reinvention

FRI AUG 7, and subsequent 1st Fridays, 8 pm, at Christoff Gallery, 6004 12th Ave. S., **Seattle**; This Film TBA. Age 21 and over only venue. presented by "the levee breaking" monthly film series showcasing the use of CREATIVITY AND THE ARTS TO NURTURE SOCIAL JUSTICE. Age 21 and over only venue. Donations accepted. info Jesse or Pamela 425-442-7104

SAT AUG 8, and subsequent 2nd Saturdays, 10 am, at Northwest Leadership Foundation, 717 Tacoma Ave. S., **Tacoma**; One America (formerly HATE FREE ZONE) FAMILY MEETINGS: Please join us for a family meeting for those who have been AFFECTED BY DETENTION AND DEPORTATION. Families are encouraged to share their stories and learn about their human rights. info Deena 206-723-2203 ext. 209 or deena@hatefreezone.org tollfree helpline 1-866-HFZONE1 (1- 866-439-6631)

SAT AUG 8, and subsequent 2nd Saturdays, please confirm at website, 10 am, at the cafe in Third Place Books- **Ravenna**; SEATTLE ESPERANTO

SOCIETY, the Seattle chapter of an international peace movement. The meeting is an informal discussion and language practice; beginners are welcome. info <http://seattlesperanto.org>, Free online Esperanto lessons at [www.lernu.net](http://www.lernu.net)

SAT AUG 8, and subsequent 2nd Saturdays, 11 am - 1 pm, at Bradford Center, 750 - 108th Ave NE, **Bellevue**, one block north of Bellevue Transit Center; War and the Soul, A Book Discussion Group, HEALING VETS FROM PTSD. A safe place to come to help ourselves, so that we might help others. Vets Helping Vets. info Charlotte (a vet) 206-285-0341

SAT AUG 8, noon to 4 p.m., at Duwamish Waterway Park in Seattle's **South Park** neighborhood, 7900 10th Avenue S., **Seattle**; 5th Annual Duwamish River Festival. Celebrate the ongoing CLEANUP AND RESTORATION OF THE DUWAMISH RIVER. The environmental justice event features live music, Mexican folk dancing, food, kids' activities, and educational kayak rides. Schedule (subject to change). info 206-954-0218, or [www.duwamishcleanup.org](http://www.duwamishcleanup.org)

MON AUG 10, and subsequent 2nd Mondays, please confirm at website, 7 pm, at Woodland Park Presbyterian Church, 225 N 70th, **Seattle**; Meeting of SOUND NONVIOLENT OPPONENTS OF WAR. info SNOW [www.snowcoalition.org](http://www.snowcoalition.org)

TUES AUG 11, and subsequent 2nd Tuesdays, 6:30 pm, at Marina Park Pavilion on the **Kirkland** waterfront park, on 255 bus route; KIRKLAND PEACE VIGIL meets monthly. We call ourselves "Citizens Along the Lake". info <http://mysite.verizon.net/resuxn0n/citizensalongthelakeforpeace/> or Donna Schill 425-821-5596

TUES AUG 11, and subsequent 2nd Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m. at the **Greenwood** Senior Center, 525 N. 85th St., **Seattle**; Transition Initiatives are part of a vibrant, international grassroots movement that builds community resilience in response to the challenges of peak oil, climate change and the economic crisis. This summer we will begin a COMMUNITY DISCUSSION to explore The Transition Handbook: From OIL DEPENDENCY TO LOCAL RESILIENCE by founder Rob Hopkins. Books can be purchased for a 15% discount at Santoro's Books. (7405 Greenwood Ave. N) info Jenny 206- 297-0875 or <http://greenwoodsage.blogspot.com/>

AUG 14 - 20, at Northwest Film Forum, 1515 12th Ave., between Pike & Pine, **Seattle**; Northwest Film Forum, Seattle's non-profit home for film, presents 69: An in-depth, yearlong exploration of the films of 1969. Le Gai Savoir (Jean-Luc Godard, France, 1969, 35mm, 95 min) begins to integrate the director's formal concerns with his political ones, building a case for the HISTORICAL NECESSITY OF REVOLUTION. \$6.50/children and seniors, \$9/general, Half Price Mondays! All tickets half price every Monday! Tickets and info [www.nwfilmforum.org](http://www.nwfilmforum.org) or 206-329-2629 or 1-800-838-3006

SAT AUG 15, and subsequent 3rd Saturdays, 6 - 9 pm, at JW! headquarters / Thrift store, 4206 Rainier Ave South, **Seattle**; Justice Works! hosts a donation-only "Coffee House". JW! is a grassroots criminal justice reform organization whose mission is UNDOING RACISM IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM as experienced by African Americans; info [justice\\_works@yahoo.com](mailto:justice_works@yahoo.com) or [www.justiceworks.info](http://www.justiceworks.info) or 206-725-9189

AUG 17 - 24, 10 am - 4 pm, 2009 SUMMER YOUTH ORGANIZING INSTITUTE, Organized by **Seattle** Young People's Project. An 8-day youth activist training camp where young people ages 12-18 will learn the skills to become youth organizers for social change. Workshops include: anti-oppression 101, real world survival skills, revolutionary art, media & facilitation skills, and more. Youth who complete the entire institute will be paid a small stipend. application, and info [www.sypp.org](http://www.sypp.org)

MON AUG 17, and subsequent 3rd Mondays (4th Mon Jan & Feb), 5:30 - 7:30 pm, in the City Hall, Boards & Commission Conference Room CH L280, 601 Fifth Ave between Cherry and James Streets, downtown **Seattle**, check website to confirm date, time and place; SEATTLE WOMEN'S COMMISSION MEETING. Meetings open to the public. info [www.seattle.gov/womenscommission/meetings.htm](http://www.seattle.gov/womenscommission/meetings.htm) or 206-684-4537 or Felicia Yearwood-Murrell [felicia.yearwood-murrell@seattle.gov](mailto:felicia.yearwood-murrell@seattle.gov)

TUES AUG 18, and subsequent 18th of each month, at St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral, 1245 10th Ave E, **Seattle**; People of all faith traditions are warmly welcomed for readings and community prayer. INTERFAITH VIGIL FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST, Program of prayer, readings and reflection, 5 p.m. to 6 p.m., Stop by any time to join the vigil from 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. in McCaw Chapel, 8 p.m. - 8 a.m. in Thomsen Chapel. info [www.pepm.org](http://www.pepm.org) and click on "Peace Vigil" or Tom Walker 425-641-9247 or [www.eappi-us.org](http://www.eappi-us.org)

TUES AUG 18, and most subsequent 3rd Tuesdays, 7 - 9 pm, at Cascade People's Center, 309 Pontius Ave N, **Seattle**; GREEN PARTY OF SEATTLE monthly meeting, topic TBA. info and meeting confirmation Andrew Rose [arose\\_1@yahoo.com](mailto:arose_1@yahoo.com)

TUES AUG 18, and subsequent 3rd Tuesdays, 7 - 9 pm, at Opperman Design office, **Ballard**, **Seattle**; SUSTAINABLE BALLARD TRANSPORTATION GUILD Meeting. Feet, bikes, busses, carpools, boats, cars. Current projects: Ballard Artistic Bike

Rack design Contest and Implementation, Ballard Grease Reclamation project, Sail Transport Network. Bring your Advanced Transportation ideas! Potluck! Directions and info Vic 206-789-7646

WEDS AUG 19, and subsequent 3rd Wednesdays, noon, at St Mark's Cathedral Bloedel Hall, 1245 10th Ave E, **Seattle**; The INTERFAITH TASK FORCE ON HOMELESSNESS (ITFH) meets. info 425-442-5418 or [itfh@comcast.net](mailto:itfh@comcast.net) or [www.itf-homeless.org](http://www.itf-homeless.org)

THURS AUG 20, and subsequent 3rd Thursdays, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m., at Harry Thomas Community Center, Lee House, New Holly Park, 7315 39th Ave South, **Seattle**; QUEER PARENTS NETWORKING DINNER. Join Northwest Network for a free monthly dinner, meet other LBTG families & parents, and talk about the parenting issues that are affecting your life. Hosted by: The Northwest Network of Bi, Trans, Lesbian & Gay Survivors of Abuse

SAT AUG 22, and subsequent 4th Saturdays, 11 am, meet at Westlake Park, 4th & Pine in downtown **Seattle**; Join Veterans For Peace in its monthly walk-about against war. END THE U.S. OCCUPATIONS OF IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN! Prosecute War Criminals, Not War Resisters! Walk to Pike Place Market. Demonstrate and pass out flyers until 1 pm. info 206-499-1220 or [projectsafehaven@hotmail.com](mailto:projectsafehaven@hotmail.com)

SUN - FRI AUG 23 - 28, at YMCA Camp Seymour, near **Gig Harbor**, WA; Puget Sound INTERFAITH YOUTH CAMP. The camp "offers a safe place for youth from a variety of faith and religious traditions to be themselves, have a great time in a beautiful natural setting, and discover more about their common humanity." Girls and boys from all faith and religious traditions who are entering the 7-9th grades in the fall are encouraged to apply. This will be the fourth year for this camp. info and applications [www.soundinterfaithcamp.org](http://www.soundinterfaithcamp.org) or 360-357-7224, info Sallie 253-383-3056 x 105

SAT SEPT 5, 10 am - noon, at 21 Acres, 13701 NE 171st Street, near **Woodinville**; The Sustainable Saturday Series at 21 Acres presents an opportunity to the community to learn and participate in a variety of activities showcasing and demonstrating SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP. Farm and garden demonstrations and volunteer work projects are planned between 10 a.m. and Noon, along with an official Farm Tour at 11 a.m. Volunteer tasks could include brush clearing, trail maintenance, light building maintenance and general garden tasks. Free and open to the public. info 206-442-2061 or [www.21acres.org](http://www.21acres.org)

SAT - SUN SEPT 12 - 13, in **Chicago**, IL; US Campaign to END THE ISRAELI OCCUPATION 8th Annual National Organizers' Conference. The registration fee is \$75 and will include conference packets, breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks, and admission to the Saturday key-note speech. To register and pay [www.endtheoccupation.org/article.php?id=2003](http://www.endtheoccupation.org/article.php?id=2003), info [www.endtheoccupation.org/article.php?list=type&type=253](http://www.endtheoccupation.org/article.php?list=type&type=253)

SUN SEPT 13, 5 pm, at 1423 10th Ave in the basement, **Seattle**; ANSWER film series. Machuca (2004) Drama about CLASS STRUGGLE IN CHILE leading up to the 1973 coup, seen through eyes of children. Film showing is free; donations will be accepted. Please confirm details at [www.answerseattle.org](http://www.answerseattle.org)

TUES SEPT 15, and most 3rd Tuesdays, please confirm, 3 - 5 p.m., at Planned Parenthood, 2001 E. Madison St., **Seattle**; SAFE SCHOOLS COALITION meeting, a public-private partnership of organizations (government agencies, schools, community agencies, churches, youth/student groups, gay/lesbian groups, human rights groups) and 400+ individuals working to help schools become safe places where every family can belong. details about how to call in or attend, contact Kyle: 206-322-6711 ext 32190 or [KRapinan@casey.org](mailto:KRapinan@casey.org), info [www.safeschoolscoalition.org/meet\\_who\\_when\\_where.htm](http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org/meet_who_when_where.htm)

MON - FRI SEPT 21 - 25, on **Olympic Peninsula**; 4th Annual ELJ Workshop: Introduction to Engineered Log Jam Technology and Applications for EROSION CONTROL AND FISH HABITAT. Course ID: HYD-501. info Northwest Environmental Training Center, a program of the Northwest Environmental Education Council, 206-762-1976 or [www.nwetc.org](http://www.nwetc.org)

SEPT 24 - 25, in **Pittsburgh**, PA; A Call for a Global MOBILIZATION AGAINST THE G20 SUMMIT. Another world is possible - but we must fight for it! Bail out the people; jobs & social needs—not war and greed; free mumia abu-jamal. Shutdown the racist prison industrial complex

SAT & SUN SEPT 26 & 27, at **Ballard** Commons Park, **Seattle**; SUSTAINABLE BALLARD FESTIVAL - Year 6. Lots of great how-to workshops, all your favorite local, sustainable businesses, good resources for saving money and the planet. Plus - Music & fun! To join the planning team contact Jenny 206-384-0053 or [jenny@sustainableballard.org](mailto:jenny@sustainableballard.org)

SAT SEPT 26, in **Auburn**; South King County LATINO HEALTH FAIR with organizations that serve the Latino community in South King County. info Cathy Aby [Cathy.Aby@kingcounty.gov](mailto:Cathy.Aby@kingcounty.gov)

SAT SEPT 26, at Woodland Park Zoo, **Seattle**; WASHINGTON PHYSICIANS FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY Annual Dinner: Hosted Social, Dinner and Program. info 206-547-2630 or [www.wpsr.org](http://www.wpsr.org) or [idill@wpsr.org](mailto:idill@wpsr.org)

# WA State Sheriffs Association Calls for Urgent Fix to 'Chaos' of Immigration System

FROM ONEAMERICA

## immigration

*Editor's note: Lately both mainstream politicians—such as Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels—as well as law enforcement are calling for at least some degree of immigration amnesty. In some intriguing ways, the case for immigration amnesty parallels the case for legalizing marijuana. In both cases, law enforcement officers and local governments suffer the brunt of dealing with crime caused by underground economies.*

In a letter to Washington state Senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell, the Washington State Sheriff's Association in June issued an urgent call for changes to the immigration system. The Sheriff's Association cited a number of ill effects caused by the broken US immigration system, including expense on local courts and jails; erosion of trust between communities and law enforcement; and distracting law enforcement from their primary objective—public safety and crime prevention.

The letter challenges the President and Congress to pass comprehensive immigration reform that creates a clear distinction between federal civil immigration law enforcement and local law enforcement.

The Sheriff's Association statement as an important step forward for immigration reform. It clearly demonstrates the dangerous impact of our current broken system on public safety and shows the breadth of the movement for reform.

The text of the letter appears below:

DATE: June 22, 2009  
TO: Senator Patty Murray, Senator Maria Cantwell,  
FROM: Washington State Sheriffs' Association

For years, the federal government has failed to deal with the broken immigration system and left our communities to deal with the effects: illegal drug trade; smugglers who take advantage of immigrant workers and families; criminals who prey on immigrants because they believe they won't be reported; the expense on local courts and local jails; millions of individuals trying to better their lot in life but who easily work with false papers or driving without a license; over-burdened schools; and an over-burdened health care system. The time is now to fix the broken immigration system and its safe-guards.

The lack of a coherent national immigration policy has created chaos in our communities and made the job of law enforcement much harder. Very bad people have been allowed to easily find their way into our communities and victimize us. There has been confusion and disparities in how law enforcement agencies have chosen to handle immigration issues nationwide.

The lack of a coherent national immigration policy has also had an enormous negative impact on the trust that many of our sheriff's offices and police departments have worked hard to build with immigrant communities over the years. We know from experience that law enforcement is most effective in achieving its job of keeping the community safe when there is strong trust built. However, the lack of a federal solution to the civil immigration system has stymied or eroded the trust we have built and our ability to effectively police all of our community.

Instead of forcing state and local police to pick up where the federal government has failed, Congress and the President must reform our immigration laws. We urge Congress and the President to enact a comprehensive immigration law that secures the borders and addresses the reality of illegal workers in a comprehensive manner so that this nation can move forward as one.

We need a national immigration system that is just and humane and yet allows us to keep clear the important dis-

## ACLU News from back page

who has been blocked from using NCRL computers to research an academic assignment about youth tobacco usage while studying at Eastern Washington University to become a drug and alcohol counselor. Because she had no Internet access at home, she had to travel to Spokane to use its library's computers for the information she sought.

· Pearl Cherrington, a resident of Twisp in Okanogan County, a professional photographer specializing in landscapes and outdoor scenes who has been blocked from using NCRL computers to conduct research on art galleries and health issues. NCRL filters also blocked her from access to YouTube.

· Charles Heinlen, a resident of Okanogan in Okanogan County, who has been blocked from using NCRL computers to access the blog he maintains on MySpace, as well information relating to firearms use by hunters, fine arts, and other lawful information.

· The Second Amendment Foundation, a nonprofit organization with more than 600,000 members nationwide and headquarters in Bellevue. The Foundation undertakes education, research, publishing, and legal action focusing on the constitutional right to own and possess firearms. The NCRL has blocked access to the Foundation-sponsored magazine Women & Guns. •

## SETTLEMENT REACHED FOR UW ART PROFESSOR

### Others have also been wrongly detained for taking photos in public places

A University of Washington professor who was frisked, handcuffed, and detained for taking photographs of power lines as part of an art project has received a payment of \$8,000 in a settlement of her lawsuit against the City of Snohomish. The ACLU of Washington represented Shirley Scheier in seeking redress for her wrongful detention by Snohomish police.

The settlement came after the US District Court in Seattle last year found that officers "lacked a reasonable justification for their aggressive tactics in com-

pletely restraining Scheier's personal liberty." Scheier's experience highlights a pattern of law enforcement officers harassing people engaged in taking pictures in public.

"Taking photographs of objects or people in plain view is not a crime. Police should not presume that it is a suspicious act, and should not overreact by detaining people for taking pictures," said ACLU-WA Legal Director Sarah Dunne.

Shirley Scheier is a 55-year-old artist and Associate Professor of Fine Art at the University of Washington who often uses photos of public land and public structures in her artistic prints. An exhibit of her work currently is showing at Richard Hugo House on Capitol Hill until June 21.

In October 2005, Scheier drove to Snohomish and stopped to take pictures of the power towers at a substation near downtown, from outside the facility's gate. She was on public property, and there were no signs indicating that photography was not allowed.

As she drove home on State Highway 9, Snohomish police pulled her over. More officers arrived soon, began to question her about her pictures and said her behavior was "suspicious." Scheier explained that she is a university faculty member interested in power lines as part of our ecosystem and cooperated with officers' requests.

Nevertheless, police frisked and handcuffed Scheier, and placed her in the back of a police car for almost half an hour. The incident was upsetting to Scheier, who as a professor was concerned that her students not have their rights violated when they went out to do field work.

In rejecting the city's motion for summary judgment which would have ended the case, the federal district court in November 2008 found that the officers' actions had likely violated Scheier's rights. "An individual's fundamental Fourth Amendment right to be free from 'unreasonable searches and seizures' does not dissipate merely because of generalized, unsubstantiated suspicions of terrorist activity," wrote Judge John Coughenour.

ACLU cooperating attorneys Venkat Balasubramani and Steven Fogg and Christina Dimmock of Corr Cronin Michelson Baumgardner & Preece LLP represented Scheier.

In 2007 the ACLU obtained compensation from the city of Seattle for Bogdan Mohora, who was wrongfully arrested for taking photographs of police making an arrest in downtown Seattle.

Other photographers also have complained to the ACLU about being harassed by law enforcement since 9/11, as a result of misplaced fears of terrorism. In 2004, the ACLU assisted photography student Ian Spiers, who was questioned by law enforcement for taking pictures at the Ballard Locks, a popular tourist destination. In 2005, the ACLU assisted a photographer when King County Sheriff's deputies seized the memory card in his camera for taking pictures of artwork in the Seattle bus tunnel. •



inction between federal officials who enforce civil immigration law versus local law enforcement who enforce criminal law.

Our immigration system must process applications in a timely fashion so that immediate families can be together, whatever the decision may be on overall strategy. Likewise, it must remove criminal aliens from the United States and punish human smugglers and unscrupulous employers who might try to profit from a broken system.

Ultimately, we believe strongly that enacting comprehen-

sive federal immigration reform will allow state and local police to focus on job number one: protecting all members of our communities from crime. We urge Congress and President Obama to pass federal immigration reform as soon as possible as we serve our country and our communities on the front line every day.

The time is now to fix the broken immigration system and its safe-guards.

The Washington State Sheriffs' Association  
Yakima County Sheriff Ken Irwin, President

## The Adventures of Hasty Hank

# Don't Beat the Love Seat

Short story by Henry Lee

In the summer heat of southwest Florida, in the city akin to Russia, two women are camped in Hank's humble abode while Hank is away working, strenuously as usual. Both women could even seem Russian by appearance: the elder Jane with her wiry, tanned physique that's still able to work long days in the sun better than most men, and the svelte, dark-haired, very white-skinned Nicole, "Nic," whose appearance would suggest the name Natasha. Her fine but not overly voluptuous body suggests a once headlining dancer, but this woman is now Truly Lazy. And unbeknownst to Hank, a secret home invader-destroyer and consummate couch potato.

Hank had left that early morning with the assurance that Nic would definitely get Jane driven to her all-important government disability appointment. There were thousands of dollars at stake as well as the ongoing financial security Jane needed since her car accident.

Jane was a bit crusty. Though she was still attractive and vital, she seemed a shell of her former self. Even before her accident, she had been going downhill. Long gone were the days of debutante balls and shaking Kennedy's hand at her Canaveral job. Now she even had to rely on Hank, a friend of a couple years, to help her.

The drama unfolds as Hank returns home extra hot and tired, seeking his usual combination of two rums—Sunny D and Hawaiian P with a splash of lime juice. And yes the soft, sleep-inducing love seat sofa. It's about the best thing Hank owns besides the entertainment system and the much cherished fishing tackle.

The large love seat had it all: reclining, vibrating, heating, and such a nice fabric color to blend with the decor.

With the large tasty drink and a few minutes on the sofa, the stress and soreness melted away into a relaxed drowsy state that Hank relished each day.

Today when Hank comes inside his home, he sees Jane sitting at the kitchen table. Nic is in the bathroom as usual, constipated, she hollers. Likely all her inactivity, coupled with massive use of so-called pain pills for some so-called pain, and cigarettes chain smoked.

"Well, how did the appointment go?"

Jane states it didn't. "Nic never left the sofa all day."

At the same moment Hank sees his precious sofa with ashes all over it. And wait! Oh my God! A hole! No, several! Burn holes! "Damn! SOB!"

Hank's hasty temper then sets in while Nic's on the toilet seat, oblivious with an Oh Well attitude. "I'm sick!" she exclaims.

"Well, carry your sick ass out of here. I hate you!"

Hank screams as he goes back to stare angrily at his sofa. He then picks up a baseball bat from behind it, and begins to let out some steam.

After the sofa suffers several wallops, grunts, and curses, Nic decides to make a cell phone call, 9-1-1 to the po-lice. "He's got a baseball bat. He's swinging it, cursing. I'm scared, come quick!"

A few seconds later, Hank, now more composed, is discovering that the police are on the way. "Well Nic,, you can wait for them outside with your belongings. Here's help with your stuff out the door"

Nic goes to her car, sans belongings, sits, and later an officer arrives. A young, good-looking ladies-man-type rookie cop who takes the complaint of Nicole, who no longer is sick.

"He chased me outside and then around the house twice with the ball bat because I wouldn't leave. I know my rights: you stay three or more days and you become a legal resident. State law. He has to evict and that takes weeks."

So what does the rookie do? When in doubt, arrest Hank, maybe get his first real bust, possible weapon offense at that! He gets to speed through traffic now. Hank is more scared by the driving than about jail for some off-the-wall charge. But first the young stud has to stop by a store where his girlfriend gets to peer into his back seat and look at the trophy buck.

Then it's on the station for fingerprint, where Hank sees 3rd Degree Felony Aggravated Assault, \$5000 bond. As Hank sits for nearly three days in jail awaiting very anxiously his buddies to bail him out, he gets called out and down, and is amazingly released on a Personal Recognizance bond, no money, just agree to come to trial.

As Hank speeds away with a friend from the large jail facility, Hank's head swells with ego. After all, the FBI fugitive warrant for him has gone unnoticed. He's

## Converging Passions

by Bob Markey

While personally lacking the talent to run fast, jump high or throw far, I've enjoyed track and field for years as a spectator sport...

still attend local high school meets and follow athletes' careers who have the skill to move up and compete at the college level.

My family has been in this State since the late eighteen hundreds, interlopers on sacred ground where others had always roamed free.

A longtime admirer of that earlier culture, it's become more real to me since reading the works of one S. Alexie.

Sherman was in our town not long ago... appeared at schools, bookstores and the colleges. I wondered if he watched the track meets where a Nooksack kid by the name of Oliver Bear Don't Walk won the sixteen and eight hundred meter races. Could be there's a story here that wants telling.

Sherm... uh... Mister Alexie?

slipped through the cracks again (but that's another story).

Hank secures a top-drawer attorney for \$1200 who simply writes a letter to the DA and the case is dismissed. As the lawyer says, "By admitting to brandishing a deadly weapon, they could convict you here, and in other states as well. It was mostly the woman Nicole being such a poor complainant, with a long history of such scenarios, that released you."

Yes, one must watch this law. Even going to your door could land you in prison if the salesman or whom-ever felt threatened, even scared, by anything you had in your hand.

So what happens to Hank's love seat? He saws it in half, removing the burnt, ugly side to the dumpster, where perhaps by now Nic is sick of scavenging.

Henry Lee resides in a Texas prison and enjoys reading his WA Free Press subscription.



# Hmm... what should I get them?

## Thoughtful Gift Idea

for people who like to think  
FROM MARTHA SKEWART



# right brain

## Winter Morning

by Gerald McBreen

Morning finds comic faces  
licking frost frozen windows  
Squealing and squirming youngsters  
race to dress  
A flower garden gust of colorful bundles  
burst out of doors  
Peals of joy clangor  
as fleet feet flight through snow  
Overhead flurries of white blitz in the sky  
greedy to join the menagerie  
forming down below

## Better Than Better Known

by Doug Collins

I don't remember your name.  
But I remember your work.  
It spoke to me during hopelessness  
decades ago.

But if you were hoping  
for immortality  
then I'm sorry.

I can't remember your name.  
My memory is full with what I need.  
I just remember your ideas.  
They are enough  
to keep the world moving.

If you were hoping for people  
you never knew  
to visit your grave,  
you have failed.

But perhaps you are better than  
any better known savior.  
Perhaps you'll save us all  
for no adulation in return.

1. Cut out the subscription form on page 3 and fill out the gift section for your friend or family member (this costs only \$12 if you also subscribe).
2. Take this paper and roll it up into a neat cylinder.
3. Put a decorative ribbon around it.
4. Tell the recipient "Happy Birthday" or "Happy Holidays," etc.
5. We'll send the lucky person a card telling them when their first mailed issue will arrive.
6. Rest assured you've supported a good cause!

# THE ONE-ARMED LAWYER

## law

BY JOHN MERRIAM

*The following is a true story. Names have been changed for obvious reasons.*

One fine spring day, more than 25 years ago, I was sitting at my desk in a Seattle office, munching on a tunafish sandwich for lunch. I was a brand-new lawyer, just admitted to the bar, and had landed my first paying legal job the previous fall. The lawyer who had hired me was a sole practitioner trying to juggle more than 200 cases by himself.

His specialty was personal injury, with an emphasis on injury to merchant seamen and commercial fishermen. (Civilian seamen, including fishermen, don't qualify for state-based systems of workers' compensation. Instead they must seek redress through the legal system under the federal maritime law.)

My new boss was way behind and it was a good thing he hired some help. I rapidly became an expert on why statutes of limitation should not apply—in other words, I became skilled at making excuses for my employer missing the three-year time-limit for filing suit.

Just before I was hired, my employer had filed a lawsuit on a Jones Act case (the remedy for seamen injured on the job) one day before the statute of limitations expired, then handed the file over to me to deal with—ostensibly to get experience in the maritime law. Our client, Mohammed, had been hurt on a ship. I dutifully wrote a demand letter to "Maritime Corporation" back in New York, the employer of our client, asking if whomever handled claims was interested in settling the case.

A "Smith" from Maritime Corporation wrote back saying that a New York lawyer had settled Mohammed's claim six months before, and asked me what the hell I was doing. I wrote a letter to him indicating that I had no knowledge of Mohammed having settled his claim, and that Smith should send me proof if he had any. Smith soon afterwards sent me a photocopy of the signed Release (the document that gives up one's rights under the law), notarized in New York, stating that Mohamed had settled his case for \$7,500.

It looked bad. I wrote Mohammed a letter asking him what he was doing by hiring a Seattle lawyer, when he had retained a New York lawyer to settle his claim. Mohammed responded that he had not settled his claim, that he was not in New York on the date of the Release ostensibly executed by him. He sent me a Coast Guard discharge to prove it. The Coast Guard discharge showed that on the date the Release was notarized, our client was aboard a ship in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean.

After receiving this information from Mohammed, I proceeded to wade through the file to check on the similarity of signatures. The other signatures from Mohammed in the file did not seem to match that on the Release. I wrote back to Smith and told him that I didn't care what kind of document he had, our case would proceed in the federal court in Seattle. The letter to Smith was sent the previous week and had likely arrived in New York a day or two before I sat at my desk that day with a tunafish sandwich.

Just then a phone call came in. I delayed another bite into my sandwich and picked up the receiver. The caller was on the ground-floor lobby of our Belltown office building. The man said he was from the East Coast and wished to retain a lawyer in the state of Washington. I told him to come on up and talk.

The would-be client appeared within minutes. His name was Bernie Friedman, a lawyer from New York. He was missing one of his arms, I surmised from the empty sleeve pinned to his sport coat, and carried a briefcase in the hand of the one remaining.

Bernie said he wished to retain me as counsel to rectify a "horrible misunderstanding."

**Although he never actually told me, I got the distinct impression that there was \$12,000 in cash in Bernie's briefcase.**

He essentially offered me the contents of his briefcase for my retainer—the largest retainer (in fact the only retainer) I'd ever been offered. Once I accepted a retainer from a client, or had the prospective client sign a fee agreement, an attorney-client relationship would be established and I then had a duty of confidentiality not to reveal anything detrimental about the client.

I asked what Bernie wanted to retain me for

and he said something about Mohammed v. Maritime Corp. I pulled out the file.

I thought that \$7,500—the amount stated on the Release—was a pretty good settlement, if the case really had settled. I had analyzed the case, in my inexperience, at having a value of only about \$2500. Mohammed had been washed to the deck by a wave hitting a freighter, with no incapacity beyond a brief period for which he was not-fit-for-duty. "Wow!" I thought. "Cases in New York must be worth a lot more money than they are in Washington!"

Mohammed, of course, had already told me that he did not receive any amount of money whatsoever from the "settlement" of this claim. I wondered what Bernie's involvement with the case was.

Then the phone rang again. I told the receptionist that I was not taking calls since I was with my prospective new client, Bernie Friedman. After a few moments, the receptionist burst into my office waving her arms and said I had to take this call since the caller claimed an emergency.

**I took the call. It was Smith from Maritime Corporation. He spoke excitedly: "My tit is in a wringer. I've lost the Mohammed file. This has never happened to me before in my career. I need your help."**

Smith asked for a copy of Mohammed's release that he had sent me. That meant the only copy of the release was on my desk, within easy reach of the one-armed lawyer. I told Smith I'd call him back.

The coincidence was too great. It suddenly dawned on me why I was chosen, out of all the lawyers in this state, for Bernie Friedman to retain. Bernie started begging. Although never—in my recollection—getting down on his knees, he did tell me that if I would not let him retain me, I would be wrecking his legal career and his life. He added that his son had just passed the bar exam in New York, and other reasons I am not able now to recall.

My head started spinning. I excused myself "to go to the bathroom"—taking the Mohammed file with me—and paced the hall. "What to do?" When I came back I told Bernie that there was a conflict of interest and that he should not talk about the situation to me anymore. Bernie asked to talk to my boss. Having not worked for my employer long enough to be able to gauge a reaction to Bernie's briefcase containing—I am convinced—\$12,000, I did not want to let that happen. Instead, I sent Bernie packing to a well-reputed lawyer in Pioneer Square for separate representation.

After a few phone calls the case settled for—you guessed it—\$12,000.

Looking back, I wonder who was behind this scam. Was Friedman working alone, or in concert with Smith? Was this one-armed lawyer's knowledge of Mohammed's injury obtained from a mole in the office of Maritime Corporation? I could not figure out who was clean and who was dirty.

To simplify this dilemma, I filed a bar complaint with the New York Bar Association, hoping they could figure it out back East. Informed that their disciplinary proceedings were confidential, I have no knowledge of the outcome of that complaint. All I know is that both Mohammed and my boss got more money than they probably would have from a Seattle judge or jury. Whether or not the one-armed lawyer is still out there, I do not know.

*John Merriam is a former merchant seaman, now practicing law at Fishermen's Terminal in Seattle. His practice is restricted to the representation of claimants for maritime wages and injury.*



## rights

### News from the ACLU of WA

## LIBRARY INTERNET FILTER

### WA Library prevents access to such sites as YouTube and KindnessUSA

The ACLU is representing three library users and a nonprofit organization in the lawsuit (*Bradburn v. NCRL*) filed in 2006 to ensure that patrons of the five-county North Central Regional Library (NCRL) in eastern Washington have access to useful and constitutionally protected information. The lawsuit challenges the library system's policy of refusing to honor requests by adult patrons to temporarily disable a filter on public computers for sessions of reading and research.

The policy impacts residents in a largely rural area who rely on the public library for Internet access. NCRL has set its filter to block access to an ever-shifting list of websites. Sites that the library's filter has blocked adults from viewing include:

- the website of an organization encouraging individuals to commit random acts of kindness ([www.kindnessusa.org](http://www.kindnessusa.org))
- the Seattle Women's Jazz Orchestra website
- the website of an organization encouraging women to carry to term by creating "a supportive environment for women in crisis situations to be introduced to the love of Christ" ([www.acceptpregnancy.org](http://www.acceptpregnancy.org))
- YouTube

"Community libraries are a valuable resource for a wide variety of information. Libraries should not deny adults using publicly available computers the opportunity to view research material and other lawful information," said ACLU Legal Director Sarah Dunne.

The North Central Regional Library District operates 28 community libraries in Chelan, Douglas, Ferry, Grant, and Okanogan Counties. The NCRL has used a blocking software product called FortiGuard to filter Internet content on all public computers at its branch libraries. The NCRL has configured FortiGuard to block a broad array of lawful information, and the NCRL refuses to commit to promptly unblocking sites for patrons.

The lawsuit contends that the library system's policy of refusing to disable its Internet filters at the request of adults who wish to conduct bona fide research or to access the Web for other lawful purposes violates the United States and Washington State Constitutions. The suit seeks an order directing the NCRL to disable its Internet filter when adults request it.

Libraries that receive funds for Internet access under two specific federal programs are required to have the ability to block minors from seeing materials deemed "harmful to minors." The US Supreme Court has interpreted the law to mean that libraries may disable those filters upon the request of an adult. But NCRL has adopted a policy of blocking access for adults to all materials it deems inappropriate for children.

Under the state constitution, people in Washington have the right to "freely speak, write and publish on all subjects" (Article I, Section 5). NCRL's policy of full-time filtering for adults is overbroad, and the library has no reasonable justification for denying adult patrons access to the substantial amount of information it blocks.

The US District Court in Spokane has requested that the Washington Supreme Court provide guidance on the state constitutional issues raised in the case. Still pending a decision by the federal court are the issues raised under the US Constitution.

Plaintiffs in the lawsuit are:

- Sarah Bradburn, a resident of Republic in Ferry County,

see *ACLU News* on page 14