

THE LAST DRAFT DODGER | C.J. HINKE
DEPORTED FOR TRYING TO GO HOME | GEORGE KHOURY
DANGER MICE | GEORGE MONBIOT

ColdType

WRITING WORTH READING | PHOTOS WORTH SEEING **ISSUE 102**

WHY I'M AN ACTIVIST



Kevin Neish

“It’s my mom and dad’s fault. They would stand, almost alone in the 1960s, for Cuba, unions and peace, and against the war in Vietnam, nuclear bombs, apartheid South Africa, fascism and book-burning McCarthyites here in Canada. They risked financial loss, political and social banishment and physical assault. But in the end, they were usually right” – **KEVIN NEISH** (Page 5)



Cover Photo:
Kevin Neish:
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Danger mice

Beware of politicians making themselves look big by inflating security threats, writes **George Monbiot**

Sir Winston Churchill's statue in London's Parliament Square should be removed to a museum. All busts and portraits of the great man in parliament and the prime minister's residence should be taken down and placed in storage. Why? To discourage his successors from slipping their tiny feet into his shoes.

Churchill was right when he claimed, in June 1940, that "upon this battle depends the survival of ... our own British life". Those who have borrowed the sentiment are in most cases wrong. The Taliban, Al Qaeda, Saddam Hussein, Isis, Islamic extremism; none of these were or are existential threats to the life of this country. But all were inflated until they appeared so, invested with almost supernatural power by prime ministers hoping to be cast in bronze. This inflation, as we discovered in Iraq, has consequences.

Last month, David Cameron maintained that confronting Islamic extremism is "the struggle of our generation". We must pursue this struggle in the spirit with which we "faced down Hitler". Yes, Islamic extremism is real. Yes, it creates genuine problems and presents genuine threats. But to claim it as the struggle of our generation suggests a total collapse of perspective.

In terms of mortal risks to people in Britain, it might rank among the top 50, but

that's probably stretching it. Diet, smoking, alcohol, loneliness, the slow collapse of the NHS, child poverty, air pollution, traffic accidents, lack of exercise, even the wrong kind of bedroom slippers are likely to kill far more people in this country than Islamic terrorists will manage. All (except the last) should demand more resources and political effort than are deployed to confront Islamic extremism. In the longer term, climate change, antibiotic resistance, soil loss and nuclear proliferation by states (including our own) are orders of magnitude more dangerous. But a Churchillian struggle against an identifiable enemy is grander and more glamorous than the battle against faceless but much greater threats. It is also politically less costly, as it offends the interests of neither corporations nor billionaires.

This is not the only sense in which Cameron's claim is presumptuous. What, in his mouth, does "our" generation mean? "It cannot be right," he said in the same speech, "that people can grow up and go to school and hardly ever come into meaningful contact with people from other backgrounds and faiths". That's true, and it applies as much to Eton as it does to faith schools in Birmingham. On social media, Cameron's Bullingdon Club photograph is circulating, attached to another quote from his speech:

Yes, Islamic extremism is real. Yes, it creates genuine problems and presents genuine threats. But to claim it as the struggle of our generation suggests a total collapse of perspective

POLITICAL BLUSTER

A failure to tax property effectively has fuelled a rise in house prices so severe that entire English regions are becoming almost uninhabitable to the poor

“there are people born and raised in this country who don’t really identify with Britain – and who feel little or no attachment to other people here.”

There’s serious intent behind the joke. The former Republican analyst Mike Lofgren, disgusted with what his party had become, said this about the economic elite in the US. “The rich disconnect themselves from the civic life of the nation and from any concern about its well being except as a place to extract loot. Our plutocracy now lives like the British in colonial India: in the place and ruling it, but not of it.” We suffer the same curse: a ruling class whose wealth lies offshore, and which identifies more readily with a transnational elite than with the other people of this nation. On behalf of this elite, the government now gives away £93bn a year in corporate welfare: a sum bigger than the deficit. It champions the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership; a graver threat to the interests of this nation than Islamic extremism presents.

A failure to tax property effectively has fuelled a rise in house prices so severe that entire English regions are becoming almost uninhabitable to the poor. When Cameron warns that “there is a danger in some of our communities that you can go your whole life and have little to do with people from other faiths and backgrounds”, he could have been talking about posh London boroughs or villages in the Cotswolds or the Chilterns, rather than estates in Bradford or Oldham.

Segregation in this country is primarily along economic, not religious, lines, but you can look in vain for a government policy to address it. The benefits gap the government has just tightened will drive the poor out of ever wider areas of England.

And if, as Cameron suggests, there’s a generation in this country engaged in an epic struggle, it’s certainly not his. Young people have been systematically disadvantaged by government policy – especially the latest budget – as both their benefits and

the fruits of their labours are transferred to their seniors. Again, there’s a dangerous segregation developing here, between the young, excluded from the living wage, housing benefit, university maintenance grants and any hope of buying a home, and the elderly, with their rising pensions, winter fuel payments, property banks and new tax breaks. The government seeks only to widen the gap.

For perspective, you must look elsewhere. A global survey published last month by the Pew Research Centre found that while the people of North America, Britain, Australia, Japan, France and Germany see Isis as the greatest threat they face, most of the countries surveyed in poorer parts of the world – Africa, Latin America and Asia – place climate change at the top of the list. Even in Turkey (where, as the recent bombing suggests, the terrorist group is a real threat), more people said they were “very concerned” about climate change than about Islamic State. The nations least threatened by Isis rank this risk the highest. This is media-driven madness, an epidemic of transcontinental paranoia, that governments are happy to foment and exploit.

Men like Cameron, Australia’s Tony Abbott and Canada’s Stephen Harper won’t engage in generational struggles with real existential threats – climate breakdown first among them – for fear of alienating their sponsors. They have learnt all the wrong lessons from Churchill’s legacy, seeking to invest themselves with belligerent glory while forgetting his ability, at crucial moments, to place the interests of the nation above the interests of his class.

So, as Hitler is reborn with a thousand faces, a new “struggle of our generation” emerges every six months, and all around us existential crises are ignored. **CT**

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George Monbiot’s book “Feral” was recently released in paperback format. This article was originally published in the Guardian newspaper

Just do the right thing

Kevin Neish tells why he wants to make the world a better place

For heaven's sake, why did you go back on another flotilla to Gaza!" I've heard this comment/question repeatedly since I returned from an Israeli prison after the attack on the Mavi Marmara, and now, once again, after the recent Gaza Flotilla III hijacking. In a nutshell, I did it again because the job is not done, the Israeli blockade still stands. Once you know something, "taken the red pill" (to give that "Matrix" movie reference), you can't go back. You can't "take the blue pill" and ignore what you've seen and just walk away. At least I can't. Sometimes, I feel that I'd give anything to take a blue pill and move into blissful ignorance, just for a while, but this isn't a movie, it can't and shouldn't happen.

Anyway, it's all my mom and dad's fault. As a little kid, I remember them repeatedly standing up for just causes. They would stand, almost alone in the 1960s, for Cuba, unions and peace, and against the Vietnam war, nuclear bombs, apartheid South Africa, fascism and book-burning McCarthyites here in Canada. They risked financial loss, political and social banishment and physical assaults. But in the end, they were usually right.

Since then I've done a fair bit of activism and learned a few important lessons. When I have come in from the "outside" to volunteer to help a project, I put my full trust in the campaign's indigenous leadership and follow their instructions closely. They know



PAINFUL EMBRACE: My parents, Gladys and Scotty (Elgin) Neish were fishermen's union guest delegates to the 1961 Cuban trade union congress. Fidel has wrapped his arm around Mom for the picture, but the butt of his pistol was jabbing her in the ribs.

the local players, the situation and the risks and dangers much better than I do. I try to act mainly as a shield or an enabler, hopefully giving them more security and breathing space to do their own good work. Needless to say you have to do careful research on the groups you plan to work with, but so far this policy has held me in good stead, and I feel the results speak for themselves.

My mother and father would stand, almost alone in the 1960s, for Cuba, unions and peace, and against the Vietnam war, nuclear bombs, apartheid South Africa, fascism and book-burning McCarthyites here in Canada



FAIR ELECTION: Counting the presidential election ballots from El Salvador's last election in 2014, which the FMLN won.

I watched and photographed as violent right wing goons ran rough shod over the voting process, threatening election officials and blatantly watched how people voted

- In 1989 I volunteered to act as a human shield for the Guatemalan opposition in exile, including Rigoberta Menchu, when they returned home for peace talks. Unfortunately we arrived in the middle of a coup d'état. A death squad harassed us with hourly phone calls, threatening notes were delivered in bouquets of flowers, there was a car chase and finally a car bomb, all to try to stop their peace effort. Through it all, the five leaders were cool and calm and just carried on with their work. I followed their instructions without question, and we all safely left the country on schedule. Eventually peace agreements were signed and Rigoberta won the Nobel Peace Prize, and I learned firsthand about the power of convictions and principles.

- In El Salvador in 2000, I volunteered with a group called CIS (<http://www.cis-elsalvador.org/>) to observe one of their earliest democratic elections. I received training from ac-

tivists who described what to expect and what to do and not to do. I was told to document transgressions, but not to interfere. I watched and photographed as violent right wing goons ran rough shod over the voting process, threatening election officials and blatantly watched how people voted. It was obvious the thugs were upset with my presence, and likely wanted an excuse to assault me and smash my camera. In such situations, one's white privilege can be used for good purposes. I followed my instructions, kept my mouth shut and just observed, and our photographs were used to embarrass the right wing government and expose the fraudulent election. Since then, I've observed four more elections, and now they are more fair to the point that the progressive FMLN party has won the presidency.

- In 2002 I volunteered with the International Solidarity Movement in Bethlehem Palestine (<http://palsolidarity.org/>). The



ALWAYS DEFIANT: Colombian prisoner Liliyany Obando in her prison cell in Buen Pastor prison, Bogota.

ISM is made up of foreigners but is led by Palestinians, who control all the actions and security. The original plan was for us to accompany farmers as they pruned their olive trees, with us acting as observers against Israeli settler attacks. Unfortunately, the Israeli military invaded the West Bank, and we suddenly became human shields. We ended up protecting an entire refugee camp, and rode in Red Crescent ambulances picking up dead and wounded Palestinians. Once again the locals knew what the dangers were, and kept us out of trouble as we assisted them. The camp was not invaded and the ambulances never stopped running.

- Since 2008, as a member of a political prisoner support group, the INSPP (<http://www.inspp.org/>), I have been regularly visiting a Colombian political prisoner, trade union leader Liliyany Obando, in a high security prison in Bogota. The intimidating and insulting treatment of me by the guards,

could have easily lead to a confrontation and my being turned away. But the local activists warned me and showed me how to deal with everything. I was only thrown out once in a dozen visits. Eventually, after three years, Liliyany was released and now she is bravely visiting and supporting her comrades in prison.

- In 2010 I volunteered to sail in the Freedom Flotilla to Gaza (<https://freedomflotilla.org/>), on board the Mavi Marmara. The organisers expected a violent assault from the Israeli military, so once again, I was given very clear instructions as to what to do and not do. During the assault, ten people were murdered, 54 shot and 100 more injured by the Israeli forces, more than a quarter of the passengers. I moved about the ship freely, photographing captured Israeli commandos and the dead and wounded aid workers. In the end I wasn't harmed physically, and I was one of the only people who managed to

I was one of the only people who managed to smuggle out photos of the Mavi Marmara attack, which are now being used in an International Criminal Court trial against Israel



SHOW OF FORCE: Heavy police presence during a left wing political march in Bogota, Columbia.

The Egyptian soldiers, police and plain clothes thugs, who manned the numerous checkpoints, repeatedly threatened, insulted and verbally sexually harassed the student I was traveling with

smuggle out photos of the attack, which are now being used in an International Criminal Court trial against Israel.

- Closer to home, in 2012, I spent a week at the Unis'tot'en native camp, blocking the Enbridge pipeline (<http://unistotencamp.com/>). Before leaving Victoria, the organisers, the Forest Action Network (<http://forestaction.wikidot.com/>), carefully vetted everyone. They gave us instructions regarding the protocols involved in asking permission to enter Wet'suwet'en territory, how to correctly offer your skills and assistance, and what to do. Once there, we were guests in a foreign land, within a very security conscious camp. When alarms were raised, due to unannounced or unwelcome visitors, everyone knew where they should go, and what was expected of us. We were part of a team, not just visitors. I felt quite safe and secure and trusted the native leadership entirely. The camp is still there today, but the RCMP have set up a "safety checkpoint" to harass and in-

timidate visitors, similar to the police in Palestine, El Salvador or Colombia. A little bit of Third World oppression here in Canada.

- In 2013, I spent four months in Gaza, volunteering with the ISM. On the way home I took a taxi across the Egyptian Sinai desert, which since the July 2013 military coup, had turned into a war zone. We were escorting a young female Palestinian scholarship student, Malaka Mohammed, on her way to England (<https://malaka383.wordpress.com/>). The Egyptian soldiers, police and plain clothes thugs who manned the numerous checkpoints, repeatedly threatened, insulted and verbally sexually harassed her. But once again, instructions and coaching by Malaka, kept us informed of which were real threats, and which were just macho bravado, so potentially volatile situations stayed under control. She got to Sheffield unharmed and is now an important leader in the British student movement.

- And now I've just returned from a



See the film at www.culturesofresistance.org

ON PAPER: Screen capture from Lara Lee's *Mavi Marmara* film, shows me with the captured chief Israeli commando's passenger list. The Turks are calling it a hit list in the Istanbul trial they are holding against the Israeli generals.

seven-week trip to Palestine aboard the Swedish ship to Gaza, the *Marianne av Goteborg* (<https://shiptogaza.se/en>), which ended with an Israeli assault, hijacking, kidnapping, a stint in an Israeli prison and deportation. In spite of the taserings, beatings and generally brutal treatment by the Israelis, no one responded with violence, so no one was seriously injured. As in Palestine, the Israelis strive to humiliate and dehumanize you, to goad you into acting violently. But we were prepared for this, as we had spent many hours on the deck of the *Marianne*, receiving non-violent resistance training from a Canadian native leader, Queen's university professor Dr. Bob Lovelace. Colonial oppression and violence is the same, whether it's in Canada or Palestine.

So if you take on an activist "mission" in a foreign land, you need to be able to trust the indigenous leaders, and give them your complete support and cooperation. It took a while for me to learn to follow orders from strangers and to put my ego, in my back

pocket. Why should activists do the things they do. I can explain why with two quotes I learned at school.

"...individuals have international duties which transcend the national obligations of obedience imposed by the individual state." – 1945, Nuremburg WWII War Crimes tribunal statement.

"Any one with knowledge of illegal activity and an opportunity to do something about it, is a potential criminal under international law, unless the person takes affirmative measures to prevent commission of the crime." – 1946, Tokyo WW II War Crimes tribunal statement.

These words, framed in the horrors of WW II fascism, speak of a citizen's duty and obligation to act against oppression anywhere, in order to make this a better world, and to not just follow orders and sit on the fence. To sum it all up, my parents taught me to always fight against bullies, whether they're a person or a country, and to ignore unjust laws.

Just do the right thing.

Every citizen has a duty and obligation to act against oppression anywhere, in order to make this a better world, and to not just follow orders and sit on the fence

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CT

The last draft dodger: We still won't go!

C.J. Hinke tells how he became a conscientious objector and fled to Canada at the height of the Vietnam war

I come from the 'duck and cover' generation. We were taught in school that to hide under our desks and cover our heads would save us from the bomb!

An excerpt from "Free Radicals: War Resisters in Prison by CJ Hinke", to be published in 2016 by Trine-Day.

My father, Robert Hinke, was not political. Nor was he religious. Nevertheless, he was a complete pacifist. When I was a very small boy, he took me to one of the many demonstrations opposing the death penalty for the accused atomic spies, Ethel and Julius Rosenberg. He was passionate and outspoken his whole life against the death penalty, a mistake which could never be undone.

My father was of draft age when the US threw itself into World War II. If he knew about conscientious objectors, I never heard him say so. Nor did I ever see him vote.

He was a football player at Rutgers. When he was called for a draft physical, he goaded another player to break his nose by insulting his mother. When the draft authorities told him he was still able to fight, he goaded the same football player to bust him in the nose again. He failed the second physical—a deviated septum meant a soldier who could not wear a gas mask.

I come from the 'duck and cover' generation. We were taught in school that to hide under our desks and cover our heads would save us from the bomb!

I was not a particularly rebellious boy. Pledging allegiance to the flag is still the rea-

son I determine right from left. But, on joining the Cub Scouts, appearing at assembly to take the pledge, I knew I could not wear a uniform and follow orders; I threw down my pin in disgust and stalked off the stage.

I was 13 in 1963, when the National Committee for a SANE Nuclear Policy marched through my hometown of Nutley, New Jersey, led by paediatrician Dr. Benjamin Spock (1903-1998). I read SANE's leaflet about mutually-assured destruction.

Without a moment's hesitation, I joined SANE's march to the United Nations in support of the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. This was my first arrest for civil disobedience. In New York City's Tombs, I met my first transsexuals and learned to play blackjack using tobacco for currency. From this point, I read everything I could find about Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and nuclear weapons testing. I began to study Japanese language the next year in order to get closer to this issue and the terrible crime which America had perpetrated on the Japanese and the world.

Family friends introduced me to Friends' silent meeting for worship and their peace testimony, seeing the Light in every person. Quakers are a traditional peace church but my attender friends were not religious, nor was I. It did not take a great deal of reflection by age 14 to decide I would not register for the Vietnam draft.

Simply put, conscription feeds the war ma-



Ant-Vietnam war protest in Wichita, Kansas, 1965.

Photo: Wikipedia

I attended the first national convention of the Wobblies and the first American Communist convention since McCarthy's Red scare

chine. If you don't believe in war, you must refuse the draft.

It was about this time I began to refuse to pay war taxes from my part-time job. These acts led logically to becoming a vegetarian: If I will not kill, why should I pay anyone to do my killing for me. I didn't know any vegetarians; I actually had never heard of any but it was a question of making nonviolence work for me. I'm still a vegetarian today.

I began to devote all my free time to the pacifist groups at 5 Beekman Street in lower Manhattan. I started out in the Student Peace Union national office and was mentored by the dean of American pacifists, A.J. Muste. I put my efforts into the War Resisters League and the Committee for Nonviolent Action, often working on their newsletters and helping with mailings.

This period saw much draft card burning as political protest. Draft card burnings and returnings had taken place since the beginnings of the 'peacetime' SSA in 1948 but destruction of draft cards was not made illegal until a spe-

cial act of Congress was passed in 1965. Among the first to burn, in 1965, was my friend, Catholic Worker David Miller, at New York's Whitehall Street Induction Center. 30,000 draft refusals in July 1966 rose to 46,000 by October.

A small group of us, including Dr. Spock, was arrested that day for chaining shut the doors of the center. I was, however, determined I would never have a draft card to burn. I did, however, get to enjoy this singular act of rebellion when one of my draft counselees gifted me with his own! This action was followed by the Fifth Avenue Peace Parade Committee, chaired by Norma Becker, which I helped organize in March 26, 1966 with Sybil Claiborne of the Greenwich Village Peace Center.

We brainstormed into being a new group of draft-age young men, The Resistance. I worked full-time for The Resistance and was eventually chosen to liaise with the many disparate groups forming the Mobe in planning the Spring Mobilization to End the War in Vietnam on April 15, 1967. That fall, our pacifist coalition marched across the border to Mon-

JUST SAY NO

We turned ourselves in to the Federal Marshal in Newark who simply refused to arrest me. And I'd packed a toothbrush

tréal where the 1967 world's fair, Expo '67, was being held in the capital of French Canada. The US had commissioned a giant geodesic dome designed by futurist architect Buckminster Fuller for its national pavilion. We wore t-shirts painted with antiwar slogans under our street clothes into the fair and stepped off the escalators to climb into its structure. We were arrested by ladder and removed, and held the night before being released without charge from the 1908 Prison de Bordeaux. Of course, we made international news. Welcome to Canada!

The Resistance was the yeast that grew the Mobe; we raised the bread to make it happen. The Spring Mobe evolved into the National Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam, chaired by Dave Dellinger, which spearheaded the 100,000-strong Confront the Warmakers march on the Pentagon on October 21, 1967.

682 of us were arrested at the Pentagon, the largest civil disobedience arrest in American history. (Yes, some people put flowers into the barrels of the rifles of the National Guardsmen keeping us at bay and some soldiers joined us—I saw it!)

The Mobe was composed of many traditional lefties but also much of the 'New Left', like Students for a Democratic Society and other stakeholders against the war such as the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, the Black Panthers, the Congress of Racial Equality, the Industrial Workers of the World, and the Yippies.

As a movement representative, I attended the first national convention of the Wobblies and the first American Communist convention since McCarthy's Red scare. I saw my job as holding the movement coalition to nonviolence. Violence was the self-defeating tactic of big government.

I was doing a great deal of counseling of draft-age young men for The Resistance. Many of my pacifist pals were going to prison, sentenced to three to five years under the Selective Service Act. I could honestly not expect less. My father was not happy about this prob-

ability but never tried to dissuade me, either. I started to draft counsel in Canada, so-called draft 'dodgers' and military deserters as well, and he was delighted when I fell for a Canadian Quaker girl while editing Daniel Finnerty and Charles Funnell's "Exiled: Handbook for the Draft-Age Emigrant" for the Philadelphia Resistance in 1967.

On May 6, 1968, five days after my 18th birthday, we held a demonstration in front of the Federal Building in Newark, New Jersey, where physicals and inductions were scheduled. However, that day more than 1,500 people, entertained by the Bread and Puppet Theater and General Hershey Bar, (parodying Selective Service director, Gen. Lewis B. Hershey), showed up to celebrate my refusal to register. There were no inductions or physicals that day. The Feds were spooked and turned away all draftee appointments.

More than 2,000 of my supporters signed a statement declaring they had counseled, aided and abetted me to refuse the draft, an act carrying the same legal penalties of five years in prison and a \$10,000 fine. We turned ourselves in to the Federal Marshal in Newark who simply refused to arrest me. And I'd packed a toothbrush!

The word 'evader' has an ignoble ring to it, as if one were a coward. We need to change the perspective because the only thing resisters are evading is injustice. COs also get called, pejoratively, 'shirkers' or 'slackers'. The only thing we shirk is shrugging off the chains of militarism.

I had already planned to move to Canada. However, I had a few more things to do to end the war.

My summer of 1968 was spent at the Polaris Action Farm of the New England Committee for Nonviolent Action, centered around a 1750 farmhouse in rural Voluntown, Connecticut. During this summer, a paramilitary right-wing group calling themselves the Minutemen were plotting to attack the CNVA farm and murder all the pacifists. The police knew about the plot but did not inform us because they thought (rightly) that we would warn the Minutemen.

The five right-wingers arrived in the dead of an August night and set up an automatic weapon on a tripod in the field. At that point, the Connecticut State Police ambushed the Minutemen into a firefight. One of the rounds blew a hole in the hip of one of our residents, Roberta Trask; she needed extensive surgery and rehabilitation. For some years, I wrote to one of the Minutemen in prison. New England CNVA lives on as the Voluntown Peace Trust.

My summer of 1969 was spent working with Arlo Tatum, George Willoughby, Bent Andresen and others at the Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors in Philadelphia, counseling draft-age men and editing the 11th edition of CCCO's Handbook for Conscientious Objectors. I was fortunate to live with veteran peace activists Wally and Juanita Nelson. I have never met more positive committed activists nor anyone more in love; they celebrated life in every way possible.

New England CNVA chose me as their representative to the Japan Socialist Party's annual Conference Against A and H Bombs in 1969 due to my research on the atomic bombings and Japanese language skills. I was one of eight international delegates and certainly the youngest.

Nothing could have prepared me for Hiroshima at 8:15 am on August 6th at the epicenter of "Little Boy's atomic blast; there is no greater call to peace. Working with the World Friendship Center founded in 1965 by Barbara Reynolds, I spent much of my time in both the Hiroshima and Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Hospitals where people are still dying from nearly 70-year old radiation illnesses.

Outside the US military base in Naha, Okinawa, I gave a speech in Japanese. Then I turned around the speakers to blast the giant US base with instructions for deserters.

In September 1969, I found myself living in Canada. My gainful employment was working with the massive collection of archived papers of British pacifist vegetarian philosopher Bertrand Russell at McMaster University. Russell

was of enormous support to conscientious objectors as were Henri Barbusse, Albert Einstein, and H.G. Wells.

I was greatly supported by Toronto Quaker pacifists, Jack and Nancy Pocock who opened their Yorkville home and hearts to many draft exiles, later Vietnamese boat people and again for Latin American refugees.

My experience as a draft counselor led me to work with Mark Satin of the Toronto Anti-Draft Programme to edit and revise the fourth edition of his "Manual for Draft-Age Immigrants to Canada," published in 1970. The book's publisher, House of Anansi Press, began my association with the alternative education of Rochdale College in Toronto, where I became both resident and part of the administration.

My gainful employment at the time was for Toronto's prestigious Addiction Research Foundation, walking distance from The Rock, from one drugstore to another! I ferried drug samples from Rochdale dealers to ARF's doctors for testing, protecting the safety of the youth community. Eventually I migrated from ARF to the province's Whitby Psychiatric Hospital where I hosted radical British psychiatrists, R.D. Laing and David Cooper. We disabled the electroshock machines there and took a lot of psychedelics.

It was during this period that I was most active in a sort of latter-day underground railroad which arranged transportation to Canada and Sweden for American military deserters and draft resisters already charged.

I have to mention that life in the super-charged peace movement was a hard act to follow. But nonviolent activism requires constant reinvention. Specific noncoöperation has an expiry date and then one must move on to new issues, new tactics. Unlike many of my activist contemporaries who remained in the US, moving to Canada was a refreshing reset which enabled me to remain true to my conscience and ethical values but still remain on the cutting edge of critical thinking and analysis.

It would be remiss of me not to credit wide

I now fully embrace the concept of economic sabotage and destruction of the machinery of evil

JUST SAY NO

Sometimes I feel like the Forrest Gump of the modern pacifist movement. I met everybody, I demonstrated everywhere, I got arrested frequently

use of LSD among young people for encouraging draft resistance. It's pretty hard to be one with everything when harming anyone is just like killing yourself. I hope the spiritual self-exploration made possible by psychedelics comes back to us. We need it...

Over the intervening decades, I have honed and sharpened what nonviolent direct action means to me. My definition has broadened considerably. I now fully embrace the concept of economic sabotage and destruction of the machinery of evil. I no longer think an activist needs to do so openly and thus be sacrificed. Better to do so secretly and live to plant another monkeywrench where it will do the most good at stopping violence.

Draft "exile" may have altered my circumstances but not my life. In Canada, I never failed to inform the FBI of my changes of address. However, after I was indicted in 1970, they didn't notify me. I was aware of my illegal status when traveling to the US but I was not burdened with it.

In the autumn of 1976, I rented a retreat cottage in the bucolic farmland of Point Roberts, Washington. Point Roberts is American solely because of its location below the 49th parallel. It can only be reached via American waters or by road...through Canada.

The American war had been over for more than a year. However, one dark December evening, a knock on the door announced, US Marshals, local police and sheriff's deputies. When I told them I was Canadian and would simply get out of their car when we reached the border, they advised me to dress warmly.

Shackled and handcuffed, they rowed me in a tiny aluminum boat to a 70-foot Coast Guard cutter with a crew of 15 men. When these boys, all younger than I, asked what I had done, they were amazed; to a man, they thought the draft was over. It was thus I arrived at Whatcom County Jail. In order to confuse my supporters who were gathering around the jail, they moved me incommunicado to King County Jail in Seattle. I fasted until the new President was inaugurated.

I had just become the last American ar-

rested for the Vietnam draft, and the first pardoned.

Jimmy Carter was elected President in November of 1976. The day after he took office, January 21, 1977, Carter's first official act as President was Proclamation 4483 which pardoned unconditionally all those accused of draft law violations from 1964 to 1973. Including me - I walked! A huge celebration of supporters was held at the Capitol Hill Methodist Church.

Due to my central position in the American peace movement, I started these interviews in 1966 when I was 16 years old. I fully expected to go to prison for the draft and I wanted to be forearmed. I soon saw that these interviews would be of the same inspiration and encouragement to other draft resisters as they were to me.

Moreover, my friendship with these fearless activists convinced me that conscience led to commitment, commitment to defiance, defiance to refusal, and refusal to noncooperation. Radical pacifists seasoned me from a principled teenager into a lifelong radical.

I decided to make this body of work into a book to share. Pacifist friend, poet Barbara Deming, was published by Richard Grossman in New York. With her introduction, Dick agreed to publish this book. Dick gave me a \$3,000 advance and let us live in his Lower East Side apartment for a month. However, I was in process of moving to Canada, the manuscript was lost, and I ran away with Grossman's money. (Sorry, Dick!) My sister only recently rediscovered it in my boxes of family archives, after more than 40 years.

Sometimes I feel like the Forrest Gump of the modern pacifist movement. I met everybody, I demonstrated everywhere, I got arrested frequently. I have been privileged to have been made family to three generations of well-known refuseniks. Today I do my best to impart those teachings of conscience to my students. I wanted to know if these writings were purely of historical interest or if they had relevance to today's antiwar activists. In working again with these interviews, I find that

these refusers sowed the seeds of my lifetime philosophy of anarchism, socialism, and pacifism, justice equality, civil liberties. They are no less moving now to me as an old man as they were when I was a teenager. These peace activists still teach us all the true meaning of courage.

I agonized over the title for this book in 1966. I used Thoreau's quote and called the manuscript, "In Quiet Desperation...". I think now, however, that title was a product of its time, when young men felt a little desperate about going to prison – jail was a last choice. I don't believe that anymore. I think nonviolent civil disobedience in the 21st century should be our first choice...if we are committed to genuine and meaningful change. And CD needs to have a sense of humor! Better still, don't get caught and live to act another day. That is revolutionary nonviolence...

Voting with my feet by no means dampened my personal activism. I was arrested with 1,500 others at the Nevada Nuclear Test Site in 1983; Quakers were my "affinity group" (sheesh!); we locked arms and ran as fast and as far as we could get over the fence, making Wackenhut goons play whack-a-mole chasing us among the cacti with SUVs. When asked by state police, I gave my name as "Martin Luther King".

I hand-built a cabin in Clayoquot Sound off the west coast of Vancouver Island in 1975. First Nations people have lived here for 10,000 years. They arrived with the cedars as the last ice age receded. From 1984 to 1987, I defended the 1,500-year old Pacific temperate rainforest, first at Meares Island, my front-yard view.

My strategy was taken from native loggers. I supported driving big spikes into the most valuable trees to make them worthless to an industry producing toilet paper and copy paper. In all, 12½ square miles of proposed logging were spiked on Meares Island, more than 23,000 old-growth trees. I followed this up with contributions on tree-spiking to the Earth First! book, "Ecodefense: A Field Guide to Monkeywrenching," by EF! co-founder Dave Foreman.

Sulphur Passage on the Clayoquot mainland of Vancouver Island was also threatened by old-growth clearcut logging. My daughter and I pitched a tiny pup tent in the logging road to stop its progress. Who speaks for the trees, so far up the evolutionary ladder from ourselves? After being arrested by helicopter, I acted in my own defense in B.C. Supreme Court and served 37 days for civil contempt in provincial prisons.

The largest Antipodean corporado, controlling 20¢ of every New Zealand dollar, was behind the clearcutting on the west coast. I traveled to New Zealand with a group of Clayoquot Sound natives to make our voice heard at the 1990 Commonwealth Games in Auckland. We also managed to shut down the loggers' company tower and send its robber baron to flight. I was again arrested at Oakland, California for blocking munitions trains to the Concord Naval Weapons Station in 1987. A small group of us covered the tracks with tenting. Inside the tent, we'd brought heavy tools and were busy removing the rails.

Upon moving to Thailand, secret, extensive, irrational censorship was impacting my academic research and hobbling the ability of my students to produce internationally-competitive papers. I started Freedom Against Censorship Thailand (FACT) with a petition to the National Human Rights Commission. No one was publicly talking about Thai censorship where, to date, government has blocked more than a million webpages. FACT turned knowledgeable conversations about censorship from taboo to trendy. Censorship remains a hot-button issue here.

FACT posted leaked government blocklists as some of the first documents on WikiLeaks in 2006. Early in 2007, Julian Assange invited me to serve on WikiLeaks' international advisory board, a position I still hold.

I am now a founder of the Nonviolent Conflict Workshop in Bangkok. We hope to secure recognition for conscientious objection under Thailand's military draft with the long-range goal of ending conscription entirely. **CT**

After being arrested by helicopter, I acted in my own defense in B.C. Supreme Court and served 37 days for civil contempt in provincial prisons

The unofficial mayor of San Luis Obispo

Dell Franklin introduces his pal Harley, an 'anal-obsessed crackpot'

Harley wears a little blue Irish cap of the likes John Wayne wore in "The Quiet Man" to keep the sun off his bald head

It's late morning and I'm out at the airport with Harley Hunter awaiting three flights in the next half hour – from LA, San Francisco and Sacramento, a repository of trench-coated, chain-smoking lobbyists wishing to turn San Luis Obispo into a high-tech industrial hub that Harley claims will raise housing prices so high nobody but the rich will live here. Harley is first in line on a dead morning in town and we're both desperate for a fare, having already read two newspapers and worked a crossword, wishing we were anywhere but here, and especially a bar.

We lean against Harley's cab, which he keeps meticulously clean, as he does his person. Harley hands out business cards announcing himself as a "Cab Pilot." Harley is the only cabbie on our staff who personally tailors his uniforms. Harley wears a little blue Irish cap like the one John Wayne wore in "The Quiet Man" to keep the sun off his bald head, and his too-close-together eyes are set in a perpetual squint/frown. Harley runs his cab through the car wash at his own expense and claims it is as clean as his own personal vehicle, a Honda Civic, upon whose engine "one could eat."

My cab is never washed and I drive a dusty, cluttered, duck-taped jalopy. I usu-

ally need a haircut and present a threadbare uniform. And though Harley is rendered almost physically ill at the sight of slovenliness and clutter, we get along famously. Before becoming a San Luis Obispo cab pilot, Harley, a bachelor, taught high school government in the ghetto in Oakland, where he tried to inspire the poor and downtrodden, and was beaten up badly, and taught government in his hometown of Bakersfield, where he quarreled with officialdom on a nonstop basis until they "squeezed him out on the claim he was burnt out." Harley quibbles with our cab company management over matters large, small, and minute.

On days like this, the longer he goes without a ride, the more riled he becomes about his teaching days.

"I've got a college degree and what good does it do me?"

he asks, looking distressed. "I'm driving a damn cab in Podunk for chump change." He sips his nutrition drink from a cooler he keeps in his trunk while I sip my third coffee and munch on an apple fritter. "You can't just teach anymore. Bureaucrats run the show. The worst, most incompetent. teachers become principals, and superintendents, and they hook up with the most despicable swine anywhere, the goddam school board, a haven for corrupt, self-important, craven,



power-hungry bullies...the sons of bitches won't let you stand up at their trumped up so-called meetings, no, they over-rule you, they tell you about fucking time-limits, and here's what they do – they supply the kids from the richest districts computers, when they already got their own computers, while the ghetto kids don't even have decent fucking books...so help me God, I actually supplied them notebooks and pencils from my own salary...and I ended up getting beat up for it!"

Even though I've heard it for months, I like it that Harley regards me as the only person he can talk to on the cab staff. In Bakersfield, according to Harley, it's about teachers being the biggest ass-kissers and hypocrites of all. A teacher gets chummy with you at their little gossip social gatherings and, like spies, like double-agents, stab you in the back so that you have to face a mealy-mouthed principal playing both ends against each other, a climber beholden to the politicians and school board tyrants above him and catering to the parents of students who are chronic whiners and need to be in the army!

I watch my pal sip his drink. "Well," I tell him, finishing off my fritter and belching. "You should at least be thankful you're out of Bakersfield, Harley."

"Yeh, sure, right..." He tugs at his neatly clipped salt-and-pepper moustache. "I was raised in a shit-hole, I come from a shit-hole, I come here to so-called gaga land to take care of my mother, who owns the house my dead father bought to retire in, and I'm stuck with this prick she remarried, I'm supposed to call him a step-father, he's a goddam living breathing parasite!" He fires his empty bottle into the nearby trash can as a plane roars off. "The fat bastard won't lift a finger to do a thing, won't walk the dog or water the plants or mow the lawn, he sits on his ass all morning listening to Rush Limbaugh while my mother waits on him, and he watches Fox News all afternoon and reality television all night, and harasses me

about being a liberal." He shakes his head. "The sonofabitch wants everybody off welfare and social security, he wants 'em on the streets, broke, homeless, and he wants to bomb the Arabs into smithereens. He worked at Boeing and got a disability pension for a bad back I could live like a king on..."

Harley's been pacing, and stops, scowls at me. "Every Tuesday, when I go down to City Hall and get my three minutes on radio at the public forum at the board of supervisors, who are really a board of stooges and pawns of the Chamber of Commerce and the good old boys with money bags, the prick turns off Rush and listens to me, and when I get home he's critiquing my performance. I go after the politicians and bureaucrats and the corporate whores cocking up our small town paradise, and he tells my mother I'm a nut case because I'm thinking of running for mayor."

Harley tends to ramble and lose his main purpose and becomes too angry when he's on the air, but many people in town look forward to his little tirades. I am a fan. "Look, Harley," I tell him, as people from the parking lot behind us head toward the cyclone fence to wave at incoming passengers deplaning. "You are allowing yourself to become discombobulated over the stooges and your stepfather, and that's playing right into their hands. It's not good for your health, Harley."

He nods, glum, resigned. "I can't help it," he admits. "I've got a social conscience. I care. Why you think I got bottles of pills in my cab? I got high blood pressure, a damn ulcer, migraines, insomnia, anxiety attacks...I can't even get drunk any more, because the doc says I'm a walking time bomb, too much booze and I might explode."

The day bartender at the oldest bar downtown, where Harley drinks among long-time regulars and college students, always turns off the TV and jukebox to listen to Harley's three minutes of hell. Whenever I run into him the next day, he wants my appraisal.

I was raised in a shit-hole, I come from a shit-hole, I come here to so-called gaga land to take care of my mother, who owns the house my dead father bought to retire in, and I'm stuck with this prick she remarried"

ON THE ROAD

Harley, behind the wheel, looks as though he's going to his own execution. He swigs from a bottle of Pepto Bismol

I'm almost always complimentary, but after this last session I feel it's time to deliver him a dose of reality.

"Look, Harley, I heard you the other day, and you can't waste two full minutes talking about the clump of shit you stepped in at Mitchell Park. For two minutes you described the awfulness of the shit on your shoe, and the big ordeal of cleaning it off, and how it poisoned your day. I mean, how are you gonna get elected mayor when all you can talk about is the shit on your shoe?" He starts to protest, but I raise my hand like a stop sign. "People think you're an anal-obsessed crackpot talking about a clump of shit on your shoe...it's downright repulsive."

A plane lands with a roar. Harley stabs a finger in the air and is about to answer me, eyes flaring, when his cab phone crackles. He reaches into his cab and picks it up and looks instantly distraught. He turns and tells me he has to go downtown and pick up Alf, a decrepit, sour, malodorous old regular and railroad retiree whose been trying to drink himself to death in Bull's Tavern every day for years and refuses to die. Alf starts boozing at six in the morning and has to be helped in and out of the cab and walked to his door three blocks from the bar, a \$2.80 ride in which he always requests the 20 cents and proudly maintains he's never tipped a cabbie. Once, while he swayed while dipping into his shirt pocket for the three usual crumpled singles, a crisp twenty flew out in a brisk breeze and I put my foot on it without a hitch as I returned his dimes and stuffed the twenty into my shirt pocket before leading Alf to his door. You always have to spray your cab with Lysol after picking up Alf.

Harley, behind the wheel, looks as though he's going to his own execution. He swigs from a bottle of Pepto Bismol. Just as he prepares to take off, a trench-coated lobbyist from Sacramento toting only a computer jumps into the back seat of my cab. I've had him before. He'll lay a twenty on me for a

ride to the Chamber of Commerce and have me keep the change on an \$11 fare and request I pick him up an hour and a half later. I'm pretty sure he's down here pushing a pro-growth ballot on local politicians in cahoots with the money-bags. Harley looks suicidal as he drives off and I follow him down the road leading to the main artery. The trench-coat lights up, (Harley forbids smoking in his cab) and says, "What's the name of that cabbie who just drove off?"

"That's Harley."

"Right. He gave me his card. Calls himself a cab pilot. Guy's a real piece of work, huh?"

"Oh yeah, Harley's an entertainer, a real comedian."

"I like him, but Jesus, the guy can overwhelm you, to say the least. He's into his political agenda, all upset, says he wants to run for mayor. He can't be serious. I mean, he's telling me he hates this place and wants to move. I've never met anybody who doesn't love San Luis Obispo. I just read it was voted one of the top ten most desirable cities to live in America. No smog. No crowds or traffic. No crime. Beaches next door. A beautiful little paradise."

"Yeah, Harley went on vacation to Santa Fe, New Mexico. He wants to move there. Says the people are friendlier, and it's cleaner. That's the biggest bone of contention with Harley - cleanliness."

"This place is clean as it gets."

"It's not clean enough for Harley. He says there's too much dogshit in the parks. One of the reasons he's running for mayor is to prosecute all those responsible for not picking up their dog's shit in parks. In fact, if you get on your computer, you can listen to Harley address the board of supervisors on public radio. It's worth waiting for. He's a real card."

"I think I'll pass."

After dropping the lobbyist off, I checked in with the dispatcher, who said a lawyer was coming out of City Hall and to take him to the airport, where a man awaited me for

a ride to the Cliffs, a resort hotel in Shell Beach, a \$22 ride and probably a salesman. She told me to hurry, because Harley would be bogged down taking little old ladies back and forth from the market, which meant more \$4 fares and puny tips to fuel his rage and his sense that life hated him.

The salesman going to Shell Beach was in high spirits at attending a convention and tipped me well, and back at the airport a woman needed to go to Cal Poly. Another fare needed a ride from a country home to the airport. Later, after returning the lobbyist to the airport, I pulled in ahead of Harley for the second arrival of afternoon planes. Harley was so morose he refused to get out of his cab. Planes landed. A handsome, perky couple in their thirties, dressed in style, with Texas accents and designer luggage, approached me. They were going to a high-end resort/winery out in Paso Robles, a \$60 ride, at least. I gazed at Harley, who looked like he might cry as he sized them

up. I walked to his window. Harley was all about fair play and despised greed and would always buy you a drink in the bar.

“Those folks are going to Paso, a resort. You want ‘em?”

He busted out of his cab and opened the rear door for them and took their luggage, and he smiled for the first time all day as he asked them where they were from. Driving off, he was talking to them, animated, no doubt filling them in on the dos and don’ts in San Luis Obispo county.

(Eventually Harley ran for mayor as a write-in candidate and got twenty something votes, mostly from the bar where he drank. I’d have voted for him, but I live in Cayucos.)

CT

Dell Franklin is a long-time journalist and former publisher of the Rogue Voice newspaper in California. He writes a weekly baseball blog, The Ball Player’s Son, at <http://kelsoswing.blogspot.com>

A handsome, perky couple in their thirties, dressed in style, with Texas accents and designer luggage, approached me. I gazed at Harley, who looked like he might cry as he sized them up

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Ku Klux Klowns perform in Columbus

There was a time when the KKK was feared in the US Deep South. Now it's just a pathetic joke, barely able to muster 50 members for its biggest demonstration of the year

Photographs: **Wespennest**
Words: **Tony Sutton**

Once the white supremacists of the Ku Klux Klan were the most feared racist thugs in the USA as they rampaged through the southern states, lynching black people and burning down their homes. At the height of its power in the 1920s the Klan claimed up to four million members, but now numbers are in steep decline, with fewer than 4,000 members, splintered into several dozen groups, which are seen more as a joke than a serious threat to public safety.

So it was probably no surprise that onlookers, counter-protesters and cops massively outnumbered Klansmen when they were given permission to demonstrate in protest against the South Carolina governor's decision to remove the Confederate flag from statehouse grounds last month following the murder of nine black worshippers at





Now where did that Nazi flag come from? Klan members parade at the South Carolina statehouse

IN THE FRAME



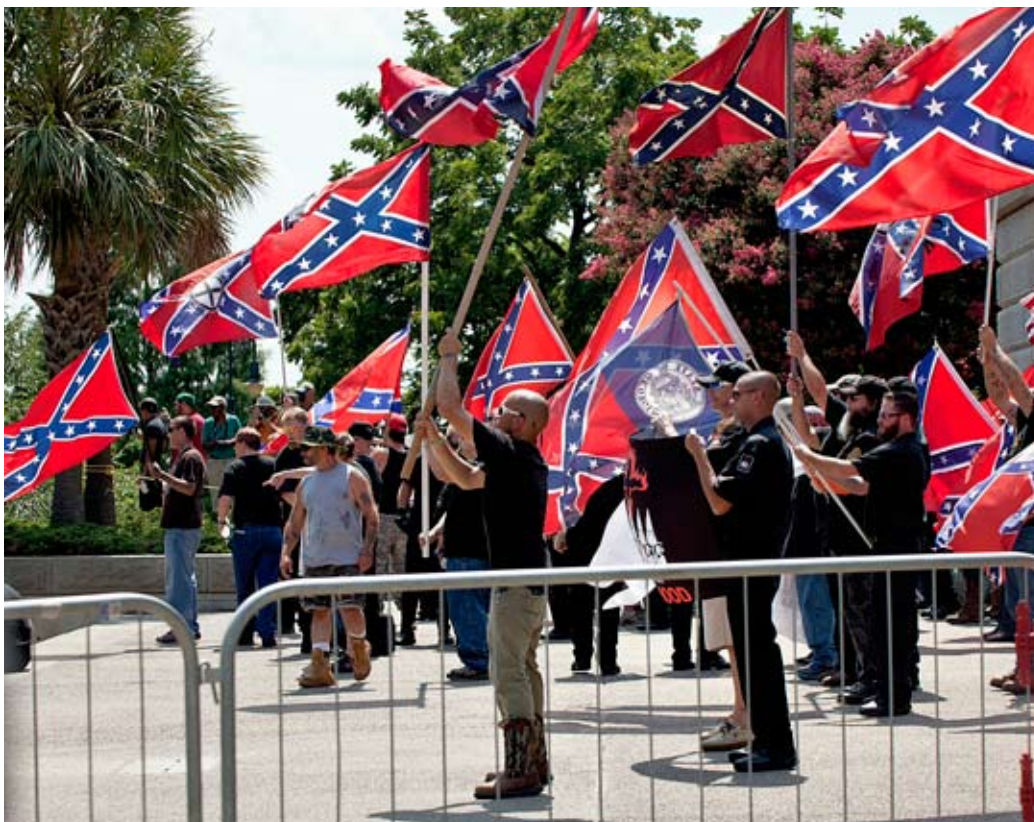
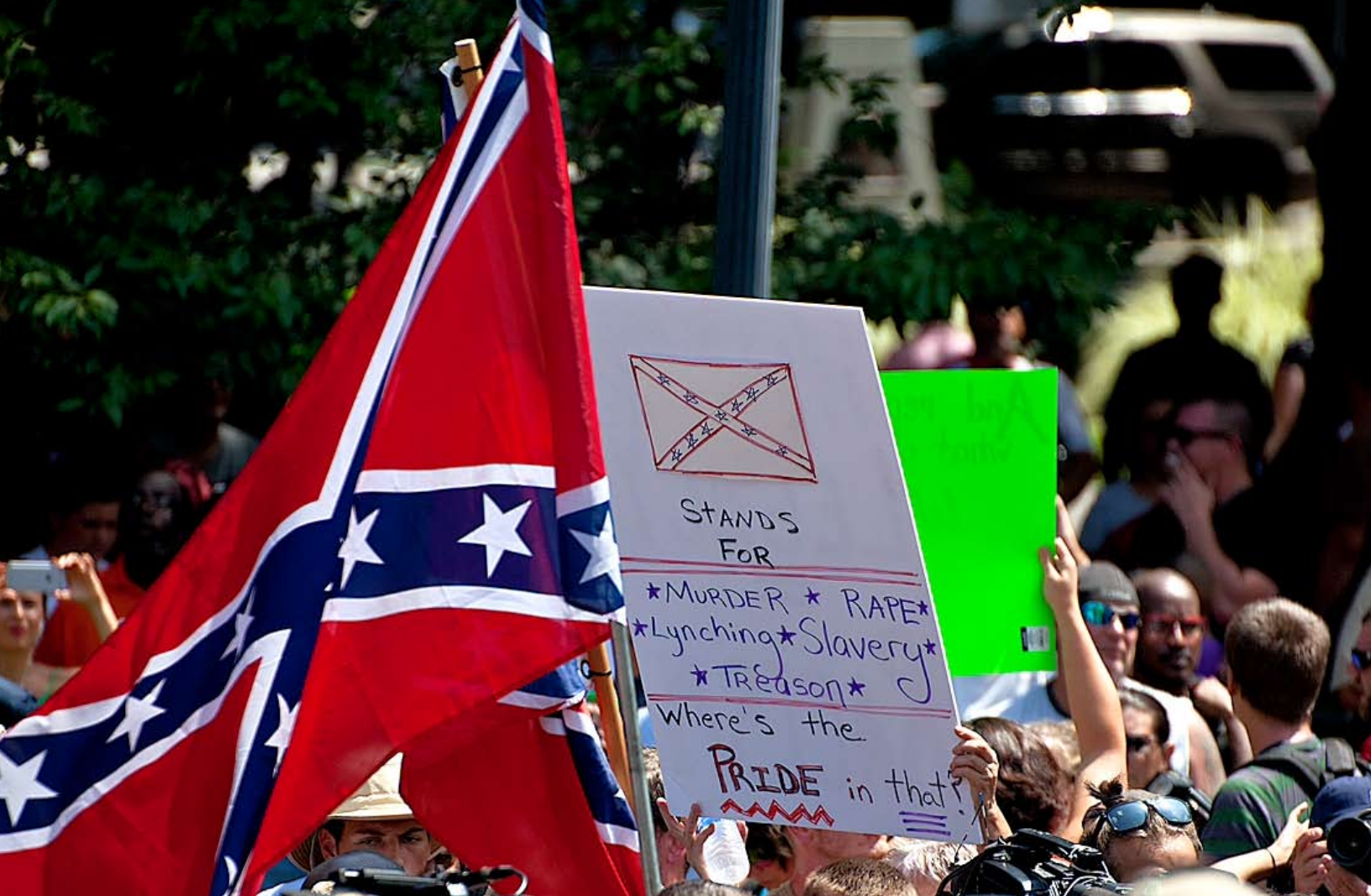
a Charleston, SC, church by right wing gunman Dylann Storm Roof a month earlier.

The Great Titan of the Loyal White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan's Pelham, North Carolina, chapter, which organised the event, said the action was being held to protest "the Confederate flag being took [sic] down for all the wrong reasons. It's part of white people's culture."

Responding, Dr Lonnie Randolph, president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in South Carolina, told reporters that his organization had a policy of not counter-protesting rallies, because the KKK has the "right to protest and the right to be wrong."

However, a counter-demonstration was arranged for the same time and place by the New Black Panther movement, so cops weren't sure what to expect when they prepared to stand between the two opposing factions outside the South





Previous Page:
Top – Nazi salute
on the steps of
the South Carolina
statehouse.

Bottom: Inspection
of the guard.

This Page:
Above: Murder,
rape, lynching,
slavery. Hand-
written sign
says it all.

Left: Fenced off
from onlookers,
the pathetic
Klan army
prepares
to march.

IN THE FRAME



Carolina statehouse in Columbia.

So, how did it end? Not so well for Klanners, who could only muster around 50 supporters. Their leaders made up for the low turnout, however, by wearing natty black uniforms and waving huge Confederate banners in the face of jeering counter-demonstrators and a 2,000-strong crowd of bemused onlookers enjoying the Saturday afternoon entertainment.

The score? Five people were arrested, one Klan flag was burned, and the event fizzled out when it started to rain (Didn't want the flags or uniforms to get wet, eh?).

And not a white sheet in sight.

CT

Wespennest is a freelance photojournalist from Washington, DC. Much of his work involves documenting hate groups. He believes that the light photography casts on hate groups and shadowy white supremacist organizations can be the best disinfectant.





Previous Page:
Top: Boys in the Hood!!

Bottom: Black power!

This Page:
Above: Counter-demonstrators give their opinions of the Klan.

Left: Why the Confederate flag has to go.

Don't give the rich their own traffic lanes

Toronto's Pan American Games are over, so special high-speed traffic lanes are being converted to toll lanes. That's a bad idea, says **Heather Mallick**

The great thing about money is not grandeur but the way it enables the shrugging off of minor annoyances. But it's no way to run a city

So you're sailing into downtown Toronto in a high-occupancy vehicle lane (HOV) with a pile of family and friends in your car and life is good. The Pan Am Games have provided an unexpected bonus for the married and popular.

Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne says that after the games, she wants to charge for these lanes on various main roads. Her plan hasn't been announced. But they could become high-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes, meaning that you'll drive free if you have one or two passengers, but if you're alone, uncongenial, and pay a toll, you can take the fast high-occupancy-rich toll (HORT) lane.

She says she had always planned this, which is true, but it was a harsh way to introduce the concept. Drivers thought HOVs were the thin end of the wedge. And so it proved.

HOVs were an environmentally friendly way to get people around the city, three people in one car rather than three people in three cars. But the intent of the Pan Am HOVs was simply to get athletes and posh people in and out of the Games without embarrassing traffic jams.

In the future, on some roads, HORT lanes would be open to people who can afford to spend money on minor comforts. What was intended as an option for environmentally aware carpoolers and buses will be candy

for the wealthy. It seems unfair.

I do understand the concept of paying for an open lane. The great thing about money is not grandeur but the way it enables the shrugging off of minor annoyances. You can walk out of a bad movie without regretting having bought the ticket. Someone smashes your basement window. "Fine, be that way," you say, and call a glazier. It is pleasant.

But it's no way to run a city. Wynne says this will help pay for a decade-long \$130-billion plan to improve public transit and traffic in southern Ontario. But Wynne should raise money for that by raising income taxes, which don't penalize the poor.

If only she had the courage. The Conservatives, both national and provincial, and unpleasant American influence have led many of us to see "tax and spend" as a slur. It is not. When taxes go up for most of us, we all see an improvement in living standards. Every lane on the road would be travelled at the same speed, a sensible one.

Taxation helps us all. We are undertaxed, and yet we wonder why our city is dirty, our streets are rubble and children have mould in their trailer-park classrooms. If Wynne had the courage to raise taxes, she wouldn't have to humiliate us with a fast lane for the wealthy and a slow lane for the humble who have to think very hard about expenses that the rich would dismiss and the middle class regard as minor.

It's expensive to set up a toll lane system, as Californians (a people who have lacerated themselves by voting against higher taxes) have learned. You might need wider roads, tollbooths, training, transponders in every car, and police paid to study each vehicle the way they are now paid, off-hours, to study holes in the road at construction sites.

The roads are owned by the public and used by the public. The taxes of low- and middle-income people helped build every lane. To make major roads fee-for-service is unfair and counterproductive, like letting the rich jump the queue for surgery.

What you will see is unfairness in action: private affluence in the fast empty left lane and public squalor in the slow remainder lanes, where people take longer to get to low-paid jobs, where children don't get to school on time, where parents pay big penalties when they are late for daycare pickup.

Here's an analogy: when you find an ant-hill in your driveway, you can stomp it with your boot. Many ants die, the hill must be rebuilt and you have a few ant-free days. But it doesn't solve the problem. That requires thought and planning (and judiciously poured streams of boiling water).

The best way to keep our air clean is to take public transit. Our subways, street-cars and buses are few and often filthy. A tax hike would give us a transit festival all across this city and region. It's not Wynne's fault that we are reluctant to pay for it but I do think she should try to persuade us. **CT**

Heather Mallick writes for the Toronto Star - <http://thestar.com>. She has published two books, a diary, "Pearls in Vinegar," for Penguin and a collection of essays, "Cake or Death," for Knopf. She has won two Canadian National Newspaper Awards in the features and critical writing categories

To make major roads fee-for-service is unfair and counter-productive, like letting the rich jump the queue for surgery

Life and Death on the Mavi Marmara

A photo essay by Kevin Neish



Download pdf at <http://coldtype.net/Assets.11/pdfs/0311.Mavi.hr.pdf>

Deported for trying to go home

Palestinian American **George Khoury** describes the treatment he received at the hands of Israeli security – for the ‘crime’ of trying to visit his homeland

I was ushered by a young female soldier to the “green room” for questioning

I was born in West Jerusalem, the so-called the Jewish half of Jerusalem, in 1945. Under a shower of bullets that were flying over our heads, my father grabbed me and the rest of the family and fled to his native city of Nablus at the eve of the creation of the state of Israel in 1948. We remained in Rafidia-Nablus until 1952 and then moved to Ramallah where my father got a job in the post office.

I went to the parochial school and then entered the Latin Seminary of Beit Jala in 1961 to study for the priesthood. In 1968, I left the seminary where I studied French and Latin in addition to philosophy and theology. I came to the US in September 1969 and entered Seton Hall University in South Orange, New Jersey, where I graduated with a B.A. in French and Spanish. In 1975, I earned a master’s degree from the University of Montclair in New Jersey.

I moved to California in 1975 where I taught foreign language at the high school level. I entered the Ph.D. program in theology in 1983 at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California, and I obtained my doctorate degree in 1990. I have been teaching language at San Mateo College, Skyline College and Westmoor High School. I joined the deaconate program in 2012 because I intend to serve various church communities as a deacon in the San Francisco Archdiocese.

After 21 years of not visiting or seeing Je-

rusalem and my homeland Palestine, I decided to go back, this time as an American citizen with an American passport, which I was granted in 1975. The trip was intended to be a religious pilgrimage with Father Bernard Poggi, as well as a long overdue visit to my homeland to reunite with friends and family I hadn’t seen in decades.

The ‘Green Room’

Once we arrived to Ben Gurion airport in Tel Aviv, they allowed Father Bernard to enter. When it came to me, I was ushered by a young female soldier to the “Green Room” for questioning. An airport security agent, who I believe was a Shin Bet agent (Israel’s equivalent of the FBI), began the dialogue.

The conversation that ensued went like this:

Agent: Oh, so you came through Ben Gurion airport?

Me: Yes. What’s wrong with that?

Agent: You can’t do that.

Me: Why? I have an American passport. I came with father Bernard, to spend a few weeks in Jerusalem and that’s it. We are coming here on a religious pilgrimage and to visit some friends and family.

Agent: No, no, you cannot go to Israel. You should have gone through the Allenby Bridge. [The Allenby Bridge is the border crossing between Jordan and Israel. Palestinians can only enter the West Bank through

this bridge because they are not allowed in through Israel proper.]

Me: Why should I do that? I'm not coming through as a Palestinian. I'm coming as an American citizen.

Agent: No. You are a Palestinian. Why are you denying that you're a Palestinian?

Me: I'm not denying that I'm Palestinian. I am Palestinian from head to toe. My father is Palestinian. My mother is Palestinian. My brothers are Palestinian. My sister is Palestinian. My grandfather is an Orthodox priest, and I can trace my Palestinian roots for the last 500 years. What do you mean I am denying? I am denying nothing.

Agent: No, no, you belong with the Palestinian people. This is our Israel. This is for the Jews. No Palestinian should come to Israel. You should have gone through the Allenby Bridge.

Me: Why do you say that? Did I ever have a Palestinian passport? Did I ever live under the Palestinian Authority? When the PA was constituted, I was never in Palestine, and I was never issued a Palestinian passport.

Agent: But you have an Israeli ID. [He was referring to the Israeli ID issued to me after Israel began its occupation of the West Bank in 1967. I had an Israeli ID until I left for the US in 1969.]

Me: An Israeli ID is not a Palestinian passport. The Israeli ID was issued to me when I was in Beit Jala studying for the priesthood, but you cannot equate that to a Palestinian passport. Juridically speaking, I was never a citizen of a country called Palestine. I am coming with an American passport, and you should honor it.

Agent: How do you want me to honor your American passport? Do you want me to kiss it, to hug it, or to worship it? Moreover, you are rude and ill-mannered. How did you get to be so rude? You are a Palestinian, and you are rude and ill-mannered.

Me: I am neither rude nor ill-mannered. I'm just stating the facts. I'm just telling you I'm an American who has been an American citizen for the past 40 years, and I've lived

in America for 46 years. So you disregard all these legal facts, and you only focus on my Palestinian heritage?

Agent: You will be deported to Jordan and must go to the Allenby Bridge to continue your visit to the West Bank.

Deportation papers

I returned to Father Bernard, who was waiting for me. I told him what had happened with the Shin Bet agent, and we waited. The man returned with the deportation papers and led me to understand in the presence of Father Bernard that I would be deported to Jordan. I waited until two other security officers came and told me, "You will not be deported to Jordan. You must go back to where you came from [the Rome Fiumicino Airport, Italy]."

"But I was just told that I would be deported to Jordan," I said. "Who said that?" they asked.

"I don't know his name," I answered. "Did you think he told me his name? He's the security man in the office who just had me sign deportation papers."

"No, you have to go back to Italy first," they said. "If you then choose to come back to Jordan after landing in Italy, then that is your choice." I was shocked, but had no choice but to go along with it. In front of the Israeli officials, Father Bernard gave me his Jordanian phone number, and we agreed we would meet in Jordan the following day.

Bernard and I parted ways, and I went back with the Israeli security officers. They kept me (and the others) in the airport until 1:30 a.m. on July 21. Eventually, they brought us a sandwich.

Some of the others who were with me during the ordeal were a Palestinian woman and her daughter (who were Palestinian born, but US citizens). They had originally traveled with her two other sons, but because the two boys were American born, they were able to enter Israel. The Israeli officials told the two of them that they would be deported back to the US, but they would be deported sepa-

The man returned with the deportation papers and led me to understand in the presence of Father Bernard that I would be deported to Jordan

They locked us up, forbade me from keeping my iPhone, refused to allow me to bring a book with me to that filthy room, and threw me there with a several poor, hungry and disoriented men from different national and ethnic backgrounds

rately. They both broke down in tears and pleaded with them to at least allow them to be deported together, but to no avail.

There was also a young British woman who told me she was working with a human rights group in Israel, as well as a Korean and a young Russian woman, neither of whom spoke much English.

They drove us about half an hour away from the airport. During the drive, the young Korean, who barely spoke any English and was hungry and penniless, asked the two guards in an extremely feeble voice and in bad English, “Are we going to die tonight?”

We were being transported in a van with bars – made for prisoners. They held us like criminals in a detention facility they called emigration, but should have been called prison – until we were deported.

They locked us up, forbade me from keeping my iPhone, refused to allow me to bring a book with me to that filthy room, and threw me there with a several poor, hungry and disoriented men from different national and ethnic backgrounds. The time was about 2 a.m.

We spent all of Tuesday in the detention center not knowing when we would be leaving. There was an Arab guard near the cell. I dared to ask him, “You know all of our names and everything about us. What is your name?” He said, “My name is George.” From his accent, he sounded like he was from Nazareth. I asked him, “Why are you treating us like prisoners?” He said, “That’s just how it is.”

He eventually let me use the phone to call my wife to tell her where I was. If I had the right to a phone call at the airport, I was never told about it. The other guards remained totally anonymous, insulted us by using disrespectful and abusive language, and forbade us from speaking to one another from each other’s rooms, which were separated by a long corridor. I didn’t sleep a wink because they kept the bright fluorescent lights on the entire time.

At 4 a.m. that morning, the guard came

to get me to take me to my flight. He heard me speaking in Arabic to the Palestinian woman and her daughter, who were being held in the room opposite from where I was detained. When he came back that morning, Samar’s mother was saying that maybe they were just roughing us up a bit, but that they really would eventually deport us to Jordan. He was very angry and yelled, “I told you not to talk to the others! I’m trying to respect you! Try to respect yourself. Get away from the door!”

Wrong plane

Around 8 a.m., a guard entered the room and frantically took me, saying that my plane was about to depart. Like a madman, he drove me to the airport and took me straight to the runway stairs rather than being taken through the airport. Just as I was getting on the plane, I asked, “Where exactly are you deporting me?” He said, “Bogotá.” I said, “Bogota!? Why?” He said, “Aren’t you Carlos?” I said, “No, I’m George Khoury. Let me see the passport in your hands.” It belonged to a Colombian man named Carlos.

He realized his mistake and frantically raced me back to the detention center. The rough rides exacerbated my sciatic nerve badly, and I’m still in great pain. We went back to the detention center, and I was returned to my cell. He called out for Carlos. Carlos was sleeping. “I’m Carlos!” he said as he woke up and was taken away.

Without going into every detail, they returned to pick me up at 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday. They drove me to the runway again, and we waited for a long time, seemingly until the entire plane was boarded and ready. They walked me all the way up to the mobile stairs.

Up to this point, I had been told I would be flying to Italy so that I could return to Jordan. At the moment just before I entered the plane, I could see in his hand the tickets that would fly me all the way via Italy all the way back to the US – to New York and then San Francisco. The Italian agent told me that my

passport would be returned to me once he made sure that I was on the plane heading to the US

And that's exactly what happened. When I arrived in Italy, but before I exited the plane, I asked the flight attendant for my passport. She told me that it would be taken care of by a man waiting outside for me.

An Italian security officer was waiting for me at the top of the stairs. He took me in a jeep to an unknown location away from the airport – some kind of a police station. He put me in a room with about five or six people where our movement was restricted. At 5 p.m., I got on a flight heading to the States where I was handed my passport.

I arrived in New York around 8 p.m. that day and remained in the airport until the next morning when I boarded a 6 a.m. flight. The entire time I held my bag in my lap, trying to close my eyes to rest for brief moments while sitting on a hard bench and counting the minutes and the hours until the 6 a.m. departure. All along, I held onto my bag for dear life since it contained my insulin, my wallet and my iPhone. I am a diabetic and parting with my medicine would be fatal.

I arrived home exhausted on Thursday at 11:37 a.m. I called my travel agent to find out if I could be reimbursed for my stolen bag

and the portion of the KLM return ticket I hadn't used. He discovered that those funds had already been used to pay for my deportation back to the US

I'm back in San Francisco now. The Israeli security services took something that was supposed to be a vacation from my long work hours and a reconnection with my homeland and old friends and turned it into a hellish nightmare. I was disrespected, demeaned and treated like I committed a crime.

I tell you my story in order to encourage people to visit Palestine and to challenge the thuggery of this racist entity – and to pose this challenge here in the US as well as in Israel. My own tax dollars finance the oppression of the Palestinian people; the US send more than \$3 billion of economic and military aid per year to Israel. Without the blind and unconditional financial and political support of the US for the state of Israel, the occupation and all its tragedies against the Palestinians would not continue.

.....
Dr. George Khoury is a professor of Arabic, French and Spanish at Skyline College and the College of San Mateo. He is in the fourth year of the Deaconate training program with the Archdiocese of San Francisco

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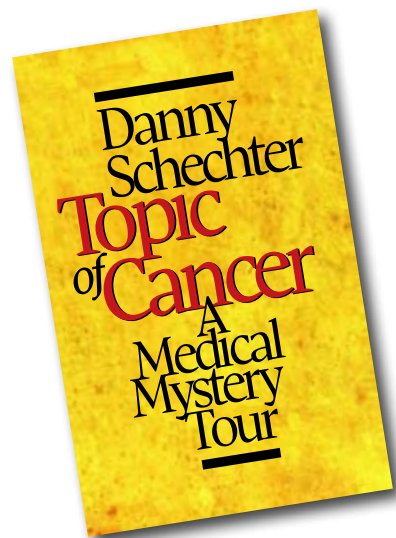
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Why I support sanctions against Israel

There's no other way to end Israeli oppression, writes **Chris Hedges**

The Palestinians are poor. They are powerless. They have no voice or influence in the halls of power. They are demonized. They do not have well-heeled lobbyists doling out campaign contributions and pushing through pro-Palestinian legislation. No presidential candidate is appealing to donors – as Hillary Clinton did when she sent a letter to media mogul Haim Saban denouncing critics of Israel – by promising to advance the interests of the Palestinian people. Palestinians, like poor people of color in the United States, are expendable.

Justice for Palestine will never come from the traditional governmental institutions or political parties that administer power. These institutions have surrendered to moneyed interests. Justice will come only from us. And the sole mechanism left to ensure justice for Palestine is the boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) movement against Israel. Sanctions brought down the apartheid regime of South Africa. And they are what will bring down the apartheid regime of Israel. BDS is non-violent. It appeals to conscience. And it works.

All Israeli products including Jaffa citrus fruits, Ahava cosmetics, SodaStream drink machines, Eden Springs bottled water and Israeli wine must be boycotted. We must refuse to do business with Israeli service companies. And we must boycott corpora-

tions that do business with Israel, including Caterpillar, HP and Hyundai. We must put pressure on institutions, from churches to universities, to divest from Israeli companies and corporations that have contracts with Israel. The struggle against apartheid in South Africa was long and hard. This struggle will be, too.

Gaza still in ruins

Gaza, a year after Israel carried out a devastating bombing campaign that lasted almost two months, is in ruins. Most of the water is unsafe to drink. There are power outages for up to 12 hours a day. Forty percent of the 1.8 million inhabitants are unemployed, including 67 percent of the youths – the highest youth unemployment rate in the world. Of the 17,000 homes destroyed by Israel in the siege, not one has been rebuilt. Sixty thousand people remain homeless. Only a quarter of the promised \$3.5 billion in aid from international donors has been delivered – much of it diverted to the Palestinian Authority, the Israeli puppet regime that governs the West Bank. And no one in Washington – Republican or Democrat – will defy the Israel lobby. No one will call for justice or stay the Israeli killing machine. US senators, including Bernie Sanders, at the height of the Israeli bombardment last summer voted unanimously to defend the Israeli slaughter of a people with

Justice for Palestine will never come from the traditional governmental institutions or political parties that administer power. These institutions have surrendered to moneyed interests. Justice will come only from us

During its 51-day siege of Gaza last summer Israel dropped \$370 million in ordinance on concrete hovels and refugee camps that hold the most densely packed population on the planet

no army, navy, air force, mechanized units, artillery or command and control. It was a vote worthy of the old Soviet Union. Every senator held out his or her tin cup to the Israel lobby and chose naked self-interest over justice.

Israel, like the United States, is poisoned by the psychosis of permanent war. It too is governed by a corrupt oligarchic elite for whom war has become a lucrative business. It too has deluded itself into carrying out war crimes and then playing the role of the victim. Israeli systems of education and the press – again mirrored in the United States – have indoctrinated Israelis into believing that they have a right to kill anyone whom the state condemns as a terrorist. And Israel's most courageous human rights campaigners, intellectuals and journalists are slandered and censored in their own country, just as American critics such as Norman Finkelstein, Max Blumenthal and Noam Chomsky are in the United States.

Those who become addicted to the wielding of the instruments of war, blinded by hubris and a lust for power, eventually become war's victims. This is as true for Israel as for the United States.

Living hell

Israel's goal is to make life a living hell for all Palestinians, ethnically cleansing as many as it can and subduing those who remain. The peace process is a sham. It has led to Israel's seizure of more than half the land on the West Bank, including the aquifers, and the herding of Palestinians into squalid, ringed ghettos or Bantustans while turning Palestinian land and homes over to Jewish settlers. Israel is expanding settlements, especially in East Jerusalem. Racial laws, once championed by the right-wing demagogue Meir Kahane, openly discriminate against Israeli Arabs and Palestinians. Ilan Pappé calls the decades-long assault against the Palestinian people "incremental genocide."

In Gaza, Israel practices an even more extreme form of cruelty. It employs a math-

ematical formula to limit outside food deliveries to Gaza to keep the caloric levels of the 1.8 million Palestinians just above starvation. This has left 80 percent of the Palestinians in Gaza dependent on Islamic charities and outside aid to survive. And the periodic military assaults on Gaza, euphemistically called "mowing the lawn," are carried out every few years to ensure that the Palestinians remain broken, terrified and destitute. There have been three Israeli attacks on Gaza since 2008. Each is more violent and indiscriminate than the last. Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman has said that a fourth attack on Gaza is "inevitable."

During its 51-day siege of Gaza last summer Israel dropped \$370 million in ordinance on concrete hovels and refugee camps that hold the most densely packed population on the planet. Two thousand one hundred four Palestinians were killed. Sixty-nine percent – 1,462 – were civilians. Four hundred ninety-five were children. Ten thousand were injured. (During the attack six Israeli civilians and 66 soldiers were killed.) Four hundred Palestinian businesses were wiped out. Seventy mosques were destroyed and 130 were damaged. Twenty-four medical facilities were bombed, and 16 ambulances were struck, as was Gaza's only electrical power plant. Israel tallied it up: 390,000 tank shells, 34,000 artillery shells, 4.8 million bullets. Most of the civilians who died were killed in their homes, many of the victims torn to shreds by flechette darts sprayed from tanks. Children were burned with white phosphorous or buried with their families under rubble caused by 2,000-pound iron fragmentation bombs. Others died from dense inert metal explosive, or DIME, bombs – experimental weapons that send out extremely small, carcinogenic particles that cut through both soft tissue and bone. The Israel Defense Forces, as Amira Hass has reported, consider any Palestinian over the age of 12 to be a legitimate military target. Max Blumenthal's new book, "The 51 Day War," is a chilling chronicle of savage

atrocities carried out by Israel in Gaza last summer. As horrible as the apartheid state in South Africa was, that nation never used its air force and heavy artillery to bomb and shell black townships.

A report by Action on Armed Violence (AOAV) found Israel killed and injured more civilians with explosive weapons in 2014 than any other country in the world. Hamas' indiscriminate firing of wildly inaccurate missiles – Finkelstein correctly called them “enhanced fireworks” – into Israel was, as a U.N. report recently charged, a war crime, although the report failed to note that under international law Hamas had a right to use force to defend itself from attack.

Disparity of firepower

The disparity of firepower in the 2014 conflict was vast: Israel dropped 20,000 tons of explosives on Gaza while Hamas used 20 to 40 tons of explosives to retaliate. Israel's wholesale slaughter of civilians is on a scale equaled only by Islamic State and Boko Haram. Yet Israel, in our world of double standards, is exempted from condemnation in Washington and provided with weapons and billions in US foreign aid to perpetuate the killing. This is not surprising. The United States uses indiscriminate deadly force in Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia that outdoes even Israel, leaving behind civilian victims, refugees and destroyed cities and villages in huge numbers.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who during his last election campaign

received 90 percent of his money from US oligarchs such as Sheldon Adelson, has internally mounted a campaign of state repression against human rights advocates, journalists and dissidents. He has stoked overt racism toward Palestinians and Arabs and the African migrant workers who live in the slums of Tel Aviv. “Death to Arabs” is a popular chant at Israeli soccer matches. Thugs from right-wing youth groups such as Im Tirtzu routinely beat up dissidents, Palestinians, Israeli Arabs and African immigrants in the streets of Tel Aviv. It is a species of Jewish fascism.

Israel is not an anomaly. It is a window into the dystopian, militarized world that is being prepared for all of us, a world with vast disparities of income and draconian systems of internal security. There will be no freedom for Palestine, or for those locked in our own internal colonies and terrorized by indiscriminate police violence, until we destroy corporate capitalism and the neoliberal ideology that sustains it. There will be no justice for Michael Brown until there is justice for Mohammed Abu Khdeir. The fight for the Palestinians is our fight. If the Palestinians are not liberated none of us will be liberated. We cannot pick and choose which of the oppressed are convenient or inconvenient to defend. We will stand with all of the oppressed or none of the oppressed. And when we stand with the oppressed we will be treated like the oppressed. **CT**

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Chris Hedges, a Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter, writes a regular Monday column for Truthdig – <http://truthdig.com>

Israel's wholesale slaughter of civilians is on a scale equaled only by Islamic State and Boko Haram. Yet Israel, in our world of double standards, is exempted from condemnation in Washington and provided with weapons and billions in US foreign aid to perpetuate the killing

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Endless misery for Gaza is no policy at all

As Israel begins to lose the propaganda war, it searches for new ways to increase its domination of Palestinians, writes **Jonathan Cook**

The difficulties for Israel of controlling the narrative about Gaza were underscored when judges at the Hague ruled that the court's chief prosecutor had erred in refusing to investigate Israel for war crimes over the killing of 10 activists aboard an earlier flotilla, in 2010

For those trying to read developments between Israel and Gaza over the past weeks, the picture has been unusually puzzling.

Two months ago European diplomats and Palestinian officials in the West Bank suggested that Israel and Hamas were taking “baby steps”, as one Palestinian analyst termed it, towards a truce.

Then earlier last month, as an attack blamed on the extremists of Islamic State (ISIS) killed dozens in Sinai, an Israeli general accused Hamas of supplying the weapons used against the Egyptian military.

A short time later, a group of Israeli army commanders urged the easing of the near-decade blockade of Gaza as a way to end Hamas' isolation.

So what's going on? Does Israel want Hamas weakened or strengthened?

The uncertainty reflects Israel's increasingly convoluted efforts to “manage” Gaza faced with the fallout from its series of attacks on the enclave beginning in late 2008 with Operation Cast Lead and culminating in last year's Protective Edge.

International activists aboard a humanitarian flotilla failed again last month to reach Gaza and break Israel's physical siege. But more difficult for Israel is maintaining the blockade on information out of Gaza.

The problem was illustrated by a new app from Amnesty International that allows users

to map 2,500 Israeli air strikes on the enclave last summer and interpret the resulting deaths and destruction from pictures, videos and testimonies.

The software, says Amnesty, reveals specific patterns of behaviour, including attacks on rescue vehicles and medical workers and facilities.

It allows any of us to turn amateur war crimes sleuth for the International Criminal Court in the Hague, and moves nearer the day when Israeli soldiers' impunity will end.

The difficulties for Israel of controlling the narrative about Gaza were underscored when judges at the Hague ruled that the court's chief prosecutor had erred in refusing to investigate Israel for war crimes over the killing of 10 activists aboard an earlier flotilla, in 2010.

The judges determined that the prosecutor, in dismissing the case as lacking the necessary gravity for the Hague court to intervene, had ignored the wider, political context.

Beyond the harm done to the passengers, Israel's attack on the flotilla delivered a blunt message to the people of Gaza and the international community: that Israel could deny humanitarian aid to the enclave by enforcing the blockade. The policy needs to be tested against the principles of international law, suggested the judges.

Not only does their ruling reopen to scrutiny the episode of the flotilla, but it puts considerable pressure on ICC prosecutors to

ensure they investigate Protective Edge thoroughly too.

Meanwhile, frustration at the failure by international institutions so far to hold Israel to account is driving other ways to punish Israel, notably the grassroots boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) movement.

Israel is slowly losing this battle, too. The US state department declared late last month that it would ignore the provision in a new trade law passed by Congress that requires the US to protect Jewish settlements from boycotts. In effect, a limited boycott has won the White House's tacit approval for the first time.

The shockwaves from Israel's rampages in Gaza are having political repercussions in the tiny enclave too. Polls indicate that among a small but growing minority of Palestinians in Gaza support is shifting towards ISIS.

They blame Hamas for failing to capitalise on its relative military success last summer. Gaza is still ravaged a year on, and continuing Israeli restrictions mean the huge reconstruction project has barely begun. The people of Gaza expect their rulers to end the blockade.

Israel's recent confusing behaviour in part reflects a belated realisation that it needs to put out these various fires.

That explains revelations in the Israeli media that Israel is quietly cooperating with the Hague court's investigators, breaking with its past refusal to deal with international inquiries. It hopes to forestall an ICC investigation by demonstrating that it is taking action itself.

War crimes

Israel also announced that it would investigate soldiers' testimonies of war crimes collected by Breaking the Silence, a whistleblowing group that the Israeli government called traitors as recently as last month.

In addition, Neria Yeshurun has become the first senior commander to be placed under investigation, after a recording emerged in which he stated he had ordered the shelling of a Palestinian medical centre to "avenge" the killing of one of his officers.

Asa Kasher, in charge of the army's code

of ethics, recently argued that notorious incidents such as the massive destruction of Rafah after a soldier went missing – the so-called Hannibal procedure that probably claimed more than 150 Palestinian lives – reflected operational misunderstandings rather than policy. Errors, he implied, were not war crimes.

A group of Israeli military commanders have also argued that it is time to offer Gaza some relief, by easing – if only marginally – the blockade.

None of this is being done from conscience or out of recognition of Palestinian rights.

The moves may be conducted in bad faith but they nonetheless indicate a growing realisation by some in Israel that the international community and ordinary Palestinians in Gaza need to be placated.

At the same time, according to local analysts, Israel is pursuing a dual policy towards Hamas. On the one hand, Israel hopes diplomatic gains will bolster Hamas' political wing against more threatening newcomers like ISIS. On the other, it wishes to weaken Hamas' military wing to avoid it developing the ability to threaten Israel's control over the enclave.

As ever, Israel is keen to sow divisions where possible. The Israeli government's repeated likening of Hamas and ISIS, and the recent suggestions of military ties between the two in Sinai, are intended to remind the international community of the threat Hamas' military wing supposedly poses to regional order. Further, it is better for Israel that Hamas commanders are forced to contend with Egypt's as well as Israel's military might, stretching it on two fronts.

Israel believes it can tame Hamas' political leadership, making them as cautious and subdued as Mahmoud Abbas' Palestinian Authority in the West Bank. But it also wants to maintain the pressure on Hamas' military wing by emphasising that it is little different from the beheaders of Islamic State.

Israel's compulsive need to dominate Palestinians trumps all – even as it finally dawns on a few generals that Gaza's endless immiseration is no policy at all. **CT**

The Israeli government's repeated likening of Hamas and ISIS, and the recent suggestions of military ties between the two in Sinai, are intended to remind the international community of the threat Hamas' military wing supposedly poses to regional order

Jonathan Cook won the *Martha Gellhorn Special Prize for Journalism*. His latest books are *"Israel and the Clash of Civilisations: Iraq, Iran and the Plan to Remake the Middle East"* (Pluto Press) and *"Disappearing Palestine: Israel's Experiments in Human Despair"* (Zed Books). His website is www.jonathan-cook.net.

What they call terrorism, and what they don't

Nicole Colson reports on the revival of the 'war on terror' media hysteria following the shootings at two military facilities in Chattanooga, Tennessee,

The same media and political establishment that was loathe to call last month's shooting in a Charleston church by white supremacist Dylann Roof "terrorism" couldn't wait to ascribe these motives to Abdulazeez

The glaring double standard in the US media and political establishment about what constitutes "terrorism" was on full display after the July 16 shooting at two military facilities in Chattanooga, Tennessee, that led to the deaths of four Marines and a Naval petty officer.

Just hours after 24-year-old Muhammad Youssef Abdulazeez opened fire on a military recruitment office and then a Naval reserve center, and was in turn fatally wounded, US Attorney Bill Killian said authorities were treating the case as an "act of domestic terrorism." A senior law enforcement official likewise told the *Washington Post*, "We will treat this as a terrorism investigation until it can be determined it was not," he said.

All the authorities needed to know to adopt the "this is terrorism until it isn't" approach – in stark contrast to their attitude in other cases – was Abdulazeez's Middle Eastern name and his Muslim faith.

The same media and political establishment that was loathe to call the recent shooting in a Charleston church by white supremacist Dylann Roof "terrorism" couldn't wait to ascribe these motives to Abdulazeez.

But according to members of the mosque where Abdulazeez worshipped, the 24-year-old wasn't known to be in sympathy with hard-line fundamentalists. Authorities admit the naturalized US citizen, who was born in Ku-

wait but spent much of his life in the US, didn't appear to have an online presence suggesting extremist beliefs – though he did, according to the *New York Times*, "view material connected to Anwar al-Awlaki," the US Muslim cleric assassinated by the Obama administration in Yemen in 2011. According to reports, Abdulazeez wasn't on a terrorism watch list or under investigation before the shootings.

FBI Special Agent in Charge Edward W. Reinhold told reporters late last week, "We have no idea at this point what his motivation was behind the shooting." That seemed to remain the case as authorities continued to sift through Abdulazeez's past writings and Internet history, looking for any clues as to his frame of mind at the time of the killings.

Not exactly evidence of a "domestic terrorist" – who generally openly declare their intentions.

Some in the media pointed to a trip that Abdulazeez made to Jordan last year as a possible "radicalizing" event. Personal writings that are more than a year old, which were turned over to the FBI by Abdulazeez's family, reportedly discuss both suicidal thoughts and "becoming a martyr" – although officials have found no actual evidence yet linking him to any terrorist organization.

The wild media speculation was on display in one *New York Times* article that, incredibly, implied Abdulazeez's conversion to a hard-line version of Islam could be deduced from family

photos that “show the once-clean-cut student recently grew a beard.” Other articles referenced a recent blog post in which Abdulazeez commented that “life is short and bitter,” and that Muslims should not let “the opportunity to submit to Allah...pass you by” – which, of course, could mean almost anything.

The media initially focused on the fact that Abdulazeez’s father had once been briefly added to a terrorist “watch list” over an allegation that he had contributed money to an organization with possible ties to the Palestinian group Hamas. But he was later removed from the watch list, like thousands of other people caught up in the post-9/11 witch hunt because they innocently donated to the wrong charity.

Some coverage referenced Abdulazeez’s firing from a job at a Tennessee nuclear plant after 10 days in 2013 because he failed a background check. But according to several sources, the firing was the result of a failed drug test, not anything related to terrorism or his political views.

Also undercutting the idea that Abdulazeez was driven by fundamentalist religious beliefs was a report that he had been arrested in April for driving under the influence, and was awaiting trial at the time of his killing spree.

Friends and family told the media that in addition to fighting drug and alcohol addiction, Abdulazeez had been suffering from depression and possibly bipolar disorder – and was facing the prospect of bankruptcy in addition to possible jail time. They suggested that his mental illness and personal problems, not an ideological embrace of terrorism, were the main factor in his violent actions.

Whatever new information emerges in the coming days, the response to the Tennessee shootings is instructive in showing how politicians and the media alike exploit fears of the “Muslim menace.”

After the killings, the governors of several states ordered further protection for personnel at military bases and recruiting centers, suggesting – based on zero evidence – that Abdulazeez’s actions were connected to the Islamic

State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

But who needs evidence? As in other high-profile cases of supposed “domestic terrorism,” the response of the political establishment – Republican and Democrat alike – has been long on dramatics and short on facts, all the better to amp up the domestic apparatus related to the “war on terrorism.”

In the days after the shootings, several governors stepped up the arming of National Guard troops, with Texas Gov. Greg Abbott saying in one typical statement, “After the recent shooting in Chattanooga, it has become clear that our military personnel must have the ability to defend themselves against these type of attacks on our own soil.”

Florida Gov. Rick Scott, meanwhile, closed the state’s National Guard recruitment offices and ordered National Guard armories moved. The *New York Times* reported that “Scott said Florida would streamline the process in which Guard members apply for concealed weapons licenses so that they can legally be armed at work sites.” Scott’s executive order declared, “The state will take any and every measure available to secure military personnel against the planned attacks of ISIS.”

Beyond the larger question of whether Abdulazeez had any ideological motive is the hypocrisy about how US officials invoke the threat of “terrorism” only when it’s convenient for US aims.

The standard definition of “terrorism” is the use of violence against non-combatants – i.e. civilians – in order to inspire fear for the purpose of a larger political or ideological aim. But in reality, in the US today, the term “terrorism” is attached to any attack or threatened attack by a Muslim.

Overseas, where the Obama administration’s drone war has indiscriminately killed thousands of civilians as part of the greater “war on terror,” such deaths are labeled unavoidable collateral damage – and certainly not “terrorism.”

As Glenn Greenwald noted at the *Intercept*, such shifting definitions are used to obscure the political and material reality of the US “war

One New York Times article implied Abdulazeez’s conversion to a hard-line version of Islam could be deduced from family photos that “show the once-clean-cut student recently grew a beard”

NAME CALLING

Overseas, where the Obama administration's drone war has indiscriminately killed thousands of civilians as part of the greater "war on terror," such deaths are labeled unavoidable collateral damage – and certainly not "terrorism"

on terror.”:

“The US drone program constantly targets individuals regarded as “illegal combatants” and kills them without the slightest regard for where they are or what they are doing at that moment: at their homes, in their sleep, driving in a car with family members, etc. The US often targets people without even knowing their names or identities, based on their behavioral ‘patterns’; the Obama administration literally re-defined ‘combatant’ to mean ‘all military-age males in a strike zone.’

“The ‘justification’ for all this is that these are enemy combatants and they therefore can be legitimately targeted and killed no matter where they are found or what they are doing at the time; one need not wait until they are engaged in combat or on a battlefield...

“The US government, its allies and their apologists constantly propagate standards that have no purpose other than to legitimize all of their violence while de-legitimizing all violence by their enemies in the ‘war’ they have declared. Nothing is more central to that effort than the propagandistic invocation of the term ‘terrorism.’ We’re now at the point where it is ‘terrorism’ when enemies of the US target American military bases and soldiers, but not ‘terrorism’ when the US recklessly engages in violence it knows will kill large numbers of civilians.”

Regardless of whether Abdulazeez’s actions were terrorism or not, there is a very real threat that the Muslim community in Tennessee and beyond – already facing the threat of violence – will be targeted further by those on the right who view every Muslim as a potential terrorist.

Republican Judd Matheny, a member of the Tennessee state House, wasted no time in declaring Abdulazeez a “jihadi,” and lamenting that state officials had “skirted around the issues of security from terrorism in Tennessee.”

He declared in a statement that “we can no longer ignore the security implications hidden in legal immigration issues, federal threats to free speech, refugee resettlement issues, in-

direct support of the Obama administration’s blind eye to burgeoning illegal immigrant traffic, and attempts to pass state laws equalizing rights and state benefits for illegal inhabitants in Tennessee to those of legal inhabitants.”

This isn’t the first time that Matheny and other Tennessee lawmakers have targeted the Muslim community. In 2011, he helped introduce legislation that would have outlawed Islamic “sharia” law – as if there was ever a threat that the state of Tennessee would have its legal system supplanted.

Describing Tennessee even before Abdulazeez’s shootings as a “hotbed of anti-Islam activity,” the *New York Times* noted that one Islamic center was “burned to the ground in 2008, the debris found etched with swastikas and racist graffiti.” In the city of Murfreesboro, the site of another planned mosque and community center was repeatedly vandalized and construction equipment set on fire.

State politicians like then-Lt. Governor Ron Ramsey questioned whether Islam is “actually a religion, or is it a nationality, way of life, cult or whatever you want to call it.” Ramsey described the religious beliefs of nearly one-quarter of the planet’s population as “a violent political philosophy more than [a] peace-loving religion.”

As a gesture of respect to those killed, the mosque that Abdulazeez worshipped at made the decision to cancel its Eid al-Fitr celebration, traditionally held at the end of the month of Ramadan. Unfortunately, some will likely see this as a necessity – as if the Muslim community must issue a public apology for the actions of one Muslim. But it seems like Muslims are the only group in US society that is required to make such collective apologies. Neither white Southerners nor Christians were made to apologize for Dylann Roof’s murderous rampage in a Charleston church.

As Muslims in Tennessee are yet again held responsible for the actions of one disturbed individual, it will be up to those of us committed to justice to challenge the tide of Islamophobia in Tennessee and beyond in the coming weeks and months.

CT

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Fantasy politics

Jeremy Corbyn is too left wing for the British media, but he may be the man to end public disenchantment with politics, according to **David Edwards**



Left wing victories in Spanish elections were heralded as major triumphs in the face of fierce and united corporate media opposition

Left wing political candidate Jeremy Corbyn is dismissed by the corporate British media.

In May, voters grasped Spanish political orthodoxy and shook it like a rag doll: “The anti-austerity party Podemos claimed its biggest victory in Barcelona, where activist Ada Colau seized control of the city hall. Podemos and Ciudadanos... made advances across the country that will give them a chance to shape policy for the first time.”

Podemos also backed the campaign of Manuela Carmena, a 71-year-old labour-rights lawyer, who ended 24 years of rule by Spain’s hard-right Popular party in the capital, Madrid. These were major triumphs in the face of fierce and united corporate media opposition. Jose Juan Toharia, president of polling firm Metroscopia, said: “Tomorrow’s

THE MEDIA & THE LEFT

One might think that, in discussing the popularity of Corbyn's leadership bid, a rational media would give serious attention to the visions, strategies and success of Podemos, Syriza and the SNP

Spain doesn't feel identified with the establishment parties."

A *Guardian* editorial commented: "Together, the two traditional parties have seen their support shrink from two-thirds of the poll in 2011, to just over half. Podemos and Ciudadanos have filled the void. The two-party system that had dominated Spain since the end of dictatorship in 1978 is crumbling."

MP Jeremy Corbyn, reportedly "far ahead of his rivals in the Labour leadership election", has explicitly called for Labour to learn from Greece's Syriza, Spain's Podemos and the Scottish National Party by campaigning against 'austerity'. Corbyn said: "I have been in Greece, I have been in Spain. It's very interesting that social democratic parties that accept the austerity agenda and end up implementing it end up losing a lot of members and a lot of support. I think we have a chance to do something different here."

This echoes a comment made by Podemos' leader Pablo Iglesias in an interview with Tariq Ali. Iglesias suggested that Podemos and Syriza offered potent examples that had already been followed in Scotland: "We saw this in the UK. The Scottish National Party [SNP] really beat the Labour Party by criticising austerity and criticising cuts, which are related to the failure of the 'third way' policies of Tony Blair and Anthony Giddens."

One might think that, in discussing the popularity of Corbyn's leadership bid, a rational media would give serious attention to the visions, strategies and success of Podemos, Syriza and the SNP. For example, we can imagine in-depth interviews with Iglesias and Colau on Corbyn's prospects. We can imagine discussions of how a weakening of the two-party grip on Spanish politics might be repeated outside Scotland in the UK, where similarly moribund political conditions apply. As former ambassador, Craig Murray, has observed: "[I]f the range of possible political programmes were placed on a linear scale from 1 to 100, the Labour and Conservative parties offer you the choice be-

tween 81 and 84."

And yet, we have not seen a single substantive discussion of these issues in any UK national newspaper. The Lexis media database records 1,974 articles mentioning Corbyn over the last month. Of these, just 29 mentioned Podemos. Our search of articles mentioning both 'Corbyn' and 'Pablo Iglesias' yielded zero results, as did our searches for 'Corbyn' and 'Ada Colau', and 'Corbyn' and 'Manuela Carmena'. Lexis found 133 *Guardian* articles mentioning Corbyn over the last month, with three of these containing mentions in passing of SNP leader Nicola Sturgeon. The *Independent* had 47 hits for Corbyn, with one article mentioning Sturgeon.

These would appear to be natural sources and comparisons, particularly given Corbyn's explicit references to them. Instead, we found complete indifference combined with a ruthless and relentless campaign to trash Corbyn across the so-called media 'spectrum'.

'Marxed Man' – the corporate press go to work

A leading article in Murdoch's *Times* dripped with elite condescension: "Only against a backdrop of stupefying blandness could Jeremy Corbyn have emerged as a serious contender for the leadership of what is still technically Her Majesty's opposition." (Leading article, 'Silence of the lambs,' the *Times*, July 27, 2015)

Clearly Corbyn was unworthy of Elizabeth. His sins: "This is a man who five years ago shared with George Galloway the distinction of presenting his own show on Press TV, the English-language propaganda arm of Iran. He wants the Bank of England to discard 17 years of independence from political meddling and to begin building houses and laying down railway lines. He believes Britain has not learnt its lessons from Karl Marx."

The *Times*' sister paper, the *Sun*, doesn't really do politics. But it does smears. Under the title, 'Marxed man', the editors wrote: "But to Jeremy Corbyn, the man who polls say will be the next Labour leader, Karl Marx

is still a hero. He said yesterday: 'We all owe something to him.' Corbyn doesn't want to take Labour back to its Bennite years in the 1980s. He wants to turn the clock back to 1917 and the Russian revolution." (Leading article, 'Marxed man,' the Sun, July 27, 2015)

In an article, 'Corbyn's Morons have only helped the hard left', Murdoch's *Sunday Times* opined: "The hard left, apparently as extinct for its influence on British politics as the dinosaurs, senses its Jurassic Park moment."

The idea is as fantastic and juvenile as the film: "When Labour activists, particularly the young, speak with admiration about the spectacularly incompetent Syriza government in Greece, or the Podemos party in Spain, you know reality has deserted them."

The paper failed to explain why reality has deserted people who look to Podemos for inspiration, successful as it has been in the real world.

Hard-right *Times* warmonger David Aaronovitch asked on Twitter: "What positive debate... is served by having Corbyn on the ballot?"

Spanish versions of Aaronovitch doubtless asked the same of Pablo Iglesias and Podemos.

The *Sunday Mirror* guffawed at Corbyn: "He is also a throwback to the party's darkest days when it was as likely to form the government as Elvis was of being found on Pluto.

"Today the *Sunday Mirror* carries articles by three leading politicians whose words should be heeded by all Labour members." (Leading article, 'We need a leader for a new world,' *Mirror*, July 27, 2015)

The three wise heads were David Blunkett, David Owen and Yvette Cooper, all securely located between '81 and '84' on Craig Murray's linear scale of political choices.

The *Telegraph* lamented the political passing of Tony Blair, who dismissed Corbyn out of hand. Blair "remains the party's most eloquent advocate of a more sensible approach to business and wealth", according to the edi-

tors. The *Guardian*'s Seumas Milne explained this "sensible approach" when he noted that Blair's "self-enrichment from corporations and dictatorships has degraded the office of prime minister".

The *Telegraph* insisted that Britain "needs a grown-up opposition prepared to debate the issues of the day, not a populist rabble interested only in echoing the wealth-hating delusions of the disaffected Left". The kind of editorial position Lord Castlereagh had in mind in the nineteenth century when he insisted that "persons exercising the power of the press" should be "men of some respectability and property." "Sensible" people, in other words. (Quoted, James Curran and Jean Seaton, "Power Without Responsibility - The Press And Broadcasting in Britain", Routledge, London, 1997, p.13)

The *Telegraph*'s editors dismissed "Mr Corbyn's fantasy politics", again ignoring the fact that they have scored very real victories in Europe.

The *Guardian* warned that "Politics moves in cycles and some are more vicious than others." Corbyn is leading a vicious "spiral into irrelevance after defeat" his politics a defunct throwback: "His ideological positions [in the past] did nothing to accelerate escape from opposition... his solutions long pre-date the challenges of the 21st century."

Instead: "All candidates must turn their attention to more forward-looking alternatives. The challenge for Mr Corbyn's rivals is to match his crusading passion while leading the debate back to a discussion of the country Labour would aspire to lead in 2020."

Also in the *Guardian*, executive editor Jonathan Freedland wrote: "Tony Blair and others tried to sit the kids down and say: 'Look, you've had your fun. But take it from us, even if Corbyn is right - which he isn't - he is never, ever going to get elected. This crusade is doomed. Come back home'".

Freedland took issue with the effectiveness of the approach, not the analysis: "The unkind reading of this is to suggest that support for Corbynism, especially among the

In an article, 'Corbyn's Morons have only helped the hard left', Murdoch's *Sunday Times* opined: "The hard left, apparently as extinct for its influence on British politics as the dinosaurs, senses its Jurassic Park moment"

THE MEDIA & THE LEFT

Who on earth would want to disrupt the status quo and jeopardise the shifting of deck chairs on the Titanic a couple of inches to the left?

young, is a form of narcissism.”

An interesting response at a time when leading climate scientists are suffering “severe depression”, some reportedly “close to suicide”, with one “looking at property in Greenland. As a possible bug-out scenario” – somewhere to escape the ravages of approaching catastrophe. Rejecting the profit-driven system that is so stubbornly refusing to respond to the crisis is “narcissism” for Freedland.

Also in the *Guardian*, senior columnist Polly Toynbee wrote: “Suddenly the party that has been a reasonably friendly coalition through the Blair, Brown, Miliband years, begins to feel like the poisonous place it was in the early 80s. That’s when it split over toxic Militant entryism unchallenged by Michael Foot, its unelectable leader with a raft of impossibilist policies.”

The years spent selling Labour out to the neocons were “friendly”, while resistance is “poisonous” “nastiness” in which people have taken “leave of their senses”. Who on earth would want to disrupt the status quo and jeopardise the shifting of deck chairs on the Titanic a couple of inches to the left? “This is summer madness,” Toynbee concludes; Corbyn is “a 1983 man”, “a relic”

Also in the *Guardian*, Martin Kettle dismissed Corbyn’s “programme of prelapsarian socialist purity...”

The *Guardian* has allowed rare glimpses of dissent that make a nonsense of its own view that Corbyn’s politics are an “irrelevance”. Nobel-prize winning economist Joseph Stiglitz was cited: “I am not surprised at all that there is a demand for a strong anti-austerity movement around increased concern about inequality... It’s just very hard to say these centre-left parties [sic] – with emphasis on ‘centre’ – have been able to deliver for most people. Their economic models have not delivered and their message is not working.”

Rare exceptions aside, the trend in *Guardian* commentary has been clear, as Craig Murray noted: “The fundamental anti-de-

mocracy of the Blairites is plainly exposed, and the panic-driven hysterical hate-fest campaign against Corbyn by the *Guardian* would be unbelievable, if we hadn’t just seen exactly the same campaign by the same paper against the rejection of neo-liberalism in Scotland.

“I think I am entitled to say I told you so. Many people appear shocked to have discovered the *Guardian* is so anti-left wing. I have been explaining this in detail for years.”

In striking contrast, the *Guardian* devoted a front-page article to the task of selling Yvette Cooper, a discredited right-winger who backed Blair and the Iraq war. The pictures and text belonged in a New Labour party political broadcast: “Hers is a life and political career punctuated by firsts – a first in PPE at Oxford, the first female minister to take maternity leave, the first female treasury chief secretary, and now the ambition is to be the first female Labour leader and first Labour female prime minister.”

New Labour and the *Guardian* were thus once again playing the gender card, exploiting a fake version of feminism to advance an elitist, corporate, warmongering agenda.

In the *Observer*, Andrew Rawnsley mocked the “fantasy” of “Corbynmania” directed by “the Pied Piper of Islington” suffering from his “terrible delusion”. Rawnsley, yet another passionate Blairite, mocked opponents of the Great Man as deluded “neoliberal finance capital conspiracy” theorists.

The editors of the Russian oligarch-owned *Independent* also lamented the loss of Blair. He “transformed the fortunes of the Labour Party”, although “his record in office, especially his wars, remains controversial”.

Much as the 9/11 attack on New York “remains controversial”.

The pain of the media class was projected onto the wider populace: “many voters in the centre ground will despair at the prospect of having to choose between an increasingly hard-faced Tory party dominated by George Osborne, and an impractical and economically dubious leftist agenda presented by Mr

Corbyn”.

As comedian Frankie Boyle observed in the *Guardian*: “in the press, public opinion is often used interchangeably with media opinion, as if the public was somehow much the same as a group of radically rightwing billionaire sociopaths”.

For the *Independent*’s editors, Corbyn “is not the answer to the Labour Party or the nation’s problems”. The piece bowed low to Blair: he ‘won a hat-trick of victories’, after all. “For that alone he earned his right to be listened to”. We wonder if this group of radically rightwing, billionaire-led sociopaths would say the same, if they were citing Blair, serving life for war crimes, from his prison cell.

A “New Labour grandee” was quoted in the *Independent* under the title: “The next Labour leader should be anyone except Jeremy Corbyn, Alan Johnson says”. Johnson likened Corbyn’s politics to electoral “suicide”.

Like the *Guardian*, the *Independent* allowed a rogue comedian, Mark Steel, to lampoon the relentless smearing of Corbyn. But the corporate *Independent*’s “sensible approach” was summed up by an article titled: “City has been too quick to dismiss the threat of Jeremy Corbyn.”

The *Evening Standard*, owned by the same Russian oligarch, contemptuously waved Corbyn, and democracy, away: “But given the options available, the most important task is simply to exclude Corbyn... Labour must have a credible leader, not a fantasist.”

Betraying the electorate?

In her *Guardian* article, Polly Toynbee suggested that voting for Corbyn would amount to a ‘betrayal’ of the electorate. In a piece for the Stop The War website, Ian Sinclair argued that in fact it is Toynbee, not Corbyn, who is out of touch with public opinion.

Sinclair noted that Corbyn supports a publicly run NHS, a position supported by 84 per cent of the public, according to a November 2013 YouGov poll. In addition: “He supports

the nationalisation of the railways, a position backed by 66 percent of the public, including a majority of Conservative voters, according to the same poll.

“He supports the nationalisation of the energy companies, a position supported by 68 percent of the public, including a majority of Conservative voters, according to the same poll.

“He believes the Royal Mail should be publicly owned, a position supported by 67 percent of the public, according to the same poll.

“He supports rent controls, a position supported by 60% of the public, including 42% of Conservatives, according to an April 2015 YouGov poll.

“He opposes the retention of Trident nuclear weapons, a position John Curtice, Professor of Politics at Strathclyde University, notes is supported by a ‘smallish plurality’ in ‘the majority of polls’.

“He strongly opposed the 2003 Iraq War, which was also opposed by the more than one million people who marched through London on 15 February 2003.

“He has long pushed for the withdrawal of British troops from Afghanistan, a position favoured by 82 per cent of the public, according to a May 2014 YouGov poll.”

Thus: “Corbyn’s key political positions are in actual fact supported by a majority of the British public.”

Like Blair and the rest of the establishment, the *Guardian* and other corporate media claim their motivation is to preserve Labour’s electability, rather than to attack any and all politics that stray off the “centrist”, “modernising” path. In reality, it could hardly be more obvious that this collection of profit-seeking, corporate enterprises – grandly and laughably proclaiming themselves “the free press” - is opposing a threat to their private and class interests. **CT**

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*David Edwards is the co-editor of
medialens, the British media watchdog -
<http://medialens.org>*

Like Blair and the rest of the establishment, the *Guardian* and other corporate media claim their motivation is to preserve Labour’s electability, rather than to attack any and all politics that stray off the “centrist”, “modernising” path

IN THE FRAME



FEET UP: Tea for two at the rear of a Rolls Royce at Chiddingstone Castle in Kent.

All in it together?

When David Cameron, Britain's prime minister, says economic austerity is affecting everyone equally, 99% of the people will probably disagree.

Alan Chapman takes his camera for a weekend in the country, where he finds two different worlds



NO DRESS CODE: It's takeaway time at a Whitstable chip shack.



SEASIDE TREAT: Fish and chips on the chilly seafront at Whitstable.



STATUS SYMBOLS: Proud owners show off their Rollers at Chiddingstone Castle

There's no Us. No Them. We're All In It Together! Tightening our belts. Fighting to fix the flagging economy. That's what prime minister David Cameron and his merry band of private school-educated Cabinet chums have been telling the British public for the past five years, as his Tory party has made life more comfortable for the rich, while axing benefits and raiding the piggy banks of

the poorest members of society.

One percent pay rise for the workers? *That's fair. We all have to tighten our belts to fight inflation, don't we?* Ten per cent pay rise for Members of Parliament? *Quite right. They haven't had a real pay rise for years.* Thirty percent pay rise (and massive bonuses) for bosses? *Well, we don't want to lose our talented captains of industry!* And so it goes. The rich get

IN THE FRAME



THE GREAT OUTDOORS: Grabbing a burger at Whitstable.

away with tax avoidance, they get relief on their opulent estates. Meanwhile, the poorest Britons, demonised by right wing media, are hit by bedroom taxes and slashed benefits, and have to use charity food banks.

Our photographer Alan Chapman found the class division as strong as ever during a weekend in Kent, playground of Londoners, both rich and poor. Here One Percenters – members of the South East Rolls Royce Club – enjoy the good life, showing off their exquisite Rolls Royce cars at Chiddingstone Castle, Kent, eating from lavish picnic hampers. Just a few miles down the road at the seaside town of Whitstable, the Ninety-Nine Percenters munch fish and chips and burgers on the windswept beach.

A nation divided? Yes. The Haves have never had it so good. The Have Nots struggle to make ends meet. Nothing changes. Except the political slogans. And they lie. No, we're **NOT** all in it together. **Tony Sutton**

Alan Chapman's latest book is 'Frame', a collection of celebrity photographs



SARTORIAL DELIGHT: Striped jackets and tea at the Rolls Club outing.

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Eurasia's Big Bang

While Western nations are wringing their hands over the Iranian nuclear deal, a new Silk Road is being developed, writes **Pepe Escobar**

Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif and his diplomatic team have pulled the near-impossible out of an extremely crumpled magician's hat

Let's start with the geopolitical Big Bang you know nothing about, the one that occurred just a few weeks ago. Here are its results: from now on, any possible future attack on Iran threatened by the Pentagon (in conjunction with NATO) would essentially be an assault on the planning of an interlocking set of organizations – the BRICS nations (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa), the SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organization), the EEU (Eurasian Economic Union), the AIIB (the new Chinese-founded Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank), and the NDB (the BRICS' New Development Bank) – whose acronyms you're unlikely to recognize either. Still, they represent an emerging new order in Eurasia.

Tehran, Beijing, Moscow, Islamabad, and New Delhi have been actively establishing interlocking security guarantees. They have been simultaneously calling the Atlanticist bluff when it comes to the endless drum-beat of attention given to the flimsy meme of Iran's "nuclear weapons program." And a few days before the Vienna nuclear negotiations finally culminated in an agreement, all of this came together at a twin BRICS/SCO summit in Ufa, Russia – a place you've undoubtedly never heard of and a meeting that got next to no attention in the US. And yet sooner or later, these developments will ensure that the War Party

in Washington and assorted neocons (as well as neoliberalcons) already breathing hard over the Iran deal will sweat bullets as their narratives about how the world works crumble.

The Eurasian Silk Road

With the Vienna deal, whose interminable build-up I had the dubious pleasure of following closely, Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif and his diplomatic team have pulled the near-impossible out of an extremely crumpled magician's hat: an agreement that might actually end sanctions against their country from an asymmetric, largely manufactured conflict.

Think of that meeting in Ufa, the capital of Russia's Bashkortostan, as a preamble to the long-delayed agreement in Vienna. It caught the new dynamics of the Eurasian continent and signaled the future geopolitical Big Bangness of it all. At Ufa, from July 8th to 10th, the 7th BRICS summit and the 15th Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit overlapped just as a possible Vienna deal was devouring one deadline after another.

Consider it a diplomatic masterstroke of Vladimir Putin's Russia to have merged those two summits with an informal meeting of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU). Call it a soft power declaration of war against Washington's imperial logic,

one that would highlight the breadth and depth of an evolving Sino-Russian strategic partnership. Putting all those heads of state attending each of the meetings under one roof, Moscow offered a vision of an emerging, coordinated geopolitical structure anchored in Eurasian integration. Thus, the importance of Iran: no matter what happens post-Vienna, Iran will be a vital hub/node/crossroads in Eurasia for this new structure.

If you read the declaration that came out of the BRICS summit, one detail should strike you: the austerity-ridden European Union (EU) is barely mentioned. And that's not an oversight. From the point of view of the leaders of key BRICS nations, they are offering a new approach to Eurasia, the very opposite of the language of sanctions.

Here are just a few examples of the dizzying activity that took place at Ufa, all of it ignored by the American mainstream media. In their meetings, President Putin, China's President Xi Jinping, and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi worked in a practical way to advance what is essentially a Chinese vision of a future Eurasia knit together by a series of interlocking "new Silk Roads." Modi approved more Chinese investment in his country, while Xi and Modi together pledged to work to solve the joint border issues that have dogged their countries and, in at least one case, led to war.

The NDB, the BRICS' response to the World Bank, was officially launched with \$50 billion in start-up capital. Focused on funding major infrastructure projects in the BRICS nations, it is capable of accumulating as much as \$400 billion in capital, according to its president, Kundapur Vaman Kamath. Later, it plans to focus on funding such ventures in other developing nations across the Global South – all in their own currencies, which means bypassing the US dollar. Given its membership, the NDB's money will clearly be closely linked to the new Silk Roads. As Brazilian Development Bank President Luciano Coutinho stressed,

in the near future it may also assist European non-EU member states like Serbia and Macedonia. Think of this as the NDB's attempt to break a Brussels monopoly on Greater Europe. Kamath even advanced the possibility of someday aiding in the reconstruction of Syria.

You won't be surprised to learn that both the new Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the NDB are headquartered in China and will work to complement each other's efforts. At the same time, Russia's foreign investment arm, the Direct Investment Fund (RDIF), signed a memorandum of understanding with funds from other BRICS countries and so launched an informal investment consortium in which China's Silk Road Fund and India's Infrastructure Development Finance Company will be key partners.

Full spectrum transportation dominance

On the ground level, this should be thought of as part of the New Great Game in Eurasia. Its flip side is the Trans-Pacific Partnership in the Pacific and the Atlantic version of the same, the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, both of which Washington is trying to advance to maintain US global economic dominance. The question these conflicting plans raise is how to integrate trade and commerce across that vast region. From the Chinese and Russian perspectives, Eurasia is to be integrated via a complex network of superhighways, high-speed rail lines, ports, airports, pipelines, and fiber optic cables. By land, sea, and air, the resulting New Silk Roads are meant to create an economic version of the Pentagon's doctrine of "Full Spectrum Dominance" – a vision that already has Chinese corporate executives crisscrossing Eurasia sealing infrastructure deals.

For Beijing – back to a 7% growth rate in the second quarter of 2015 despite a recent near-panic on the country's stock markets – it makes perfect economic sense: as labor costs rise, production will be relocated

From the Chinese and Russian perspectives, Eurasia is to be integrated via a complex network of superhighways, high-speed rail lines, ports, airports, pipelines, and fiber optic cables

LOOKING EAST

The BRICS nations and the SCO have now called upon Afghanistan's "armed opposition to disarm, accept the Constitution of Afghanistan, and cut ties with Al-Qaeda, ISIS, and other terrorist organizations"

from the country's Eastern seaboard to its cheaper Western reaches, while the natural outlets for the production of just about everything will be those parallel and interlocking "belts" of the new Silk Roads.

Meanwhile, Russia is pushing to modernize and diversify its energy-exploitation-dependent economy. Among other things, its leaders hope that the mix of those developing Silk Roads and the tying together of the Eurasian Economic Union – Russia, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan – will translate into myriad transportation and construction projects for which the country's industrial and engineering know-how will prove crucial.

As the EEU has begun establishing free trade zones with India, Iran, Vietnam, Egypt, and Latin America's Mercosur bloc (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Venezuela), the initial stages of this integration process already reach beyond Eurasia. Meanwhile, the SCO, which began as little more than a security forum, is expanding and moving into the field of economic cooperation. Its countries, especially four Central Asian "stans" (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan) will rely ever more on the Chinese-driven Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the NDB. At Ufa, India and Pakistan finalized an upgrading process in which they have moved from observers to members of the SCO. This makes it an alternative G8.

In the meantime, when it comes to embattled Afghanistan, the BRICS nations and the SCO have now called upon "the armed opposition to disarm, accept the Constitution of Afghanistan, and cut ties with Al-Qaeda, ISIS, and other terrorist organizations." Translation: within the framework of Afghan national unity, the organization would accept the Taliban as part of a future government. Their hopes, with the integration of the region in mind, would be for a future stable Afghanistan able to absorb more Chinese, Russian, Indian, and Iranian investment, and the construction – final-

ly! – of a long-planned, \$10 billion, 1,420-kilometer-long Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline that would benefit those energy-hungry new SCO members, Pakistan and India. (They would each receive 42% of the gas, the remaining 16% going to Afghanistan.)

Central Asia is, at the moment, geographic ground zero for the convergence of the economic urges of China, Russia, and India. It was no happenstance that, on his way to Ufa, Prime Minister Modi stopped off in Central Asia. Like the Chinese leadership in Beijing, Moscow looks forward (as a recent document puts it) to the "interpenetration and integration of the EEU and the Silk Road Economic Belt" into a "Greater Eurasia" and a "steady, developing, safe common neighborhood" for both Russia and China.

And don't forget Iran. In early 2016, once economic sanctions are fully lifted, it is expected to join the SCO, turning it into a G9. As its foreign minister, Javad Zarif, made clear recently to Russia's Channel 1 television, Tehran considers the two countries strategic partners. "Russia," he said, "has been the most important participant in Iran's nuclear program and it will continue under the current agreement to be Iran's major nuclear partner." The same will, he added, be true when it comes to "oil and gas cooperation," given the shared interest of those two energy-rich nations in "maintaining stability in global market prices."

Got corridor, will travel

Across Eurasia, BRICS nations are moving on integration projects. A developing Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar economic corridor is a typical example. It is now being reconfigured as a multilane highway between India and China. Meanwhile, Iran and Russia are developing a transportation corridor from the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman to the Caspian Sea and the Volga River. Azerbaijan will be connected to the Caspian part of this corridor, while India is

planning to use Iran's southern ports to improve its access to Russia and Central Asia. Now, add in a maritime corridor that will stretch from the Indian city of Mumbai to the Iranian port of Bandar Abbas and then on to the southern Russian city of Astrakhan. And this just scratches the surface of the planning underway.

Years ago, Vladimir Putin suggested that there could be a "Greater Europe" stretching from Lisbon, Portugal, on the Atlantic to the Russian city of Vladivostok on the Pacific. The EU, under Washington's thumb, ignored him. Then the Chinese started dreaming about and planning new Silk Roads that would, in reverse Marco Polo fashion, extend from Shanghai to Venice (and then on to Berlin).

Thanks to a set of cross-pollinating political institutions, investment funds, development banks, financial systems, and infrastructure projects that, to date, remain largely under Washington's radar, a free-trade Eurasian heartland is being born. It will someday link China and Russia to Europe, Southwest Asia, and even Africa. It promises to be an astounding development. Keep your eyes, if you can, on the accumulating facts on the ground, even if they are rarely covered in the American media. They represent the New Great – emphasis on that word – Game in Eurasia.

Location, location, location

Tehran is now deeply invested in strengthening its connections to this new Eurasia and the man to watch on this score is Ali Akbar Velayati. He is the head of Iran's Center for Strategic Research and senior foreign policy adviser to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei. Velayati stresses that security in Asia, the Middle East, North Africa, Central Asia, and the Caucasus hinges on the further enhancement of a Beijing-Moscow-Tehran triple entente.

As he knows, geo-strategically Iran is all about location, location, location. That country offers the best access to open seas

in the region apart from Russia and is the only obvious east-west/north-south crossroads for trade from the Central Asian "stans." Little wonder then that Iran will soon be an SCO member, even as its "partnership" with Russia is certain to evolve. Its energy resources are already crucial to and considered a matter of national security for China and, in the thinking of that country's leadership, Iran also fulfills a key role as a hub in those Silk Roads they are planning.

That growing web of literal roads, rail lines, and energy pipelines, represents Beijing's response to the Obama administration's announced "pivot to Asia" and the US Navy's urge to meddle in the South China Sea. Beijing is choosing to project power via a vast set of infrastructure projects, especially high-speed rail lines that will reach from its eastern seaboard deep into Eurasia. In this fashion, the Chinese-built railway from Urumqi in Xinjiang Province to Almaty in Kazakhstan will undoubtedly someday be extended to Iran and traverse that country on its way to the Persian Gulf.

At the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum in June, Vladimir Putin told PBS's Charlie Rose that Moscow and Beijing had always wanted a genuine partnership with the United States, but were spurned by Washington. Hats off, then, to the "leadership" of the Obama administration. Somehow, it has managed to bring together two former geopolitical rivals, while solidifying their pan-Eurasian grand strategy.

Even the recent deal with Iran in Vienna is unlikely – especially given the war hawks in Congress – to truly end Washington's 36-year-long Great Wall of Mistrust with Iran. Instead, the odds are that Iran, freed from sanctions, will indeed be absorbed into the Sino-Russian project to integrate Eurasia, which leads us to the spectacle of Washington's warriors, unable to act effectively, yet screaming like banshees.

NATO's supreme commander Dr. Strangelove, sorry, American General Philip Breedlove, insists that the West must create

Vladimir Putin told PBS's Charlie Rose that Moscow and Beijing had always wanted a genuine partnership with the United States, but were spurned by Washington

Seemingly unaware of the Vienna negotiations, the Pentagon continued to accuse Iran of pursuing nuclear weapons. And that "military option" against Iran is never off the table

a rapid-reaction force – online – to counteract Russia’s “false narratives.” Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter claims to be seriously considering unilaterally redeploying nuclear-capable missiles in Europe. The nominee to head the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Marine Commandant Joseph Dunford, recently directly labeled Russia America’s true “existential threat”; Air Force General Paul Selva, nominated to be the new vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs, seconded that assessment, using the same phrase and putting Russia, China and Iran, in that order, as more threatening than the Islamic State (ISIS). In the meantime, Republican presidential candidates and a bevy of congressional war hawks simply shout and fume when it comes to both the Iranian deal and the Russians.

NATO’s strategic rethink

In response to the Ukrainian situation and the “threat” of a resurgent Russia (behind which stands a resurgent China), a Washington-centric militarization of Europe is proceeding apace. NATO is now reportedly obsessed with what’s being called “strategy rethink” – as in drawing up detailed futuristic war scenarios on European soil. As economist Michael Hudson has pointed out, even financial politics are becoming militarized and linked to NATO’s new Cold War 2.0.

In its latest National Military Strategy, the Pentagon suggests that the risk of an American war with another nation (as opposed to terror outfits), while low, is “growing” and identifies four nations as “threats”: North Korea, a case apart, and predictably the three nations that form the new Eurasian core: Russia, China, and Iran. They are depicted in the document as “revisionist states,” openly defying what the Pentagon identifies as “international security and stability”; that is, the distinctly un-level playing field created by globalized, exclusionary, turbo-charged casino capitalism and Washington’s brand

of militarism.

The Pentagon, of course, does not do diplomacy. Seemingly unaware of the Vienna negotiations, it continued to accuse Iran of pursuing nuclear weapons. And that “military option” against Iran is never off the table.

So consider it the Mother of All Blockbusters to watch how the Pentagon and the war hawks in Congress will react to the post-Vienna and – though it was barely noticed in Washington – the post-Ufa environment, especially under a new White House tenant in 2017.

It will be a spectacle. Count on it. Will the next version of Washington try to make it up to “lost” Russia or send in the troops? Will it contain China or the “caliphate” of ISIS? Will it work with Iran to fight ISIS or spurn it? Will it truly pivot to Asia for good and ditch the Middle East or vice-versa? Or might it try to contain Russia, China, and Iran simultaneously or find some way to play them against each other?

In the end, whatever Washington may do, it will certainly reflect a fear of the increasing strategic depth Russia and China are developing economically, a reality now becoming visible across Eurasia. At Ufa, Putin told Xi on the record: “Combining efforts, no doubt we [Russia and China] will overcome all the problems before us.”

Read “efforts” as new Silk Roads, that Eurasian Economic Union, the growing BRICS block, the expanding Shanghai Cooperation Organization, those China-based banks, and all the rest of what adds up to the beginning of a new integration of significant parts of the Eurasian land mass. As for Washington, fly like an eagle? Try instead: scream like a banshee. **CT**

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***Pepe Escobar** is the roving correspondent for Asia Times, an analyst for RT and Sputnik, and a TomDispatch regular. His latest book is Empire of Chaos. This essay originally appeared at <http://tomdispatch.com>*

Greece and the IMF shuffle

A poem by **Philip Kraske**

Easier it'd be to feel sorry for Greece,
 If it weren't themselves that themselves did fleece.
 Some folks say those were predatory loans,
 As if nations like swells buy big pricey homes.
 Well, corruption there was, but a difference there lies,
 'Tween finance ministers and truck-driving guys.

So now Greece hobbles down hot rocky roads,
 Having poked out its eyes and sung all the odes:
 Relief, reapportions, reappraisals, repositions,
 Repairs, rearrangements, renewals, re-commissions.
 You would think with a list of options like that,
 The banks pub' and priv' could cut them some slack.

But it's a sure measure of what Europe's become,
 When banks call the tune and pols play their drum.
 The money they'd lose if Athens went south,
 Would be a big whack, a punch in the mouth,
 But not the K.O. that have them all scared,
 They'll just "take a charge" and act like they cared.

Maybe what irks them is a Greece independent,
 Not tied to a bank nor bawling repentant.
 Or maybe they're afraid that others will try
 The IMF Shuffle and off their debts pry.
 But I'll tell you one thing that's truly for sure:
 This Greece stuff is only the debt crisis' spur.

I look at the States whose pols often fret:
 Our GDP is the equal of debt!
 But add Social S'curity, plus Medicaid,
 The huge cost of vets who've drunk the Kool Aid,
 And 100 trill is the tune the pols muffle,
 Which they'll only pay by doing the Shuffle. **CT**

Philip Kraske lives in Madrid, Spain, where he teaches English on a freelance basis and does some translation. His four novels, of varied plots but centering on American politics and society, began to appear in 2009. His web site is <http://philipkraske.com>

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American nightmare

John W. Whitehead on the tyranny of the US criminal justice system

James Bain spent 35 years in prison for the kidnapping and rape of a 9-year-old boy, but he too was innocent of the crime

*How can the life of such a man
Be in the palm of some fool's hand?
To see him obviously framed
Couldn't help but make me feel ashamed to
live in a land
Where justice is a game.*

– Bob Dylan, “Hurricane”

Justice in America is not all it's cracked up to be. Just ask Jeffrey Deskovic, who spent 16 years in prison for a rape and murder he did not commit. Despite the fact that Deskovic's DNA did not match what was found at the murder scene, he was singled out by police as a suspect because he wept at the victim's funeral (he was 16 years old at the time), then badgered over the course of two months into confessing his guilt. He was eventually paid \$6.5 million in reparation.

James Bain spent 35 years in prison for the kidnapping and rape of a 9-year-old boy, but he too was innocent of the crime. Despite the fact that the prosecutor's case was flimsy – it hinged on the similarity of Bain's first name to the rapist's, Bain's ownership of a red motorcycle, and a misidentification of Bain in a lineup by a hysterical 9-year-old boy – Bain was sentenced to life in prison. He was finally freed after DNA testing proved his innocence, and was paid \$1.7 million.

Mark Weiner got off relatively easy when you compare his experience to the thousands

of individuals who are spending lifetimes behind bars for crimes they did not commit.

Weiner was wrongfully arrested, convicted, and jailed for more than two years for a crime he too did not commit. In his case, a young woman claimed Weiner had abducted her, knocked her out and then sent taunting text messages to her boyfriend about his plans to rape her. Despite the fact that cell phone signals, eyewitness accounts and expert testimony indicated the young woman had fabricated the entire incident, the prosecutor and judge repeatedly rejected any evidence contradicting the woman's far-fetched account, sentencing Weiner to eight more years in jail. Weiner was only released after his accuser was caught selling cocaine to undercover cops.

In the meantime, Weiner lost his job, his home, and his savings, and time with his wife and young son. As Slate reporter journalist Dahlia Lithwick warned, “If anyone suggests that the fact that Mark Weiner was released this week means ‘the system works,’ I fear that I will have to punch him in the neck. Because at every single turn, the system that should have worked to consider proof of Weiner's innocence failed him.”

The system that should have worked didn't, because the system is broken, almost beyond repair.

In courtroom thrillers like *12 Angry Men* and *To Kill a Mockingbird*, justice is served

in the end because someone – whether it’s Juror #8 or Atticus Finch – chooses to stand on principle and challenge wrongdoing, and truth wins.

Unfortunately, in the real world, justice is harder to come by, fairness is almost unheard of, and truth rarely wins.

On paper, you may be innocent until proven guilty, but in actuality, you’ve already been tried, found guilty and convicted by police officers, prosecutors and judges long before you ever appear in a courtroom.

Chronic injustice has turned the American dream into a nightmare.

At every step along the way, whether it’s encounters with the police, dealings with prosecutors, hearings in court before judges and juries, or jail terms in one of the nation’s many prisons, the system is riddled with corruption, abuse and an appalling disregard for the rights of the citizenry.

Due process rights afforded to a person accused of a crime – the right to remain silent, the right to be informed of the charges against you, the right to representation by counsel, the right to a fair trial, the right to a speedy trial, the right to prove your innocence with witnesses and evidence, the right to a reasonable bail, the right to not languish in jail before being tried, the right to confront your accusers, etc. – mean nothing when the government is allowed to sidestep those safeguards against abuse whenever convenient.

It’s telling that while President Obama said all the right things about the broken state of our criminal justice system – that we jail too many Americans for nonviolent crimes (we make up 5 percent of the world’s population, but our prison population constitutes nearly 25% of the world’s prisoners), that we spend more money on incarceration than any other nation (\$80 billion a year), that we sentence people for longer jail terms than their crimes merit, that our criminal justice system is far from color-blind, that the nation’s school-to-prison pipeline is contributing to overcrowded jails, and that we need to focus on rehabilitation of criminals

rather than retribution – he failed to own up to the government’s major role in contributing to this injustice in America.

Indeed, while Obama placed the responsibility for reform squarely in the hands of prosecutors, judges and police, he failed to acknowledge that they bear the burden of our failed justice system, along with the legislatures and corporations who have worked with them to create an environment that is hostile to the rights of the accused.

In such a climate, we are all the accused, the guilty and the suspect.

As I document in my book “Battlefield America: The War on the American People”, we’re operating in a new paradigm where the citizenry are presumed guilty and treated as suspects, our movements tracked, our communications monitored, our property seized and searched, our bodily integrity disregarded, and our inalienable rights to “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness” rendered insignificant when measured against the government’s priorities.

Every American is now in jeopardy of being targeted and punished for a crime he did not commit thanks to an overabundance of arcane laws. Making matters worse, by allowing government agents to operate above the law, immune from wrongdoing, we have created a situation in which the law is one-sided and top-down, used as a hammer to oppress the populace, while useless in protecting us against government abuse.

Add to the mix a profit-driven system of incarceration in which state and federal governments agree to keep the jails full in exchange for having private corporations run the prisons, and you will find the only word to describe such a state of abject corruption is “evil.”

How else do you explain a system that allows police officers to shoot first and ask questions later, without any real consequences for their misdeeds? Despite the initial outcry over the shootings of unarmed individuals in Ferguson and Baltimore, the pace of police shootings has yet to slow. In

How do you explain a system that allows police officers to shoot first and ask questions later, without any real consequences for their misdeeds?

There are an endless number of factors that can render an innocent man or woman a criminal and caged for life

fact, close to 400 people were shot and killed by police nationwide in the first half of 2015, almost two shootings a day. Those are just the shootings that were tracked. Of those killed, almost 1 in 6 were either unarmed or carried a toy gun.

For those who survive an encounter with the police only to end up on the inside of a jail cell, waiting for a “fair and speedy trial,” it’s often a long wait. Consider that 60 percent of the people in the nation’s jails have yet to be convicted of a crime. There are 2.3 million people in jails or prisons in America. Those who can’t afford bail, “some of them innocent, most of them nonviolent and a vast majority of them impoverished,” will spend about four months in jail before they even get a trial.

Not even that promised “day in court” is a guarantee that justice will be served.

As Judge Alex Kozinski of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals points out, there are an endless number of factors that can render an innocent man or woman a criminal and caged for life: unreliable eyewitnesses, fallible forensic evidence, flawed memories, coerced confessions, harsh interrogation tactics, uninformed jurors, prosecutorial misconduct, falsified evidence, and overly harsh sentences, to name just a few.

In early 2015, the Justice Department and FBI “formally acknowledged that nearly every examiner in an elite FBI forensic unit gave flawed testimony in almost all trials in which they offered evidence against criminal defendants over more than a two-decade period.... The admissions mark a watershed in one of the country’s largest forensic scandals, highlighting the failure of the nation’s courts for decades to keep bogus scientific information from juries, legal analysts said.”

“How do rogue forensic scientists and other bad cops thrive in our criminal justice system?” asks Judge Kozinski. “The simple answer is that some prosecutors turn a blind eye to such misconduct because they’re more interested in gaining a conviction than achieving a just result.”

The power of prosecutors is not to be underestimated.

Increasingly, when we talk about innocent people being jailed for crimes they did not commit, the prosecutor plays a critical role in bringing about that injustice. As the *Washington Post* reports, “Prosecutors win 95 percent of their cases, 90 percent of them without ever having to go to trial.... Are American prosecutors that much better? No... it is because of the plea bargain, a system of bullying and intimidation by government lawyers for which they ‘would be disbarred in most other serious countries....’”

This phenomenon of innocent people pleading guilty makes a mockery of everything the criminal justice system is supposed to stand for: fairness, equality and justice. As Judge Jed S. Rakoff concludes, “our criminal justice system is almost exclusively a system of plea bargaining, negotiated behind closed doors and with no judicial oversight. The outcome is very largely determined by the prosecutor alone.”

It’s estimated that between 2 and 8 percent of convicted felons who have agreed to a prosecutor’s plea bargain (remember, there are 2.3 million prisoners in America) are in prison for crimes they did not commit.

Clearly, the Coalition for Public Safety was right when it concluded, “You don’t need to be a criminal to have your life destroyed by the US criminal justice system.”

It wasn’t always this way. As Judge Rakoff recounts, the Founding Fathers envisioned a criminal justice system in which the critical element “was the jury trial, which served not only as a truth-seeking mechanism and a means of achieving fairness, but also as a shield against tyranny.”

That shield against tyranny has long since been shattered, leaving Americans vulnerable to the cruelties, vanities, errors, ambitions and greed of the government and its partners in crime.

There is not enough money in the world to make reparation to those whose lives have been disrupted by wrongful convictions.

Over the past quarter century, more than 1500 Americans have been released from prison after being cleared of crimes they did not commit. These are the fortunate ones. For every exonerated convict who is able to prove his innocence after 10, 20 or 30 years behind bars, Judge Kozinski estimates there may be dozens who are innocent but cannot prove it, lacking access to lawyers, evidence, money and avenues of appeal.

For those who have yet to fully experience the injustice of the American system of justice, it's only a matter of time.

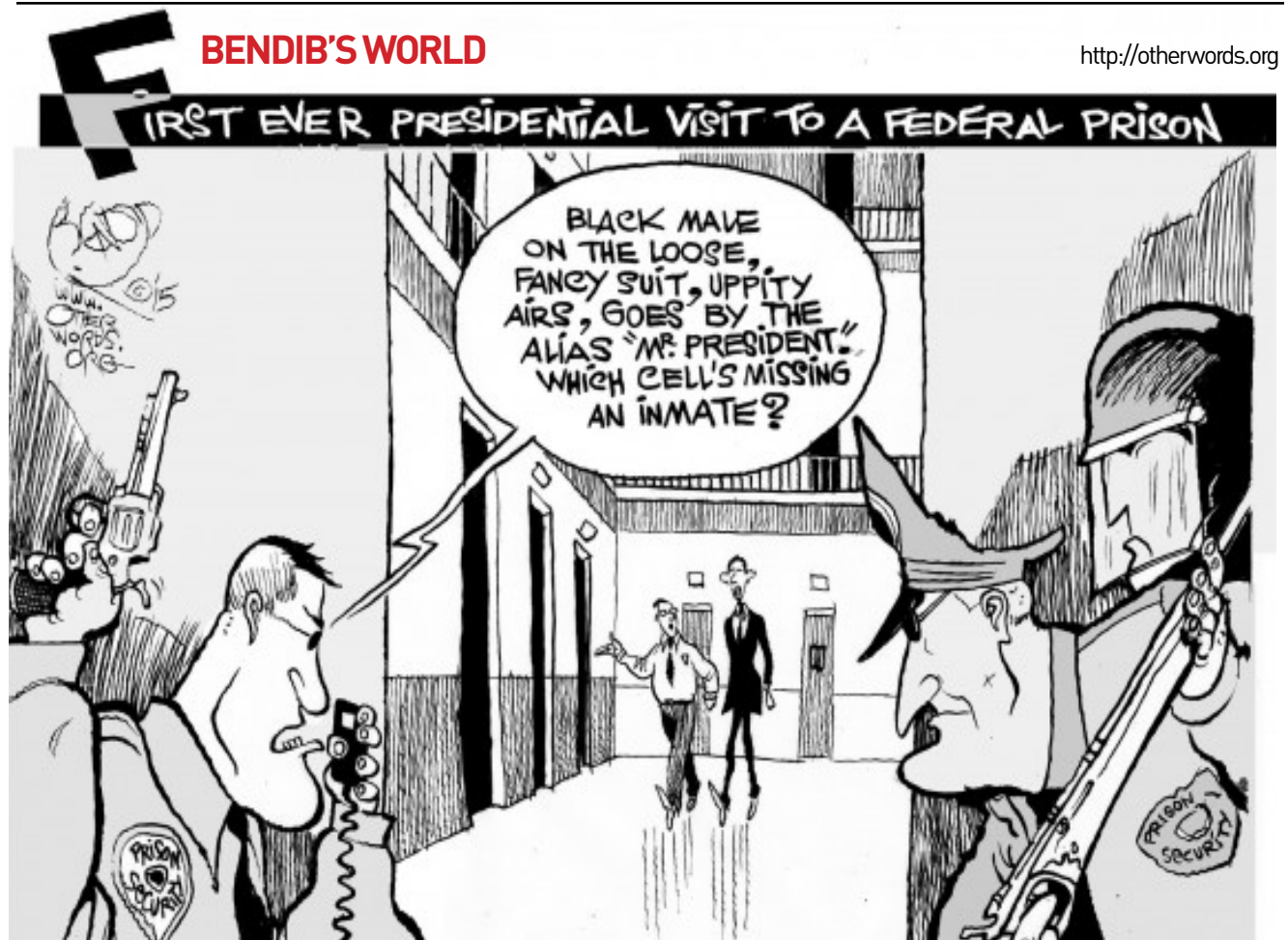
America no longer operates under a system of justice characterized by due process, an assumption of innocence, probable cause, and clear prohibitions on government overreach and police abuse. Instead, our courts of justice have been transformed into courts

of order, advocating for the government's interests, rather than championing the rights of the citizenry, as enshrined in the Constitution.

Without courts willing to uphold the Constitution's provisions when government officials disregard them, and a citizenry knowledgeable enough to be outraged when those provisions are undermined, the Constitution provides little protection against the police state.

In other words, in this age of hollow justice, courts of order, and government-sanctioned tyranny, the Constitution is no safeguard against government wrongdoing such as SWAT team raids, domestic surveillance, police shootings of unarmed citizens, indefinite detentions, asset forfeitures, prosecutorial misconduct and the like. **CT**

The Constitution provides little protection against the police state



How the One Per Cent won New Orleans

Bill Quigley shows how the city's racial mix has been manipulated in the ten years since Hurricane Katrina

Since Katrina, white incomes, which were over twice that of blacks, have risen three times as much as blacks

When Hurricane Katrina hit the US Gulf Coast on Aug. 29, 2005, the nation saw tens of thousands of people left behind in New Orleans. Ten years later, it the same people have been left behind again.

The population of New Orleans is noticeably smaller and noticeably whiter. While tens of billions poured into Louisiana, the impact on poor and working people in New Orleans has been minimal. Many of the elderly and the poor, especially poor families with children, never made it back to New Orleans. The poverty rate for children who did make it back remains at disturbingly high pre-Katrina levels, especially for black children. Rents are high and taking a higher percentage of people's income. The pre-Katrina school system fired all its teachers and professionals and turned itself into the charter experiment capital of the US even while the number of children in public schools has dropped dramatically. Since Katrina, white incomes, which were over twice that of blacks, have risen three times as much as blacks. While not all the numbers below are bad, they do illustrate who has been left behind in the 10 years since Katrina.

33: Rent in New Orleans is up 33 percent for one-bedroom apartments and 41 percent for two-bedroom apartments since Katrina hit. This is very tough because in New Orleans, 55 percent of residents rent. (The na-

tional average is 35 percent.) CNN/Money recently named New Orleans as one of the worst cities in the US for renters. Before Katrina, the average renter spent 19 percent of her income on rent. The Data Center reports 37 percent of renters in New Orleans now spend more than 50 percent of their income on rent. Rental apartments are mostly substandard and 78 percent of them, nearly 50,000 apartments, need major repairs.

38: In 2005, 38 percent of the children in New Orleans lived in poverty, 17 percentage points higher than the US as a whole. The most recent numbers show 39 percent of the children in New Orleans live in poverty. 82 percent of these families have someone working in the family so the primary cause is low wages.

44: New Orleans now has 44 school boards. Prior to Katrina, nearly all the public schools in New Orleans were overseen by the Orleans Parish School Board. 91 percent of the public schools in New Orleans are now charter schools, the highest rate in the country. Only 32 percent of African Americans believe the new charter school system is better than the public school system before the storm, versus 44 percent of whites (few whites attend the public schools).

50: 50 percent of the black children in New Orleans live in poor households, a higher percentage than when Katrina hit.

59: New Orleans is now 59 percent African

American, down from 66.7 percent in 2000; 31 percent white, up from 26 percent in 2000; and 5.5 percent Hispanic, up from 3 percent in 2000.

67: Prior to Katrina, New Orleans incarcerated more of its citizens than any city in the US, five times the national average. Ongoing efforts by community members and local officials have reduced the number of people held in the jail by 67 percent.

73: 73 percent of New Orleans students who start high school graduate on time.

3,221: There are now 3,221 fewer low-income public housing apartments in New Orleans than when Katrina hit. In 2005 there were 5,146 low-income public housing apartments in New Orleans, plus thousands of other public housing apartments scheduled for renewal or maintenance, nearly 100% African American. The housing authority now reports having 1,925 public housing apartments available for low-income people on the sites of the demolished complexes, less than half the number promised, and less than half of those have rents set at rates which are affordable to those who lived in public housing before Katrina. That means the majority of public housing units now require higher incomes from renters than the people who were living in public housing prior to Katrina. That is why only about half of the families who lived in the four public housing developments that were demolished after Katrina made it back to New Orleans by 2011. And only 7 percent of those original families were living in the new housing that replaced their homes.

6,000: There are 6,000 fewer people on Social Security in Orleans Parish than before the storm. Orleans Parish had 26,654 people on Social Security, either old age or disability, in 2004. Orleans Parish had 20,325 people on Social Security in the latest report. There are similar drops in the numbers of people on Temporary Assistance for Needy Families in New Orleans. There were just over 3,000 families receiving state temporary assistance in New Orleans in May 2005. As of May 2015, that number was down to 463.

7,500: Over 7,500 public school teachers and paraprofessionals, mostly African American, were fired when Louisiana took over the New Orleans public school system after Katrina. The US Supreme Court refused to hear their appeal in May 2015.

9,000: There are 9,000 fewer families receiving food stamps than before. In May 2015, Orleans Parish had just under 40,000 households receiving SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits. In May 2005, New Orleans had 49,000 households receiving food stamps.

17,392: There are 17,392 fewer children enrolled in public schools in New Orleans now than before Katrina. There were over 63,000 enrolled pre-Katrina and now there are 45,608.

35,451: The median income for white families in New Orleans is \$60,553; that is \$35,451 more than for black families whose median income was \$25,102. In the last 10 years the median income for black families grew by 7 percent. At the same time, the median income for white families grew three times as fast, by 22 percent. In 2005, the median income for black households was \$23,394, while the median for white households was \$49,262. By 2013, the median income for black households had grown only slightly, to \$25,102. But the median for white households had jumped to \$60,553.

44,516: The New Orleans metro area has 44,516 more Hispanic residents in 2013 than in 2000. The total is now 103,061, just over 8 percent of metro population according to the Data Center.

71,000: 71,000 fewer people live in New Orleans now than before the storm. In 2005, New Orleans had a population of 455,000 and in 2014 its population was 384,000.

99,650: There are 99,650 fewer African Americans living in New Orleans now than in 2000, compared to 11,000 fewer whites.

\$71 Billion: \$71 billion was received by the state of Louisiana for Katrina repairs, rehabilitation and rebuilding. This index makes it clear who did not get the money. **CT**

The median income for white families in New Orleans is \$60,553; that is \$35,451 more than for black families whose median income was \$25,102

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Bill Quigley is a human rights lawyer and professor at Loyola University New Orleans College of Law. He is also a member of the legal collective of School of Americas Watch, and can be reached at quigley77@gmail.com.

Pedophilia and the idiocy of Ann Coulter

Fred Reed does a quick fact check on right wing author's latest rant

Mexico, we are to believe idfwe read Coulter's new book, is now a freefire zone for doing children. She says it's legal. But is it true?

Enough. I shall go deep into the Okefenokee Swamp, dwell in a hut of clay and wattles made, and live on crocodile meat and watermelons. The modern world is too much for me. I have just read *¡Adios, America!* by Ann Coulter, and discovered that Mexico, my current home, is a suppurating moral sore where men of fifty can legally screw little girls of twelve. Yes. It is perfectly legal. I know this is true because Miss Coulter says it is true. All a drooling pervert has to do is sweet-talk the child. "Hey, leetle girl, want an ice-cream cone? I geeve you a nice toy eef you let me...."

I am grateful to Miss Ann for the information. I have lived 13 years in Mexico without encountering this. The Mexicans have not heard of it either. Mexican attorneys are unaware of it. The penal codes are barren of it. She in lone splendor knows of this officially sanctioned child-molestation.. Specifically she says that the age of sexual consent in Mexico is "12 in all but one Mexican state and 14 in the other."

Twelve? My god, that's barbaric. This is certainly what Miss Ann is peddling as the nature of Mexico and Mexicans. Of course all manner of gullible websites picked this up. Mexico, we are to believe, is now a freefire zone for doing children. Why, it's legal.

But is it true? Let us look at the actual law. In the newspaper business of earlier times, this was called "research" or "reporting," and was thought to be good form in writing for publication.

Penal Code of the State of Jalisco Artículo 142-M.

"A quien tenga cópula o cópula equiparada, con una persona menor de edad o en una persona que no tenga la capacidad de comprender el significado de las cosas o de resistir el hecho, se le impondrá una pena de.:

"On one who copulates or the equivalent of copulation ("cópula equiparada" means penetration with anything other than a penis) with a person of minor age or who does not have the capacity to understand the significance of the act or to resist the act, will be imposed a penalty of:"

"1 Tres meses a cinco años de prisión, cuando la víctima tenga entre quince y menos de dieciocho años de edad y el acto se realice con su consentimiento por medio de la seducción, la cual se presume salvo prueba en contrario, o por medio del engaño;"

"1 Three months to five years of prison, when the victim is between fifteen and eighteen years of age and the act is realized with his or her consent by means of seduction, which shall be presumed unless there is proof to the contrary, or by means of deception"

"2 Ocho a quince años de prisión, cuando la víctima tenga entre quince y menos de dieciocho años de edad y el acto se realice sin su consentimiento, o cuando sea una persona que no tenga la capacidad de comprender el significado de las cosas o de resistir el hecho;"

"2 Eight to fifteen years of prison when the victim is between fifteen and eighteen and the act is realized without his or her consent, or when the victim lacks the capacity to understand the significance or to resist."

3 Doce a veinte años de prisión, cuando la víctima sea menor de quince años de edad.”

Twelve to twenty years of prison when the victim is less than fifteen. Maybe that sounds to you like license to screw little girls of twelve. To me it sounds like a long time in a Mexican jail. I do not recommend confusing the two.

The foregoing is the law in Jalisco, where I live. Similar laws exist in the other states. At risk of boring the reader, I offer another example from a randomly selected state: .

For the state of Campeche:

“Artículo 164 Comete el delito de estupro el que realice cópula con el consentimiento de persona mayor de catorce y menor de dieciocho años, independientemente de su sexo. Al que cometa el delito de estupro se le impondrán de seis meses a tres años de prisión y multa de doscientos a cuatrocientos días de salario.”

“Article 164: He commits statutory rape who copulates, with consent, with a person of more than fourteen years of age but less than eighteen, regardless of the person’s sex. A punishment of six months to three years of prison will be imposed on the perpetrator and a fine of 400 days of salary.”

So, the age at which a young female can legally engage in sex with any consenting adult without restriction is...eighteen.

Now, Miss Ann could have discovered this in ten minutes on Google. (In fairness, though, it may be that internet service hasn’t reached New York.) Why didn’t she? The penal codes for all of Mexico are easily found there. Is she deliberately deceiving the reader (translated from the prissy journalese, this means “lying”) or is she so ideologically inflamed as to accept without checking anything derogatory about anything she doesn’t like? Actual malice? Reckless disregard for truth? Incompetence?

She is fiercely opposed to immigration from the Third World, which is reasonable since it is probably going to leave America poorer and bitterly divided forever. Yet it seems to me that she should stay within telemetry range of truth. Her book would be useful if she had done so. Instead it is a sustained partisan shriek, often lapsing into the silly. For example, the subtitle is “The Left’s Plan to Turn Our Country into a Third World Hellhole.”

I picture myself talking to my good left-liberal

friend Diana:

Me: “Hey, Di, are you planning to make America into a third-world hellhole?”

Di: “Why, yes, Fred! I’m on the disease-importation committee.”

Come on, Ann. Grow up. This isn’t journalism. If it were any more slanted it would be vertical. Unsupported charges of encouraging pedophilia wouldn’t get past a desk editor at the Weekly Reader.

If she is so sloppy in her research—the most charitable explanation – regarding things I know about, how am I to accept her word on things I can’t check? And this stuff isn’t appreciated by Mexicans since it encourages every pervert north of Laredo to come down to prey on their children.

As so often happens when I read of Mexico in the American press, I see little resemblance to the country I live in. She tells with satisfied dudgeon of the inherent filthiness of Mexicans, who strew trash everywhere. Dirty diapers, plastic bags, used condoms, garbage. Really?

In the last few months, thanks to a major road trip, I have been in Guadalajara, Arandas, Aguas Calientes, Leon, Durango, Rosario, Mazatlan, Ls Paz, Cabo San Lucas, Jamai, San Pedro Itzican, and Loreto, among others. None was strewn with trash. My neighborhood is not strewn with trash.

Hell holes exist in the Third World, whatever precisely that is: much of the Moslem world, probably all of black Africa, India, Gaza – but aside from Belize, maybe Nicaragua, and Guatemala, there probably isn’t one below the Rio Bravo (I have never been to Nicaragua or Venezuela.)

¡Adios America! energetically favors ending immigration to America, a good idea which will not be adopted, but her unending railing against the Left ensures that the book will be read only by people who already agree with it. How bright is that?

Enough of hellholegenesis. I am off to the Okefenokee, to live peacefully among water moccasins and weird-looking birds.

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Fred Reed’s books include “*Nekkid in Austin: Drop Your Inner Child Down a Well*”, “*Reports from a Fractal Dung Beetle*”, “*Au Phuc Dup*”, “*Nowhere to Go: The Only Really True Book About VietNam*”. he blogs at <http://fredoneverything.org>

Miss Ann is herself a curious piece of work. She is in her mid-fifties, but on her book jackets looks like a hot babe of twenty-two. Achieving this must require enough makeup to fill a peanut-butter sandwich, and I suspect that she has worked a couple of copies of Photoshop into smoking ruins

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