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## Famous Aussies Weigh in: Time to Get Serious About Nuke Disarmament

By Malcolm Fraser, Gustav Nossal, Barry Jones, Peter Gration, John Sanderson and Tilman Ruff

April 8, 2009

We are at the crossroads of a nuclear crisis. On the one hand we are at a growing risk of nuclear terrorism and the use of still massively bloated arsenals. On the other we have perhaps the best opportunity yet to abolish nuclear weapons.

For the first time a US president has been elected with a commitment to abolish nuclear weapons. Barack Obama needs all the support and encouragement in the world. Unlike the last opportunity, at the end of the Cold War, this one must not be squandered. An increasingly resource- and climate-stressed world is an ever more dangerous place for nu-

clear weapons. We must not fail.

Abolishing nuclear weapons is a paramount challenge for the entire world - a precondition for survival, sustainability and health for our planet and future generations. Both in the indiscriminate devastation they cause, and in their persistent, spreading, genetically damaging radioactive fallout, nuclear weapons are unlike any other "weapons". They cannot be used for any legitimate military purpose. Any use or threat of use violates international humanitarian law.

The notion that nuclear weapons can ensure anyone's security is fundamentally flawed. They most threaten those who possess them, or - like Australia - claim protection from them, because they become the preferred targets for others' nuclear weapons. Accepting that

they have a legitimate place - even for "deterrence" - means being willing to accept the incineration of tens of millions of fellow humans and radioactive devastation of large areas, and is fundamentally immoral.

As noted by the Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission headed by Hans Blix: "So long as any state has nuclear weapons, others will want them. So long as any such weapons remain, there is a risk that they will one day be used, by design or accident. And any such use would be catastrophic." The only sustainable approach is one standard - zero nuclear weapons for all.

State-of-the-art climate models put the case for abolition beyond dispute. Even a limited regional nuclear war involving 100 Hiroshima-sized

See **AUSSIES** on page 2

## Profits versus a Priceless Culture: A Choice for American People

By Riki Ott

Point Hope, Alaska. News of ExxonMobil's record profit of \$45 billion for 2008 - the highest for a US company - was met with indifference in the longest continuously occupied community site in North America.

Located in the northwest corner of Alaska, Point Hope sits like a remote lighthouse on a thin strip of land that juts out into the Chukchi Sea. Like a beacon for humanity, the Inupiat ("In-OU-pe-at or Eskimo") people have inhabited this site for over ten thousand years.

Earl Kingik is an Inupiat Elder and a whaling captain from Point Hope (the traditional name is Tikigaq or "the Real People"). For two weeks, I traveled with Kingik and Rosemary Ahtuanguak to visit the Inupiat villages along the Arctic Ocean. Both are outspoken advocates of human rights and their subsistence culture.

The coastal Inupiat rely on the sea for their subsistence, specifically on the great bowhead whales that live close to the edge of the Arctic ice pack. Bowhead whales spend summers feeding above the Arctic Circle in the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas and winter in sub-arctic in the Bering Sea. The annual migrations of these great animals bring them close to the coast where the Inupiat of Point Hope harvest the northbound whales in spring and watch them head south in fall.

But all this may change. The coastal Inupiat now face the greatest threat to their culture: double jeopardy from America's - and the world's - dependency on fossil fuels.

The Arctic region is experiencing the effects of global climate change from burning fossil fuels and other human-use impacts. The ice pack has thinned and fall storms now erode the jutting coast once protected by sea ice. Point Hope may have to relocate further inland. Further, the Arctic Ocean is becoming more acidic as the cold water ocean's capacity to absorb

carbon is exceeded. [An acidic ocean will disrupt the entire Arctic food web that sustains the Inupiat culture.](#)

The other threat is the relentless drive for more oil. The Bush administration's US Arctic Policy opens 73 million acres of the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas to oil and gas exploration and development.

Earl, Rosemary, and other Arctic indigenous people - are members of nonprofit group [Resisting Environmental Destruction On Indigenous Lands \(REDOIL\)](#), which is an Alaska Native network of coastal and interior Tribes. Concerned about effects on culture from catastrophic climate change, REDOIL supports the self-determination right of Tribes in Alaska, as well as a socially-just transition from fossil fuels and mineral development to sustainable economies.

REDOIL and environmental groups combined efforts and successfully sued the [corruption-riddled Mineral Management Services](#) twice to block oil lease sales and exploration, first in the Beaufort Sea in 2007, and then in the Chukchi Sea in 2008. Both lawsuits challenged the Bush administration's process as "rushed" with disregard of significant impacts to indigenous subsistence users, cultural sovereignty, critical habitats, and endangered species such as bowhead whales and polar bears. [Shell Oil is now pressing the court to reconsider.](#)

REDOIL has allies. The North Slope Borough and Alaska Eskimo Whaling Commission (AEWC) also challenged Shell Oil's drilling plan in the Beaufort Sea in 2007. When the fight over offshore oil development shifted west into the Chukchi Sea, the Native Village of Point Hope - a federally recognized tribal government and the Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope (ICAS), among others, joined in the second lawsuit. Just last week, the AEWC and the ICAS called for a moratorium on offshore oil and gas activities in the Beaufort

and Chukchi Seas.

Earl figures the courts are a stopgap measure at best to buy precious time. He is familiar with the Exxon Valdez case - after 20 years of litigating, the US Supreme Court sided with ExxonMobil, sharply reducing punitive damages to four days' net profit instead of one year's net profit as the jury had awarded.

Earl has turned to the young people in his quest to build support to oppose oil development in the Arctic Ocean. He asked students to write letters to President Obama, explaining their culture and what they learned from Rosemary and I about the need to protect the ocean and wildlife from oil development and oil spills. "Will the president listen to us?" many students asked doubtfully.

"President Obama supports tribal sovereignty," Earl told them. "Look up sovereign. This president will listen to us." The children bent earnestly to their task.

The Inupiat people - from the youngest letter-writers to the Elders - know their culture is priceless. Cultural value cannot be measured like ExxonMobil's profit and assigned a value in billions of dollars. Oil exploration and development in the Arctic threaten cultural survival and represent a clash of cultural values versus corporate profits. This is a human rights issue.

Silence on the part of the American public amounts to complicity - tacit support of the oil industry. It is time for Americans to break silence. Please join the Inupiat people in opposing the Bush administration's US Arctic Policy; specifically, oil and gas development in the Beaufort and Chukchi Seas.

*Spill survivor and author Riki Ott shares insights on disaster trauma and recovery nationwide and in [Not One Drop: Betrayal and Courage in the Wake of the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill](#) (Chelsea Green, 2008). Ott is an advisor to the nonprofit organization REDOIL.*

## Demand Side is Our Future

By V.B. Price

Who would you rather support with your dollars - a local business run by people you know and trust, people who have goods to sell to you that you feel you need or want, or a global corporation, a fictional corporate person, you'll never know, that is constantly trying to persuade you to buy things that you don't really need and don't, personally, want?

That's a loaded question, of course, and the answer is obvious. But the underlying issue was not so obvious to me until I started thinking about, of all things, the war on drugs. The economic issue common to the drug war and issues of local versus global enterprise, is "demand."

And "demand" is a murky pond full of strong eddies and cold, dark places. But when one looks ahead, past this recession and the global economic upheaval caused by corporate and banking crime compounded by a radical shift in fuel sources and climate change, demand becomes an idea that needs exploring.

Local people are in charge of local demand. That has everything to do with self-determination versus being conned.

The question is always who sets demand? Who profits from, and who is burdened by, demand?

Demand is not only about goods to be purchased and prices to be paid. It is also about ripple effects and local independence.

Generally, local businesses that thrive against global competition respond to the "demand" of their customer's needs and wants. If they don't, they perish. "Corporate persons" who have no hometown, tend not to respond to local demand, but rather create demand through manipulative advertising that often outright lies about price and quality to lure the volume sales they need to rake in billions by underpricing all smaller providers until they have a true monopoly.

In this equation, local business responds to local demand. Global business creates artificial demands that it supplies.

Albuquerque is chock full of wonderful small businesses run by real people, employing more real people, and keeping their incomes in the community. I'll always look for local sources because they cater to what I want, to my personal "demand," and don't try to con me into buying what they want to sell.

So where does the drug war come in?

The War on Drugs is a supply-side war. The U.S. Government is battling a vast underground "criminal person," a network of huge cartels both international and territorial, that are matchlessly secret and mercilessly violent, at war with each other and at war with our culture.

The supply-side of the drug war

will never be defeated. It's too varied, too scattered, too rich, and brings in billions to those who operate it and to those who oppose it.

Who profits from this supply-side war? And who is burdened?

Every entity engaged in the war profits from it, in some way or another - the global crime cartels and the various governmental and international agencies that fight them.

Who is burdened? Obviously, the local worlds we all inhabit, the local businesses and neighborhoods constantly on guard for property crime and the never ending surge of drug violence.

What is the demand side solution? Clearly, one can't catch all the drug johns and snorters in the world, any more than one could stop drinkers from drinking during prohibition. The only way to intervene is to alter the delivery system. Decriminalize marijuana and other drugs, regulate them and tax them, and prohibit advertising (or "pushing" them) and communicate the availability of rehabilitation. In doing so, countless non-violent jobs will be created for people who will replace supply-side warriors.

The ripple effect of this demand side solution is almost self-evident. International drug traffic into the United States will come to a standstill. Crime cartels will try to find something else to sell, some new way to con the gullible into buying what they sell, but mostly, in American localities the market for crime supplied drugs will dry up.

Odious private prison corporations, making money off the misery of others, will fold when they can't make fortunes by holding non-violent smokers and purveyors of marijuana for appallingly long sentences.

Smoking dope will be as limited as smoking cigarettes. When the alcohol business was revived at the end of Prohibition, legitimate businesses were reborn. The decriminalization of drugs would not bring the rebirth of legitimate business, because they've always and only been sold by crime gangs and international criminal cartels. But they could be offered by government taxed, controlled and regulated dispensaries with prices that would not drive people to criminal activity to fulfill their demand.

Demand-side thinking has its flaws and drawbacks. But we are all living through the death throes of supply-side economics, and the drip, drip, drip that's driving us nuts is not the trickle down of wealth, but the melting of personal incomes and savings. It's time we take charge of the demand side, investing in our local communities while divesting ourselves of supply side manipulations and the many "wars on..." that consume our freedoms, fortunes and environment.

# The UNM Press Predicament

By John Crawford

April 12, 2009

A notice released Tuesday, March 31, 2009 on the UNM website titled "UNM Press Announces Reorganization" has set in motion a series of volatile developments around the university community and press. Following the announcement, UNM Press director Luther Wilson terminated the positions of marketing director Glenda Madden, publicity director Amanda Sutton, and editor Lisa Pacheco and initiated a study of whether to outsource the press's warehousing and customer service, an action likely to result in the loss of more employees and the cancellation or alteration of distribution agreements of up to thirty independent presses. Among those presses facing the possible termination of UNM Press distribution are West End Press, La Alameda Press, the Maxwell Museum of Anthropology, the Museum of New Mexico, New Mexico Magazine, and Fresco Fine Art Publications.

News of the firing of the marketing and publicity directors was devastating in itself. Glenda Madden and Amanda Sutton, whom Wilson hired shortly after returning to UNM Press as its director nine years ago, are recognized as having provided consistent service of the highest standard. Wilson does not plan to replace them. How UNM Press can market and publicize its books without them has occasioned considerable speculation from members of the remaining UNM Press staff, as well as authors and other clients of the press.

Meanwhile, a bitter battle has broken out between Wilson and the same two terminated employees, whom Wilson has allegedly threatened to sue, claiming libel. Whether or not he actually sues them after having fired them, it appears that so far Wilson has enjoyed some protective cover from administrators serving the University. A series of concerns raised by staff members last December, critical of UNM Press management on a number of points, has not been addressed so far by assistant provost Wynn Goering's office, and the entire controversy around UNM Press and its financial crisis was apparently soft-pedaled during the recent North Central ten-year assessment visit.

Whither Outsourcing?

In a belated letter to "client publishers" sent out ten days after the plan was announced on the UNM website, Richard Schuetz, the Associate Director for Busi-

ness Operations, stated "The University of New Mexico Press plans to solicit proposals to outsource its order fulfillment functions to include warehousing, shipping, receiving, customer service, invoicing, returns processing and accounts receivables [sic]. The purpose of soliciting proposals is to determine if outsourcing is more cost effective in this troubled economy than our current in-house operation."

The letter adds that as a result of this study the "client presses" will either be dropped, outsourced themselves while retaining a relationship to UNM Press, or subjected to "changes in services we provide and/or the rates we charge for our services."

The outsourcing plan raises many questions. While one might speak of UNM Press outsourcing its own distribution, it is less clear what this means when applied to the "client presses." Involuntarily removing other presses from their UNM Press distribution agreement is not "outsourcing," it is dumping. It is not yet clear how many presses the UNM Press management will seek to remove altogether, but outright removal would likely ruin the smaller presses that depend on the support they've received under the current arrangement. And the problems hit close to home. Nearly all the presses likely to be affected are based in New Mexico.

Widespread Coverage

The UNM Press action has been reported in a number of places, first in a lengthy press release sent out from the publicity office itself, then by independently written stories in the Daily Lobo, the Albuquerque Journal, the Chronicle of Higher Education, Inside Higher Education, the Poets and Writers website, and elsewhere. Several articles, including the one in the Chronicle of Higher Education, cite the UNM Press staff's explosive reaction to news of the firings and the threat to existing distribution agreements.

The Poets and Writers piece touches on the danger the action creates for "client publishers" who face possible termination of services.

In the Poets and Writers report former marketing director Glenda Madden comments, "Outsourcing is a slap in the face to the community, state, and region that UNM Press has served so well for eighty years." Madden describes at length the disruptive effects of outsourcing on continuity of sales for long-established books as well as those struggling to find an audience.

The Chronicle of Higher Education article cites Clark Whitehorn, UNM Press editor in chief, concerning the press's importance to New Mexico's smaller presses and well-known authors, as well as its responsibility to continue to produce state textbooks for the elementary and secondary school levels. In New Mexico there is a unique cultural interdependence: "You sneeze, and half the state catches cold. That's where the value of an academic press like UNM comes into play," he states.

A Higher Responsibility

Although West End Press, for example, can maintain a stable environment on its own in the face of these surprising developments, there is more at stake than the success of any single publisher. Like others, we have reduced the cost of publication by short run digital printing and plan to substantially reduce the number of titles in inventory. West End Press's recent New Series of books by younger writers continues to do well regionally. But, like other small New Mexico publishers, we must have prompt, professional fulfillment of orders and a close-knit relationship to the distribution process, which outsourcing imperils.

Our primary objective in publishing creative literature (poetry, fiction, and drama) is to advance the humanistic goals that until recently were regarded as essential to the aims of university education and discourse. All of the aforementioned presses share a concern for our responsibility in speaking to the citizens of New Mexico. The actions currently contemplated by the University of New Mexico Press, along with the historic refusal of the University itself to subsidize its publishing activity, run counter to this purpose. They reflect a national trend toward corporatization of universities as well as an attack on humanistic expression so apparent in this decade. This economic, cultural and ethical shrinkage, if implemented, runs counter to a thriving intellectual community. If the smaller New Mexico presses are dropped from the UNM Press distribution plan in significant numbers, West End Press may have no choice but to join them on the "outside," perhaps to find a more responsive environment than we presently enjoy in the corporate university.

*John Crawford, Associate Professor of English Emeritus at UNM, is founder and publisher of West End Press, which he began in 1976 and which now numbers 128 volumes. (www.Westendpress.org)*

## AUSSIES from page 1

bombs - just 0.03 per cent of the explosive power of the world's nuclear arsenal, would kill tens of millions of people and cause severe climatic consequences for a decade or more.

Cooling and darkening - with shorter growing seasons, less rainfall and increased ultraviolet radiation - would slash global food production. One billion people could starve. More would succumb from epidemics and inevitable social and economic mayhem. Such a war could occur with the arsenals of India and Pakistan, or Israel.

The most effective, expeditious and practical way to abolish nuclear weapons is to negotiate a comprehensive, irreversible, binding, verifiable treaty - a nuclear weapons convention. Such an approach has achieved all successes to date in eliminating whole classes of weapons, from dum dum bullets to chemical and biological weapons, landmines and cluster munitions.

It will be a long and complex process, and the sooner it begins the better. We agree with the United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, that the model nuclear weapons convention developed by an international team of lawyers, physicians and scientists is "a good point of departure".

Incremental steps can achieve important ends, demonstrate good faith and generate political momentum. The 13 practical steps agreed at the nuclear non-proliferation treaty review conference in

2000 should be upheld and implemented. They include all nuclear weapons states committing to eliminate their nuclear arsenals; entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty; ending production of fissile material; taking weapons off hazardous "launch on warning" status; and negotiating deep weapons reductions.

But at the same time a comprehensive roadmap is needed, a vision of what the final puzzle looks like, and a path to get there, to make unequivocal the goal of abolition. Without the intellectual, moral and political weight of abolition as the credible and clear goal, and real movement on disarmament, the non-proliferation treaty is at risk of unravelling after next year's five-yearly review. A cascade of nuclear weapons proliferation can be expected to follow.

Achieving a world free of nuclear weapons will require not only existing arsenals to be progressively dismantled and destroyed, but production of the fissile materials from which nuclear weapons can be built - separated plutonium and highly enriched uranium - to cease, and existing stocks eliminated or placed under secure international control.

The International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament announced by the Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, in Kyoto last June and led with Japan, has real potential. It could direct its efforts to building political momentum to get disarmament moving.

Australia should prepare for a world free of nuclear weapons by "walking the talk". We should reduce the role of nuclear weapons in our security policies, as we call on nuclear weapon states to do. The international safeguards on which we depend to ensure our uranium does not contribute to proliferation need substantial strengthening and universal application. Our reliance on the "extended nuclear deterrence" provided by the US should be reviewed so that Australian facilities and personnel could not contribute to the possible use of nuclear weapons.

Canada championed the treaty banning landmines, or the Ottawa treaty. Norway led the way on cluster munitions, or the Oslo convention. Why should the nuclear weapons convention, which the world needs and deserves, not be championed by Australia and become known as the Canberra (or Sydney or Melbourne or Brisbane) convention?

Malcolm Fraser is a former Liberal prime minister, Sir Gustav Nossal is a research immunologist and former Australian of the Year, Barry Jones was a minister in the Hawke Labor government, Peter Gratton is a former chief of the Defence Force, John Sanderson is a former chief of army and a governor of Western Australia, and Tilman Ruff is Associate Professor at the University of Melbourne's Nossal Institute for Global Health.

*Source: The Sydney Morning Herald*

# Albuquerque Slam Poet Laureate Program Offers Historic Title

By Zachary Kluckman

For the first time in 700 years a Poet Laureate will be appointed by the people in an open competition, offering a unique opportunity for underserved artists and a brand new title for the City of Albuquerque.

After nearly 700 years of traditional appointment of Poets Laureate by government officials, Albuquerque Mayor Martin J. Chavez and Executive Director Zachary Kluckman create an historic new title, and opportunity, for poets in the region. In its inaugural year the Albuquerque Slam Poet Laureate program will appoint the world's first Slam Poet Laureate, allowing local residents and visitors to name their new spokesperson directly, in what will prove to be a truly historic first.

In 1341 the Roman poet Petrarch took the title Poet Laureate for his poem "Africa". Almost three hundred years later, King James I recreated the title in its current incarnation for friend and poet Ben Jonson. This year, the Albuquerque based program aims to create a second title for poets by recognizing the impact of spoken word on the new voice of the nation. Acknowledging the fact that slam poetry has significantly reinforced the role of poets as story-tellers and historians in modern society, this program will combine that aesthetic with the traditional role of spokesperson that the laureate title carries.

Two of the most significant aspects of this program are that now a potential laureate is asked to prove him or herself by reaching the audience, and also the people will now get to pick their own laureate in a performance setting.

"This program creates a unique opportunity for the people who will be represented by this laureate to ask them for something, a demonstration that their words and feelings match those of the audience enough to be representative...to be a spokesperson for those values," says Kluckman.

The newly crowned laureate will serve a one year term as liaison between the city and the people. This one year reign has one limitation - the laureate may only serve once. The organizers have crafted this program to create new opportunities for literary artists in the community who are often overlooked by the traditional limitations of laureate appointments. By the same token, they have created this rule to encourage poets to make their year count artistically and in terms of service.

"As much as we want to allow the open performance dynamics of slam, we also want the winner to be a poet first...someone who loves their craft and brings a passion to it," states Kluckman.

The competitors will battle through two preliminary bouts of three rounds each in May, including free verse, structured poems and a one minute "free" round. The winner will be determined by audience votes and a combined jury of established poets and audience members will determine the final outcome on June 13, 2009 at the historic Kimo Theater. For the last ten poets standing the prize package includes a professionally recorded CD by a Grammy winning local sound engineer, the coveted "iced dog-tags" and the honor of being recognized as the first Slam Poet Laureate in the world.

The program also includes musical guests Melissa Christopher of Santa Fe and Best of 'Burque winner Fast Heart Mart. All three nights of competition - May 20, May 29 and the finals on June 13 - are open to the public and tickets are available through Ticketmaster and the venue box offices.

For details on the competitors, venues and dates, please visit the website at <http://abqspl.wildapricot.org> or e-mail Executive Director Zachary Kluckman at [tigerbrioughtiger@yahoo.com](mailto:tigerbrioughtiger@yahoo.com) for more information.

To be truly radical is to make hope possible, rather than despair convincing.

By Raymond Williams, Welsh academic, novelist, and media critic

COMMENTARY

Harry's Rant

“Looking for the Upside”

By Harry Willson

Someone asked, "Is there an upside to the economic meltdown?" I know people who say they can't imagine any such thing -- it is pure disaster, a 20-year depression -- what could be good about it?

I'm no cock-eyed optimist, but I can think of several things.

[1] The meltdown will lead to a required review of the Pentagon budget, and perhaps even of war itself as an instrument of national policy. What is gained by killing large numbers of people? What do we manufacture for export, besides F-16's?

[2] The meltdown provides the final and complete repudiation of the doctrines of Milton Friedman and the so-called Chicago School, who advocated absolutely total deregulation, privatization of all government functions except war, and the shredding of the safety net human families depend on. Their ideas were carried out in many countries in recent decades, including Chile, Argentina, Bolivia, Poland, Russia and partially even here in the U.S. The meltdown proves that Friedman was entirely wrong. For the details of all this, see THE SHOCK DOCTRINE, by Naomi Klein.

[3] The meltdown will lead to massive popular endorsement of Social Security and the safety net. People will comprehend its value. There will be no more toleration of talk of privatization or of shutting down of Social Security. There will be fresh impetus and opportunity to set up Medicare for all, which will care for all of us and end up cheaper than the current health care mess.

[4] The meltdown constitutes a serious comedown for rampant consumerism and unlimited growth. It will amount to a restoration of reasonableness and a return to reality. There will be less emphasis on individuals amassing heaps of stuff, like all that Christmas crap we import from China. Many families have been renting storage sheds for all the stuff that doesn't fit in the house.

[5] The meltdown could result in a revamped economy, with more emphasis on providing for the necessities of life for everybody. Concern

and care for the environment will be enhanced. Equality will once again be taken seriously by a growing number of people. The new economy will not let such a huge fraction of our ingenuity and effort go into "holidays," while people are hungry and cold.

[6] The meltdown will take away the mystique of Bigness. Small will be seen once again as beautiful. Local will again be seen as preferable to "global."

[7] The meltdown will make more desirable, and feasible, a new social contract, a new sense of solidarity. It will become clearer that we are all in this together, after all. Our species made it through hard times in the early stages, what with ice ages and saber-toothed tigers. We did it through cooperation. The meltdown has proved that unbridled individualism is a bad idea, for everyone.

What has melted down? Imaginary wealth, scams, then housing, then banks, now employment, now commerce itself. No one is buying anything but food and medicine. The value of the money itself is now seriously at risk. See Zimbabwe. Gone! All gone! Some could call this development "chickens coming home to roost." Recent foreign policy and economic policy -- wrong! All wrong!

If the goal of the world-wide response to the meltdown is to "get back to where we were," as one pundit put it, then there is no upside and no meaning at all in the meltdown. If that's all we attempt, then humans are too stupid to benefit from setbacks, or to learn from mistakes. Unlimited growth and unrestricted greed constitute a mistake. If we don't learn from it, there is no upside.

But this must be noted -- the upside of the meltdown is opportunity. Nothing good is guaranteed or automatic. Nothing good will result, if we do nothing. Maybe we should start doing some of what needs to be done.

Harry Willson writes a Rant of the Month at [www.amadorbooks.com](http://www.amadorbooks.com) -- come see the Library of Old Rants. Email Harry at [harry@amadorbooks.com](mailto:harry@amadorbooks.com)

Tainted Research on Genetically Altered Seed

By Jim Hightower



Little rebellions can achieve big results, especially those coming from unlikely places.

And, surely, one of the least likely sources of rebels would be corn-insect researchers at land-grant universities. These crop-science specialists usually stay focused on things like rootworms, not grassroots uprisings. But 26 of them from various schools recently risked their own careers by daring to stand up to such powerhouse genetic seed manipulators as DuPont and Monsanto.

The researchers submitted a statement to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) charging that biotechnology giants are preventing them

from fully studying and reporting on the effectiveness and environmental impact of the industry's genetically altered seeds. On many crucial questions about the safety of these lab created crops, wrote the scientists, "No truly independent research can be legally conducted."

Why? Because the corporations' lobbyists and lawyers have rigged the rules so no studies can be done on their altered seeds without their permission, and even then, no findings can be published without their okay. In short, those who profit from the spread of these unproven and dangerous seeds have a chokehold on all research to evaluate their impact on our health and environment. The profiteers even have the potential, as one of the rebellious scientists put it, "to launder the data" that EPA relies on to authorize the use of the seeds.

Since these same corporations are

now the major funders of university research on biotech crops, it is no small thing for scientists to speak out. As one bluntly says, "People are afraid of being blacklisted."

It's time for Congress to break this corporate chokehold and free our public researchers to protect our health and environment. For information, contact: [www.organicconsumers.org](http://www.organicconsumers.org).

For more information on Jim Hightower's work -- and to subscribe to his award-winning monthly newsletter, *The Hightower Lowdown*, visit [www.jimhightower.com](http://www.jimhightower.com) [www.minute-manmedia.org](http://www.minute-manmedia.org)

No matter how cynical you get it is impossible to keep up.

By Lily Tomlin, American actor and comedian

Loco or Local and Living as If

By Astrid Webster

If we continue to live as if oil would last forever....

If we continue to live as though our cars did not leave dark clouds in the sky....

If we continue to specialize in the export of arms and armies, sent to the farthest reaches of the planet to make sure that we can obtain the world's choicest goods at the lowest prices, we leave nothing for our young save a harvest of bitterness.

Long before Julia Ward Howe penned the following words in 1870,

Arise, all women who have hearts.....Say firmly.....

Our sons shall not be taken from us to unlearn

All that we have been able to teach them of charity, mercy and patience.

We, the women of one country, Will be too tender of those of another country

To allow our sons to be trained to injure theirs."

From the voice of a devastated Earth a voice goes up with

Our own. It says: "Disarm! Disarm!

women knew that we needed farms more than arms, schools more than armies, and that words,

listening to one another and understanding, not a hierarchy of aggression, are key to the continuation of civilized human race.

We have known since the first club crushed the first skull that aggression raises rather than solves problems, consuming precious resources, inflaming hostilities which further shrinking resources, turning our young into storm troopers of our darkest imagination. Yet we see ourselves, not as taking the world's resources at gunpoint, but as schooling the world in our ways, our wants, stoked by irrepressible advertisers and lobbyists, as our due. Cooler, more compassionate heads urge us to answer the waste by conserving what we have and using it to develop environmentally sound and sustainable ways of meeting our needs. War and weapons are not among these ways.

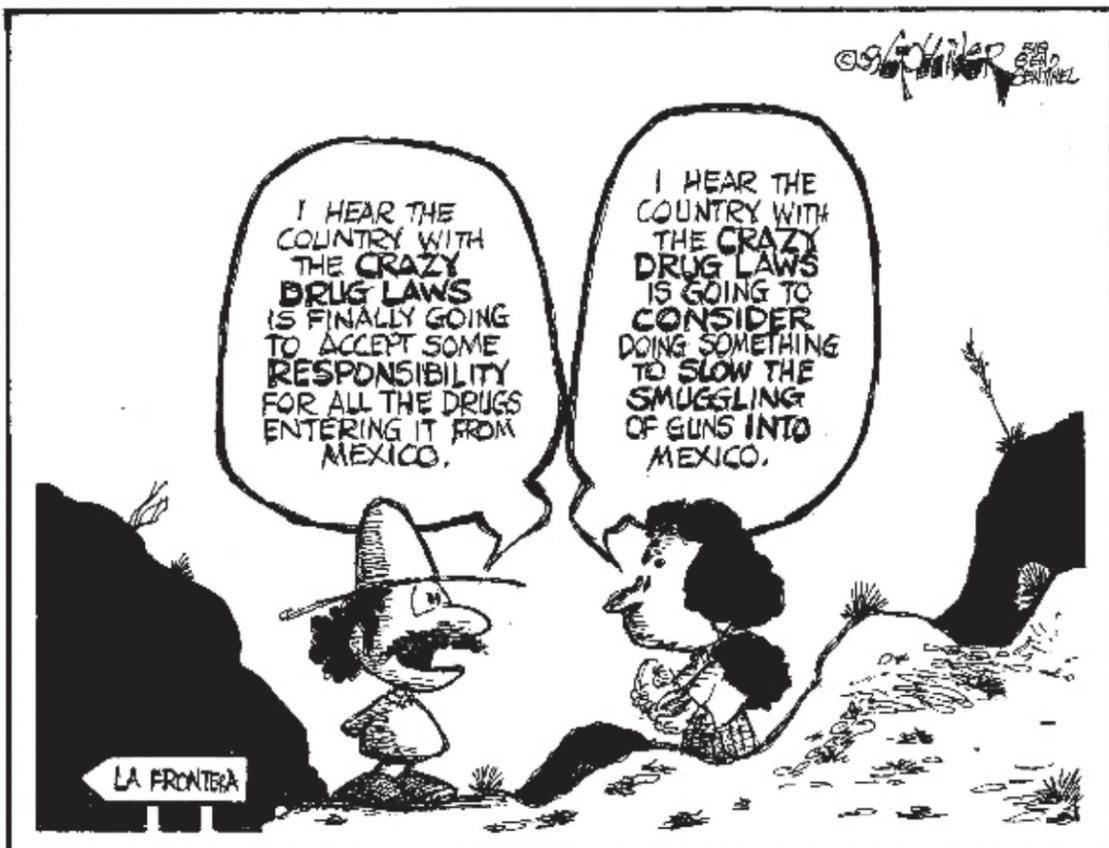
When newly elected Senator Udall says he is still studying the question of whether or not to build a new plutonium facility in Los Alamos, one that could displace most of the sustainable energy initiatives that might come to New Mexico, he is not really undecided. He simply has not figured out how to pass the cost of just one more deadly sin on to the all too easily, monitarily manipulated citizens of this nuclear enchanted land. We clutch the stimulation money and any other federal funding we can get, hoping it will lift the state from its bottom feeding economic status. War and weapons

never do that, however. They simply turn the young from the lessons learned at mothers' and teachers' knees, giving them graduate degrees in the school of despair. Too often they loose their heart in the depths of war and loose their lives on returning to homes that cannot heal what they've sacrificed.

There are a string of events, beginning with Earth Day on the Silver Bike Boulevard on April 26, to Mother's Day on May 10, to a new Independence Day in which we declare freedom from the bonds of massively destructive weapons, of subservience to huge corporations that won't rest until they beat us at monopoly, that we can celebrate in a new spirit of humanity, a spirit that leaves no one hungry, homeless, healthless or uneducated. We can't do it without our junior Senator, the mostly silent on the most important issues, Senator Bingaman, or the newest lab convert, Congressman Heinrich. Be sure to pay them a lot of attention until they realize that the only homeland security is sustainability.

**Insist that they learn that resources are destroyed with weapons, they are developed by thoughtful men with seeds, plows, irrigation ditches, hammers, nails and other construction tools.**

As consumers of resources, we must remind ourselves that globalism feeds war machines. Local farms and industry feed people.



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Comments and submissions (articles, photos, artwork), are welcomed and encouraged with the understanding that the editors cannot be held re-

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**Contributions as funds also are essential for continued growth of the ABQ TRIal Balloon.**

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## BOOK REVIEW

### Lincoln's Veteran Volunteers Win the War

By D. Reid Ross  
Excelsior Editions, State University of New York Press

By Jack Pickering

Ross's book depicts a spirit that has led directly to the election of Barack Obama. A century and a half ago a host of young Americans

were willing to sacrifice everything -- wealth, health, even their lives -- to defend the principle that "all men are created equal." About 2.5 million men served the Union between 1861 and 1865, but only about 200,000 enlisted "for the duration." They earned the honorific of "Veteran Volunteer" and were the heart and soul of Lincoln's army.

It happens that my maternal grandfather, Jacob Pontz, served in the 77th Pennsylvania Veteran Volunteer Infantry. He lived until I was 13 and told me of his experiences, mostly the funny ones. But he was modest and never explained "Veteran Volunteer." His three brothers

served in similar regiments. Coincidentally Ross's paternal grandfather and three brothers served in similar regiments from New York State and Illinois.

Ross's forbears were Scotch and Dutch Presbyterians and longtime Abolitionists. My ancestors on the distaff side were of a German Reformed Lutheran persuasion. They were not Abolitionists, since they believed -- as Lincoln did originally -- that emancipation should happen gradually. They fought for the Union -- that is, for a nation "conceived in liberty." In the end the Veteran Volunteers all fought for justice.

## Quique Cruz Converts Darkness Into Light with Quijerema and Archaeology of Memory



Rafael Manriquez is on the right, Quique Cruz on the left, holding up a musical instrument in the photo. Photo by Bill Nevins

By Bill Nevins

Quique Cruz sums up the story of his long life journey towards creation of an extraordinary work of art and human testimony called *Archaeology of Memory*: "The day after my nineteenth birthday, I was detained by Pinochet's secret police and spent one month as a desaparecido in the Villa Grimaldi torture center. Later, I spent one long year in four different concentration camps in central Chile. In 1976, I was expelled from the country and was allowed to return safely only towards the end of the dictatorial regime in 1989. It was not until I began a graduate program in Cultural Studies at Stanford University that I started to realize the nature of my past experiences as a survivor from the hands of Pinochet's special secret service. It finally dawned on me that I had been carrying around a fragmented history inside a hermetically sealed suitcase which I had never really wanted to unpack. It was the last suitcase that I had brought into exile, the one that was forgotten in the corner of my memory, hidden probably because of my fear of unwanted demons."

"I feel that one of the most important contributions that I have to offer to the discussion about memory, torture, the relationship between terror and aesthetics, political violence, and survival, is to pick up the pieces and try to assemble the dark puzzle that is the legacy of the dictatorial period"

I first met Quique Cruz one late Spring afternoon a few years ago

on the sidewalk outside Berkeley's La Pena Cultural Center, the wonderful performing arts center that has long been a mecca for Bay Area and visiting artists. Quique and fellow Chilean-born musician Rafael Manriquez were getting ready to rehearse and standing in front of the extraordinary mural portraying people's martyr Victor Jara amid a pantheon of progressive and revolutionary heroes. Strikingly, the mural displays Jara's hands as being disconnected from his body but still playing his guitar while Jara smiles and sings.

It was a fitting place to meet two artists who themselves are heroic survivors of the 1973 US-backed General Pinochet-led fascist coup which overthrew Chile's democratically elected government and resulted in the death of Chilean President Salvador Allende and coincided with the death of Chilean poet Pablo Neruda.

Maestro Quique Cruz is a Chilean-born musical composer/multi-instrumentalist and writer who has performed, taught and recorded music since the age of fourteen. In addition, he has created, participated and consulted in multimedia productions involving theater, dance and visual arts and film. He is the leader of the latino fusion jazz trio Quijerema. Quijerema is a performing arts quartet that celebrates and expands the cultures of the Americas through original music, poetry and multi-media art installations. Members of the ensemble play over thirty instruments, and have performed worldwide and

appeared on regional, national and international radio and television. Quijerema performs in theaters, festivals, museums, cultural centers and other venues. They also perform and conduct workshops for schools. In addition to performance, Quijerema specializes in scoring music for film. The band's website is [quijerema.com](http://www.quijerema.com). <http://www.quijerema.com>, <http://www.quijerema.com>

An NEA Fellow and a Doctoral candidate at Stanford University, Quique Cruz has won many awards. He seems always to be engaged in more than one musical, literary, film, tv or artistic project.

He composed the score called "Tinta Verde", for the documentary film Pablo Neruda, Presente! (Quijerema 2004) He just finished working with noted film Emmy Winner composer Mark Adler on the documentary film *The Fall of Fujimori* (2005 Sundance). He is the composer for the new feature film "Pisagua" by noted Chilean filmmaker Cristian Galaz.

Besides performing Latin American folk music and fusion jazz, Cruz has performed onstage with Jackson Browne, Mimi Fariña, Pete Seeger, Jorge Strunz, and Sting, among others. He's collaborated with Jackson Browne on *Lives in the Balance* (Electra Asylum, 1985); Strunz & Farah on *Guitarras* (Fantasy, 1985); William Ackerman on *Conferring with the Moon* (Windham Hill Records, 1986); Pete Sears on *Watchfire* (Redwood, 1988); Kenny Loggins on *Leap of Faith*. (Columbia Records, 1992); and Alex de Grassi on *The World's Getting Loud* (Wind-

## Updates on New Community Radio Stations in New Mexico!

By Maria Santelli

In October 2007, the FCC opened a brief filing window for community groups around the US to apply for full-power FM Radio licenses. Available Media, the 501(c)(3) arm of NM Indymedia, found five open frequencies around NM, and, along with help from the larger community, applied for the licenses. So far, we have been awarded 2 licenses, one for Gallup and one for Grants. Two are still pending, including one with service to Albuquerque! Since last summer, we have been working closely with some local organizers in Gallup, who are mobilizing the skills and enthusiasm it takes to build a community radio station from the ground up. Among this wonderful, dedicated group of folks are longtime uranium mining activists,

media professionals who have been squeezed out of the field as it has become more corporate and consolidated, students, other young people, artists, and eco-activists. In fact, many of the core radio organizers are also part of a solar energy collective in Gallup and are working to see that the station will be powered by the New Mexico sunshine! The Gallup station will likely have its barnraising—a weekend of production and programming workshops plus the actual building of the station—sometime in the spring of 2010. In the meantime, we will be working out some programming on an Internet station, which we will have up and running soon. You can keep posted and learn how you get involved by calling 505-242-5511 or send us an email: [info@availablemedia.org](mailto:info@availablemedia.org).

ham Hill Records, 1993). Cruz's own musical recordings include *Tatamonk* (Tropo Records, 2000) with Alex de Grassi and *Amistades* (Wariznake, 2000) with Rafael Manriquez. His latest recording, *Tinta Verde*, is the score for a documentary on Pablo Neruda, (Quijerema 2004).

Cruz has been a research fellow via the Ford Foundation and the Social Science Research Council, working on issues of memory, violence and exile and writing on issues of aesthetics and political violence.

This social research scholarship melded with Quique Cruz's musical art and his own experience as a survivor of political persecution and terror in his multi-media master work, *Villa Grimaldi: Archaeology of Memory in Three Cantos*. This extraordinary collaborative performance art-piece includes: a musical suite, a book and a documentary film and a multimedia installation. The work gathers the art and the experiences of six artists who were detained in one of the most infamous torture centers during the Chilean military dictatorship of Pinochet: Villa Grimaldi.

For several years, Quique Cruz interviewed, photographed and filmed a group of artists--poets, painters, writers, playwrights, musicians-- who have created a narrative in which they explore the contradictions of terror and aesthetics, the notion of pain and beauty and how to convert darkness into light.

*Villa Grimaldi: Archaeology of Memory in Three Cantos* is an installation, designed to be exhibited in a museum or cultural gallery, that is a life-changing artistic experience. Detailed information about the work and its availability for exhibition can be found at [archeologyofmemory.org](http://archeologyofmemory.org). It is to be hoped that we will soon enjoy a presentation of this great work, as well as a performance by Quique Cruz and Quijerema here in New Mexico. Let's all talk with our arts promoters, venues and sponsors here to that worthy purpose!

*Bill Nevins teaches Composition and Creative Writing at UNM-Valencia and hosts the monthly Sanjevani Poetry Circle in Albuquerque. He can be contacted at [bill\\_nevins@yahoo.com](mailto:bill_nevins@yahoo.com).*

### The Human Sacrifice

She kept him warm; she kept him dry  
And always fed him when he'd cry.  
She'd wash his clothes  
And wipe his nose.  
Each night she'd sing a pretty lullaby.

As time went on, and through the passing years  
She often had to calm his childish fears.  
She taught him "please"  
Bandaged bloody knees.  
When his team lost, she wiped away his tears.

She helped him with his homework ev'ry night:  
His chemistry and algebra made right,  
She even taught him dancing,  
And the secrets of romancing.  
He truly was the high school girls' delight!

But now she sheds a grieving mother's tears  
As she recalls those short and happy years.  
The sacrifice she's made  
The awful price she's paid  
To Country and Almighty Dollar, god she fears.

Sally-Alice Thompson

# Van Jones Promotes Smart Grid, but is it Really Smart?

By Mark Sardella, PE

April 10, 2009

If ever you need to push a progressive agenda, you'd do well to have Van Jones on your side. The first time I saw him, at the BALLE conference in Oakland speaking about his work with incarcerated youth, he transfixed an audience of six-hundred for forty-five minutes of laughter and tears and applause. The Yale-educated civil rights attorney is a heavyweight orator:

Who else gets a round of applause after giving congressional testimony?

Check out the video.

Naturally I was excited when Jones was selected to join Obama's green-team of advisors, but now I can see that he's going to have his hands full with the big utilities and their so-called "Smart Grid" program. Any time I'm told something is smart I just have to check, and with "Smart Grid" my worst fears

were realized. So when Jones told Congress that building the "Smart Grid" would create benefits on the level of our interstate highway-system or the internet, I cringed. When he said that consumers would save money due to improved energy efficiency, I came unglued. Here's the problem:

First, the benefits of the interstate highway system and the internet were the direct result of placing them in the public trust, rather than letting them be held by corporations. Would our highways be in better shape if Halliburton owned them? If we sold the internet to AT&T, would it become more affordable or reliable? Our coast-to-coast network of wires should never have been private, yet other than a small group of us here in Santa Fe, very few have called for it to be put in the public trust. As of now, the intelligent grid is slated to be owned by the same monopoly utilities that built the dumb one.

Second, revenue decoupling

laws ensure that consumers, as a group, do not save money by using less energy. What is being "decoupled" is the utility's revenues and the amount of energy used by their customers. Under revenue decoupling, the revenues collected by the utility do not fall when their customers use less energy. That's terrible for consumers, because as a group they can no longer stem the flow of energy dollars leaving their community to pay for energy. (A single customer can still save money by becoming efficient, but when they do the utility gets the money back by adding a charge on all customer bills.) Utilities got this crazy rule by claiming that it would keep them from secretly wanting us to waste energy, but all they really wanted was a guarantee on their revenues heading into a recession. Next the Saudis will want revenue decoupling on their oil, claiming they need it so they can help us build fuel-efficient vehicles.

Finally, utilities successfully lobbied for a provision in the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 - the act that launched "Smart Grid" - requiring States to pursue policies that allow utilities to recover the lost value of assets rendered obsolete by the program. My translation: If the smart grid makes the dumb one useless, we have to keep paying for it anyhow.

That ensures that consumers won't see a penny of the savings gained by sending the grid to school, but more than that, the rule is ground breaking from a legal perspective: Even the boldest of the "stranded cost" arguments made during electricity deregulation did not contemplate that technological obsolescence was grounds for stranded cost recovery.

Van Jones' responsibility in the Obama administration will be to ensure that the green economy benefits people of all socioeconomic backgrounds, much like what his Green-For-All nonprofit is doing. Now that he has the ear

of the president, there is more potential than ever to change the rules to enable the Smart Grid program to live up to its potential. Jones is already saying that rebuilding the power grid could serve as an engine of green-economic development, creating green jobs and providing affordable access to green energy. What he may not know is that our power grid has always had the potential to do that. He needs to point out that the reason the grid's potential has never been realized is that utilities have too much control over it, and that the "Smart Grid" program does nothing to limit their power.

By putting our network of wires in the public trust and eliminating revenue decoupling, the grid could finally become the tool we need to create green jobs across the socioeconomic spectrum. It's an opportunity we must capitalize on, and the time to do it has never been better. more at: Local Energy News, www.localenergynews.org

## Animal Rights. An Ethical Idea Whose Time Has Come – Finally.

By Rob Raucci

When, if ever, will we become a "post-speciesist" world? Animals have been and continue to be the "second class citizens" of all living creatures. While great strides in human rights have been made, animal rights have yet to break the barrier of injustice, inequality, indifference, and ignorance.

But is that changing? Nicholas Kristof of the New York Times points out in a recent article of the "stunning passage in California, by nearly a 2-to-1 majority, of an animal rights ballot initiative that will ban factory farms from keeping calves, pregnant hogs or egg-laying hens in tiny pens or cages in which they can't stretch out or turn around."

Kristof presses on showing how other countries' response to animal rights such as Spain's move to grant basic legal rights to apes is "... an element of a broad push in Europe and America alike to grant increasing legal protections to animals. What we're seeing now is an interesting moral moment: a grassroots effort by members of one species to promote the welfare of oth-

ers."

Kristof attributes this coming of age for animal rights to the work of philosophy professor Peter Singer, the Princeton scholar whose book *Animal Liberation* was revolutionary at the time of its publishing over thirty years ago. But Singer wasn't the first philosopher to espouse the need for animal rights.

"The question is not, Can they reason?, nor Can they talk? but, Can they suffer?" The 19th century philosopher Jeremy Bentham equates the rights of animals to those of humans by their capacity to suffer. Add to Bentham's beliefs the recent findings of Animal Scientists such as Dr. Temple Grandin who posits that animals have emotions; that animals feel and that they have and experience family connections.

But rather than dwell on the few positive forward strides that have been made, we need to acknowledge there's a lot of us who still don't understand why animal rights is even an issue.

The saying goes "what you don't know won't hurt you." As human beings we take a similar view when it comes to the treatment of animals. What we don't

see, won't impact us. If we don't see the way animals are slaughtered then we can eat our hamburgers and Chicken Mc Nuggets. If we don't see the way the animals are captured, electrocuted, and skinned for their fur, then we can wear our fur coats, joyfully ignorant. If we don't see that animals are cold, hungry or lonely then we can leave them chained to a post in our back yard.

Even if one has his or her head buried in the sand, the fact remains if you eat or wear an animal in some way that animal has suffered. Period. But we don't think about it. Also, there are the meat processors and clothing manufacturers who prepare our food and clothing who don't want you to think about it. Not good for business. That's why we have advertising, marketing and PR firms. They are like the soma of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*.

The bottom line is that humans have choices where animals do not.

It's time for all of us as human beings to step up to the plate, embrace the spirit of change and treat animals humanely and with respect as equal living creatures.



Urban Garden with Composting

## Cycling Calms Mother Earth

By Astrid Webster

The more stressed you become by talk of catastrophic climate change, the more you need to stop by the Bike-ABQ table and the City of Albuquerque's Bike Rodeo for young cyclists at the Earth Day celebration sponsored by La Montanita Coop, on April 26.



Learn how cycling calms: traffic, toxic clouds in the sky, kids who exercise on their parents rather than on their own initiative and, most of all, you. While almost everyone talks of the need for more energy, few are actually producing it in sustainable form save cyclists, solarists and wind

energists.

So enjoy the flow and join, as Congressman Earl Blumenauer says, the carbohydrate economy, leaving the carbon economy to languish in its own CO2. You can bike for clean air, strong muscles, better health and a sense of self worth that won't take a beating everytime you tune into the news.

You'll enjoy yourself, learn something and breathe a little easier.

The April 26 event will be held on Silver Ave. between Carlisle and Tulane, SE. If you must miss this event honoring our collective mother, the Earth, and still want to learn Traffic Skills 101, call Chuck Malagodi at 768-BIKE for classes held in April and in June.

## Wild & Scenic Environmental Film Festival Coming to New Mexico

The New Mexico Wilderness Alliance is proud to announce hosting the "Patagonia Wild & Scenic Environmental Film Festival on Tour" in The Land of Enchantment. The Wild and Scenic Environmental Film Festival sits apart from the hundreds of festivals around the world by leaving you feeling INSPIRED and MOTIVATED to go out and make a difference in your community and the world.

The New Mexico Wilderness Alliance will be hosting two showings of the film festival - one in Las Cruces on April 22nd and the second in Albuquerque on April 30th.

WHO: New Mexico Wilderness Alliance in partnership with Patagonia

WHAT: Wild & Scenic Environmental Film Festival

WHEN: Wednesday, April 22 in Las Cruces, 6 - 9 PM

Thursday, April 30 in Albuquerque, 6 - 9 PM

WHERE: Rio Grande Theater, 211 N. Downtown Mall in Las Cruces

O'Niell's Pub, 4310 Central Ave in Albuquerque

TICKETS: \$8 Adult in advance, \$5 Students, Kids FREE, \$10 Adult @ the door

CONTACT: Nathan Newcomer (505-843-8696) for tickets to the Albuquerque show and Nathan Small (575-496-9540) for tickets to the Las Cruces show.

# ENERGY POLICY:

## Carbon capture technology fosters water worries

Steam billows from the cooling towers at Exelon's nuclear power generating station in Byron, Illinois. In 2006, elevated levels of radioactive tritium were found in water leaked from the facility as well as two other nuclear power generating facilities.

By Katherine Boyle, E&E reporter

March 11, 2009

Efforts to capture or reduce carbon dioxide emissions could cause a spike in water consumption, experts told the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee yesterday, voicing their support for legislation that would analyze water usage in energy projects.

S. 531, sponsored by Chairman Jeff Bingaman (D-N.M.) and ranking member Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska), calls for a host of new as-

sessments of the water usage in power, transportation fuels and other sectors. The bill also seeks to study the amount of energy consumed in water storage and delivery systems (Greenwire, March 6).

Carl Bauer, director of the Energy Department's National Energy Technology Laboratory, warned that carbon capture technology in particular could have drastic implications for freshwater resources if it is not improved. He emphasized the need for additional research to advance carbon capture and water management technologies.

Lawmakers also expressed concern about the current water costs of carbon capture technology. "We can develop all the zero-carbon technologies we want, but without a reliable supply of water, they amount to nothing," Murkowski said.

"I'm a skeptic," said Sen. Bob Corker (R-Tenn.). "It seems like when donkeys fly they'll do it on a commercial basis. Secondly, a lot of water is used in that process."

Other efforts to reduce carbon emissions also present problems. Building additional nuclear power plants could increase water consumption, Bauer said, noting that they consume 40 percent more water than equivalent contemporary subcritical pulverized coal technology. Water cooling technology options can help decrease water use at nuclear plants, but often increase power costs.

On the other hand, adding near-commercial carbon capture and storage technology to pulverized coal plants in order to capture 90 percent of carbon emissions would more than double the amount of water used per unit of electricity

generated.

"Advanced technology coal plants offer the opportunity to significantly reduce the consumptive footprint, with integrated gasification combined cycle technologies," Bauer said.

Energy providers pushed for federal help and research dollars, suggesting Congress establish incentives that would decrease the capital cost of installing water management equipment.

Stephen Bolze, president and CEO of power and water for GE Energy, noted that industry is responsible for 45 percent of all water withdrawals in the United States and said he expects to see the United States' energy demand double and water demand triple over the next 20 years. Faced with declin-

ing resources, he said industry, the federal government and public entities should work together to make reusing water cost-effective.

Michael Webber, associate director of the Center for International Energy & Environmental Policy at the University of Texas-Austin, and other witnesses endorsed the call for a national water census conducted by the U.S. Geological Survey that would take stock of the United States' water resources. Provisions for a water census are contained in H.R. 1145, introduced by House Science and Technology Chairman Bart Gordon (D-Tenn.).

Corker expressed strong support for a census, saying it would help cities and states as they worked toward a sustainable future.

## Supreme Court Upholds Power Plant Cooling Water Rule

WASHINGTON—The Environmental Protection Agency can compare costs with benefits to determine the technology that must be used at power plant water-cooling structures, the Supreme Court ruled Wednesday in a setback for those seeking greater protection for aquatic life.

By a 6-3 vote, the high court handed a victory to the EPA, Entergy Corp., units of Public Service Enterprise Group Inc and the Utility Water Act Group, which consists of individual energy companies that operate power plants.

The justices overturned a ruling by a U.S. appeals court in New York that the federal clean water law does not permit the EPA to consider the cost-benefit relationship in deciding the best technology available to minimize adverse environmental impact.

Electric power plants use billions of gallons of water each day from bays, rivers, lakes, oceans and other waterways for cooling

of their facilities.

The court upheld a rule by the EPA in 2004 that set requirements for intake structures at large, existing facilities in an effort to protect fish, shellfish and other aquatic organisms from being harmed or killed.

The flow of water into the plants traps large aquatic organisms against grills or screens and draws smaller organisms into the cooling mechanism.

The technologies selected by the EPA include relocation of the intakes, fine-mesh screens, velocity caps, larger intakes to decrease the intake velocity and barrier nets.

The rule affected about 550 facilities that account for about 40 percent of the nation's energy production.

The EPA rejected stricter proposals, like requiring existing plants to use closed-cycle cooling technology, which reuses withdrawn water and which would have cost more than \$3.5 billion a year na-

tionwide.

The rule was challenged in court by environmental groups and by the states of Connecticut, Delaware, New Jersey, New York, Massachusetts and Rhode Island on the grounds it was not strict enough.

Writing for the court majority, Justice Antonin Scalia said the EPA permissibly relied on cost-benefit analysis in setting the national performance standards as part of the regulations.

Justice Stephen Breyer agreed with the majority that the law gives the EPA the authority to compare costs and benefits, but added he is not convinced the EPA has successfully explained the basis for the change.

Justices John Paul Stevens, David Souter and Ruth Bader Ginsburg dissented, saying the law prohibited the EPA's use of cost-benefit analysis when setting regulatory standards. "The court unsettles the scheme Congress established," Stevens wrote.

## From the FOAT Board

The seeds for the Albuquerque TRIal Balloon (pun intended), were planted in Spring, a year ago. We want to continue to grow!

The Albuquerque Tribune, after 86 years of continuous publication, was closed by E.W. Scripps on February 28, 2008. Some loyal readers of the Pulitzer-winning paper expressed their dismay at the prospect of living in a one-newspaper-town by forming a non-profit, incorporated as Friends of the Albuquerque Tribune. As a 501(c)(3) we began to receive supporting membership donations. The first 10,000 copies of the TRIal Balloon were printed at the end of May, 2008 and distributed by "network."

This is issue # 5. Continuous donations have covered our printing (Vanguard Printing, Inc., a locally owned business), and design and layout, (Christine Carter, Envision Graphics, a locally owned small business). Talented writers have donated high quality articles and dedicated volunteers have kept the community enterprise functioning.

We have a PO Box, 35058, NM 87176 - 5058, and a monitored telephone service, (505) 903-7778. Another non-profit, Quote...Unquote, which produces community TV, Channel 27, and in May, Channel 26, made it possible for us to offer tax-exempt status for donations. (Checks for tax-exempt donations should be written to Quote...Unquote, with "FOAT" in the lower left line).

The 10,000 copies of the print edition is distributed by a network of volunteers. Copies are always kept available

at Page One Bookstore, Juan Tabo and Montgomery NE, (locally owned), and Newsland, 2112 Central SE, (locally owned), and at La Montanita Coop, 2400 Rio Grande Blvd, NW. One volunteer walks regularly and has distributed to selected neighborhoods as many as 3,600 copies of an issue!

Checks to support a membership subscription should be mailed to Marvin Gladstone, treasurer, 429 Montclair Drive, SE, Albuquerque, NM 87108.

Our aim is to continue to be a bi-monthly print edition, and to be a daily online with a paid staff. There is support to include affordable advertising services for locally-owned businesses and for non-profits. As we contact more readers and supporters that will contribute to the enterprise, we will evolve as a community-owned media presence in the city. All of us will benefit if we learn about our diverse citizenry, and the many projects and possibilities that exist to bring about a sustainable future.

The FOAT Board is grateful for the encouragement we have received from writers, readers and from volunteers. Well-known Albuquerque author, V.B. Price recently wrote a cherished comment. "... Can't wait to see how this issue turns out. You know, you all have persevered and made something completely admirable out of close to absolutely nothing, from scratch, and have become a part of New Mexico's journalistic history, with a full future ahead of you. I'm proud to know you, and proud to be working for you.

Here's to Spring!"



As Nature washes away our resources, overwhelms our infrastructure and splinters our political alignments, our survival will depend increasingly on our willingness to join together as a global community. As the former Argentine climate negotiator, Raul Estrada-Oyuela, said: "We are adrift in the same boat and there's no way half the boat is going to sink."

By Ross Gelbspan, 2007, and author in 2004 of *Boiling Point: How Politicians, Big Oil and Coal, Journalists, and Activists Have Fueled the Climate Crisis -- and What We Can Do to Avert Disaster*.

# Medicare For All: It's Time

By Leonard Rodberg

President Barack Obama has said repeatedly that he wants "ideas that work." In spite of this, leading Democrats are working hard on plans for health care reform that will fail.

These plans, pushed by Sen. Max Baucus (D-Mont.) and others, seek to extend coverage to everyone by mandating the purchase of private insurance, with perhaps an option to buy into a public plan. They would ease this purchase through an "insurance exchange," while subsidizing premiums for those with low incomes. Advocates of such plans readily acknowledge some of the key problems the country faces: the large number of uninsured, now approaching 50 million; the high cost of health insurance, with the average annual premium for an employer-purchased family policy now above \$12,500, fully one-fourth of the median family income; and the continuing rise in the cost of health care itself, at two to three times the rate of inflation.

Yet their proposed solution – a multi-payer mix of private and public plans – won't get us the health care we need. Here's why:

• **Mandates cannot possibly assure that everyone is covered.**

A recent report by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) shows that no existing government mandate, whether to purchase auto insurance, pay income taxes or immunize children, achieves more than 85 percent success. In Massachusetts, where a state mandate supposedly delivers "universal" health care, many thousands remain uninsured. And more than a third of those with insurance are avoiding treatment because of the cost. Insur-

ance co-pays, deductibles, and limits on coverage still keep them from the care they need.

• **Multi-payer financing systems involve high marketing and administrative costs.**

These wasteful expenditures presently consume nearly one-third of every U.S. health care dollar. Baucus' plan would do nothing to cure this problem, and would likely worsen it because of its added complexity. In fact, advocates of this approach acknowledge it will cost us additional tens of billions more than what we spend now.

• **Multi-payer systems are unable to control costs.**

The only way to assure cost containment is to adopt a unified financing mechanism that has the leverage to negotiate lower prices (with the pharmaceutical companies, for example) and provide the necessary budgeting and planning tools needed to save money over the long haul. Some Democrats tout the cost-saving potential of better medical information technology and better management of chronic illness. But the CBO finds that these measures are as likely to increase costs as to reduce them. Others point to the Federal Employees Health Benefit Program as a model, but this program is merely a menu of private insurance plans. Federal employees who get sick enough to use their plans face huge co-pays in even the best plan, often leaving them owing thousands of dollars to doctors and hospitals.

Moreover, such incremental reforms would do nothing to help the growing number of Americans who are underinsured. Recent studies show that 40 percent or more of us, including those with insurance, are having difficulties paying our med-

ical bills.

Yet most leading Democrats would have us cling to our failing private health insurance system. "You can keep what you have" is the mantra, ignoring that "what we have" is continually deteriorating or, in the current economic downturn, even disappearing.

The bottom line: these piecemeal health proposals don't really reform the system; they just add to it. They will not work. As long as our nation continues to rely on a private multi-payer insurance system, universal coverage will be unachievable and costs will remain uncontrollable.

In contrast, a unified plan modeled on our successful experience with Medicare would effectively address our problems, including containing costs. It would automatically enroll everyone. Patients would go to the doctor or hospital of their choice. The administrative cost savings of a single-payer system would amount to over \$350 billion annually, enough to cover all the uninsured and to eliminate all co-pays and deductibles. Everyone would be guaranteed the same high-quality care. Polls show that such an approach – an improved and expanded Medicare-for-All – has majority support, including among physicians. But Sen. Baucus and others dismiss such talk, saying the time's not right.

President Obama should insist that single payer be on the table. Our nation deserves nothing less.

Leonard Rodberg, Ph.D., is chairman of urban studies at Queens College, City University of New York, and research director of the N.Y. Metro chapter of Physicians for a National Health Program ([www.pnhp.org](http://www.pnhp.org)), [www.minutemanmedia.org](http://www.minutemanmedia.org)

# Cuba Rejects Microsoft Windows, Opts for Technological Freedom

By Radhika Miller

Cuba has unveiled its newly developed, Linux-based computer operating system, Nova -- a significant step toward freeing the country from the grasp of the Windows-dominated capitalist computer market.

Microsoft Windows is a strong argument for the open-source alternative: Source code for Windows cannot be modified or reproduced and is often cost-prohibitive. The U.S.

blockade makes legal procurement and updating very hard for Cuba. In contrast, open-source software can be freely obtained, modified and reproduced.

Hector Rodriguez, information sciences director at Cuba University, noted that private software may contain malicious code and black holes -- a potential that could be exploited by hostile U.S. intelligence agencies. Code for open-source software can be readily scrutinized for threats.

Cuba is among a number of nations -- including Nigeria, Russia and Venezuela -- turning to open source software. China's version of Linux, Red Flag, has been available for several years. Nova will further advance Cuban independence from global capitalism and break constraints to technological development imposed by for-profit private software.

Liberation, March 13, 2009, [www.pslweb.org](http://www.pslweb.org)

# Cuba Excluded from Summit of the Americas

By Cuba Central Newsblast

April 10, 2009

On April 17, heads of state from 34 democratic nations in the Caribbean and Latin America will meet at the Fifth Summit of the Americas, which will take place in Trinidad and Tobago.

The Obama administration is focused on key agenda items such as the regional impact of the global financial crisis and the issues of energy policy and public security, but administration officials made it clear in Washington this week that they really, really, really hope that Cuba doesn't come up.

"In a way, we believe it would be unfortunate if the principal theme of this meeting turned out to be Cuba," White House advisor Jeffrey S. Davidow said. "I think there are a lot of very important issues that warrant discussion, whether it's economic issues, social inclusion, environment or public safety."

The Economist this week called Cuba "The ghost at the conference table," reporting that "The most divisive issue concerns the one country that is not invited. Latin America is now united in wanting to end the diplomatic isolation of Cuba, and many would like the United States to lift its long-standing economic embargo against the island."

According to the Associate Press, Cuba's absence from the summit stems from the United States' decades old policy to isolate Cuba. But "U.S. attempts to isolate Cuba diplomatically have collapsed in recent decades and Cuba now has warm relations with most major Latin American and Caribbean nations."

Cuba is certain to come up in public comments by regional leaders and in private discussions with President Obama.

"All the countries of the Americas -- with the exception of Cuba -- are going to the Summit of the Americas in Trinidad and Tobago," said President Hugo Chávez according to the Miami Herald. "Why does Cuba continue to be on the out-

side? Venezuela is going to firmly propose this. We can't continue accepting the impositions of the North American empire."

President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva of Brazil and Trinidad's Prime Minister Patrick Manning also condemned the obsolete policy of the U.S. isolationist stand toward Cuba. Manning has separately invited President Raúl Castro of Cuba to visit his nation before the Summit convenes, reported Reuters News.

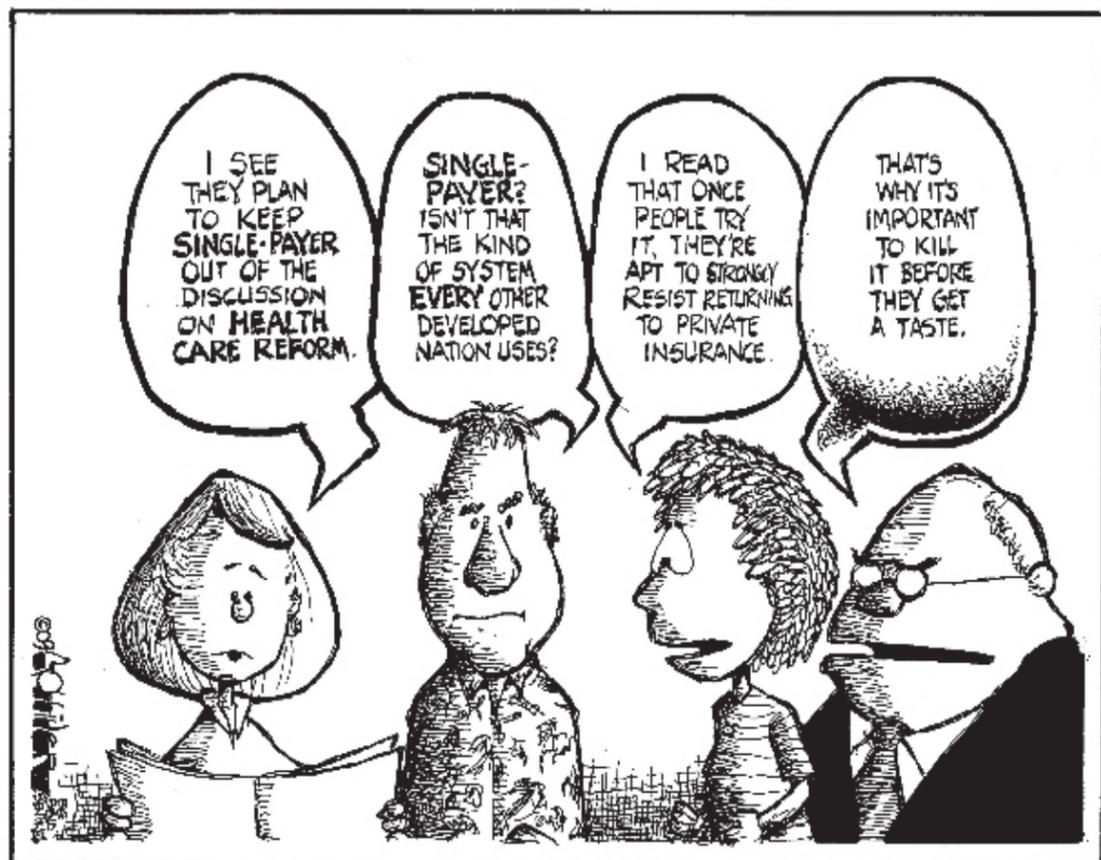
Several news agencies reported that, even after working to keep Cuba off the formal agenda, President Obama will act in the days before the Summit convenes to make good on his campaign promise to remove all restrictions on family visits and financial support by Cuban-Americans.

But, as the Miami Herald reports, "pressure is mounting for Obama to do more. A procession of Latin American presidents has visited Havana in the past months, publicly underscoring how Washington's policy is out of sync with the rest of the hemisphere. The House and the Senate held back-to-back press events last week to advocate bills that would change Cuba policy. Even a top Republican on the Senate foreign relations committee wrote Obama last week asking him to appoint a special envoy for talks with Cuba and to begin discussions about including Cuba in the OAS." (Organization of American States)

During a recent visit to Cuba, when Nicaragua's President Daniel Ortega shared a draft copy of the Summit's communiqué, former President Fidel Castro denounced the statement for failing to mention calls by Latin America's leaders for the embargo of Cuba to end.

Read more in: Miami Herald, Trinidad Express, Jamaica Gleaner, Associated Press, BBC News

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# Cuba: Chernobyl rescue anniversary marked

By W.T. Whitney Jr.

April 1 marked the 19th anniversary of the medical program the government and medical specialists established in Cuba for children suffering radiation-associated illnesses following the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear disaster.

The Cuban News Agency reported the estimate of program coordinator Dr. Julio Medina that every year up to 800 children have come to Cuba accom-

panied by at least one parent for care that is cost-free to families. The 20,000 children arriving since 1990, 16,000 of them Ukrainian, were housed at a former Pioneer Children's Camp in Tará, east of Havana. Medical care offered the children has included treatment for various types of leukemia, bone marrow and kidney transplants, and surgery for congenital heart defects.

Reprinted from People's Weekly World, April 18 - 24, 2009

# The Wellbriety Journey for Forgiveness to Visit Former Indian Boarding School Sites; US Apology Sought for Abuses at US Indian Schools

Beginning on May 16, 2009, White Bison Inc. will undertake a 40-day, 7,000 mile cross-country journey to bring awareness about the Native American Boarding School era in the U.S. The Journey for Forgiveness is being undertaken in order to promote healing from the intergenerational trauma that still affects many American Indian and Alaska Native people in diverse ways. The Journey to the boarding school sites will begin on May 16, 2009 in Salem, Oregon at the Chemewa Indian School, and conclude on June 21, 2009 at the site of the former Carlisle Indian School in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. The Journey will also visit sites in Idaho, Wyoming, Nevada, California, Arizona, New Mexico, (Santa Fe Indian School), Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, and New York. The End of Journey Gathering will be held at the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, DC on June 24, 2009.

The Wellbriety Journey for Forgiveness will offer unique presenta-

tions at each of the twenty-four site visits across the country. Each presentation will include learning material, ceremony, and the opportunity for local and regional communities to share their knowledge of the issues and history of their particular site. Some of the sites are still in operation as upgraded modern schools, while others ceased operation sometime during the 20th Century. The Wellbriety Movement is a term coined by White Bison in 1999 to denote the grassroots efforts in Indian communities to get well through culturally-based programs and practice.

Another objective of the Wellbriety Journey for Forgiveness is to request an apology from the U.S. government for the physical and sexual abuse and atrocities to Native children committed on its behalf during the boarding school era. Both the Australian and Canadian Governments made such an apology to its Indigenous people in 2008. White Bison, Inc. is circulating a petition for an apology by the U.S. government on behalf of the Wellbriety

Movement. Those feeling strongly about the need for an apology by the government may sign the petition on the White Bison, Inc. website, [www.wellbrietyjourney.org](http://www.wellbrietyjourney.org). The petition is also being circulated throughout Native American communities so that individuals may express their feelings by signing copies of the petition. **The petition will be presented to President Obama on June 24, 2009.**

The boarding school era began in 1879 with the opening of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Although US government policy about the culturally repressive nature of the Indian boarding schools changed in 1934, the destructive practices of the boarding schools in fact continued into at least the 1960's. Both Bureau of Indian Affairs schools and those run by diverse church denominations continued to suppress free expression of Native culture and spirituality until about 1970.

The resulting historical trauma is now understood to be a root cause of most present day problems affecting

Native American individuals, their families, communities and tribal nations. Elders, educators, health care workers, scholars and researchers alike now know that the disproportionate issues of alcohol and drug abuse, domestic violence, and disparities in jobs and educational opportunities among Native Americans today are symptoms of the intergenerational and historic trauma of the boarding school era.

White Bison, Inc. invites those who understand the need for healing from issues of the boarding school era to participate in the funding of the Wellbriety Journey for Forgiveness. There are opportunities for individuals, corporations, associations of all kinds, tribal governments, faith based organizations and others who feel an affinity with Indian issues to help make this life-saving event a reality.

The White Buffalo Prophecy tells of a time when a white buffalo calf would be born, and that birth would signal a time of Great Healing for All Nations. That white buffalo calf - the first of many - was born in

Janesville, Wisconsin in 1994. Elders call this the healing time, time to do what we need to, to heal, to forgive.

**It is in the spirit of the White Bison Prophecy, that we call upon all peoples to join in signing this petition supporting a US apology and collective healing for the widespread abuse of Native American children at the nearly 500 schools funded by the US government to assimilate Native American people.**

White Bison, Inc. is a 501(c)(3), Indian owned non-profit organization. All donations are tax deductible. Please visit the website, [www.wellbrietyjourney.org](http://www.wellbrietyjourney.org) or call toll-free 1-877-871-1495 to sign the petition and to learn more about the boarding school era, intergenerational trauma, and the Wellbriety Journey for Forgiveness.

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## Governor's Inaction Supports the Status Quo In NM: The Rich Wage The Wars; The Poor Fight Them

By Maria Santelli

Governor Richardson had a chance to take a stand for equal opportunity for all students in New Mexico High Schools. He chose not to act. At noon on April 10, time ran out on a bill that would have put an end to predatory military recruiting on low-income high school campuses across NM. The bill, Senate Bill 464, made its way through several committees and the Senate and House floors during this year's legislative session, only to

be killed by the Governor's failure to act on it. He did not veto it. To do so would have demanded his accountability. Instead, by using his privilege of the "pocket veto," Richardson is able to remain completely unaccountable for his actions. And military recruiters are still allowed to prey on low-income students, sometimes visiting their schools daily, making promises of a better life to potential recruits, who have no guarantee that these promises will ever materialize.

In January, coinciding with the start of the 2009 legislative session, a press release about a military recruiting lawsuit in North Carolina revealed that the Department of Defense (DOD) had no intention of ever again waiting to go to court to stop high schools from curbing predatory recruiting practices: they were going to stop legislation that threatened their predatory practices before it became law. Perhaps that is what happened here in New Mexico.

A dozen supportive organizations

and individuals, including School Board members, teachers, principals, students, parents, and faith and social justice groups, wrote thoughtful and persuasive letters to the governor outlining the need for this legislation, and hundreds of community members across the state called him urging him to sign the bill. Richardson, apparently, was unmoved by their words. We may never know why he chose to let the bill die or if the phone call that moved him most was from the DOD. What we do know is this:

a student's socio-economic status shouldn't affect their exposure to equal opportunities for their future, but it does. Military recruiters will spend \$20 billion in FY 09 working to recruit young people to fight ongoing wars and enforce ongoing occupations—and, at least for now, they'll spend more of it walking the halls in lower income schools than they will in wealthier schools.

*Maria Santelli is Coordinator and volunteer of the New Mexico GI Rights - Hotline, 505 410-7657.*

My plea is for humanity to embrace the common good. A kinder, gentler society must evolve. No longer me and mine, but ours, enough for all. No one is secure unless everyone is secure.

Can the flickering light of hope in the few places with their goal the common good, burst into a flame for peace that illuminates the world? The light is dim but hope dies last.

Semper Fabricate,  
Numquam Consumite,  
or Always Build,  
Never Destroy.

By Edward Grothus,  
1923 - 2009,  
antiwar and  
antinuclear activist,  
Los Alamos, NM

## America's Sixth Child

By Marian Wright Edelman

On the day he died, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. called his mother to give her his next Sunday's sermon title: "Why America May Go to Hell." In his 1968 call for a Poor People's Campaign, he warned, "America is going to hell if we don't use her vast resources to end poverty and make it possible for all of God's children to have the basic necessities of life."

As Christians reflect on the birth of the most famous poor baby in history, imagine God seeing our very wealthy family blessed with six children. Five of them have enough to eat and comfortable warm bedrooms. One does not. She is often hungry and cold. On some nights, she has to sleep on the streets or in a shelter and even be taken away from her neglectful family and placed in foster care or a group home, with strangers.

Imagine this rich family giving five of its children nourishing meals three times a day, but sending the sixth child to school hungry, with only one or two meals.

Imagine this very wealthy family making sure five of its children get all of their shots, regular health checkups, and immediate access to health care when illness strikes,

but ignoring the sixth child, who is plagued by chronic respiratory infections and painful toothaches, which sometimes abscess and kill for lack of a physician.

Imagine this family sending five of their children to good preschools and making sure they have music and swimming lessons but sending the sixth child to unsafe daycare with untrained caregivers responsible for too many children or leaving her alone.

Imagine five of the children living with books in family that is able to read to most of its children every night, but leaving the other child unread to, untalked and unsung to, unhugged, or propped before a television screen or video game that feeds him violence and sex and racially-and gender-charged messages, interrupted only by ceaseless ads for material things beyond the child's grasp.

Imagine this family sending most of their children to high-quality schools in safe neighborhoods with enough books and computers and labs and well-prepared teachers, but sending the sixth child to a crumbling school building with peeling ceilings and leaks and lead and asbestos and old, old books—and not enough of them—and un-

dertrained teachers with low expectations.

Imagine most of the family's children being excited about learning, and looking forward to finishing high school, going to college, and getting a job, but the sixth child falling further and further behind grade level, not being able to read, wanting to drop out of school, and being suspended and expelled, because no one has taught him to read and compute. And no one has diagnosed his attention deficit disorder or treated his health and mental health problems or helped him keep up.

Imagine five of the children engaged in sports and music and arts, in after-school activities and summer camps, but the sixth child hanging out with dubious peers or going home alone because Mom and Dad are working, in prison, or on drugs and alcohol, leaving him alone or on the streets during nonschool hours for weeks and months, at risk of being sucked into illegal activities and the prison pipeline or killed in our gun-saturated nation.

This is our American family today, where one in six, 13 million, of our children lives in poverty in the richest nation on earth, more

than 40 percent in extreme poverty. This is not a stable, healthy, economically sensible, or just family. Our failure to invest in all our children before they get sick, or drop out of school, get pregnant, or get into trouble is costly. Every year that we let 13 million children live in poverty costs \$500 billion in lost productivity, crime, and health expenses.

As our political leaders ponder our nation's choices, let them remember the millions of children living in poverty and extreme poverty and without health coverage. Let's put their needs first and not last. Our economic futures depend on it and so does our nation's soul.

*Marian Wright Edelman, whose new book is The Sea is So Wide And My Boat Is So Small: Charting a Course for the Next Generation, is president of the Children's Defense Fund. CDF's Leave No Child Behind® mission focuses on ensuring every child a Health Start, a Head Start, a Fair Start, a Safe Start and a Moral Start in life and successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities. <http://www.childrensdefense.org/> [www.minutemanmedia.org](http://www.minutemanmedia.org)*