

connections

PRICELESS

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SAVE THE DATES

NOV 30-DEC 1
PEACEFUL HOLIDAY FAIR



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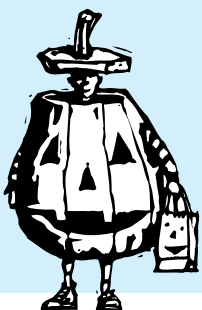
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Stockton General Plan deliberations end in rubberstamp

Eric Parfrey

After hundreds of hours of testimony and numerous sessions debating the fine points of arcane policy language, the Stockton Planning Commission voted on October 3 to leave the developer-driven General Plan largely intact and send it up to the City Council. A final push by Commissioner Chris Kontos to delete two villages south of Weston Ranch (the proposed River Run project of 10,000 homes that is already being processed by the City) died for lack of a second by another commissioner. Susan Eggman's commissioner was noticeably absent to provide that second.

Most notably, the commission totally ignored the biggest single growth issue facing the City: whether to continue suburban sprawl north of Eight Mile Road. There was absolutely no debate about whether the so-called "villages" proposed by Spanos and others (equal to 100,000 new residents) were a good or bad idea. There was no debate about expanding the ag belt between Stockton and Lodi. The commission refused to even consider the 75 individual policies contained in Campaign for Common Ground's Alternative Plan. The commissioner ignored the biggest issues and just called it a night.

The Planning Commission

had shown a small sign of independence last week when a majority voted to delete the disastrous Empire Ranch project east of Highway 99, which has been vociferously opposed by most of Morada and the eastside neighborhoods. That action raised the slim possibility that the commission might begin to reduce the growth allowed in the draft General Plan land use map by eliminating other "villages." But the actions on Wednesday night by the pro-developer majority cut off any further attempts to deviate from the plan that had been handed to the commission by staff and developers. The commission directed staff to prepare final documents for adoption on October 17th.

Commissioner Kontos deserves some praise for being the only one on the board to try to bring up the most important issues that had already been rejected by staff late last year, without even a consideration by the commission. However, his weak attempts to make the land use plan better were shut down.

What now

CCG must now shift gears and ready itself for the inevitable conclusion at the City Council. There is no possible majority on that body that will do anything to derail this steamroller. Although a couple

of the policies that CCG advocated in the Alternative Plan made their way into this developer General Plan, we have by and large been deliberately ignored by staff and now the commission. It will be the same at the council.

It is now time to investigate our

options, which should include supporting litigation by the Sierra Club and other organizations, planning for a referendum or growth initiative, building a campaign to elect new council members, or a combination of these.

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Time to speak out

Bruce Giudici

It was a dark and windy night... and there was work to do. Many downtown hotels were slated to be demolished for a few parking spaces and thousands of houses were about to be built in a flood plain. Such was the scene a few years ago and the results were not pretty. The hotels are now gone, and Lathrop is partly built out on rich farm bottom land. Such battles, sadly, never end. As we close out 2007, we face the same

choices—a distinctive downtown or parking lots; preserved open space or urban sprawl. The Stockton City Council is the battle ground for the next round of decisions on hotels and the general plan. So now is the time both to call your City councilperson and to visit them at their Tuesday night meetings at City Hall.

Help from the State, in the form of recently signed legislation, may keep houses from being built in flood plains, due to the high

cost of levee repair. We can only hope that the argument that local governments are fiscally liable for their planning decisions, coupled with the housing market collapse, will slow the urge to build new "communities" in flood prone areas. Money ultimately talks.

On the national front, it is encouraging that the nation is waking up to the reality of what we have lost in the "war on terror." That awareness must, however, be able to weather the storm of Iran

Bruce Giudici,
editor



fear-mongering that may drag us into another pre-emptive and disastrous war. Stay alert—and tell your representative we don't need to sink the ship of state on the rocks of an Iranian war. Just say no now.

Feedback



Water and sewage...yum

Having a cup of coffee while scanning *Connections*? Made with tap water? In San Joaquin County, that water usually comes from the aquifer underfoot.

A glass of water from the tap, a shower, soup at a restaurant, water for your vegetable garden—almost all groundwater. And who is safeguarding our water supply? Why it's the same folks that bring you the DMV, the IRS, the welfare programs, the Katrina response, etc—government. State and local governments are now working their magic on our aquifer.

The government of the City of Lodi runs a sewage treatment plant at the edge of the Delta, six miles west of town. It discharges 6.5 million gallons of non-potable water daily, plus biosolids (read human manure) and discharges from industry. It puts this stuff on land over the aquifer for most of each spring and summer, where water carries components through the soil and to the aquifer beneath. The rest of the year that discharge goes to the Delta. Stockton is a little different in that its discharge is five times Lodi's and it discharges exclusively to the river and Delta, but the underground water movement also carries materials eastward from the plant itself and its discharge zone.

It's a problem common to the whole Valley. River water, Delta water, or aquifer water—they've all become part of the sewage-

disposal system. Name a city on the rivers and you have three guesses where their non-potable sewage plant discharges go. Sacramento, Elk Grove, Galt, Modesto, Merced, and so on. When they discharge to land, as with Lodi and Modesto, materials accumulate in the aquifer and are drawn up by city and rural water wells and into our water systems. Think of that "Calvin" decal on car windows where he looks devilishly over his shoulder while an arching urinary stream soaks the name of an opposing football team or car brand. It's not a perfect analogy, but you might apply it to the Delta water we send to southern California and the Bay Area for drinking.

The cities should be putting only potable water into our drinking water supplies. Why would the City of Lodi do otherwise? It's a question of money. It's another infrastructure project, and not a glamorous one. They'd rather wait a decade or two and let someone else worry about it. Why would the Central Valley Regional Water Board—the state regulator—not direct them to clean up through the permit process? Perhaps because the state might have to come up with some dough, too, if the strapped cities must do so.

The Water Board does have an enforcement arm that goes after industrial polluters. Were the City of Lodi a private company, I have little doubt that their discharges would be a focus of attention. However that government agency seems to have a soft spot for the

government of the city when it comes to this issue. The City of Lodi has been lax about permit compliance when one reads the investigative report, but nothing has come of it. It is a contrast.

So what's in your coffee? Government tells you things are fine. Should you believe? Indicator species in the Delta may be indicators for more than just the rest of the wildlife -- they may be indicators for us that our water resources and quality are being mismanaged. Governments should be held to account.

Dr. Ken Hajek, Lodi

OMI/Thames not all bad

Editor,

I am disturbed by the shrill overblown hyperbole recently engaged in by several columnists and reporters describing the cancelling of Stockton's contract with OMI Thames. Amidst many falsehoods is the claim that OMI/Thames ruined existing infrastructures and, in their words, "ran to fail".

Not only are such claims utterly false—i.e. why would a contractor having a 20 year contract run to fail?—but the exact opposite happens to be true. Anyone who wants to take trouble to look will find that OMI/Thames has built for Stockton a state-of-the art waste disposal system and, as part of this system, has constructed a wildlife preserve that will be the envy of any other municipalities. Further, those who point to the unfortunate one-time spill of

partly treated water into the river last year fail to remember that such spills occurred a number of times when the City ran its waste treatment plant, costing the taxpayers thousands of dollars in fines.

OMI/Thames has brought to Stockton the expertise of designers and engineers with world-wide experience - and we in Stockton now have a waste disposal system to be proud of! As for ongoing maintenance of existing pumps and sewage pipes, the record will show that many of these were actually neglected during the years prior to OMI/Thames taking over, and the contractor has had to spend much time and effort to correct these deficiencies.

I happen to agree with those who believe that water, fire, and police are not areas that should be outsourced and am glad that the City will be taking over the management of its water and wastewater systems. There is no excuse, however, to print falsehoods about what has happened during OMI/Thames tenure merely for the sake of journalistic scoops and "victorious bravados."

Paul Fairbrook, Stockton



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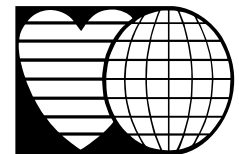
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"The Peace and Justice Network is a nonprofit educational organization committed to the vision of a world in which the equality of all persons is achieved, basic needs are met, conflict is resolved nonviolently, and the earth's resources are shared responsibly for the well-being of all her inhabitants and all future generations."

October 23

Hotel vote comes to Stockton City Council

The Environmental Impact Report is finally out for the Parking Expansion Project for downtown Stockton. Write the City Council before October 19. Ask them to save all the historic downtown hotels scheduled for demolition



Earle Hotel

and to negotiate with developers to preserve them for needed housing and inclusion in the entertainment district being planned. All hotels have been nominated to be included on the National Register of Historic Places that will be decided by the State Office of Historic Preservation sometime in February, 2008.

Campaign for Common Ground is requesting that an impartial study of parking needs be undertaken and made public before any hotels are demolished. They are also asking that the



Commercial Building

feasibility of restoring each hotel be studied before they are written off as expendable.

Write to City Council or to your own councilperson. Let them know that saving the hotels is a top priority. Express your outrage at the proposal to demolish 185 housing units in downtown Stockton for 130 parking spaces.

Address letters to: City Hall, 425 N. El Dorado, Stockton, CA 95202, Attn. Stockton City Council (or your own representative)

And attend the City Council meeting Tuesday, October 23.



Hotel St. Leo



Verta Hotel



MSM = truth? Check out the alternatives & decide for yourself

If you tap in to some of the alternative media, you will get a very different perspective on events. Especially now, when the mainstream media often acts as a cheerleader for whatever the administration does, it's necessary to go a little further to get your news. An internet connection is helpful.

KPFA (94.1 FM) provides the best coverage around for many issues. You can listen on the internet at <http://www.kpfa.org>

Democracy Now! on KPFA, 94.1 FM at 9am, on KVMR, 89.5 at 7pm or on the web at: <http://www.democracynow.org>

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The Next Hurrah <http://thenexthurrah.typepad.com/>

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Global Alliance Against Weapons & Nuclear Power in Space — <http://www.space4peace.org>

The Guardian: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/latest/>

Angry Arab News Service—<http://www.angryarab.blogspot.com/>

Corporate Watch—<http://www.corpwatch.org/home/PHH.jsp>

We're on the web too!

The Peace & Justice Network of San Joaquin County (pjnsjc) website has information, calendar, media links, and more. Under construction and growing. Share your ideas on how the website should evolve.

<http://www.pjnsjc.org>

October 27

End the War Now... protest at SF Civic Center

The U.S. occupation of Iraq has led to 4,000 American deaths and roughly 30,000 injuries. Hundreds of thousands of Iraqis have died and millions are homeless. Spending on the war thus far has been \$458,438,386,702 (<http://www.costofwar.org>). That money could pay for:

- * 4 million housing units
- * 8 million teachers for one year
- * 60 million children in Head Start for one year
- * 272 million children's health insurance
- * 22 million 4 year college scholarships

The Pentagon now wants \$195 billion more over the next year for war, while President Bush says spending only \$35 billion over the next five years on child health is "irresponsible."

While most Americans oppose the war, there is no end in sight.

A wide array of groups have come together to organize major demonstrations this fall. One of these actions is the protest and march in San Francisco on Saturday, October 27th. We'll start at the Civic Center at 11am and later march to Dolores Park.

Join us, tell your friends to join us, volunteer as an organizer and donate to our effort to show Bush, Cheney, Pelosi and Feinstein that northern California is fed up with the war and won't tolerate any more excuses. No more surges, no more study groups: Bring the troops home now!

For more information go to <http://www.oct27sf.org/>



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Single payer SB840 status at year end

Many who support a true single payer health care system described in Senate Bill 840 tried to stop the passage of AB 8 the first week of September. Despite this effort, the Democratic leadership called for a "yes" vote on AB 8 and few, besides SB840 author Senator Sheila Kuehl, broke ranks, so the bill, allowing the private health insurance industry to remain in control of our health insurance, passed 22 to 17.

Governor Schwarzenegger previously announced he'd veto AB 8 and would call for a Special Session of the Legislature to hammer out a "deal" to finance a health insurance plan his way— via a so-called individual mandate (and a patchwork of other funding gimmicks). Of course, no one knows what that deal will be. In fact, there is no guarantee that there will be any health care plan this Fall except SB 840, which goes to the 2008 session.

Three scenarios could play out: AB 8 or a new version could fail flat out, it could end up as a ballot measure or it could be stopped cold by the courts. But the insurance corporations, lead by AARP, are pushing hard for any plan that keeps them in business, preserving their private insurance profits. They seem to think that the movement for SB 840 plan will be stopped - or averted - with a fake substitute.

But we know their plan will be a bad deal for the people of California. Because their "health care reform" will include the private insurance industry in the mix, we know that, as Senator Kuehl aptly put it, their plans "will not pencil out."

What's next for the SB840 campaign

- We will continue Year Two of the OneCareNow 365 campaign to build grassroots awareness of the one bill that will work, SB 840.
- We will generate commitments for SB 840 in the way of endorsements from 365 city councils, 365 school boards, 3650 churches, 3650 businesses, and 3650 service organizations.
- We will introduce new strategies to win a 2/3rd's "super majority" in the legislature to pass and veto-proof SB 840 in 2008.
- We will continue to attract more passionate supporters and donors, like the millions of supporters that helped double single payer awareness in California in just the past six months (according to a recent Field Poll).
- We will continue to expand the coalition that took us so far this past year.

The great news with this AB 8 fight (like the "SiCKO" campaign and the last six months of the 365 City Campaign) is that we've galvanized personal relationships with many organizations to give this movement enduring strength.

Our core group of colleagues are the League of Women Voters of California, The California School Employees Association, the California Nurses Association, the California Physicians' Alliance, the California Council of Churches/Church IMPACT, the California Alliance for Retired Americans, the Consumer Federation of California, the California Federation of Teachers, the California Teachers Association, and the California Retired Teachers Association.

Source: Andrew McGuire, Executive Director, Health Care for All - California, OneCareNow 365 Campaign for SB840. www.healthcareforall.org



October 29

Health care forum in Lodi

Are you a senior, or do you have family members and friends who are seniors? Have you or your senior friends been in a hospital? How was the transition from hospital to home? Come to a presentation, discussion and performance! You will learn about state and local efforts to improve hospital and nursing home discharge policies. Tell your story about hospital discharges. And learn about your rights to appropriate care. Refreshments will be provided.

Monday, October 29, 10 am
Lodi Public Library,
201 W. Locust St, Lodi

Sponsored by: California Alliance for Retired Americans (CARA), Planning for Elders Long Term Care Coordinating Council (PECC). For more info, call CARA at 209-823-3890



What's new in health care reform: the president shows his colors

Roger Speed

Defying the mostly unassailable arguments for passage, the President of the United States vetoed the S-CHIP Childrens Health Funding Act. The legislation would have provided additional billions of dollars to fund the health care of poor and middle class children. The President decided to veto it, even with broad bipartisan support for the program.

Why? "The government should not be in the business of providing health care for people" he said.

If you needed any other indication of the direction the President goes when confronted with a choice between using government to help either the people or the corporate world, his veto of this health funding initiative gives a clear look at his priorities.

California received \$647 million for our S-CHIP program in 2006. The projection for 2007 is that California will outspend that amount by \$300 million, making it the largest S-CHIP program in the nation. Called Healthy Families in our state, it provides insurance for children up to 250% of the Federal Poverty level. It has been credited with reducing the percentage of uninsured kids in the state from 21% in 1998 to 14% in 2005.

In San Joaquin County there are about 15,000 uninsured children. About 400 are on a waiting list for the Healthy Kids program which funds insurance through non-Federal funds for children in families making 3 times the Federal poverty level. This waiting list will expand if the veto of S-CHIP isn't overridden.

The Governor and Democrats in the legislature had planned to expand S-CHIP coverage for families of four making up to \$60,000 a year. This is about the median family income in San Joaquin County.

Many conservatives in Congress had helped draft the bill and it passed with much bipartisan support. Orrin Hatch (R UT)—hardly a flaming liberal—stated that the S-CHIP program helped working families afford health insurance. "It's hardly welfare," he stated.

So what does a veto of S-CHIP funds mean to San Joaquin County? First of all, the S-CHIP funds are used to fund the Healthy Families program which provides low-cost health insurance to kids whose parents are up to 250% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL).

Vetoing the funding puts on hold the ability of thousands more kids to get the health insurance they need and their parents can't afford.

As of this writing, some Congressional leaders are saying they will put together enough votes to override the veto. We will see if they can pull it off. Let's hope so, for the sake of children in San Joaquin County.

Status of health reform in California

The Governor vetoed the Assembly Bill 8, which was a major reform effort promoted by Senate President Pro Tem Don Perata and Assembly Leader Fabian Nunez. This bill, hammered out over the last few weeks, would have increased the number of insured in California and would have required a pay or play contribution from all employers in the state. This would have meant a requirement that each employer provide health insurance for their employees or pay 7.5% of payroll to a state pool for the uninsured. This 7.5% was close to the same figure that the single payer initiative, SB 840, requires in its proposal.

AB 8 would have covered essentially all employed Californians and would have set the standard of shared responsibilities among employers, government and individuals.

The governor vetoed it saying it wasn't the individual mandate for private insurance that he is committed to. He called a special session of the Legislature to work on the problem. Now the work to come up with a compromise is being done behind closed doors. We don't know what the progress is to date but maybe by the time this goes to press we will have a clearer picture.

Health reform: an immigrant magnet?

When discussing the idea of universal health care in California, one of the arguments that is frequently made by opponents of single payer systems is the complaint that it would attract more illegal immigrants to our State. This gut feeling is not supported by any data. According to the UCLA Health Policy Research Brief, July 2007, there is no significant migration of immigrants to states due to the presence of public benefits. In fact, the three states with some of the fastest growing Latino immigrant populations are Alabama, Georgia and South Carolina. They are also the states with the least generous welfare provisions.

The facts are that immigrants are attracted to states for two major reasons:

1. jobs, and
2. reuniting with family

Its time to give up the argument that public services, including health care, are going to attract immigrants. As long as jobs are here, immigrants are going to continue to come. Health reform should address the fact that immigrants who are here working should share in the cost of health care by paying taxes to the single entity able to collect taxes, the state.

This didn't come as a surprise to any of you who have followed the reasoning (or lack of it) behind the President's decisions. Just look at the Medicare Prescription Act or Part D. Congress passed the Medicare Part D with the following features deliberately built in:

- Sold it to Congress by underestimating costs;
- Created a confusing program with significant out of pocket costs to consumers;
- Underfunded the outreach to consumer, with no translators for non-English speakers;
- Set up a new entitlement for contracted private companies;
- Let each contractor set up confusing counseling services

with not enough phone lines for support, resulting in long waits;

- Allowed no government option program for those preferring a simplified approach;
- Let each plan have its own different coverage rules, customer service and appeals process;
- Required little oversight of plans and contractors including imposing few or no penalties for bad behavior; and
- Pre-empted the strong California rules of managed care companies so they wouldn't apply to Part D.

By ensuring the Part D program

would benefit the private sector, not the consumer, how can we be surprised Bush would say the government has no role in providing health care to children? He set up the Part D program to ensure a complex, massive shift of public funding to the private sector, thus making a self-fulfilling prophecy that government is not capable of providing good efficient services. (And let's not even talk about Blackwater, the contracted mercenary army that costs huge amounts more per person than our own military, and is, apparently, accountable to no one.)



Contact Your Reps

Pres. George W. Bush, The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Washington DC 20500. 202-456-1414

Sen. Barbara Boxer, 1700 Montgomery St, Ste 240, San Francisco, CA 94111. 415-403-0100; 112 Hart Building, Washington, DC 20510. 202-224-3553, senator@boxer.senate.gov

Sen. Dianne Feinstein, One Post Street, Ste 2450, San Francisco, CA 94104. 415-249-0707; 331 Hart Building, Washington, DC 20510. 202-224-3841, senator@feinstein.senate.gov

Rep. Jerry McNerney, 11th District, 2222 Grand Canal Blvd #7, Stockton, CA 95207. 209-476-8552. Fax 209-476-8587. 312 Cannon House Office Bldg., Washington DC 20515; info@jerrymcnerney.org, 925-833-0643, http://www.JerryMcNerney.org

Rep. Dennis Cardoza (R-District 18) 137 E. Weber Ave, Stockton, CA 95203. 209-946-0361, 503 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515, 202-225-6131.

Rep. John Doolittle (R-District 4), 2130 Professional Dr, Ste 190, Roseville, CA 95661. 916-786-5560; 1524 Longworth Bldg, Washington, CA 20515. 202-225-2511

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, 2201 C St, NW Washington, DC 20520

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, State Capitol, Sacramento, CA 95814. 916-445-2841

State Sen. Michael Machado (District 5), 31 E Channel St, Room 440, Stockton, CA 95202. 209-948-7930; State Capitol, Rm 4035, Sacramento, CA 95814. 916-445-2407

Assemblyperson Kathleen Galgiani (District 17), 31 E. Channel St., Rm. 306, Stockton CA 95202, 209-948-7479



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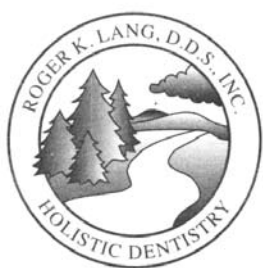
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Ten tips to fight global warming

Here are the top ten ways consumers can cut into the 22 tons of carbon dioxide each of us produces in the United States. Take these small and not-so-small steps and you'll help ensure a more comfortable future for us all (all carbon savings are annual averages).

1) Replace five incandescent lightbulbs in your home with compact fluorescents: Swapping those 75-watt incandescents with 19-watt CFLs can cut 275 pounds of CO².

2) Instead of short haul flights of 500 miles or so, take the train and bypass 310 pounds of CO².

3) Set your thermostat to 75 degrees and blow away 363 pounds of CO².

4) Replace refrigerators more than 10 years old with today's

more energy-efficient Energy Star models and save more than 500 pounds of CO².

5) Shave your eight-minute shower to five minutes for a savings of 513 pounds.

6) Caulk, weatherstrip and insulate your home. If you rely on natural gas heating, you'll stop 639 pounds of CO² from entering the atmosphere (472 pounds for electric heating). And in the summer, you'll save 226 pounds from AC use.

7) Whenever possible, dry your clothes on a line outside or a rack indoors. If you air dry half your loads, you'll dispense with 723 pounds of CO².

8) Trim down on the red meat. Since it takes more fossil fuels to produce red meat than fish, eggs and poultry, switching to

these foods will slim your CO² emissions by 950 pounds.

9) Leave the car at home and take public transportation to work. Taking the average U.S. commute of twelve miles by light rail will leave you 1,366 pounds of CO² lighter than driving. The standard, diesel-powered city bus can save 804 pounds, while heavy rail subway users save 288.

10) Finally, support the creation of wind, solar and other renewable energy facilities by choosing green power if offered by your utility. To find a green power program in your state, call your local utility or visit U.S. Department of Energy's Green Power Markets page. See also our Green Power Utilities Product Report.

Source: <http://www.thegreenguide.com/>

Nuclear power no solution to global warming

This summer Congress passed legislation that could set the U.S. on the path to a clean energy future. For the first time in thirty years, the Senate voted to raise the fuel economy standard for America's automobiles. And in the House, legislators approved an energy bill that establishes a Renewable Electricity Standard (RES) requiring utilities to generate 15 percent of their electricity from clean, renewable energy sources like wind, solar and geothermal power. Together, the bills could achieve a significant reduction in global warming pollution, while reducing U.S. dependence on oil.

But buried in the many good provisions on renewable energy and energy efficiency, both the House and Senate bills contain language that could give away tens of billions of dollars in government loan guarantees for the construction of new nuclear reactors. Loan guarantees for this dirty and dangerous energy source have no place in a clean energy bill.

Seizing on concerns about global warming, nuclear industry lobbyists are seeking more than \$50 billion over the next two

years to finance the construction of a fleet of new reactors, which they argue could produce low-carbon electricity to meet rising demand. But Congress shouldn't make the mistake of accepting the false tradeoff between the risks of unmitigated global warming and the risks of nuclear power expansion. Nor should legislators force taxpayers to shoulder the immense costs of new nuclear plants in the very likely case that these projects default on their loans.

Provisions in the Senate-passed energy bill would remove Congressional authority to set a limit on the amount of loan guarantees given out by the Department of Energy (DOE), while language in the House energy bill would prevent Congress from being able to exclude certain projects. The Office of Management and Budget warns the provisions would "remove appropriate controls over the size of the program and increase taxpayer liability." The Congressional Budget Office issued an even starker assessment of the financial risk, stating in a recent report that the risk of default on loan guarantees for new nuclear

plants is "very high—well above 50 percent."

Every year, nuclear power plants produce thousands of tons of long-lived radioactive waste for which there exists no permanent storage facility. Expansion of nuclear power would exacerbate the danger to workers and surrounding communities from current on site storage of nuclear wastes. Further, the \$50 billion sought by the nuclear industry is enough to cover only a small number of new reactors. So while loan guarantees for nuclear power present a huge risk for taxpayers, they would do little to reduce global warming pollution. By making smart investments in technology to improve our nation's energy efficiency and expand our production of clean, renewable energy, the U.S. can significantly cut global warming pollution without relying on nuclear power.

Action: As Congress works to reconcile the two energy bills, tell your senators and representative to oppose loan guarantees for nuclear power plants.

Source: *Physicians for Social Responsibility release, www.psr.org*

Gut-check time for Congress

Jim Hightower

In another of his ever-changing rationales for his Iraq war, George W has bizarrely proclaimed that this conflagration is like the Vietnam War—a comparison he had spent the previous four years heatedly rejecting. Well, on at least one point, his Vietnam comparison is apt: next year, the Iraq war will pass the \$600 billion mark in U.S. spending, making it nearly as costly as the longer Vietnam debacle. Bush has now requested an additional \$173 billion for Iraq war funding in 2008, making it the most expensive year yet for his disastrous misadventure.

For those of us who want to end Bush's Big Mistake, however, the focus of our effort can no longer be on him. George is who he is: a bonehead. Intent on dumping ever-more lives and money into his war, he is immune to sanity.

Rather, the question now is, where the hell is Congress? Yes, I know that the new Democratic leadership has only slim majorities and that the Bushites use filibusters, veto threats, and demagogic lies to thwart their efforts to initiate a withdrawal from Iraq. But, come on—it's time to toughen up! Asserting congressional authority to check and balance a runaway, lawless executive is not a mere political option, it's a Constitutional obligation.

The founders deliberately gave real muscle to Congress to use in situations like this, and previous lawmakers were not too timid to use them. From the revelations of the Fulbright hearings in the 1960s to the withholding of war funds in 1973 to stop Nixon from extending the Vietnam War into Laos and Cambodia, earlier Congresses have had the guts to show that they really are a co-equal branch of government.

It's time for Congress to pull the purse strings on Bush's war. It has the power to stop the needless killing and maiming of thousands more Americans and Iraqi civilians. Failure to use that power is not just political cowardic—it's immoral.

*Source: Hightower Lowdown, 10/10/07
<http://jimhightower.com/>*



An ominous pattern of provocative words and acts from the White House points to a new war: a “preventive” strike on Iran.

“All options are on the table,” says the Bush Administration. Does that include a nuclear option? Yes, they have refused to rule out using nuclear weapons.

Nuclear or not, the fallout from this attack will be catastrophic. Iran is three times larger than Iraq. It has vast resources and intense national pride. It can wreak havoc on oil markets. It can retaliate against Israel or the Gulf States. In Iraq and Afghanistan, 175,000 U.S. soldiers could be the victims of a surge of anger at America.

But doesn't Iran refuse to talk? That is White House fiction. Two serious offers from the Iranian leadership have been rejected out of hand by the White House.

No one wants a nuclear-armed Iran. The reality is that bombing Iran will likely strengthen the hard-liners' hand and ensure that Iran will one day become a nuclear state.

The American people want diplomacy, not another war. Four out of five Americans favor direct talks with Iran. Congress must make the White House listen to the people.

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Congress ignores critical Pentagon spending report

Jason Leopold

In April, the nonpartisan research arm of Congress issued a damning report that criticized the Pentagon for mismanaging hundreds of billions of dollars in emergency funds it received to pay for the occupation of Iraq and the war in Afghanistan.

Additionally, the report said, among other things, that since late 2003 the Pentagon has overstated its financial needs and has failed to turn over to Congress an accurate and transparent accounting of how it has spent the emergency funds earmarked for Iraq and Afghanistan.

The 45-page Congressional Research Service (CRS) report, "The Cost of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Other Global War on Terror," released in the Spring advised the new Democratic leadership in Congress it should withhold funding until the Department of Defense (DOD) provides lawmakers with a detailed accounting of its expenditures in Iraq, where 90 percent of the funds the Pentagon has received have been spent.

In July 2006, David Walker, comptroller general of the Government Accountability Office, testified before the Congressional Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats and International Affairs. He told lawmakers that a lack of actual costs, supporting documentation and routine reporting problems by the Pentagon, with regard to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, "make it difficult to reliably know what the war is costing, to determine how appropriated funds are being spent, and to use historical data to predict future trends."

The DOD "has not been willing to provide Congress" with the data it uses to predict its operating costs on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan, Walker said. As such, Congressional researchers have recommended in their report that Congress ask the DOD inspector general to audit the Pentagon in order to resolve these various gaps and discrepancies in cost data

related to the occupation of Iraq and the war in Afghanistan.

Yet, despite issues raised by Walker and, more recently, in an updated report by the Congressional Research Service, the Pentagon has failed to open up its accounting books to Congress and the Democratic leadership in the House hasn't pressed DOD officials to do so. More than 90 percent of the DOD's funds for Iraq were provided in the form of emergency supplemental or additional appropriations requests. Emergency funding is exempt from ceilings applying to discretionary spending in Congress's annual budget resolutions. Some members of Congress have argued that continuing to fund ongoing operations with supplementals reduces Congressional oversight....

Action now

Late last month, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates told Congress that he needs \$141.7 billion—roughly a 40 percent increase over the previous year—in addition to a \$50 billion emergency supplemental President Bush requested in September to continue funding operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. If approved, it would bring the cost of the Iraq and Afghanistan operations to \$610 billion. The \$50 billion in emergency funding Bush asked for is needed, the DOD said, to pay for the 30,000 additional troops Bush sent to Iraq earlier this year. All told, the occupation of Iraq is costing taxpayers roughly \$2.1 billion a week. The Congressional Budget Office predicted that by the end of 2008, the cost of the Iraq occupation could very well reach \$1 trillion.

Democratic lawmakers and their aides were unwilling to comment publicly on whether they intended to force the Pentagon to be more transparent or if lawmakers heeded the advice of CRS and would call for an audit of the Pentagon. Privately, some aides to lawmakers serving on the House Appropriations Committee said that scenario was highly unlikely

to happen.

David Obey (D-Wisconsin), the chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, said last month that he has "no intention" of passing an Iraq funding bill through his committee "that simply served to continue the status quo."

Senator Robert Byrd (D-Virginia), chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, became visibly upset last month when Gates disclosed how much additional funding was needed to continue occupying Iraq.

"If granted, we will have spent more than 600 billion!—billion! billion!—dollars" on the "nefarious and infernal war in Iraq," Byrd said.

Still, while statements like that of Obey's and Byrd's may allow Democrats to flex some political muscle from time to time it doesn't begin to address the Pentagon's accounting irregularities CRS says will continue to be a major factor each time the Bush administration seeks additional funding for Iraq and Afghanistan unless lawmakers rein in the Pentagon's spending and take a closer look at its books.

"Grappling with these issues is more difficult because DOD has provided limited information about prior war costs making trends difficult to decipher and explanations unlikely to be available," the July 16, CRS report said. The General Accounting Office, the Congressional Budget Office and CRS "have all raised concerns about these problems in reports and testimony. There are many unresolved discrepancies and gaps in reported DOD figures."

Gates testified before Congress last month that a large part of the funding request will be earmarked for equipment upgrades and weapons enhancement. But the CRS report said that still doesn't account for the massive annual increase in spending.

source: [truthout | Report, 10/10/07](http://truthout.org/contactjl.php)
<http://truthout.org/contactjl.php>. Jason Leopold is senior editor and reporter for Truthout. He received a Project Censored Award in 2007 for his story on Halliburton's work in Iran.

Thursday peace demo grows



Lela and Bob Nelson of Stockton, with two grandchildren and 35 others, protest the "obscene" Iraq occupation and President Bush's veto of children's health care along Pacific Avenue at the edge of the Delta campus on October 4.

John Morearty

For three weeks a dozen people showed up, not always the same ones. We held up signs to Pacific Avenue rush hour drivers-U.S. Out of Iraq, All Troops Home Now, Restore Democracy, Impeach Bush and Cheney, \$\$ for Education not Occupation.

Also Honk for Peace—and the honking came in waves, trucks and buses joined the chorus. Overwhelmingly drivers nodded, gave thumbs up, waved peace signs and shouted Yes; the young and people of color were especially enthusiastic, but dignified grannies and white guys in suits nodded too. Folk walking on the Delta campus stopped for a leaflet, or joined the demonstration.

But just a dozen of us? We shook our heads and asked, "What's it gonna take?"

Then George Bush vetoed children's health care, MoveOn.org put out a call nationwide, and next day we were 40:

A newborn peering from her blanket, a limping Ph.D. nurse in her seventies, a native American woman with two pre-teen

children, a healer from Germany who remembers how her parents ignored the Holocaust, a retired cable car worker with his buddies, the retired phone company worker and (all the way from Union City) the Vietnam vet/retired janitor and union organizer, a middle-aged lawyer and his girlfriend, a Latina real estate woman with her husband and their whole tribe.

And this time, the musicians—a retired office worker/union organizer dancing and shaking a big bead-draped gourd, and a couple of enthusiasts (including this reporter) cheerfully banging metal pots with wooden kitchen spoons. Shades of Chile in the 1980s, when the people staged a slowdown strike, took to the streets with pots and pans, held an election and drove the murderous fascist generals out.

There was one more sign people waved at passing cars: JOIN US. EVERY THURSDAY, 5-6:30. That's on the grassy edge of the Delta campus, just north of the stop light and bus stop at Yokuts, by the main college entrance. Several of us said afterwards, "There's room for a thousand people on this lawn."



Burma

US: urge UN Security Council to impose arms embargo

The United Nations Security Council should impose and enforce a mandatory arms embargo on Burma because of continuing massive violations of human rights, Human Rights Watch said early October. India, China, Russia, and other nations are supplying Burma with weapons that the military uses to commit human rights abuses and to bolster its ability to maintain power.

"It's time for the Security Council to end all sales and transfers of arms to a government that uses repression and fear to hang onto power," said Brad Adams, Asia director at Human Rights Watch. "Instead of continuing to protect Burma's abusive generals, China and Russia should join other Security Council members to cut off the instruments of repression."

India appears to be one of the two main suppliers of advanced modern arms to the Burmese military. Earlier this year, India sold Burma two BN-2 Defender maritime surveillance aircraft that India had bought from the United Kingdom in the 1980s. The aircraft were delivered in August despite the British government's objections that they were being supplied to a country under a European Union arms embargo. Later this year, India sold T-55 tanks and 105mm artillery pieces to the Burmese military. As it wages war against ethnic insurgents, the military routinely uses weapons such as artillery and mortars in conflict areas to destroy villages and exact retributions against civilian settlements.

India is currently preparing to send Burma aircraft, artillery, armored personnel carriers, tanks, ships, and a host of small arms in the next year. Perhaps most alarming, India has offered to sell newly developed Advanced Light Helicopters (ALH) to Burma, manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautical Limited (HAL). These helicopters, if delivered, would give the Burmese military a sophisticated weapon platform to

fire rockets and guns, which could be used with devastating effect against political demonstrations in urban areas or rural villagers.

"India's close relationship with the Burmese military is a discredit to the 'world's largest democracy,'" said Adams. "The Indian authorities should be leading the efforts to end the supply of arms being used against the democracy movement in Burma."

China is the other main arms supplier. It has supplied Burma with advanced helicopter gunships, arms production technology, and support equipment such as trucks and vehicles. Chinese-manufactured Mi-8 helicopter gunships have been photographed supporting Burmese military actions in eastern Burma where Burmese troops have committed numerous war crimes against civilians and massive displacement in its attacks on ethnic minority separatist groups. Beijing has also supplied small arms, including mortars, landmines, and assault rifles, as well as assistance in setting up an indigenous small-arms production capability. China has supplied a vast array of advanced military hardware to Burma, including fighter planes, naval vessels and tanks, and other infantry support weapons. Russia is also a noted supplier of arms to Burma, which includes a deal for MiG-29 fighter planes in 2002. South Korea, North Korea and Israel have all supplied the Burmese army with varying amounts of weaponry.

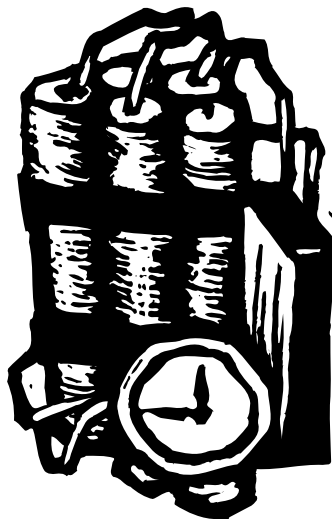
Human Rights Watch said that an arms embargo should also include a ban against training the Burmese military, paramilitary, and police forces, all of which have been used to crush the pro-democracy movement in Burma. According to information received by Human Rights Watch, there are hundreds of Burmese defense forces officers being trained in military academies in Russia on nuclear physics, artillery techniques, and computer technology....

Australia has included Burmese police and military officers in its counterterrorism training workshops at centers in Indonesia. Other nations involved in training the Burmese military include China and offers of training from India.

The Burmese spend an estimated 40 percent of the government budget on the military, while combined health and education expenditure is among the lowest in Asia. Military-run hospitals and schools are the best in the country, while civilian hospitals are poorly funded and cannot respond to the widespread health crisis in HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria. While Burma's people are among the poorest in the region, senior military officials live lavish lifestyles. Instead of working to improve the lives of its people, the military also routinely seizes land from civilians for defense establishments and frontline bases, using forced labor in construction.

"The world should insist that the Burmese government address the country's massive poverty and build up its health and education infrastructure," said Adams. "Instead, many countries are draining Burma of its limited resources through military sales, profiting handsomely while many Burmese struggle to put food on the table."

Source: Human Rights Watch release, 10/10/07 www.hrw.org



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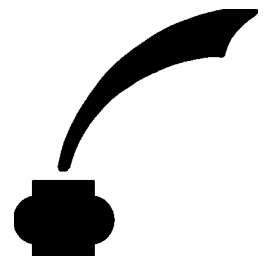
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"Zero" Amazon deforestation possible by 2015

Halting deforestation in the Amazon rainforest is the objective of nine Brazilian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that have drafted an ambitious plan to stop clearcutting in the region within seven years. The groups, which include national affiliates of Greenpeace, WWF, and The Nature Conservancy, presented the proposal at an event in Brasilia on Friday attended by environment minister Marina Silva, state governors, and other authorities.

The plan aims to unite sectors of Brazil's government and civil society in efforts to conserve the biologically rich Amazon region. "This is just the start, but it is a good start, and it is something interesting," said Silva, who herself grew up in the Amazon and achieved global recognition as a leading rainforest activist before joining the ministry. "We are building a national plan with common, but differentiated responsibilities."

The proposal, known as the "Agreement on Acknowledging the Value of the Forest and Ending Amazon Deforestation," calls for combining strong public policies with market strategies to achieve annual deforestation reduction targets. It suggests that roughly \$1 billion Real per year (US \$550 million) from national and international sources be invested in maintaining existing forests and the environmental services they provide.

Other recommendations include strengthening forest monitoring, control, and tax measures and providing economic incentives for indigenous people and rural producers to conserve land. "It is necessary to go beyond 'command and control' measures by promoting the revision and re-orientation of financial incentives, which historically have been channelled into destructive practices," the Agreement notes.

By 2006, an estimated 17 percent of Brazil's original Amazon rainforest cover had been destroyed, an area larger than France. Land-use changes and related deforestation—in particular the clearing of trees for agriculture and livestock ranching—are responsible for up to 75 percent of Brazil's greenhouse gas emissions, and they contribute to significant losses of biodiversity in the region. Continued destruction of the Amazon could bring prolonged drought to many regions of Brazil and directly affects the lives of millions of people who rely on the forest to survive, according to the Agreement.

The details of the proposal remain to be worked out through a process involving key national, regional, and local stakeholders. These include Brazilian state and federal government representatives, rural and forestry producers and businesses, environmental and social justice organizations, and indigenous and traditional populations of the Amazon region.

Source: Environmental News Network release, 10/10/07
http://www.enn.com/top_stories/article/23763

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Youth must be our priority

Jim Walsh

Education woes and youth health care have been making the news lately. Youth incarceration rates are taxing the overloaded juvenile justice system. This—and an increasing level of youth homelessness—is a sign that our youth are in crisis. No Child Left Behind is leaving many children behind under the guise of making public education “accountable.” President Bush’s recent veto of the children’s health care bill signals the continuing priority confusion within all levels of American government. This confusion is evident at the state level in California when, last year, Gov. Swartzenegger vetoed the California health care effort SB840 and claimed that “socialized medicine is not the answer”—while most government officials themselves have “socialized medicine.” At the county level, funding for the San Joaquin General Hospital was considered “losing \$17 million a year” by county officials and Record reporters. How can a “cost” of caring for our most vulnerable citizens be considered a loss?

The recent presidential veto of the children’s health care bill follows years of federal defunding and/or privatization of public infrastructure, elimination of social services, and lowering of enforcement capabilities of government oversight agencies—except for police departments and correctional facilities. As a result, prospects for the future of our young citizens are very bleak. Their climate is warming and changing. Their highways, bridges and schools are falling apart. Jobs have been exported and our national debt is about to exceed 9 trillion dollars. This amounts to \$30,000 per American citizen. How will this be repaid? With their plan, as always, it will be on the backs of the broadest base of our population, the middle class and the working poor. And also as always, their/our children will pay the highest price.

The progressive community has tirelessly worked to offset these conditions with very little success. Health Care For All, which is still pushing for single

payer health care, meets monthly at the Peace and Justice Center. Restore the Delta is lobbying to protect the delicate balance of our estuary system and to prevent the ransacking of this precious resource. Campaign for Common Ground is lobbying for “smart growth” and pressing City officials to provide for affordable housing and restoration of useful buildings that don’t seem to fit with the “look” that planners envision. Antiwar SJC has been demonstrating, providing educational film series, working for antiwar candidates, and networking with national campaigns to end the militarism and war-mongering of our elected officials. What has been missing from all of these efforts? I submit this answer: youth participation.

It is time to reach out to local youth who will be most affected by the choices we make today. It is time to identify their needs and provide for them. It is time to heal their hearts. It is time to empower them with a sense of community and an engagement in the political processes that they must use to change the conditions under which we all currently live. It is time to teach peace. And with that, we must teach social justice. Peace does not happen in a vacuum. It must be accompanied by social justice. We must level the playing field by reigning in the power of the corporatocracy (as we have been trying to do), but at the same time we must devote as much effort to share our movements with a younger generation. To do that we must deal with the real world that they live and die in—a world in which:

- An estimated 1.2 million elementary school children come home to a house with a gun and no parent;
- U.S. children are 12 times more likely to die by gunfire than children in 25 other industrialized countries combined;
- Hospital emergency room departments treat four children with gunshot wounds for every child killed by gunfire.
- There are 18 times more gun dealers than McDonald’s in California;
- A gun in the home is 43 times

more likely to be used to kill a family member or friend or to commit suicide than for self defense; and

- There are fewer federal safety regulations for guns than for teddy bears.

The above statistics came from the Seeds of Peace program, JoJo White—Our Hope, a violence awareness and recovery program. This just covers the gun violence our kids face. This does not cover domestic violence, nutritional deprivation, teen pregnancy, overcrowded and unresponsive schools and a lack of access to decent health care. Our youth are in crisis and they need us now.

One response: Seeds of Peace

As a response, The Peace and Justice Network is working to establish a new learning environment. We must identify needs of our young and develop programs to fill those needs. Seeds of Peace will serve as a catalyst for building a web of interconnectivity between the existing efforts of social justice advocates, social service providers within government and without, and disengaged youth. We must instill in them a positive sense of self. We must empower them with the skills and knowledge needed to repair our society. Along with the JoJo White violence awareness program, Seeds of Peace is also working to develop the following:

- * Freedom Writers program, which will develop writing skills and provide a forum to publish excerpts from diaries of these youth in the Connections newspaper, perhaps leading to publication in a book. A Freedom Writers teachers guide is being reviewed (<http://www.freedomwritersfoundation.org/>)

- * Youth For Freedom film series, for peace activists to understand war and resistance and the power and effectiveness of non-violent movements throughout history. A Teach Peace program (<http://www.teachpeace.com/youthforfreedom.htm>), this program includes A Force More Powerful (<http://www.aforcemorepowerful.org/>)

- * Working with the Community Planning and Development program, through which we will build organizational skills and enhance knowledge of community planning process, transportation and agriculture, while advocating for smart growth, sustainable energy use and a Community Gardens program that will cover the city and county.

- * Digital Video Production program, which will yield video documentaries on issues relevant to our community, while developing marketable skills for youth to take into the job market. A Peacekeeper Collaboration grant has been applied for.

- * Web Design/Internet research, which will help youth use the internet to research issues and broadcast media, sharing their experiences with others.

- * Democratic Therapy, which will be a process to re-engage youth in the political process and teach a collective decision making process.

- * Creative Conflict resolution program, which will teach creative communication skills to ward off the first response of fight or flight.

What we need now is the rich pool of experienced people in the Stockton area to come forth with program ideas, organizational collaboration suggestions, funding sources and finally, an 8-10 member Founders Committee that will share their skills and expertise as “active, peace-minded citizens.” We need people who have worked for years for the common good and will rejoice at the opportunity to pass on their learning and their lore and love on to our youth. We need class facilitators who can develop additional lesson plans and design dynamic course work. We need to identify sources for youth referrals.

If you wish to be part of this exciting new project—or if you just have some sage advice—call Jim Walsh at 981-0544. Together we will make our children our most privileged members of our society.

From the JoJo White—Our Hope program:

If I could change the world
I’d dismantle all the bombs
If I could change the world
I would feed all the hungry

If I could change the world
I would shelter all the homeless
If I could change the world
I would make all people free

I can not dismantle all the bombs
I can not feed all the hungry
I can not shelter all the homeless
I can not make all the people free
I can not because there is only one of me.

When I have grown and I am strong
I will find many more of me.

We will dismantle all the bombs
We will feed all the hungry
We will shelter all the homeless
We will make all the people be free.

We will change the world
me and my friends
all together, together
at last.

—JoJo White, 1984 at age 11



Pesticides contribute to the decline of delta smelt

The Delta drains California's Central Valley, encompassing 1,600 square miles and draining over 40 percent of the state: it is the largest estuary on the west coast. The Delta provides habitat for numerous species of fish and wildlife. Nearly half of the state's migrating waterfowl and shorebirds and two-thirds of the state's spawning salmon pass through the Delta.

The Delta is the major focal point for California's water system. The State Water Project, federal Central Valley Project and thousands of private water diversions extract as much as 65 percent of the Delta's total freshwater inflow, killing both spawning adult delta smelt and their young in pumps and diversions. At times, pumping levels are so high they reverse flow in the San Joaquin River, confusing and delaying adult fish migrating upstream, impairing downstream transport of larval and juvenile delta smelt from the upper estuary to their brackish water rearing habitat, and drawing water and fish into the pumps.

The delta smelt is a small, nearly translucent fish native to the San Francisco Bay and Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. The delta smelt was one of the most common and abundant fishes in the Delta, but their numbers have declined 90 percent in the past two decades. Delta smelt spend their entire lives in the Delta, swimming in shallow open waters where the inflowing fresh water from the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers and salt water from the ocean meet.

All life stages of delta smelt are at least periodically exposed to lethal or sub-lethal concentrations of herbicides and pesticides discharged and transported from upstream into their habitat, and chemicals may also have indirect effects on their Delta ecosystem. There is growing evidence that fish species in the Delta are suffering direct mortality and physiological and/or developmental impairment from the presence of toxic substances in the water. The plankton upon which the smelt feed may also be declining due to periodic, highly concentrated pulses of pesticides through

the Delta. Recently published population viability analyses indicate that the species has a 50 percent probability of going extinct in the next 20 years.

The smelt's decline toward extinction shows that the Delta ecosystem is in crisis. Of the



original 29 indigenous fish species in the Delta, 12 have either become extinct or are threatened with extinction. Since 2002, scientists have documented catastrophic declines of longfin smelt, threadfin shad and striped bass, and numbers of white and green sturgeon in San Francisco Bay and the Sacramento River have fallen to alarmingly low levels. The green sturgeon was listed as federally threatened in 2006. Scientists warn that the entire Delta food web is poised for an ecological crash.

Pesticides affect all members of an ecosystem, from the smallest invertebrate to birds and humans. In California, the annual application of more than 100,000,000 pounds of the most toxic pesticides in both urban and agricultural settings is responsible for the deaths of many birds, fish, and the smaller aquatic animals that fish depend on for food. More generally, pesticides reduce species diversity in the animal kingdom and contribute to population declines in animals and plants by destroying habitat, reducing food supplies, and impairing reproduction.

Urgent action is needed to protect Delta habitat and water quality, for the benefit of the delta smelt and the 20 million Californians who depend on the Delta for clean drinking water.

How pesticides affect fish

The influx of toxic pesticides into California streams, sloughs, rivers, and bays is particularly damaging to many aquatic species. Several well-documented facts emerge from recent studies on pesticides and aquatic organisms in California:



- Multiple pesticides are commonly found in California waters and sediments, frequently at concentrations that exceed lethal levels for many species of zooplankton, small organisms eaten by fish. Because of both high use and significant water solubility, the insecticides diazinon and chlorpyrifos and the herbicides simazine, diuron, and EPTC are found most commonly.

- Toxic pulses of pesticides are a routine occurrence in California rivers, as stormwater and irrigation runoff carry pesticides from urban and agricultural areas into surface waters. These pulses are a violation of the Clean Water Act and the Basin Plans set forth by the Regional Water Quality Control Boards because they create lethal conditions for many consecutive days for the small organisms fish eat. The pesticides most commonly found in toxic concentrations in these pulses are diazinon and chlorpyrifos from sprays to dormant almond and stone-fruit orchards, as well as from urban applications to buildings and in landscape maintenance.

- Most fish species and many species of zooplankton in the San Francisco Bay-Delta have experienced dramatic population declines in the last several decades. Multiple factors contribute to these declines, including toxic contaminants in waterways, dams, diversions, exotic species, and reduction in food sources. Pesticides known to kill aquatic animals and plants, impair their reproduction, and reduce food sources for fish are thought to be one of the major stressors affecting the aquatic organisms in the Bay-Delta ecosystem

Restoring the balance—alternatives to pesticides

Every crop in California that is commonly grown with intensive pesticide use is also being grown organically at other farms in the state. Least-toxic methods of pest control are available, and a growing number of California farmers are utilizing them. They include the following strategies:

- "Cultural" pest control methods such as crop rotation, reduction of habitat for pest species, provision of habitat for beneficial insects, and timing of plantings are effective in controlling many pests in agricultural settings. In urban settings, strategies such as pest exclusion by sealing cracks and other openings, as well as reduction of the pests' food supply are effective.
- A number of least-toxic methods for controlling pests are available. In agricultural settings, these include mulching, hand weeding, mating disruption, release of beneficial insects, and judicious application of low-toxicity pesticides such as oils, soaps, biopesticides, and sulfur. In urban settings, insect pests can be controlled with exclusion strategies and low-toxicity baits, and weeds can be controlled by mulching or hand-weeding.

Consumer recommendations

The amount of pesticides used on lawns, gardens and in homes and schools is estimated to be more than 20% of total pesticide use in California. If you are a homeowner, renter, or parent and

wish to reduce your impacts on the environment while protecting you and your family's health, here are some steps you can take.

- Use least-toxic pest control methods around the home and garden. Exclude pests by caulking cracks, and keep kitchens and other parts of the home free from food sources that attract pests. Use low-toxicity, contained baits instead of spraying potent toxicants into the environment. In the garden, control weeds by mulching or hand weeding and use beneficial insects or least-toxic insecticides such as soaps, oils, and biopesticides to control insect pests. Watch out for "weed and feed" fertilizers containing pesticides. If you hire others to do your gardening work, insist that no pesticides be used.
- Buy organic foods whenever possible. Market forces are a powerful incentive to encourage growers to go organic.
- Insist on least-toxic pest management in your children's schools and support efforts to phase out use of toxic pesticides in schools. Many schools now have a "no toxic pesticides" policy. If yours doesn't, work with other parents and teachers to implement such a policy at your school. Write your California legislators to give your support to the Healthy Schools Bill, AB 1207, which phases out school use of pesticides known to cause cancer, reproductive and developmental harm, and neurotoxicity.

Sources: www.biologicaldiversity.org and www.pesticidereform.org



Sustainable agriculture: what is it and why is it important?

Karen and Adrian Nickols

What comes to mind when you hear the term "sustainable agriculture"? Perhaps from overuse, the word has come to mean many things to people. Merriam Webster defines the word "sustainable" as a method of harvesting or using resources so that the resource is not depleted or permanently damaged.

As a Peace Corps Agro Forestry Volunteer in El Salvador, we came to learn the importance of water as a resource fundamental to life and the livelihoods of the farmers we worked with. It was not uncommon for families in some rural villages to travel up to 17km each day, by foot, horse, or bus, to get their drinking water. Erosion due to deforestation and intensive slash-and-burn agriculture continues to reduce yearly crop yields and is a major factor creating water shortages. Water that is available is often not suitable for drinking due to contamination. Water conservation and the use of sustainable methods were always at the core of the projects we worked on with farmers.

There is a sad irony to all of this. I thought, with the best of intentions, that I was going to El Salvador to help. The problems are there, right? Not here. I was aware that most farmers do not use sustainable methods in the United

States, but I was not aware of how dire the water crisis is in the San Joaquin Valley. This local crisis is a result of our failure to farm using sustainable methods and a misuse of our most valuable resource, water.

According to a report published by the Environmental Justice Coalition for Water (EJCW), groundwater is the major source of drinking water for more than 90% of communities in the San Joaquin Valley. Many families in the Valley's rural communities must travel 30 to 50 miles to buy bottled water because the groundwater is so contaminated. The levels of groundwater contamination are higher here than in any other region of California and are due, in large part, to the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, and to wastes generated by dairies and food processing plants. The unsafe water affects approximately 40,000 people, primarily in the southern San Joaquin Valley. In fact, of the nitrate drinking water violations recorded by the state, 73% come from the southern San Joaquin Valley. According to the EJCW, California is one of only two states in the U.S. that does not have a groundwater management program.

How is agriculture, in particular large-scale corporate agriculture, able to pollute our waterways

without any consequence? Answer: Section 404(f) of the Federal Clean Water Act exempts any farming operation that meets the criteria of "normal, active and continuous" from complying with national water quality standards. These farming operations are not required to obtain permits that all other industrial operations must acquire. Considering the large-scale use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides in farming, this green light from the government contributes greatly to groundwater contamination.

Agricultural water pollution not only causes great risks to our water supply and negatively affects human health—it breaks down the ecosystems with which our lives are undeniably linked. The Environmental Protection Agency is designated to administer the Clean Water Act. Though it allows farmers to pollute without penalty, the agency has determined that agricultural pollution causes or contributes to the pollution of virtually every significant waterway in the Central Valley. This pollution renders these waterways unsafe for fishing, swimming, and drinking and contributes to the degradation of aquatic life.

Sources: www.usace.army.mil/cw/cecwo/reg/moul/cwaag.htm, www.ejcw.org/ourwork/cvdrinkingwater.htm



San Joaquin County UC Master Gardeners

The San Joaquin County University of California Cooperative Extension Office is pleased to announce the return of the Master Gardener Program to San Joaquin County. Master Gardener volunteers provide horticultural outreach and education to San Joaquin County residents using research provided by the University of California Cooperative Extension. The Program educates the public on resource reduction, conservation techniques and green waste minimization and provides information on environmentally friendly gardening practices. Master Gardeners are available to diagnose plant problems and give horticultural assistance to San Joaquin County residents over the telephone and via office visits, workshops, demonstrations, events, and through mass media.

With support from the San Joaquin County Department of Public Works, the MG program kicked off in January of 2007 after a 15 year hiatus. In July of 2007 thirty residents from throughout San Joaquin County successfully completed the rigorous 17 week training to become Master Gardeners. Lessons included an introduction to horticulture; soil; water and fertilizer management; composting; green waste reduction; ornamentals and drought tolerant plants; turf management; landscape trees; planting and maintenance; introduction to insects; integrated pest management; home vegetable gardening; plant disease diagnosis; weed identification and management; home orchards; fruit and nut trees; small fruits and grapevines; identification

and control of household pests; understanding pesticides; volunteerism; diagnosing garden and landscape problems. The courses are comprised of one 4-1/2 hour class per week, along with quizzes and a final test for certification into the Master Gardener Program. Upon completion of the training, Master Gardeners are required to contribute 50 hours of Community service to San Joaquin County within a year of graduation.

San Joaquin County residents can benefit from the expertise of the Master Gardener Program at no cost by calling the Master Gardener Hotline at (209) 468-8457. The hotline is available Tuesday through Thursday from 9 a.m.–12 p.m. for gardening questions. San Joaquin County residents may also bring their samples into the UC Extension Office at 420 S. Wilson Way in Stockton during these hours.

Master Gardeners will soon be giving demonstrations on topics related to home gardening, including composting, ornamental plant care, and plant management.

Get trained

The Master Gardener program is open for enrollment for residents of San Joaquin County. The next training session will begin in the spring of 2008. Applications are available at the UC Extension Office or online at <http://sjmastergardeners.ucdavis.edu>. Questions can be directed to the Master Gardeners at: (209) 468-8457, mgsanjoaquin@ucdavis.edu or through the web page at <http://sjmastergardeners.ucdavis.edu>

Enviro Americorps needs you

Do you know someone who loves the Sierra Nevada and wants to gain valuable professional experience helping to restore and protect the Range of Light?

Here's your chance to express your unbounded nepotism. Tell members of your clan to apply today for one of the twenty-seven Sierra Nevada AmeriCorps Partnership (SNAP) positions for 2008. SNAP AmeriCorps members serve for one year with an environmental nonprofit or public agency (including the PCL Foundation) to conduct and lead projects on habitat restoration, ecological or watershed monitoring, and/or

environmental education. For their year of service, Sierra Nevada AmeriCorps Partnership members will receive skills and technical training, mentor with outstanding environmental leaders, and get an educational stipend at the end of their service.

All positions start January 7, 2008. Applicants are highly encouraged to apply by October 15, 2007 to be considered in the first round of interviews. Applicants after October 15 are encouraged to apply and will be applying for any positions still open after the first round of interviews. Applicants must be at

least 18 and have a minimum of a High School Diploma or GED (higher education degrees are highly recommended). Interviews will be conducted until all positions are filled.

For more information please contact Do Lee, Sierra Nevada AmeriCorps Partnership Regional Coordinator at 530-542-4546 x 302 or do@sierranevedaalliance.org. To find out more about the 2008 AmeriCorps position at the PCL Foundation, contact Traci Sheehan at tsheehan@pcl.org.

Source: *PCL Insider*, 10/4/07 www.pcl.org

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The Top Censored Stories of 2006 and 2007

1: No Habeas Corpus for "Any Person"

With the approval of Congress and no outcry from corporate media, the Military Commissions Act (MCA) signed by Bush on October 17, 2006, ushered in military commission law for US citizens and non-citizens alike. While media, including a lead editorial in the New York Times October 19, have given false comfort that we, as American citizens, will not be the victims of the draconian measures legalized by this Act (such as military roundups and life-long detention with no rights or constitutional protections), Robert Parry points to text in the MCA that allows for the institution of a military alternative to the constitutional justice system for "any person" regardless of American citizenship. The MCA effectively does away with habeas corpus rights for "any person" arbitrarily deemed to be an "enemy of the state." The judgment on who is deemed an "enemy combatant" is solely at the discretion of President Bush.

More about the movement to rewrite the Military Commissions Act: https://secure.aclu.org/site/SPageServer?pagename=DOA_learn

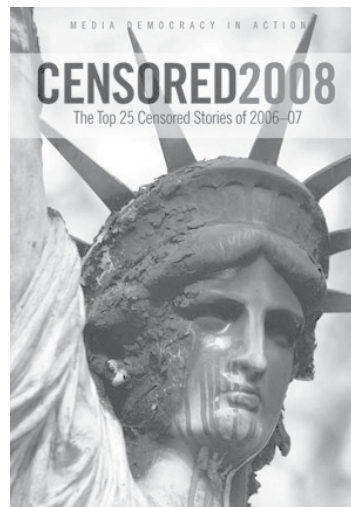
Sources: "Who Is 'Any Person' in Tribunal Law?" by Robert Parry 10/19/06 <http://consortiumnews.com/2006/101906.html>

"Still No Habeas Rights for You" by Robert Parry 2/3/07 <http://consortiumnews.com/2007/020307.html>

"Repeal the Military Commissions Act and Restore the Most American Human Right" by Thom Hartmann 2/2/07 <http://www.commondreams.org/views07/0212-24.htm>

2: Bush Moves Toward Martial Law

The John Warner Defense Authorization Act of 2007, which was quietly signed by Bush on October 17, 2006, the very same day that he signed the Military Commissions Act, allows the president to station military troops anywhere in the United States and take control of state-based National Guard units without the



Edited by Peter Phillips and Andrew Roth with Project Censored
Introduction by Dennis Lee • Cartoons by John Jenik

consent of the governor or local authorities, in order to "suppress public disorder."

By revising the two-century-old Insurrection Act, the law in effect repeals the Posse Comitatus Act, which placed strict prohibitions on military involvement in domestic law enforcement. The 1878 Act reads, "Whoever, except in cases and under circumstances expressly authorized by the Constitution or Act of Congress, willfully uses any part of the Army or Air Force as a posse comitatus or otherwise to execute the laws shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than two years, or both." As the only US criminal statute that outlaws military operations directed against the American people, it has been our best protection against tyranny enforced by martial law—the harsh system of rules that takes effect when the military takes control of the normal administration of justice. Historically martial law has been imposed by various governments during times of war or occupation to intensify control of populations in spite of heightened unrest. In modern times it is most commonly used by authoritarian governments to enforce unpopular rule.

Section 333 of the Defense Authorization Act of 2007, entitled "Major public emergencies; interference with State and Federal law," states that "the President may employ the armed forces, including the National Guard in Federal service—to restore public

order and enforce the laws of the United States when, as a result of a natural disaster, epidemic, or other serious public health emergency, terrorist attack or incident, or other condition in any State or possession of the United States, the President determines that domestic violence has occurred to such an extent that the constituted authorities of the State or possession are incapable of (or "refuse" or "fail" in) maintaining public order—in order to suppress, in any State, any insurrection, domestic violence, unlawful combination, or conspiracy."

Thus an Act of Congress, superceding the Posse Comitatus Act, has paved the way toward a police state by granting the president unfettered legal authority to order federal troops onto the streets of America, directing military operations against the American people under the cover of "law enforcement."

ACTION: Urge Congress to repeal Section 1076 of the 2007 NDAA through immediate enactment of Senate Bill 513. Introduced in February 2007, and sponsored by Senator Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.), the bill seeks to repeal, or as the Congress puts it, "revive previous authority on the use of the Armed Forces and the militia to address interference with State or Federal law, and for other purposes," through the "Repeal of Amendments made by Public Law 109-364-Section 1076 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007."

Source: "Bush Moves Toward Martial Law" by Frank Morales 10/26/06 <http://www.uruknet.info/?p=27769>

3: AFRICOM: US Military Control of Africa's Resources

In February 2007 the White House announced the formation of the US African Command (AFRICOM), a new unified Pentagon command center in Africa, to be established by September 2008. This military penetration of Africa is being presented as a humanitarian guard

in the Global War on Terror. The real objective is, however, the procurement and control of Africa's oil and its global delivery systems.

The most significant and growing challenge to US dominance in Africa is China. An increase in Chinese trade and investment in Africa threatens to substantially reduce US political and economic leverage in that resource-rich continent. The political implication of an economically emerging Africa in close alliance with China is resulting in a new cold war in which AFRICOM will be tasked with achieving full-spectrum military dominance over Africa.

In the end, regardless of whether it's US or Chinese domination over Africa, the blood spilled will be African. Hunt concludes, "It does not require a crystal ball or great imagination to realize what the increased militarization of the continent through AFRICOM will bring to the peoples of Africa."

Source: "Understanding AFRICOM" by Bryan Hunt 2/21/07 http://www.moonofalabama.org/2007/02/understanding_a_1.html

4: Frenzy of Increasingly Destructive Trade Agreements

The Oxfam report, "Signing Away the Future," reveals that the US and European Union (EU) are vigorously pursuing increasingly destructive regional and bilateral trade and investment agreements outside the auspices of the WTO. These agreements require enormous irreversible concessions from developing countries, while offering almost nothing in return. Faster and deeper, the US and EU are demanding unprecedented tariff reductions, sometimes to nothing, as the US and EU dump subsidized agricultural goods on undeveloped countries (see story #21), plunging local farmers into desperate poverty. Meanwhile the US and EU provide themselves with high tariffs and stringent import quotas to protect their own producers. Unprecedented loss of livelihood, displacement, slave labor, along with spiraling degradation of human rights and environments are resulting as economic governance is forced from governments of developing countries, and taken over by unaccountable multinational firms. See www.oxfamamerica.org.

Sources: "Singing Away The Future", by Oxfam International 3/07 http://www.oxfam.org/en/policy/briefingpapers/lbp101_regional_trade_agreements_0703

"Free Trade Enslaving Poor Countries" by Sanjay Suri, 3/20/07 <http://ipsnews.org/news.asp?idnews=37008>

5: Human Traffic Builds US Embassy in Iraq

The enduring monument to US liberation and democracy in Iraq will be the most expensive and heavily fortified embassy in the world—and is being built by a Kuwait contractor repeatedly accused of using forced labor trafficked from South Asia under US contracts. The \$592 million, 104-acre fortress equal in size to the Vatican City is scheduled to open in September 2007. With a highly secretive contract awarded by the US State Department, First Kuwaiti Trading & Contracting has joined the ranks of Halliburton/KBR in Iraq by using bait-and-switch recruiting practices. Thousands of citizens from countries that have banned travel or work in Iraq are being tricked, smuggled into brutal and inhumane labor camps, and subjected to months of forced servitude—all in the middle of the US-controlled Green Zone, "right under the nose of the US State Department."

Source: "A US Fortress Rises in Baghdad: Asian Workers Trafficked to Build World's Largest Embassy," by David Phinney 10/17/07 <http://www.corpwatch.org/article.php?id=14173>

6: Operation FALCON Raids

Under the code name Operation FALCON (Federal and Local Cops Organized Nationally) three federally coordinated mass arrests occurred between April 2005 and October 2006. In an unprecedented move, more than 30,000 "fugitives" were arrested in the largest dragnets in the nation's history. The operations directly involved over 960 agencies (state, local, and federal) and were the brainchild of Attorney General Alberto Gonzales and US Marshal's Director Ben Reyna. The DoJ supplied television networks government-shot action videotape of Marshals and local cops raiding homes and breaking down doors, "targeting the worst of the worst criminals on the run," emphasizing suspected sex offenders. Yet less than ten percent of the total 30,150 were suspected sex offenders and less than two

percent owned firearms. The press has not asked, "Who were the others?" And to date, the US Marshal's office has issued no public statement as to whether the people arrested in Operation Falcon have been processed or released. Author Mike Whitney cautions that Attorney General Gonzales has little interest in the petty offenders who were netted in this extraordinary crackdown. This action is instead, he warns, a practice roundup in the move toward martial law.

Sources: "Operation Falcon" 11/18/06 http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Operation_FALCON

"Operation Falcon and the Looming Police State," by Mike Whitney 2/26/07 <http://luruknet.info/?p=m30971&s1=h1>

7: Behind Blackwater Inc.

The company that most embodies the privatization of the military industrial complex—a primary part of the Project for a New American Century and the neoconservative revolution is the private security firm Blackwater. Blackwater is the most powerful mercenary firm in the world, with 20,000 soldiers, the world's largest private military base, a fleet of twenty aircraft, including helicopter gunships, and a private intelligence division. The firm is also manufacturing its own surveillance blimps and target systems. Recent allegations of brutality may curtail future Blackwater activity in Iraq.

One of the last things Dick Cheney did before leaving office as Defense Secretary under George H. W. Bush was to commission a Halliburton study on how to privatize the military bureaucracy. That study effectively created the groundwork for a continuing war profiteer bonanza.

Source: "Our Mercenaries in Iraq: Blackwater Inc and Bush's Undeclared Surge" by Jeremy Scahill 1/26/07 <http://www.democracynow.org/article.pl?sid=07/01/26/1559232>

8: KIA: The US Neoliberal Invasion of India

Farmers' cooperatives in India are defending the nation's food security and the future of Indian farmers against the neoliberal invasion of genetically modified (GM) seed. As many as 28,000 Indian farmers have committed suicide over the last decade as a result of debt incurred from failed GM crops and competition

with subsidized US crops, yet when India's Prime Minister Singh met with President Bush in March 2006 to finalize nuclear agreements, they also signed the Indo-US Knowledge Initiative on Agriculture (KIA), backed by Monsanto, Archer Daniels Midland (ADM), and Wal-Mart. The KIA allows for the grab of India's seed sector by Monsanto, of its trade sector by giant agribusiness ADM and Cargill, and its retail sector by Wal-Mart.

For more info, check out the following websites: <http://www.ddsindia.com/www/default.asp>; www.soilandhealth.org; www.gmwatch.org; and www.mindfully.org.

Sources: "Vandana Shiva on Farmer Suicides, the US-India Nuclear Deal, Wal-Mart in India," by Vandana Shiva with Amy Goodman 12/13/07 <http://www.democracynow.org/article.pl?sid=06/12/13/1451229>

"Genetically Modified Seeds: Women in India Take on Monsanto," by Arun Shrivastava 10/9/07 <http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=viewArticle&code=ARU20061009&articleId=3427>

"Sowing Trouble: India's 'Second Green Revolution'," by Suman Sahai <http://www.scidev.net/content/opinions/eng/sowing-trouble-indias-second-green-revolution.cfm>

second-green-revolution.cfm

9: Privatization of America's Infrastructure

We will soon be paying Wall Street investors, Australian bankers, and Spanish contractors for the privilege of driving on American roads, as more than twenty states have enacted legislation allowing public-private partnerships to build and run highways. Investment firms including Goldman Sachs, Morgan Stanley, and the Carlyle Group are approaching state politicians with advice to sell off public highway and transportation infrastructure. When advising state officials on the future of this vital public asset, these investment firms fail to mention that their sole purpose is to pick up infrastructure at the lowest price possible in order to maximize returns for their investors. Investors, most often foreign companies, are charging tolls and insisting on "noncompete" clauses that limit governments from expanding or improving nearby roads.

Sources: "The Highwaymen," by Daniel Schulman with James Ridgeway 2/07, <http://www.motherjones.com/>

news/feature/2007/01/highwaymen.html

"Bush Administration Quietly Plans NAFTA Super Highway," by Jerome R. Corsi 6/12/06 <http://www.humanevents.com/article.php?id=15497>

10: Vulture Funds Threaten Poor Nations' Debt Relief

Vulture funds, otherwise known as "distressed-debt investors," are undermining UN and other global efforts to relieve impoverished Third World nations of the debt that has burdened them for many decades. Vulture funds are financial organizations that buy up debts that are near default or bankruptcy. The vulture fund will pay the original investor pennies on the dollar for the debt and then approach the debtor to arrange a better repayment on the loan, or will go after the debtor in court.

In the case of nations, the actions of vulture funds are corrupting the process begun in 1996 to provide debt relief for Third World nations struggling to emerge from the heavy debt laid upon them by previous corrupt rulers and colonial masters.

In one recent case, the poverty-stricken nation of Zambia was negotiating with Romania to reduce a \$40 million debt still owed from a 1979 loan to buy Romanian tractors. In 1999, Romania had agreed to liquidate the entire loan for \$3 million. Zambia planned to use the debt cancellation to invest in much-needed nurses, teachers, and basic infrastructure. Just before the deal was finalized however, investors at the England-based vulture fund Donegal International convinced the Romanian government to sell them the loan for just under \$4 million—not much more than Zambia had offered. Donegal then turned around and sued Zambia (where the average wage is barely a dollar a day) for the full \$40 million. On February 15, 2007, an English court ruled that Donegal was entitled to much of what it was seeking—at least \$15 million, perhaps more.

Source: "Vulture Fund Threat to Third World," by Greg Palast with Meirion Jones 2/14/07 <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article17070.htm>

Source: Project Censored release 9/14/07, Sonoma State University, 1801 East Cotati Ave, Rohnert Park, CA 94928. www.projectcensored.org/

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During the past 35 years, government has grown dramatically under Republican administrations and shrunk under Democratic presidents. This oddity cannot be fully explained by war, the business cycle or policies of Congress. The best way to measure the size of government is to determine what proportion of the country's annual spending the federal government allocated. You determine this quite simply by dividing the federal government's expenditures for a given year by that year's gross domestic product. In other words, what proportion of the GDP goes to the federal government?

At the end of President Jimmy Carter's tenure, the federal government absorbed 21 percent of the nation's yearly production. This was slightly below what was spent during the Ford administration. By 1983, under President Ronald Reagan, the federal government's take grew to 23.3 percent of the gross domestic product. Prior to 2006, this is the biggest the federal government got to be since World War II.

How could a president famous for being a small-government conservative, during a time of peace, with effective control of both houses (with southern Democrats), nevertheless spend more than any president in the past 62 years? The answer is the trillion dollars spent on defense. Reagan bought the B-1 bomber program, the MX missile program, the Trident submarine program, the expansion to a 600-ship navy and the Strategic Defense Initiative, popularly known as Star Wars. It was said of Reagan's secretary of defense, Casper Weinberger, "He never saw a defense system he didn't like."

The reason many people are not aware of the dramatic increase in federal spending under Reagan is that we didn't pay taxes for it. We borrowed a trillion dollars, mostly from foreigners. The deficit in Carter's final year in office was 1.92 percent of the budget. Three years later, under Reagan, it was 4.89 percent of the budget. It should be remembered that a deficit is just a postponed tax. The idea of a deficit is that we spend

now and borrow to pay for it, with the expectation that our children will pay it back later.

So much for "tax cuts."

When President Bill Clinton took over, his first budget absorbed 21.5 percent of the gross domestic product. There were no expensive new programs under Clinton. In addition, there were savings from the Welfare Reform Act that reduced the number of families on welfare to less than half what it was in 1992.

With the help of many Republicans in Congress, the size of government declined steadily every year for Clinton's entire term. By 2000, Clinton's last budget, the federal government's portion of the economy had been reduced to 18.9 percent, the smallest government in 27 years. The deficit in Clinton's first year was 4.6 percent of the budget. The deficit was .4 percent, one-tenth as much, in 1998. Then we began generating surpluses, a positive 1.9 percent of the budget in 2000.

Under President George W. Bush, we have returned to growing government (transportation bill, Medicare drug benefit, farm bill, exploding earmarks) and accelerating deficits. The president has issued only one veto, on stem cell research, so spending has grown with the acquiescence of the White House. In 2003, before war spending amounted to much, the federal government carved out 20.6 percent of the nation's yearly wealth. It is now about 23 percent. The deficit was back up to 3.7 percent of the budget.

Most conservatives agree that small government, declining deficits and a cut in taxes necessary to service them are the fiscal best policies. We need an administration that is more frugal, like President Clinton's, and less profligate, like those of Presidents Reagan and George W. Bush.

Mickey McGuire is a retired high school social studies teacher from Tracy.

Lawn signs, peace pins, mugs, and T-shirts



Beautiful PJN mugs!

"War is NOT the answer" lawn signs come from the Friends Committee on National Legislation (FCNL). We are requesting a \$5 donation to cover costs

(sorry, we can't ship lawn signs). We also have elegant pins made of pewter in the shape of the peace symbol for \$10. Also, handsome PJN T-shirts in many colors, and more. Come by the P&J Center to see these items, plus buttons and bumperstickers galore, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton CA 95204. Call 467-4455.





Sawznhammers

"Saw": a tool for analysis, taking things apart; a proverb, often trite
"Hammer": a tool for synthesis, putting things together; to pound away

Walking together

"Stand together, and people will find the way" —Magpie

John Morearty

On September 26 Mike Fitzgerald kindly reviewed my memoirs, *Walking to Omega*, and told my story sharp and clean. But it's not just my story, it is our story—the story of a peace community in San Joaquin County, each one of us like nodes of bermuda grass, roots and tendrils reaching out through hardpan, mud, ether and internet to each other and all the earthlings, twining into past struggles and hope for times to come. Like bermuda grass, each of us is a center, no one is boss, we encircle the earth and cannot be defeated.

I think of times when I stood alone waving my "U.S. out of Iraq" sign along Pershing. But not alone—I was buoyed by all the drivers who waved support, and by the hundreds with whom I've carried signs and banners over forty years, in front of Norman Shumway's office, and Richard Pombo's and Dennis Cardoza's and Jerry Mc Nerney's, at City Hall corner and lately along Pacific Avenue at Delta every Thursday afternoon. I thought of thousands at Livermore Lab and the Nevada nuclear test site, hundreds of thousands marching in San Francisco (I remember

three quarters of a million in the early seventies), and the millions with whom we will certainly walk again, before the wars are over.

I remember pioneer peace activist A. J. Muste, who years ago stood alone in the snow outside the White House with his peace sign. A reporter asked, "Surely Mr. Muste, you don't think that by standing here with your little sign, you're going to change your government?" "No," replied Muste, "I'm just trying to keep my government from changing me."

I think of the photograph of Dorothy Day, war resister, founder of the Catholic Worker movement, sitting calmly on her little stool in the fields of Delano during the grape workers' strike, looking up at glowering sheriffs, like Martin Luther before his judges: "Here I stand. I can do no other." Or his namesake Martin Luther King Jr., in a church in Memphis the night before he died: "I've been to the mountaintop, and I've seen the promised land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, that we as a people will get to the promised land. And I'm happy, tonight."

All these "clouds of witnesses" are our ancestors. As they say in the Latin American movement, "Presente! they are here with us!"

The Vietnamese Buddhist peace activist Thich Nhat Hanh says, "We are here to awaken from the illusion of our separateness."

From the moment in 1979 when I decided to work against the nukes that threaten my twin sons, I've known this story is not about the Lone Ranger. I asked, is there a peace movement around here? People directed me to Ellen Lyon, Barre Stadtner, Nancy Shepherd, Reid and Ann Cerney and others, and we did what Americans always do when confronted with a Big Job: we called a meeting. It was on February 22, so we called it the "George Washington's Birthday and Nuclear Disaster

Averting Party." Wilbur Hubbell turned up, and John and Linda Whittock and 30 others, and over cookies and punch we formed a committee and schemed to save the world.

All these people became my friends for life. Looking for allies, I had found my intellectual and heart community. I remember walking in the meadow behind my house on Carpenter Road, thinking what magnificent men and women these were—willing to look hard reality in the face, eager to give their time and money—as the Declaration of Independence says, pledging their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor. They were some of the best people in the world, and I knew that in the peace movement I would meet more. We tried many tactics, "apparently insignificant yet terribly important," as Gandhi said.

The last word in the book goes to a friend who reminded me again that I'm not the Lone Ranger. In the spring of 2005 Ria and I were walking the coast of Whidbey Island in Puget Sound with old friends from Stockton, Julie and Rudy Whittaker. Julie taught special children for many years. Into his fifties Rudy was a master sergeant in the army reserves; he is also a master gardener who was on speaking terms with each individual tree at Delta College, and on Whidbey he volunteers to keep the walking trails clear of brush, so locals and strangers can enjoy ambling in the woods.

As we stroll under the August sun I inform the old soldier I'm writing my memoirs, calling my pilgrimage *Walking to Omega*.

"Are you by any chance familiar with Teilhard de Chardin? He used the term 'Omega point' to refer to the unity toward which humankind is converging."

"Oh sure," says Rudy, "I read him when I was a student at Berkeley." He grins. "Of course, we're all walking to Omega."

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—Mike Fitzgerald, Record columnist

"Dear John,
[When I finally read] the new Morearty tome...after weeks of healing..., I was rewarded. You've been cursed & blessed with an interesting, passionate life. I sometimes have a fantasy that all who truly live out the ironies, swallow the foibles and endure the furies, will be gathered in one place. It's called 'heaven', or 'one another'. They're assembled to save, savor, tell their tales. With the overriding conviction that despite all, life was eminently worth it all. Their marks will be wit & gratitude.

Found the above verified and given vivid transfusion in your book. For which, deep thanks."
—/s/ Dan Berrigan, S.J.

*Walking to Omega: Tales of a
Peacenik Carpenter*
memoirs by John Morearty

available at www.johnmorearty.com,
or from the author 209-464-3326, john@morearty.com

Peace and Justice Network



of San Joaquin County

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great work!
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Vigil against capital punishment

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops made a clear call to the Catholic community to join the campaign to end the use of the death penalty in the November 2005 statement, A Culture of Life and the Penalty of Death. Responding to that call, the Cathedral of the Annunciation's Restorative Justice and Peace and Justice Ministries initiated the first Vigil of Witness in 2005.

This year's Vigil of Witness Against Capital Punishment will take place on Thursday, October 25th at 7 p.m. in the Cathedral's Choir Room (440 W. Rose Street, Stockton), for an hour of prayer, reflection and readings.

The public (regardless of religious affiliation) is invited to attend. Join us as we raise our voices to call for the "day when our society chooses not to answer violence with violence" becomes a reality.

Hospice of San Joaquin

Coping with the holidays workshop

"Coping with the holidays" is a half-day workshop for adults who have suffered the loss of a loved one. This workshop will be held on Saturday, November 17th from 12 - 4 pm at Hospice of San Joaquin, 3888 Pacific Ave., Stockton. The purpose of this workshop is to share and discuss the special considerations that holidays bring for people who are grieving. Time will be spent on personal reflection, challenges, coping with depression, practical techniques, and developing a plan to work with grief at holiday time. This is also an opportunity to meet others and share the journey through grief. There is a \$5 fee for the workshop to cover materials. Pre-registration is required and space is limited; call 209-957-3888. Hospice of San Joaquin supports terminally ill patients and their families in the greater San Joaquin County.

Stockton Chorale, Oct 28

Music for heart and soul

The Stockton Chorale will introduce its 2007-08 season "Music for the Heart and Soul" on Sunday, October 28, 2007. The season will include five concerts. Highlights of the first concert will be the glorious sacred music of Anton Bruckner (1824-1896) and the contemporary sounds of Daniel Pinkham (1923-2006). Sharing the stage will be the Stockton Master Chorale, performing Daniel Pinkham's lovely Wedding Cantata, as well as the Stockton Youth Chorale. This single performance will be held 3:00 pm on Sunday, October 28, 2007 at Quail Lakes Baptist Church, 1904 Quail Lakes Drive, Stockton.

Single concert tickets are \$20 for adults, and \$10 for students age 17 yrs. and younger. Season tickets are \$75 for adults and \$37.50 for 17 yrs. and younger. For more information, call (209) 951-6494.

Baroque chamber music at UOP

Chatham Baroque, the lively trio that helped put Pittsburgh on the music map, will perform their period music on period instruments at a Sunday concert on November 4 for Friends of Chamber Music in Stockton. The trio, billed as "western Pennsylvania's only professional

baroque ensemble using period instruments," will play at 2:30 p.m. in the Faye Spanos Concert Hall at University of the Pacific.

Following the concert, the audience is invited to meet the musicians at a reception at the adjacent Buck Hall.

Single tickets at \$25 will be

available at the door of the hall, Pacific Avenue at Dave Brubeck Way. Students of any age are admitted free, as are children ages five and above who are accompanied by an adult.

For more information, 946-0540, 954-0421 or visit www.chambermusicfriends.org.



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For Whom: Our patients and friends in the community

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PCMC Seminar Room

When: Two consecutive Wednesday afternoons December 5th and 12th
1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Reservations: Seating is limited. Please call in advance to indicate which session(s) you plan to attend. (209)464-4800

SCHEDULE

12/05/07 WOMAN'S HEALTH IN WINTER

- Cold/flu prevention
- Easy menstruation
- Self heat treatment
- Hormone replacement therapy (HRT) - Pros and Cons

Yoshiko Kage, L.Ac., M.S., M.A.
Yi-Po Anthony Wu, M.D., M.P.H.

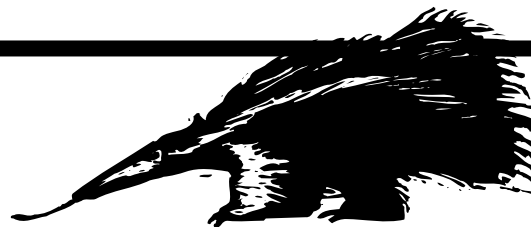
12/12/07 WINTER TONICS

- TCM tonification therapy
- Herbs
- Winter diet
- Exercise & self massage

Susan Wang, L.Ac., Ph.D., O.M.D.
Teresa M. Chen, Ph.D.

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November Calendar



Editor's note: if your event isn't listed, let us know. Send copy to: bgiudici@catel.com by the 7th of the month.

Oct 1 - Nov 3

Due Exhibit featuring Gil Garcia (painter) and Mark Plaza (glass). M-F 10-5, Sat 11-3 Tidewater Gallery, 223 E. Weber Ave, Stockton. 463-4033

Oct 4 - Nov 1

Monica Van den Dool art show: Specters-Narrative Ceramic Tableaux. T 11-4, W-Th 11-6:30, F 11-1. LH Horton Jr Gallery, Shima Center, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. 954-5507

Oct 1 - Nov 3

Collage Work by Mary Lois Thompson. M-F 10-5, Sat 11-3 Tidewater Gallery, 223 E. Weber, Stockton. 463-4033

Sat, Oct 20

The Audubon Experience exhibit and reception, keynote by Pulitzer winning author Richard Rhodes. 1 pm. Chavez Central Library, 605 N El Dorado St, Stockton. Free. 937-8221

Sat, Oct 27

Make a Difference Day. 8 am - 2 pm. Stockton Civic Auditorium, 525 N Center St, South Hall, Stockton. Free 937-8827.

Stockton Art League art auction, live music, wine and food, 6-9 pm. Elsie May Goodwin Gallery, 1902 Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$15, 466-6604. Gallery hours Tue-Fri 11-5, Sat 10-4.

Diwali show, music and dance from India. 7 pm. Scottish Rite Center, 33 W Alpine Ave. \$15 - \$20. 466-2626

Sun, Oct 28

Stockton Chorale Music for the Heart & Soul, 951-6494. (see page 18)

Thur, Nov 1

Peace & Justice Network board meeting, Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. 7 pm. All welcome. 467-4455

Yosemite Sound Series experimental & improv. 8pm. Blackwater Cafe, 914 Yosemite, Stockton. \$3, 943-6938.

Sun, Nov 4

Friends of Chamber Music concert, with the Chatham Baroque trio. 946-0540. (see p 18)

Out of the Poison Tree documentary describing the Khmer Rouge era in Cambodia, presented by the UOP Cambodian Student Association. Director and producer will answer questions after the screening. 2:30 pm, Pacific Theater, UOP, Free.

Thur, Nov 8

Health Care for All San Joaquin meeting, 6-8 pm. 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. Second Thursdays.

Anita Wolff oil painting opening, 7-9 pm. Elsie May Goodwin Gallery, 1902 Pacific Ave, Stockton. 466-6604. Tue-Fri 11-5, Sat 10-4.

Fri, Nov 9

Harvest Fest Dinner, sponsored by the Emergency Food Bank. Thanksgiving dinner and silent auction. 6 pm. Quail Lakes Baptist Church, 1904 Quail Lakes Drive. \$25 adult, age 6-12 \$12, under 6 free. 464-7369.

Sat, Nov 10

Maria Flumiani photography opening, 4-9 pm. Elsie May Goodwin Gallery, 1902 Pacific Ave. 466-6604. Gallery hours Tue-Fri 11-5, Sat 10-4.

Thur, Nov 15

Stockton Symphony Concert with guest soprano Aimee Puentes, 8 pm. SJ Delta College Atherton Auditorium, 5151 Pacific Ave, Stockton. \$16 - \$48, 951-0196

Fri, Nov 16

Drinking Liberally—Promoting Democracy One Pint at a Time. An informal inclusive progressive social group—bring democratic discourse to your local democratic space.

Stockton Grand Hotel, 2323 Grand Canal Blvd, Stockton. Free to attend, support event host. 7 pm. 351-3397.

Sat, Nov 17

Coping with the holidays grief workshop, sponsored by Hospice of SJ (see page 18)..

Stockton Symphony Concert (see Nov 15 for details)

Sat, Nov 22

Run and Walk Against Hunger, sponsored by the Emergency Food Bank. Registration begins at 6 am. Stockton Ports Ballpark, 404 W Fremont St, Stockton. \$25 before 11/16, \$30 after. 464-7369.

Mon, Nov 26

Delta Sierra Club meeting, History and Ecology of the Wetlands of the San Joaquin Basin and of the Delta, 7 pm. Central United Methodist

Church Fireside Room, 3700 Pacific Ave, Stockton. 7 pm program. All welcome.

Thursdays

Peace and social justice demonstration. Edge of Delta campus along Pacific Ave just north of Yokuts. Bring flags, signs. 5-6:30 every Thursday.

Infinite Harmony & Reiki Healing Network. Receive a Reiki mini session. Spiritual Truth Center, 4545 Georgetown Pl., Stockton, 95207. 7:30-9 pm. \$10 donation. 983-9633

Fridays

Downtown farmers market, Hunter Square. 9 am-2 pm. 464-5246

First Sundays

Vegan potluck, Peace & Justice Center, 231 Bedford Rd, Stockton. 5:30 pm \$2 donation bringing food, \$9 without. sjvegans@hotmail.com.

First & Third Tuesdays

Stockton Writers Community workshop for writers with works in progress, led by Robert J Reinarts. 6 pm. Chavez Central Library, 605 N El Dorado St, Stockton. 937-8221

First Thursdays

Experimental & improv music, 8 pm Blackwater Cafe, 914 N Yosemite, Stockton. \$3. 943-6938.

Third Thursdays

Hispanics for Political Action - HPA meets 6 pm at 2080 E 4th St, Stockton. Info, call Louis Gonzales 464-9205

Fourth Saturdays

Greater Lodi Area Democrats (GLAD) meets 8:30 a.m., Dee Dee's Restaurant, 1170 S. Cherokee Ln, Lodi. All welcome, including recovering Republicans. 339-1599. No meetings in November and December.



Pacific Theatre University of the Pacific

Fall 2007

FILM SCHEDULE

Blades of Glory — Fri. & Sat., Aug. 31, Sept 1

Zodiac — Fri. & Sat., Sept 7, 8

Tom Jones (Classic) — Thurs., Sept 13

300 — Fri. & Sat., Sept 14, 15

Duck Season (Spanish) — Thurs., Sept 20

Reign Over Me — Fri. & Sat., Sept 21, 22

Amen. (French) — Thurs., Sept 27

Days of Glory — Fri. & Sat., Sept 28, 29

Get Real — Wed., Oct 10

Once — Thurs., Fri., & Sat., Oct 11, 12, 13

Waitress — Thurs., Fri., & Sat., Oct 18, 19, 20

Throne of Blood (Japanese) — Thurs., Oct 25

The Descent — Fri., Oct 26

Rocky Horror Picture Show — Fri., Oct 26 (11:00pm)

Metropolis (Japanese anime) — Sat., Oct 27

Smoke Signals (Native American) — Thurs., Nov 1

Breach — Fri., & Sat., Nov 2, 3

Pirates of the Caribbean - At World's End — Fri. & Sat., Nov 9, 10

Painted Fire (South Korea) — Thurs., Nov 15

Knocked Up — Fri. & Sat., Nov 16, 17

Starter for 10 — Fri., & Sat., Nov 30, Dec 1

Shakespeare Behind Bars (Documentary) — Thurs., Dec 6

Tokyo Godfathers (Japanese Anime) — Fri. & Sat., Dec 7, 8

Spider-Man 3 — Fri. & Sat., Dec 14, 15

Show Time: 8:00pm

(Doors Open 7:30pm)

Phone: (209) 946-2025

Pacific Students: FREE

Pacific Staff, Faculty, Alumni: \$3.00

General Admission: \$5.00



Talking It Through

Talking It Through is now two half-hour shows.

The Real Show hosted by Margee Ensign is on Monday at 6pm

Talking It Through is hosted by Adrian Nichols and Sammy Nunez every Monday evening at 6:30pm

SJTV: Stockton, Lodi and Manteca cable channel 26

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Peace Work is Happening

November Movie Festival: Plays on Film

Tuesdays, 6:30 pm at Peace & Justice Center

The next cycle of cinematic gems being showcased at the Peace & Justice Center by Cinephile extraordinaire, Dan Hettmannsperger III, will feature movies based on stage plays:

October 30 - SECRET HONOR (1984) Richard Nixon, armed with a gun, a bottle of Chivas Regal and a tape recorder, desperately tries to explain his entire presidency. This amazing film directed by the late Robert Altman and written by Donald Freed, is a fascinating look into the tortured soul of America's most hated President. 90 minutes

November 6 ~ THRONE OF BLOOD (1957) This Japanese adaptation of Macbeth was written and directed by famed director/writer, Akira Kurosawa and stars Toshiro Mifune (Seven Samurai, The Hidden Fortress) in what some call his best role. 109 minutes with subtitles.



November 13 ~ REVENGERS TRAGEDY (2003) This is the only adaptation of Thomas Middleton's brutal 17th century play, and it's a corker! Starring Derek Jacobi, Eddie Izzard and Christopher Eccleston (Dr. Who, Heroes) and directed by British film maker, Alex Cox, this tale of blood and steel never fails to entertain. 109 minutes.

November 20 ~ WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF? (1966) This smashing film of Edward Albee's brutal play won 4 academy awards including best actress (Elizabeth Taylor) and best supporting actress (Sandy Dennis). Also stars Richard Burton and George Segal. Some say that this film revealed more than a little of Liz and Richard's true feelings—you be the judge. 131 minutes.

November 27 ~ CLOSER (2005) Based on the play by Patrick Marber and directed by Mike Nichols (Catch 22, The Graduate), this caustic drama examines the black charms within romantic relationships. See Julia Roberts and Natalie Portman in a film unjustly cheated by the Oscars. Jude Law and Clive Owen also star. 104 minutes.

Don't miss it!!
Peaceful Holiday Fair



Friday, November 30th
4:00 – 9:00 pm
Saturday, December 1st
10:00 – 3:00 pm

Free Admission
Food and drink

Central United Methodist Church
3700 Pacific Avenue
Stockton, CA 95204

467-4455 for details

Weekly Iraq peace demonstrations

On the grassy lawn just north of the bus stop at Yokuts, from 5 to 6:30 every single Thursday. Bring flags, banners, and signs for peace and social justice issues. For info call Carol Holman, 478-3733; Suzy Arnett, 478-4191; Barry Reingold, 951-6691; or Harold Bell, 333-2353. Note: Delta police DO enforce parking regulations!



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