


 ECO

FREE

REPORT

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± Local, National, Global, Health & Environmental News

The "Green Paper" since April, 1991 ±

Why Glucosamine, Ginkgo Biloba, and CoQ10 May Soon Become ILLEGAL And What You Can Do to Stop It

Dr. Robert Jay Rowen's Second Opinion Nov., 2003

Your right to use nutritional supplements is in serious jeopardy!

Under the misnamed guise of "consumer protection," a new bill before the Senate will give unelected bureaucrats complete and unchecked control over the supplement industry.

The bill, S. 722, gives the FDA the power to take any supplement off the market at its sole discretion. There need be no evidence that the supplement does harm; all that is required is one single complaint about the product!

Now, please bear in mind, millions of Americans take supplements every day. So the likelihood of having one complaint is quite high. But under this bill, it takes only one complaint to trigger a call from the FDA to remove all products containing this nutrient!

Here's an example of what could happen: What if someone living in New York City is stressed out from work and decides to take magnesium to protect his heart, takes it for two days, but still suffers a heart attack caused by the stress and his poor diet? According to this new bill, the manufacturer of the magnesium must report the incident to the FDA, giving the FDA the authority to pull all the magnesium off the shelves until the manufacturer proves the magnesium didn't cause this person's heart attack. The manufacturer is guilty until proven innocent.

But here's the worst part: It's not just this particular manufacturer's magnesium that would be pulled; all magnesium would be taken off store shelves!

In contrast, let's look at what has to happen for the FDA to take a prescription drug off the market: The drug must kill several people and cause a large number of serious side effects in others.

The fact is, prescription drugs kill over 100,000 Americans per year ... and maim many times more. Yet, the FDA pulls very few of these drugs from the market.

On the other hand, how many people per year die because of a nutritional supplement? Maybe 10 or 20 — and the majority of these deaths are from abuse of ephedra, a stimulant herb.

Yes, the consumer needs to be protected from ephedra. And yes, the supplement industry needs cleaning up. As I've reported in the pages of Second Opinion, many products are not what they claim to be, and some even contain contaminants and pollutants. But current laws already give the FDA the authority to deal with violators. To give the agency broader powers is an invitation to disaster.

The FDA — a History of Abuse

I'd like to believe the FDA is trustworthy and would do a good job of regulating the supplements, but history proves otherwise. All we have to do is look back at the early 1990s, when the agency tried to ban consumers' access to information on supplements, and even to the supplements themselves!

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Crimes Against Nature

Bush is sabotaging the laws that have protected America's environment for more than thirty years

by Robert F. Kennedy Jr., National Resources Defense Council

George W. Bush will go down in history as America's worst environmental president. In a ferocious three-year attack, the Bush administration has initiated more than 200 major rollbacks of America's environmental laws, weakening the protection of our country's air, water, public lands and wildlife. Cloaked in meticulously crafted language designed to deceive the public, the administration intends to eliminate the nation's most important environmental laws by the end of the year. Under the guidance of Republican pollster Frank Luntz, the Bush White House has actively hidden its anti-environmental program behind deceptive rhetoric, telegenic spokespeople, secrecy and the intimidation of scientists and bureaucrats. The Bush attack was not entirely unexpected. George W. Bush had the grimmest environmental record of any governor during his tenure in Texas. Texas became number one in air and water pollution and in the release of toxic chemicals. In his six years in Austin, he championed a short-term pollution-based prosperity, which enriched his political contributors and corporate cronies by lowering the quality of life for everyone else. Now President Bush is set to do the same to America. After three years, his policies are already bearing fruit, diminishing standards of living for millions of Americans.

I am angry both as a citizen and a father. Three of my sons have asthma, and I watch them struggle to breathe on bad-air days. And they're comparatively lucky: One in four African-American children in New York shares this affliction; their suffering is often unrelieved because they lack the insurance and high-quality health care that keep my sons alive. My kids

are among the millions of Americans who cannot enjoy the seminal American experience of fishing locally with their dad and eating their catch. Most freshwater fish in New York and all in Connecticut are now under consumption advisories. A main source of mercury pollution in America, as well as asthma-provoking ozone and particulates, is the coal-burning power plants that President Bush recently excused from complying with the Clean Air Act.

Furthermore, the deadly addiction to fossil fuels that White House policies encourage has squandered our treasury, entangled us in foreign wars, diminished our international prestige, made us a target for terrorist attacks and increased our reliance on petty Middle Eastern dictators who despise democracy and are hated by their own people.

When the Republican right managed to install George W. Bush as president in 2000, movement leaders once again set about doing what they had attempted to do since the Reagan years: eviscerate the infrastructure of laws and regulations that protect the environment. For twenty-five years it has been like the zombie that keeps coming back from the grave.

The attacks began on Inauguration Day, when President Bush's chief of staff and former General Motors lobbyist Andrew Card quietly initiated a moratorium on all recently adopted regulations. Since then, the White House has enlisted every federal agency that oversees environmental programs in a coordinated effort to relax rules aimed at the oil, coal, logging, mining and chemical industries as well as automakers, real estate developers, corporate agribusiness and other industries.

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Tomgram: Rebecca Solnit, Tank Girl in Miami

I used to think that, as with what Chalmers Johnson calls its "empire of bases," the United States was developing a new form of militarism, unlike every past example, in which you could walk the streets of our cities forever without seeing anyone in a military uniform. That, of course, began to change after 9/11. Now, from airports to subways, not to speak of demonstrations, it has become quite normal to spot well-armed soldiers. As Rebecca Solnit suggests in her vivid report below on the FTAA demonstrations in Miami, in the face of protest there's a creeping militarization of whole cityscapes. Along with that goes a version of the "bubble" effect of presidential visits abroad — the shutting down of vast central city areas to protect our head of state. The two paradigmatic responses of our moment, in fact, seem to be "war" in metaphor and reality and this shut-down effect which buttons up all life for "protection."

Just a day or two ago, Newsmax.com, evidently a conservative website, released quotes from an interview the magazine *Cigar Aficionado* was granted with former Centcom commander General Tommy Franks in which he speculated on what might happen after a nuclear, biological, or chemical attack on the United States:

"It means the potential of a weapon of mass destruction and a terrorist, massive, casualty-producing event somewhere in the Western world — it may be in the United States of America — that causes our population to question our own Constitution and to begin to militarize our country in order to avoid a repeat of another mass, casualty-producing event. Which in fact, then begins to unravel the fabric of our Constitution. Two steps, very, very important."

Comments the website: "He is the first high-ranking official to openly speculate that the Constitution could be scrapped in favor of a military form of government." It's interesting, of course, that such extreme scenarios are running around the brain of the general who oversaw our war in Iraq. At a more mundane level, another kind of militarization of our society is taking place as the Pentagon moves slowly on a host of fronts to blur the lines between civilian and military. With its mountainous \$400 billion budget, of course, it is competing to become the agency of choice for just about everything — from war to peace, foreign intelligence to domestic surveillance.

On Sunday, William M. Arkin, the sober military analyst for the *Los Angeles Times* began an important piece, "Mission Creep Hits Home," this way:

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Questioning Authority: At the Root of the Problem

Full disclosure: Your editor is neither a Democrat nor a Republican, although both parties dun me for monetary contributions as if I belonged to them. Nor can your editor be described as a liberal or a conservative, nor a futurist or Luddite. I believe in all and none of the above. In short, there are no convenient, all-encompassing cubby-holes where your editor can be filed.

What I do believe in is nature and the people who are a part of that whole. I do believe in the evolution of the principals of a democratic republic as put forth by the founders of this country who derived much of it from earlier work by Native Americans, among others. I believe in responsibility for actions and leaving a legacy for our children. In fact, the motivation for publishing the *ECO Report* came with having children and thinking about their future.

When I first started the *ECO Report* in 1991, we only covered environmental news. Some years later, an article in *Science News* about how PBCs from plastic beverage containers acted as hormone disrupters after consumption (thereby affecting health in a negative way) led me to consider how the habitat of the body corresponded to the habitat of the planet. Where the habitat is in balance, there is health. When it is out of balance, sickness and disease result. We therefore began to cover health issues as they related to the environment.

This past week was the 40th anniversary of the assassination of JFK. I watched some 15 hours of the History Channel special on JFK. It rekindled the memories of why I became disgusted and distrustful of government. I didn't like being lied to then, and I still don't like being lied to now. As it is becoming more clear with each passing day, the Bush administration is dismantling all that is of value to the health and environmental habitat to enrich the very few at the expense of the many and its commons. It does so with lies, deception, misspeak and doublespeak that would make George Orwell roll in his grave, except that it's almost 2004, not 1984.

The radical right has taken control of America and the future is not very bright:

A DECADE OF DECADENCE —With its big boost from the 2001-2002 redistricting, the G.O.P. dominance in the U.S. House likely has been locked in for the remainder of the decade. This has happened because G.O.P. leaders have encouraged attempts to draw districts that not only get rid of white Democrats, but also of moderate Republicans.

Increasingly, the House is populated by representatives to the left or right of most voters, and the political center of the House has moved sharply rightward. Safe seats have become the rule, blocking opportunities for women, people of color and other Democratic-leaning constituencies. Two-party politics is dead in most districts, and entire regions of America have become balkanized one-party fiefdoms. DeLay and the G.O.P. have engineered our antiquated winner-take-all system into a new kind of apartheid representation. This cannot help but further undermine confidence in our already shaky political system. — *The Washington Spectator*, Nov 1, 2003

The problem lies not with politics, but with corporatism; we start with a little history:

In Jefferson's mind, "the natural rights of man" were enjoyed by Jefferson's ancient tribal ancestors of Europe, were lived out during Jefferson's life by some of the tribal peoples of North America, and were written about most explicitly 60 years before Jefferson's birth by John Locke, whose writings were widely known and often referenced in pre-Revolutionary America.

Natural rights, Locke said, are things that people are born with simply by virtue of their being human and born into the world. In 1690, in his *Second Treatise on Government*, Locke put forth one of the most well-known definitions of the natural rights that all people are heirs to by virtue of their common humanity. He wrote, "All men by nature are equal... in that equal right that every man hath to his natural freedom, without being subjected to the will or authority of any other man... being all equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty or possessions..."

As to the role of government, Locke wrote, "Men being... by nature all free, equal and independent, no one can be put out of his estate and subjected to the political power of another without his own consent which is done by agreeing with other men, to join and unite into a community for their comfortable, safe, and peaceable living... in a secure enjoyment of their properties..."

...The Three Threats

Thomas Jefferson's vision of America was quite straightforward. In its simplest form, he saw a society where people were first and institutions second. In his day, Jefferson saw three agencies that were threats to our natural rights. They were:

- Governments (particularly in the form of kingdoms and elite groups like the Federalists).
- Organized religions (he rewrote the New Testament to take out "miracles" so that in *The Jefferson Bible* Jesus became a proponent of God-given natural rights).
- Commercial monopolies and the "pseubaristoi," or pseudo aristocracy (in the form of extremely wealthy individuals and overly powerful corporations).

Instead, he believed it was possible for people to live by self-government in a nation in which nobody controlled the people except the people themselves. He found evidence for this belief both in the cultures of Native Americans such as the Cherokee and the Iroquois Confederation, which he studied extensively; in the political experiments of the Greeks; and in histories that documented the lives of his own tribal ancestors in England and Wales.

...Jefferson Considers Freedom Against Monopolies a Basic Right

Once the Revolutionary War was over, and the Constitution had

been worked out and presented to the states for ratification, Jefferson turned his attention to what he and Madison felt was a terrible inadequacy in the new Constitution: It didn't explicitly stipulate the natural rights of the new nation's citizens, and didn't protect against the rise of new commercial monopolies like the East India Company.

...a bill protecting natural persons from out-of-control governments or commercial monopolies shouldn't just be limited to America, Jefferson believed. "Let me add," he summarized, "that a bill of rights is what the people are entitled to against every government on earth, general or particular; and what no just government should refuse, or rest on inference."

...Chief Justice Waite Rewrites The Constitution (Or Does He?)

According to the record left to us, here's what seems to have happened. For reasons that were never recorded, moments before the Supreme Court was to render its decision in the now-infamous *Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific Railroad Company* case, Chief Justice Waite turned his attention to Delmas and the other attorneys present.

As railroad attorney Sanderson and his two colleagues watched, Waite told Delmas and his two colleagues, "The court does not wish to hear argument on the question whether the provision in the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which forbids a state to deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws, applies to these corporations. We are of the opinion that it does." He then turned to Justice Harlan, who delivered the Court's opinion in the case.

In the written record of the case, the court recorder noted, "The defendant corporations are persons within the intent of the clause in section 1 of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which forbids a State to deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

This written statement, that corporations were persons rather than artificial persons, with an equal footing under the Bill of Rights as humans, was not a formal ruling of the court, but was reportedly a simple statement by its Chief Justice, recorded by the court recorder.

- There was no Supreme Court decision to the effect that corporations are equal to natural persons and not artificial persons.
- There were no opinions issued to that effect, and therefore no dissenting opinions on this immensely important constitutional issue.

The written record, as excerpted above, simply assumed corporate personhood without any explanation why. The only explanation provided was the court recorder's reference to something he says Waite said, which essentially says, "that's just our opinion" without providing legal argument.

In these two sentences (according to the conventional wisdom), Waite weakened the kind of democratic republic the original authors of the Constitution had envisioned, and set the

The Fisher Boy's Lament

I remember when I was young,
Thought I'd be able to fish forever,
Always cast free in the dawn's early light
Surrounded by the crystal white sand of Siesta Key.

But times have changed in my home town,
the once friendly beach of fishermen,
has now become a tourist attraction!
The memories of boys like me,
have been washed away to sea.

Now condo buildings, walls and the white gate,
keeps me from my beloved Turtle Beach.
No longer can I fish the shore,
Where I learned to walk and watch birds soar.
I am the fisherboy who can fish no more.

— Raphael Alland, 5th Grade

SUNCOAST



REPORT

December/January 2003/04 edition

Minimum 33,000 copies published bimonthly and distributed for free on recycled paper using soy based ink by:

Sarasota Environmental Report, Inc.,
a Florida (501)(c)(3) not for profit corporation.

Founder/Editor/Publisher — Guy Alland, 941.925.1946

Associate Editor, — Brad Fitzgerald

Copy Editor — Ellen Rossler

Graphics & Ad Art — Blue Haze Design, 941.388.0103

Back Issues/Subscriptions — M. Robbins, see pg. 15

Fund-raising/Events — Position Open

Inspiration — K. Chan, Hawaii ECO Report (1990)

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Subscriptions & Back Issues:

By MAIL or EMAIL ONLY, see page 15

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Keep Our Drinking Water Safe

We all expect and want the water from our taps to be safe and drinkable. But is it? Last August, a majority of Pinellas County Commissioners voted to add to our drinking water hydrofluorosilicic acid (sodium fluorosilicate), a hazardous waste by-product of the phosphate fertilizer industry. Citizens for Safe Water has been formed to preserve safe drinking water and to prevent the addition of anything to our county water supply other than what is necessary to make it safe to drink.

This excellent article on the dangers of fluoride first appeared on Sunday, Oct. 26, 2003 in the *Palo Alto Daily News*. We have left in the references to the municipality of Palo Alto. Simply substitute the name of your city as you read this.

As the daughter of a dentist, I grew up with confidence in fluoride. After bouts with cancer and osteoporosis, I learned to scrutinize health claims more closely. When I discovered that our water fluoridation product is not natural *calcium fluoride*, but rather synthetic, non-toxicologically tested, non-FDA approved, non-pharmaceutical grade *sodium fluorosilicate*, which carries a "TOXIC" label complete with skull and cross-bones, I felt betrayed. Our water department informed me that this chemical is a by-product of the phosphate fertilizer industry and requires disposal as a "hazardous waste." It is not found anywhere in nature and is 20 times more toxic than *calcium fluoride*. Safe for me and my family? Doubtful.

But what about all those endorsements for reduction in tooth decay? If you look at nothing else, look at the worldwide data on tooth decay reduction published by the World Health Organization (www.fluorideaction.org/who-dmft.htm). Tooth decay rates have declined worldwide, in fluoridated and non-fluoridated countries alike. No matter how many dentists, agencies, and politicians say we need to drink fluoride for healthy teeth, the fact is, we do not. If other countries can reduce tooth decay without fluoridation, at the same rates to the same levels that we do, we can too.

98% of Europe is non-fluoridated, along with Japan, China, and India. Only seven countries worldwide fluoridate over half their population. Basel, Switzerland, just quit after 41 years, citing ineffectiveness and health and environmental consequences. Over 110 American cities have rejected fluoridation

since 1990. Global rejection of fluoridation is underway.

Tooth decay has declined worldwide in recent decades due to better nutrition and use of dental sealants, hygiene, and topical fluoride products, like toothpaste. This is reflected by recent CDC findings that fluoride doesn't work by ingestion, only by topical application. Dental claims that you have to drink fluoride to constantly bathe your teeth in topical fluoride from saliva fail to mention that the concentration in saliva is too minuscule to have an impact. (www.fluoridealert.org)

Poverty correlates with tooth decay far more than absence of fluoride, and studies that do not control for this factor are flawed. Baby bottle tooth decay afflicts 50% of poor, Head Start children in this country, and water fluoridation is powerless against this problem.

No one knows how much fluoride we swallow daily. What other FDA-defined drug is prescribed that way? The "intended" dose is one milligram per day for adults, and if you drink one liter of Palo Alto water, about 4 cups, you'll get one milligram. If you drink 8 cups of Palo Alto water, you will be at the California EPA Maximum Contaminant Level for high risk of dental fluorosis — staining and mottling of the teeth (unsightly and expensive to repair). Further, this dose does not take into account the "halo effect" of water fluoridation — as fluoride is now in many foods and beverages, such as food processed with fluoridated water and fluoride-containing pesticide residues on produce. (www.keepers-of-the-well.org)

Fluoride is not benign in the human body. After you swallow it, it is no longer a dental matter. 50% of ingested fluoride accumulates in adult bones; 70% in the bones of growing children, and 87% in the bones of infants. The majority of studies show higher hip or wrist fracture rates for seniors in fluoridated communities, when they have consumed fluoride over a period of 20 years. (www.slweb.org) There is no shortage of studies on the negative impact of fluoride consumption — for bones, pineal gland, brain, thyroid, and people with kidney or cardiovascular disease. Read the FDA-required warning on your fluoride toothpaste container, if you have any doubts about the toxicity of ingested fluoride.



Did you know that 99% of Palo Alto's *sodium fluorosilicate* doesn't even go into humans? It flows down our drains and into San Francisco Bay, where it is non-biodegradable. Over 57,000 pounds yearly from Palo Alto alone. Talk about an inefficient way to deliver a medication. Fluoridation is not a sustainable practice, and doesn't Palo Alto pride itself on its sustainability goals?

This is not the 1950s. We have alternatives. Measure B calls for cessation of fluoridation until the chemical passes scrutiny by the FDA, and the dosage takes into account overall fluoride exposure — like any other drug we ingest. And by the way, not one city has been compelled to fluoridate since the so-called state "mandate" became effective in 1995.

Please respect your neighbor's right to choose not to be medicated. Vote against fluoridation.

Susan Willis, Ph.D., is a Stanford graduate, and Palo Alto psychologist, wife, and mother. She is Treasurer of Palo Alto Citizens for Safe Drinking Water, and can be reached at safewater4pa@aol.com or (650) 322-5689.

For more information on keeping drinking water safe in Pinellas County, contact Citizens for Safe Water at SafeWater@commercesite.com or visit our website at <http://safewater.commercesite.com/> to join our mailing list. Each month we hold an educational meeting and a Citizens Action meeting. Please join us.Ⓟ

FLUORIDE QUIZ

1. The fluoride compound that will be added to our drinking water here in Pinellas County and has already been added to the drinking water in Hillsborough County is:

- Calcium fluoride, a fluoride compound that occurs naturally in drinking water.
- Pharmaceutical or food grade fluoride
- Hydrofluorosilicic acid, a toxic waste product of the phosphate fertilizer industry containing contaminants of lead, arsenic and other toxic elements.

2. In a recent congressional investigation of fluoridation, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency reported that the number of animal or human studies performed on the actual substance to be used in our fluoridation program is:

- 3,000 studies
- 19 studies
- 0 studies

3. An increasing number of peer-reviewed studies are linking fluoride accumulation in the body to:

- Impaired brain function resulting in behavioral problems and reduced IQ
- Thyroid disease and bone cancer
- Higher levels of lead in children's blood

4. According to the Centers for Disease Control and the *Journal of the American Dental Association*, fluoride's benefit comes from:

- Swallowing it (systemic exposure)
- Applying it directly to the tooth surface (topical exposure)
- Equal topical and systemic exposure

5. The largest study on fluoridation and tooth decay ever undertaken, looking at the teeth of over 400,000 students in India in 1994 showed that 1 part per million of fluoride (the amount typically used to fluoridate drinking water) resulted in:

- A decrease in decayed teeth in the group drinking fluoridated water
- An increase in decayed teeth in the group drinking fluoridated water

c. No difference in the test group (drinking fluoride) and the control group (drinking unfluoridated water)

6. According to the Food and Drug Administration, fluoride ingested to reduce tooth decay is under FDA regulation and:

- Is a drug the agency has not yet reviewed or approved as safe and effective
- Is an approved drug
- Is not really a drug

7. Which of these groups of food contributes to over-exposure to fluoride:

- Many fruit juices and sodas
- Raisins, citrus fruit, lettuce, tomatoes, potatoes
- Many kinds of processed cereals, milk

8. Excessive fluoride exposure can:

- Cause lower back pain and thickening of connective tissue
- Inhibit production of insulin, serotonin, melatonin and thyroxin
- Cause dental fluorosis, a permanent scarring of tooth enamel.

ANSWERS to FLUORIDE QUIZ and SOURCES

1. c "fluorine recovery in the fertilizer industry — a review," by H.F.J. Konig and G.E.W. Kruger, *Phosphorous & Potassium*, Sept./Oct. 1979 No. 103, pp. 33-39.

2. c Response dated 6/25/99 from the U.S. EPA to the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Science. Link to excerpt: www.keepers-of-the-well.org/determination/CSDW_ref.pdf

3. a, b & c *ibid*.

4. b "Recommendations for Using fluoride to Prevent and Control Dental Caries in the United States," *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR)*, Vol. 50, NoRR14:1, 08/17/2001, pp. 3-4; Link: www.cdcgov/mmwr/PDF/RR/RR5014.pdf. For an overview of the literature regarding topical vs. systemic exposure, link to: www.keepers-of-the-well.org/effectiveness_pdfs/topical_vs_systemic.pdf

5. b "Dental Caries: A Disorder of High Fluoride and Low Dietary Calcium Interactions (30 Years of Personal Research)," *Fluoride* 1994; 27: pp. 59-66.

6. a Response dated 12/21/00 from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Science.

Link to full document: www.keepers-of-the-well.org/gov_resp_pdfs/fda_response.pdf

7. a, b & c: www.fluoridealert.org/f-sources.htm#4

8. a, b & c: www.keepers-of-the-well.org/determination/CSDW_ref.pdf

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Crimes Against Nature

Bush's Environmental Protection Agency has halted work on sixty-two environmental standards, the Food and Drug Administration has stopped work on fifty-seven standards. The EPA completed just two major rules — both under court order and both watered down at industry request — compared to twenty-three completed by the Clinton administration and fourteen by the Bush Sr. administration in their first two years.

This onslaught is being coordinated through the White House Office of Management and Budget — or, more precisely, OMB's Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, under the direction of John Graham, the engine-room mechanic of the Bush stealth strategy. Graham's specialty is promoting changes in scientific and economic assumptions that underlie government regulations — such as recalculating cost-benefit analyses to favor polluters. Before coming to the White House, Graham was the founding director of the Harvard Center for Risk Analysis, where he received funding from America's champion corporate polluters: Dow Chemical, DuPont, Monsanto, Alcoa, Exxon, General Electric and General Motors.

Under the White House's guidance, the very agencies entrusted to protect Americans from polluters are laboring to destroy environmental laws. Or they've simply stopped enforcing them. Penalties imposed for environmental violations have plummeted under Bush. The EPA has proposed eliminating 270 enforcement staffers, which would drop staff levels to the lowest level ever. Inspections of polluting businesses have dipped fifteen percent. Criminal cases referred for federal prosecution have dropped forty percent. The EPA measures its success by the amount of pollution reduced or prevented as a result of its own actions. Last year, the EPA's two most senior career enforcement officials resigned after decades of service. They cited the administration's refusal to carry out environmental laws.

The White House has masked its attacks with euphemisms that would have embarrassed George Orwell. George W. Bush's "Healthy Forests" initiative promotes destructive logging of old-growth forests. His "Clear Skies" program, which repealed key provisions of the Clean Air Act, allows more emissions. The administration uses misleading code words such as streamlining or reforming instead of weakening, and thinning instead of logging.

In a March 2003 memo to Republican leadership, pollster Frank Luntz frankly outlined the White House strategy on energy and the environment: "The environment is probably the single issue on which Republicans in general and President Bush in particular are most vulnerable," he wrote, cautioning that the public views Republicans as being "in the pockets of corporate fat cats who rub their hands together and chuckle maniacally as they plot to pollute America for fun and profit." Luntz warned, "Not only do we risk losing the swing vote, but our suburban female base could abandon us as well." He recommended that Republicans don the sheep's clothing of environmental rhetoric while dismantling environmental laws.

I prosecute polluters on behalf of the Natural Resources Defense Council, Riverkeeper and Waterkeeper Alliance. As George W. Bush began his presidency, I was involved in litigation against the factory-pork industry, which is a large source of air and water pollution in America. Corporate pork factories cannot produce more efficiently than traditional family farmers without violating several federal environmental statutes. Industrial farms illegally dump millions of tons of untreated fecal and toxic waste onto land and into the air and water. Factory farms have contaminated hundreds of miles of waterways, put tens of thousands of family farmers and fishermen out of work, killed billions of fish, sickened consumers and subjected millions of farm animals to unspeakable cruelty.

On behalf of several farm groups and fishermen, we sued Smithfield Foods and won a decision that suggested that almost all of American factory farms were violating the Clean Water Act. The Clinton EPA had also brought its own parallel suits addressing chronic air and water violations by hog factories. But almost immediately after taking office, the Bush administration ordered the EPA to halt its Clean Air Act investigations of animal factories and weaken the water rules to allow them to continue polluting indefinitely.

Several of my other national cases were similarly derailed. Eleven years ago, I sued the EPA to stop massive fish kills at power plants. Using antiquated technology, power plants often suck up the entire fresh water volume of large rivers, killing obscene numbers of fish. Just one facility, the Salem nuclear plant in New Jersey, kills more than 3 billion Delaware River fish each year, according to Martin Marietta, the plant's own consultant. These fish kills are illegal, and in 2001 we finally won our case. A federal judge ordered the EPA to issue regulations restricting power-plant fish kills. But soon after

President Bush's inauguration, the administration replaced the proposed new rule with clever regulations designed to allow the slaughter to continue unabated. The new administration also trumped court decisions that would have enforced greater degrees of wetlands protection and forbidden coal moguls from blasting off whole mountaintops to get at the coal beneath.

The fishermen I represent are traditionally Republican. But, without exception, they see this administration as the largest threat not just to their livelihoods but to their values and their idea of what it means to be American. "Why," they'll ask, "is the president allowing coal, oil, power and automotive interests to fix the game?"

Back to the Dark Ages

George W. Bush seems to be trying to take us all the way back to the Dark Ages by undermining the very principles of our environmental rights, which civilized nations have always recognized. Ancient Rome's *Code of Justinian* guaranteed the use to all citizens of the "public trust" or commons — those shared resources that cannot be reduced to private property — the air, flowing water, public lands, wandering animals, fisheries, wetlands and aquifers.

When Roman law broke down in Europe during the Dark Ages, feudal kings began to privatize the commons. In the early thirteenth century, when King John also attempted to sell off England's fisheries and erect navigational tolls on the Thames, his subjects rose up and confronted him at Runnymede, forcing him to sign the *Magna Carta*, which includes provisions guaranteeing the rights of free access to fisheries and waters.

Clean-air laws in England, passed in the fourteenth century, made it a capital offense to burn coal in London, and violators were executed for the crime. These "public trust" rights to unspoiled air, water and wildlife descended to the people of the United States following the American Revolution. Until 1870, a factory releasing even small amounts of smoke onto public or private property was operating illegally.

But during the Gilded Age, when the corporate robber barons captured the political and judicial systems, those rights were stolen from the American people. As the Industrial Revolution morphed into the postwar industrial boom, Americans found themselves paying a high price for the resulting pollution. The wake-up call came in the late Sixties, when Lake Erie was declared dead and Cleveland's Cuyahoga River exploded in colossal infernos.

In 1970, more than 20 million Americans took to the streets protesting the state of the environment on the first Earth Day. Whether they knew it or not, they were demanding a return of ancient rights.

During the next few years, Congress passed twenty-eight major environmental statutes, including the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act and the Endangered Species Act, and it created the Environmental Protection Agency to apply and enforce these new laws. Polluters would be held accountable; those planning to use the commons would have to compile environmental-impact statements and hold public hearings; citizens were given the power to prosecute environmental crimes. Right-to-know and toxic-inventory laws made government and industry more transparent on the local level and our nation more democratic. Even the most vulnerable Americans could now participate in the dialogue that determines the destinies of their communities.

Earth Day caught polluters off guard. But in the next thirty years, they mounted an increasingly sophisticated and aggressive counterattack to undermine these laws. The Bush administration is a culmination of their three-decade campaign.

Strangling the Environment

In 1980, candidate Ronald Reagan declared, "I am a Sagebrush Rebel," marking a major turning point of the modern anti-environmental movement. In the early 1980s, the Western extractive industries, led by one of Colorado's worst polluters, brewer Joseph Coors, organized the Sagebrush Rebellion, a coalition of industry money and right-wing ideologues that helped elect Reagan president.

The big polluters who started the Sagebrush Rebellion were successful because they managed to broaden their constituency with anti-regulatory, anti-labor and anti-environmental rhetoric that had great appeal both among Christian fundamentalist leaders such as Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson, and in certain Western communities where hostility to government is deeply rooted. Big polluters found that they could organize this discontent into a potent political force that possessed the two ingredients of power in American democracy: money and intensity. Meanwhile, innovations in direct-mail and computer

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CoQ10 May Soon Become ILLEGAL

For instance, the FDA didn't want folic acid distributors to tell potential customers that folic acid helps prevent birth defects. (Think of the thousands of babies who would have been born crippled if the FDA had gotten its way!) But it gets worse....

In the early '90s, FDA agents were raiding stores, manufacturers, and distributors of vitamin products at gunpoint. In most cases, the FDA confiscated their property and never returned it. Ironically, many of these good folks never had any charges filed against them — but they still lost everything.

The FDA also banned L-tryptophan when a few batches were contaminated and harmed some users. Research proved the contamination caused the adverse effects, not the L-tryptophan. But the FDA was unmoved and we still don't have access to this wonderful, healing nutrient.

After L-tryptophan was banned, my good friend Dr. Jonathan Wright continued to prescribe it. According to Life Extension magazine: "The FDA raided him and seized his supply of tryptophan. Dr. Wright filed suit. The FDA retaliated by storming into Wright's clinic with armed sheriffs who terrorized employees and seized vitamins and other natural therapies, allergy screening equipment, computers, bank records, his mailing list, and medical records.

"In October 1992, Wright filed suit in district court charging unlawful search and seizure and demanded his property back. In response, the FDA convened a Federal Grand Jury and subpoenaed Wright's clinic records. No charges were ever filed."

Another famous raid was on the Bursynski Research Clinic in Texas on July 7, 1985. You read about Stanislaw Bursynski's promising brain cancer treatment in Second Opinion several years ago. The raid was conducted because

NCI, Aetna insurance, and others pressured the FDA into throwing its weight around (none of his patients ever complained). Even though the FDA seized 200,000 medical and research documents and forced Bursynski to pay to make copies, no charges were ever filed.

To show you how bad things got, in 1993, the FDA made a dramatic announcement. It declared that coenzyme Q10, selenium, amino acids, herbals, and high potency vitamins would be declared illegal by the end of the year! Your ability to purchase these nutrients would be completely wiped out!

The threat was greeted with 24 million Americans (including many of you) inundating Congress with letters, faxes, and phone calls that caused the FDA to back away completely from its proposed ban. It also resulted in the creation of the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act (DSHEA), which was passed to specify the powers the FDA has over the nutritional supplement industry.

But now, the sponsors of S. 722 want to roll back the freedoms we won in DSHEA. They want to give all the power back to a bunch of corrupt, unelected bureaucrats!

It's Not Just About Safety

I can assure you, this isn't about safety. As in most cases of politics, you need to "follow the money."

If the FDA gains complete regulatory control over supplements, every manufacturer will be required to get approval from the FDA for their products. Drug companies pay the FDA millions of dollars for approval of their drugs, and the FDA will accept nothing less from the supplement industry. I'm sure the FDA sees a cash cow waiting to be milked, but the consequences would be devastating, as this type of regulation would put most of these companies out of business.

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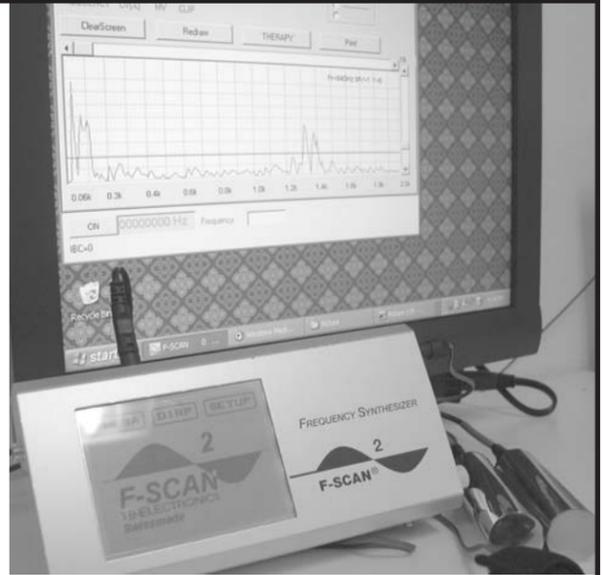
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Above: Two rescued chickens perch in a tree.



Right: Karen Davis, President of United Poultry Concerns, and friend, Karla. (photo Tal Ronnen)



Is Agribusiness Adding Inches to Your Waist and Taking Years From Your Life?

Could the real cause of the obesity epidemic facing the nation be an overabundance of cheap food? According to this *New York Times* article by Michael Pollan, it could be — and it is.

The central premise is that large-scale farmers are producing too much food, for instance “cheap corn” is transformed into “cheap beef,” and while these products are inexpensive they are greatly lacking in worthwhile nutrients. The end result is an excess of cheap, poor-quality calories that consumers are driven to consume.

New York Times October 12, 2003

Dr. Mercola's Comment

This is a thought-provoking article written by the same *New York Times* author who told us the truth of how cattle are raised in the United States.

The government makes matters even worse by recklessly encouraging farmers to produce even more unneeded food through its subsidies. We are not talking about lightweight subsidies here either, as the government is paying nearly \$20 billion to keep this flawed design in place.

Cheap corn is truly the building block of the “fast-food nation,” as the article says. It's in everything from high fructose corn syrup — which if you read labels you'll see how many products contain this ingredient — to chicken nuggets (they're typically made from corn-fed chickens).

Corn, and usually highly processed corn, has become a staple ingredient of the American diet. This is most unfortunate since, contrary to common belief, corn is a grain, not a vegetable, and is definitely not fit as the dietary staple and mainstay it has become. You can read more about the dangers of grains in my book, *The No-Grain Diet*, but let me tell you now that grains (and sugars) are responsible for the vast majority of chronic diseases facing the nation — and this includes obesity.

If you want to avoid being part of this poor-quality food trend and instead want to better your health, you will need to avoid grains and sugars, both in obvious forms like bagels and candy, and more hidden forms like grain-fed animals. For optimal health you will want to pass up this grain-fed meat in favor of healthy meat. Grain-free meats not only provide a better balance of omega fats, but the animals are healthier and more humanely raised, and the risk of acquiring an infection from a healthy animal is very remote.

Many stores will advertise beef as grass-fed, because virtually ALL cattle are grass-fed initially. But what matters is what they are fed in the months prior to their slaughter, not what they are fed initially, and most cattle are fed grains during this time.

The least expensive way to obtain grass-fed beef is by locating a farmer and purchasing the products directly. If you

“Seeds of Deception and Gene-Engineered Foods”

Tue., Dec. 16, 7:30 p.m. Free talk by Jeffrey Smith, author of the new book, “Seeds of Deception: Exposing Industry and Government Lies about the Safety of the Genetically Engineered Foods You're Eating.” South Gate Community Center, 3145 South Gate Circle, Sarasota. This book is being called the best on the subject. Learn how to protect your family and your children from experimental GE food. Sponsor: Florida Alliance for Safe Foods. (941) 362-3869.

are unable to do this we have grass-fed beef suppliers on our site who can overnight the grain-free beef to you.

There are also other healthy meat options beyond beef. Two of the best meats on the planet — in terms of nutritional value and their incredible taste — are bison and ostrich. Please remember you can now get bison meat and exclusive omega-3-rich ostrich meat in our store. Both of these meats are free-ranged, fed primarily grass/alfalfa diets, and contain no antibiotics or steroids.

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CoQ10 May Soon Become ILLEGAL

Remember, when the FDA says it wants one thing, it means something else altogether. In this case, the government and medical establishment say they want to protect the public. In reality, S. 722 will give the FDA the power to remove large classes of products from the market on a whim, even for problems that were created by a user not heeding manufacturer's instructions. This isn't protection. In fact, it prevents you from protecting yourself from disease

Think about all the wonderful supplements you rely on to protect and maintain your health. Under S. 722, the bureaucrats would have the power to take any and all of these off the market. It's a complete disaster!

Fortunately, you can do something about it. But time is running out and you must take action now!

I've included below the names and phone numbers for every senator from each state. Please call both of your senators immediately and ask them to kill S. 722. I implore you, don't put this report down before you pick up the phone and dial the numbers of each senator from your state. It will take only a few seconds, but the impact will be dramatic. Simply tell your senators you oppose S. 722 and you expect them to vote against the bill. It's that simple.

If you're familiar with the Internet, you can go to capwiz.com/nafa/home/ and submit your request via a simple web form. Simply scroll down to where it says “Action Alert” and click under “Support S. 1538 and Oppose S. 722.”

If you prefer to compose your own letter, you can go to www.senate.gov on the Internet. There you can find the e-mail addresses for each Senator. You can also mail a letter, but because of the Anthrax scare two years ago and other security concerns, it's possible it will never arrive. So I recommend calling or e-mailing.

Please call now. Don't wait until another time. We all need your help immediately. Our health depends on you. If you don't call, it's quite possible that your right to purchase these disease-preventing supplements will vanish. By calling your senator immediately, you'll prevent them from enacting this dangerous law!

Do it now!

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Bob Graham (D) 202-224-3041

Bill Nelson (D) 202-224-5274

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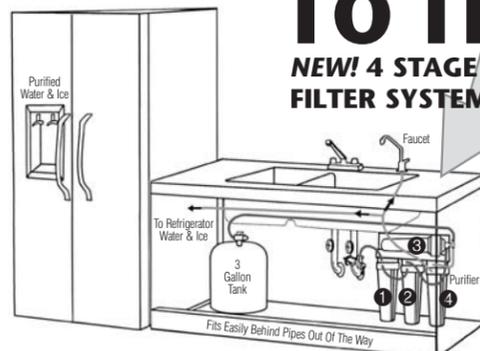
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TIM MACKSEY, Owner



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Tomgram: Rebecca Solnit, Tank Girl in Miami

“Preoccupied with the war in Iraq and still traumatized by Sept. 11, 2001, the American public has paid little attention to some of what is being done inside the United States in the name of anti-terrorism. Under the banner of ‘homeland security,’ the military and intelligence communities are implementing far-reaching changes that blur the lines between terrorism and other kinds of crises and will break down long-established barriers to military action and surveillance within the U.S.

“We must start thinking differently,” says Air Force Gen. Ralph E. ‘Ed’ Eberhart, the newly installed commander of Northern Command, the military’s homeland security arm. Before 9/11, he says, the military and intelligence systems were focused on ‘the away game’ and not properly focused on ‘the home game.’ ‘Home,’ of course, is the United States.”

The military, it turns out, is heading into the domestic counterintelligence business and into — welcome home, John Poindexter — the “data mining” business as well (that is, information about you). Arkin comments: “And it doesn’t seem far-fetched to imagine that those charged with assembling ‘actionable intelligence’ will slowly start combining databases of known terrorists with seemingly innocuous lists of contributors to charities or causes, that membership lists for activist organizations will be folded in, that names and personal data of anti-globalization protesters will be run through the ‘data mine.’”

Consider, then, Rebecca Solnit’s experience in Miami and wonder whether she indeed did step into one future — not necessarily the only possible one — that faces us all. —Tom

Fragments of the Future: The FTAA in Miami

by Rebecca Solnit

The future was being modeled on both sides of the massive steel fence erected around the Intercontinental Hotel in downtown Miami last Thursday. Inside, delegates from every nation in the western hemisphere but Cuba watered down some portions of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) agreement and postponed deciding on others in an attempt to prevent a failure as stark as that of the World Trade Organization ministerial in Cancun two months before. Outside, an army of 2,500 police in full armor used a broad arsenal of weapons against thousands of demonstrators and their constitutional rights. “Not every day do you get tear-gassed, pepper-sprayed, and hit in the face,” said Starhawk, a prominent figure in the global anticapitalism movement, who experienced all three Thursday.

Since the Seattle surprise of 1999, it has become standard procedure to erect a miniature police state around globalization summits, and it’s hard not to read these rights-free zones as prefigurations of what full-blown corporate globalization might bring. After all, this form of globalization would essentially suspend local, regional, and national rights of self-determination over labor, environmental, and agricultural conditions in the name of the dubious benefits of the free market, benefits that would be enforced by unaccountable transnational authorities acting primarily to protect the rights of capital. At a labor forum held the day before the major actions, Dave Bevard, a laid-off union metal-

worker, referred to this new world order as “government of the corporations, by the corporations, for the corporations.”

The corporate agenda of NAFTA and related globalization treaties is demonstrated most famously by the case of MTBE, a gasoline additive that causes severe damage to human health and the environment. When California phased it out, the Canadian corporation Methanex filed a lawsuit demanding nearly a billion dollars in compensation from the US government for profit lost because of the ban. Under NAFTA rules, corporations have an absolute right to profit with which local laws must not interfere. Poisoning the well is no longer a crime; stopping the free flow of poison is.

The FTAA, modeled after NAFTA, was originally intended to create a borderless trade zone that would encompass the whole hemisphere (except, of course, for Cuba). That globalization is an economic disaster for many existing industries is so apparent that, while paying lip service to a borderless economy, both Presidents Clinton and Bush have attempted to protect the US steel industry from cheap foreign imports, though neither has done anything about the export of former union jobs to the *maquilladoras* of Mexico (and now those jobs are fleeing Mexico for yet cheaper venues in the infamous “race to the bottom,” while more and more white-collar US jobs, from programming to data processing, are also being exported).

And it’s the fact that even the richest nations — the United States and the European Union — won’t live up to their own rhetoric of capitalism without borders that trips up the globalization agendas they pursue. Both maintain high agricultural subsidies that undermine the ability of poorer nations to generate export-crop income or in some cases — as with corn in Mexico — even to compete successfully domestically. NAFTA, which will be a decade old this New Year’s, devastated hundreds of thousands of Mexican subsistence farmers. Florida’s citrus industry would be devastated by tariff-free Brazilian imports, and small Kentucky tobacco farmers are going out of business because of developing-world imports of the crop. **The question now is not whether globalized commodities are profitable but who profits, and the answer is usually the already rich, while the rest get poorer.**

The Clinton administration genuinely believed in the corporate internationalism that the word ‘globalization’ stands for, and the FTAA talks were first launched by Clinton nine years ago. If there’s one thing to be grateful to the Bush junta for, it’s their commitment to a narrowly defined national self-interest that makes their pursuit of globalization pretty indistinguishable from old-fashioned colonialism: you open your borders to our products and principles, perhaps after a little arm-twisting, and then we’ll pretty much do whatever we want. This is much the same screw-the-world-community policy that made Bush and Co. disregard the UN Security Council and world opinion to pursue the current war in Iraq with only a few allies. The solution to the collapse in Cancun and stalemate in Miami will be pursuit of a similarly splintering agenda — bilateral trade agreements, mostly with nations the US can bully. As the WTO was collapsing, the US was already turning to the FTAA, and as it becomes evident that the FTAA would flop, the US has stepped up its pursuit of bilateral trade agreements with Latin American, southern African and other nations.

Cancun was a watershed victory because more than twenty nations in the global south, led by Brazil, stood up to the US and the EU, urged on by the activists and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), which were part of the continuum of conversation there. In Miami there was no such continuum and no exhilarating victory, but there is room enough for those who oppose corporate globalization to continue resisting it. The FTAA conference dissolved a day early, having only achieved what has been dubbed “FTAA lite.” This version allows member nations to withdraw from specific aspects of the FTAA agreement and otherwise weakens its impact. Brazil, the economic giant in the south, had objected to two provisions: protection of foreign investment and intellectual property rules; FTAA lite let Brazil win on those fronts. As Lori Wallach of the NGO Public Citizen put it, “All that was agreed was to scale back the FTAA’s scope and punt all of the hard decisions to an undefined future venue so as to not make Miami the Waterloo of the FTAA.”

The War at Home

It’s popular to say that corporate globalization is war by other means, but what went down in Miami during the FTAA skipped the part about other means. And though it was most directly — thanks to clubs, pellet guns,

continued on page 9

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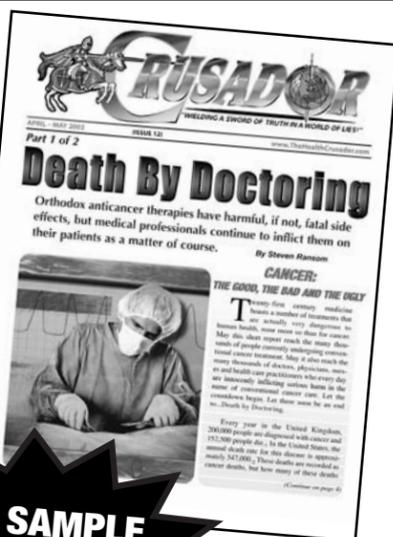
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Tomgram: Rebecca Solnit, Tank Girl in Miami

rubber bullets, tear gas, pepper spray and other weapons — an assault on the bodies of protestors, it was first an assault against the right of the people peaceably to assemble and other first amendment rights, a dramatic example of how hallowed American rights are being dismantled in the name of the war on terrorism.

For months beforehand, Police Chief John Timoney — engineer of the coup against constitutional rights at the 2000 Republican National Convention when he headed Philadelphia's police force — had portrayed protestors as terrorists and the gathering in Miami as a siege of the city. Much of the money for militarizing Miami came, appropriately enough, from an \$8.5 million rider tacked onto the \$87 million spending bill for the war in Iraq. Miami will pay directly, however, both in revenue lost from shutting the city down and, presumably, for activists' police brutality and civil-rights-violation lawsuits.

Perhaps the silliest example of the paranoid reaction to the arrival of protestors was the removal of all coconuts from downtown Miami palm trees, lest activists throw them at the authorities — whether after first shaking or scaling the trees was not made clear. Every outdoor trash can had also apparently been removed from downtown; second-guessing terrorists is an exercise whose creativity knows no bounds.

One of the most explicit ways the FTAA policing was modeled after "the war on terror" abroad was the police decision to "embed" reporters. While a number of reporters — looking dorky in their borrowed helmets — joined the Miami cops, protestors invited the press to join the other side as well, and many did. (Some got tear-gassed, and reported on it.)

Many activists in the streets said that one of the functions of this Miami police mobilization was to adjust the American public to the militarization of public space and public life, to a John-Ashcroft-style America. It may also have been an attempt to condition police to functioning as a military force against the civil society they're supposed to serve. **The city of Miami and a few nearby communities passed emergency laws banning basic civil liberties such as the right of assembly, laws that could easily be challenged — but not before the FTAA was over.** Activists were already talking about what kind of police state will take hold of Manhattan during the Republican Convention next year. And civil libertarians are taking note of the way dissent of every kind is being reconfigured as terrorism.

The War of the Possible Worlds

Thursday, November 20, was like a day out of the science fiction movies I grew up on, the ones where the world we know is in ruins and guerrilla war rages in the rubble. Central Miami had been totally shut down. Stores and offices were closed, nothing was being bought or sold, no one was driving, the Metromover elevated rail system was locked up, few went to work that day. The FTAA negotiators from the 34 nations of the western hemisphere were sequestered in the tower of the Intercontinental Hotel, and occasionally I'd see some of the hotel people, tiny on the roof of that skyscraper, watching the turbulence below. We must have looked like ants. Helicopters droned overhead, reportedly using high-tech surveillance equipment to pinpoint activists for arrest or assault by ground forces.

Thursday morning the city was abandoned but for those 2,500 cops and an approximately equivalent number of activists. We've seen the world Miami was that day in movies that range from *The Terminator* to *Tank Girl* to Terry Gilliam's *Brazil*. Maybe the earliest and most somber version can be found in H. G. Wells's, *The Time Machine*, in which humanity has diverged into two species: the bestial subterranean Morlocks who prey on the pretty lamblike Eloi. We had moments of being Tank Girl and moments of being lambs to the slaughter. Friday afternoon, Eddie Yuen, who's written about the antiglobalization movement since Seattle, commented to me that at these antiglobalization summits, "There are laboratories of dissent and laboratories of repression, and right now the laboratories of repression are dominant."

The police — except for a squadron of bare-kneed bicycle cops — were in full riot gear: black helmets with visors, black body armor that protected limbs, crotches and torso, combat boots. All seemed to carry long wooden clubs and many had the rifles that fire "sublethal" rubber bullets, beanbags and other projectiles capable of causing severe injury — and even death. Four years before, in Seattle, I had seen the dystopian future: it was a Darth Vader cop guarding the ruins of a shattered Starbucks; now there were 2,500 of them and they weren't guarding, they were marching. As Starhawk commented, "It wasn't the worst I've ever seen, compared to Israel and Palestine, and Genoa [where Italian police engaged in bloody assault and torture against 300,000 activists come to protest the G8 summit in the summer of 2001]. But there was a quality of sheer brute calculated fascism that's hard to equal."

"...civil libertarians are taking note of the way dissent of every kind is being reconfigured as terrorism."

Some activists were picked off or hassled long before they got to the site of the early-morning demonstration. More police were waiting for us when we got there, ranks of cops, two or three thick, blocking off streets, clubs clutched ready for action. Periodically they would move in and herd us in yet another direction, and they never let us get near the steel fence that steelworkers shouting against the FTAA had marched past the afternoon before. Sometimes they would come out clubbing and shooting. Local television claimed that activists threw smoke bombs at the police, but what they videotaped was activists lobbing back the tear-gas canisters that had been fired at us.

At midmorning, when it looked like they might surround us and engage in wholesale arrests, I escorted a noncitizen out of the last possible exit from the scene. Another member of our group, a professor with a bandage around his head — he'd been clubbed from behind and bled profusely — joined us, and we stayed on the sidelines until the permitted march of perhaps 10,000 union members came by at noon on its way through the abandoned city and then back to the safety zone of a rented arena.

As the unions dispersed, the violence resurfaced. Puffs of tear-gas rose up from the crowd in the distance. The helicopters roared overhead, the only machine sound on that day when cars had been shut out of the central city but for the occasional police vans and buses bringing reinforcements or hauling away the arrested. What looked like an amphibious tank rolled around in front of the steel fence. Snatch squads moved into the crowd to seize individuals. A few vultures had circled the skyscrapers in the morning, and by mid-afternoon there must have been fifty of them, a flock of black carrion-eaters soaring sometimes above, sometimes below the level of the helicopters.

The police rushed the crowd again, becoming so violent that the activists splintered into small groups fleeing north into Overtown, an African-American neighborhood of lush vacant lots, boarded-up buildings, affable people out on the streets, and evident destitution. Sirens screamed past us and small groups were pounced upon or hunted further from downtown. My group was carrying a number of huge puppets that had been used in the morning's procession and, weary, we came to stop under a row of street trees where we wouldn't be so visible to the helicopters hovering low for surveillance. Just this kind of hiding and being hunted made it clear that what was going on was warfare of a sort. This day, more than a hundred would be injured, twelve hospitalized, and more than 200 arrested.

Later that night people would be pulled out of their cars at gunpoint or stopped on the street for no particular reason — not just the young but ministers, middle-aged NGO workers, anyone and everyone. And the next day, more than fifty more activists were arrested in a peaceful vigil outside the jail, where many of the previously arrested languished. "They were surrounded by riot police and ordered to disperse," reported organizers. "As they did, police opened fire and blocked the streets preventing many from leaving. We are now receiving reports from people being released or calling from jail that there is excessive brutality, sexual assault and torture going on inside. People of color, queer and transgender prisoners are particularly being targeted." Sunday many of those arrested were released.

The visionary slogan of the antiglobalization movement is "Another world is possible." This time around some of the steelworkers had the slogan emblazoned across the backs of their royal-blue union t-shirts. What we don't talk about so much is that many worlds are possible, and some of them are hell.

Fragments

Seattle in 1999 has become a genesis story in which the revolution began as Eden. There were tens of thousands of us blockading the WTO, the story goes, and we were all as one: "turtles and teamsters," is the cliché. Actually, there were about fifty thousand in the big labor-organized parade, and ten thousand or less — few union members among them — shut down the streets around the WTO meeting on November 30, 1999. The various groups coexisted nicely but few articulated a profound common ground for us all (though the globalization issue has pushed activists from labor to the Sierra Club to develop a broader, more encompassing analysis and to reach for broader coalitions).

After the Black Bloc of young anarchist activists first made its presence known by smashing up the windows of Niketown, Starbucks and a few other downtown Seattle corporate entities, some of those who supported the blockade sparked internal squabbles when they decried the property destruction. The

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Activists Now Ecoterrorists? Hold a Bake Sale, Go to Jail

Sierra Club members, beware: Legislation has been introduced in many states and passed in Oklahoma that could define environmentalists and animal-rights activists as "ecoterrorist" criminals. While ostensibly aimed at groups like the Animal Liberation Front and Earth Liberation Front that advocate property destruction, the legislation is so sweeping and nebulous it could also cover nonviolent civil disobedience or even ordinary environmental activism. The version introduced in Texas defined terrorists as "two or more persons organized for the purpose of supporting any politically motivated activity intended to obstruct or deter any person from participating in an activity involving animals or . . . natural resources." A person giving money to such a group could be charged with abetting a crime; holding a bake sale to support tree-sitters could be a terrorist offense.

The bills are particularly concerned with trespass; the Oklahoma legislation, which goes into effect in November, makes trespassing that results in damage of more than \$500 a felony. The language is so vague, points out Club lobbyist Keith Smith, that "damage" could be interpreted to include EPA fines or bad publicity resulting from, say, polluted water samples collected from giant hog-raising facilities by activists. Because such samples helped win a lawsuit against the Oklahoma operations of mammoth pig-producer Seaboard Farms, the Club's Oklahoma Chapter chair, Tom Libby, thinks the legislation is retaliation: "By making such actions a potential felony," he says, "the law is designed to intimidate anyone who might want to take on the big corporate farms." Says Smith: "This would put Erin Brockovich in jail."

The apparent goal of this type of legislation, says Peter Cannavo, a professor of government at Hamilton College in Clinton, New York, "is to push environmental activism out of the realm of legitimate political discourse." In New York, the legislation would even require that personal information and mug shots of "ecoterrorists" be posted on a state-run Web site

for up to three years, as some states now do with convicted sex offenders.

The template for most of the ecoterrorism bills comes from the American Legislative Exchange Council, a little-known, but influential, organization of more than 2,400 conservative lawmakers. Among its 300 corporate sponsors, who pay dues of \$5,000 to \$50,000 a year, are ExxonMobil and General Motors. (The legislator/members pay only \$25.)

Sandy Liddy Bourne, director of ALEC's Energy, Environment, Natural Resources, and Agriculture Task Force, denies that the bill's language is ambiguous. "It's very clear you have to trespass, cause damage, or cause fear" to be classified as a terrorist, she says.

The ALEC bills and similar efforts are meeting with mixed success. The Texas bill stalled in committee, and a similar one in Maine also died. Utah's "commercial terrorism" statute prohibited protesters from entering "animal enterprises" including via "sound wave" and "light ray." The American Civil Liberties Union pointed out that this would prohibit peaceful communication on the sidewalk in front of the business; a judge agreed and ruled the statute unconstitutional. In addition to New York, bills are being pushed by legislators in Arkansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, and Oregon.

Julian Zelazney, director of an organization that tracks ecoterrorism legislation, the State Environmental Resource Center, says, "They are right-wing ideologues with an agenda of rolling back regulations, privatizing resources, and finding the way to make the most money for business. Unfortunately, they think environmental protection is in the way." And they intend to do something about it.

Andrew Becker, Lay of the Land, Sierra Club

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Tidal Waves Power Electrical Generators on English Coast

[Lynmouth,] UK - Anywhere there is movement, there is the potential for producing power. The latest in a series of new and novel ventures for "mining natural forces" was recently undertaken off the coast of Lynmouth, in North Devon, England. It's a prototype marine turbine, designed to produce electricity from tidal currents. "It works on the same principle as a windmill but, because water is denser, the turbines don't have to go so fast," explains Peter Fraenkel, technical director in charge of engineering of Marine Current Turbines.

"Lynmouth is one of a number of places with the right physical conditions. If you look at the seabed, the water whizzes by every six and a quarter hours at speeds of up to 5 knots. It's the underwater equivalent of standing on the summit of Ben Nevis."

If all goes well, Britain could have the first commercial units supplying electricity to the grid by 2005. One tower with two

turbines should produce 1 Megawatt, enough electricity to power 500 households. Grouped together, some 20 or 30 could stand side by side, like an underwater wind farm, except that they would take up much less space.

Marine Current Turbines has received support of £960,000 from the government which recently published its plans for Britain to meet 20 per cent of its energy needs from renewable sources by 2020. "The right direction, but not fast enough," said Charles Secrett, Director of Friends of the Earth. The government is also backing tidal power developments in Scotland and Wales.

For more information: www.marineturbines.com.

Source: *Positive News*: www.positivenews.org.uk

Global Village News and Resources
 Issue 68 - August 18, 2003 Ⓟ

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Tomgram: Rebecca Solnit, Tank Girl in Miami

Seattle police were brutal, attacking activists, passersby, nearby neighborhoods, and even an older woman on the way to her chemotherapy appointment. Seattle was no Eden but a miracle all the same, and a huge surprise for the world — both that direct action could be so effective and that globalization was not going to go forward unimpeded. Four years later the tank of corporate capitalism that seemed to be inexorably advancing on the world is idling its engines or going in circles, and it could yet end up in a ditch.

Cancun was another miracle, notable for the fluid circulation of passion and politics between the developing nations that stood up to the United States and the European Union, the NGO activists who were both inside at the Ministerial and outside in the streets, and the street activists, who included Yucatan and Korean farmers and a fair representation of the rest of the world from Canada to Africa. As in Seattle, the activists stiffened the resolve of the poor nations, and the poor nations stood up for themselves against the agendas of the rich ones.

The street activists in Miami were overwhelmingly white Americans, and there was no such porousness: the Intercontinental Hotel was for all intents and purposes

hermetically sealed. NGOs had no role in the FTAA talks or even access to the hotel. AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney went to visit the Convergence Center, the warehouse north of downtown where the direct action was organized and decried the police violence (which never targeted the union people). But the protests felt fragmentary: beforehand, the direct action contingent had had to negotiate long and hard even to get the unions to consent to letting them — as if they owned the day — demonstrate on the same day. Though we joined the labor march, they didn't join us, and the teach-ins held at the Doubletree Hotel and other venues around town seemed to separate out more circumspect activists from the stuff in the street.

Uprisings, protest, civil disobedience — the stuff in the street — still matter, even though they don't change the world every time. Sometimes it's just an exercise of democracy and bravado, exercise in the sense of maintaining the strength and ability to intervene at a time when it will count. A month ago, Bolivians in the streets and roads of their own nation forced the resignation of their millionaire president, who was trying to export the impoverished nation's resources. An insurgent

spirit and direct action are radicalizing Bolivia, Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador, and Venezuela. The surprise in Miami isn't that so little was agreed to but, with the revolt against neoliberalism well underway in South America, that anything was.

Rebecca Solnit's most recent book is *River of Shadows: Eadweard Muybridge and the Technological Wild West*, though her 1994 *Savage Dreams: A Journey into the Landscape Wars* of the American West has the most civil disobedience in it.

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Happy Meal

©Health Sciences Institute e-Alert, July 29, 2003

Dear Reader,

Would you like to participate in an experiment? There's just one catch: you, your family, and your friends and neighbors are going to be the guinea pigs. Enjoy!

If that sounds like a joke, you won't be laughing when you hear the new information about irradiated meat that appears in the August 2003 issue of *Consumer Reports* (CR) magazine.

Longtime e-Alert readers know that I have occasionally taken *Consumer Reports* research to task whenever I felt it veered outside its zone of competence in healthcare matters. But I'll be the first to acknowledge when CR research stays inside that zone and gets it right — which is the case with a recent CR microbial analysis and taste test of irradiated meat sampled from grocery stores in 11 states.

Unfortunately the results don't smell very good. Suddenly, I'm not hungry.

Last February I sent you two e-Alerts about the dangers of irradiated meat: "Don't Beam Me Up" (2/4/03), and "Radiation Nation" (2/10/03). I promised to keep you up to date on the latest developments, so when I saw this CR report I wanted to share the details with you, along with some other information you won't find in the report.

To briefly recap: Irradiation is a process by which a food product is exposed to extremely high doses of radiation that breaks down chemical bonds, killing bacteria, parasites and fungi that may cause disease. But like any technology that monkeys around with nature, you usually end up doing as much damage as good.

Consumer Reports asked specially trained shoppers to purchase grocery store samples of irradiated beef and chicken in 60 U.S. cities. More than 500 samples were cold-packed and shipped to labs for examination. To no one's surprise, the bacteria levels were found to be "significantly" lower in the irradiated meat samples compared to non-irradiated meat. And if that were all that mattered, the test would be a triumph for irradiation.

Sawfish Research Project, How You Can Help

by Tonya Wiley,
Mote Marine Laboratory Staff Biologist

The smalltooth sawfish is a large species of ray that was once common in Florida waters. On April 1, 2003 the National Marine Fisheries Service added it to the Endangered Species List because of a serious decline in the size of the population. The endangered species listing protects smalltooth sawfish in all U.S. waters. Anyone catching a sawfish should release it carefully.

The Center for Shark Research at Mote Marine Laboratory (MML) in Sarasota has been studying the sawfish, *Pristis pectinata*, to address inadequacies in the current state of knowledge about sawfish and to assist in the development of effective conservation strategies. One component of the project is to compile a database of sawfish captures and sightings. And that is where you can help. If you catch or encounter a sawfish, (while fishing, diving, boating, etc.) the researchers at MML would like to know about it. Report all available information, such as date and time, location, habitat type, tidal stage, water quality, method of capture or encounter, and size of the sawfish. Any available photos of the sawfish are also appreciated. To report information regarding a sawfish capture or encounter, email sawfish@mote.org, log on to www.mote.org/~colins/Sawfish/Index.htm, or call 800-691-6683 for more information.

Sawfish Research Project Mote Marine Laboratory Center for Shark Research, 1600 Ken Thompson Pkwy, Sarasota, Florida 34236 Tel. 941-388-4441

Please consider this article for an upcoming issue of the Suncoast Eco Report. I have attached two jpegs of both a small and large sawfish that you may use with the article if you wish. If you would like any additional photos or information about sawfish, please feel free to contact me.

Tonya Wiley Mote Marine Laboratory Staff Biologist Tel. 941-388-4441, ext 395 sawfish@mote.org

Two key points from the CR microbial analysis stand out:

1) After meat has been irradiated it can still become contaminated if not handled properly. And according to the Centers for Disease Control, 20 percent of food-borne illnesses are caused by mishandling the meat after it reaches the store.

2) After meat is purchased, if it's properly stored and cooked, irradiation offers no benefit because proper cooking kills more bacteria than irradiation.

But there's one more point on the safety issue that completely floored me. Here's how the CR report puts it: "The government considers irradiation so effective that it allows tainted ground beef that otherwise would be unlawful to sell, such as meat containing *E. coli* O157:H7, to be irradiated and sold to consumers."

Staggering, isn't it? Knowing that, and given the choice between irradiated meat and normally processed meat, which would you choose?

Tainted Never Tasted So Good

Selling the idea of irradiated food to consumers has been an uphill battle. The word "irradiated" is a little too close to "radiation" for comfort. So last year congress included a clause in the 2002 Farm Act that broadened the definition of pasteurization. This change was specifically designed so that meat processors and retailers could use the term "cold pasteurized" rather than "irradiation."

But another even more convenient way to ease consumers' fears is to simply mislead them.

The *Consumer Reports* research discovered two promotional statements for irradiated meat to be untrue. A flyer from one supermarket chain stated that irradiation "eliminates any bacteria that might exist in food." The CR report established that this is untrue, but this was a known fact long before the current issue of CR hit the stands. But it also gives the impression that the meat can't be contaminated, which could easily lead to lax handling and cooking by consumers.

The second statement comes from a pamphlet put out by SureBeam, one of the leading food irradiators. The claim: "You can't taste the difference."

Well... not quite, says CR. According to CR's taste test in which tasters were not aware if they were eating normal or irradiated meat, the irradiated beef and chicken samples were picked out by the tasters in well over half the matchups. The irradiated meat had what was described as a "slight but distinct off taste and smell," and was compared to the aroma of singed hair.

Yum! Would you like a side of *E. coli* with that?

You Are What You Irradiate

In his *Daily Dose* e-letter, William Campbell Douglass, M.D., noted another problem with irradiation. In "Zap! Your food is safe" (8/16/02), Dr. Douglass wrote, "If irradiated food is subsequently mishandled... and becomes contaminated with a disease-causing organism, the food will lack the competing beneficial organisms that could otherwise inhibit its growth. This is comparable to the situation in your intestine. There are trillions of bacteria in your gut, but they are friendly agents when in that environment. If you were to irradiate your gut, you would kill these organisms and there would be a foreign invasion that would probably kill you."

And as if all of that weren't enough, last year a German study showed that a "unique byproduct" created when fat is irradiated may have promoted tumor development in laboratory animals. Further studies were called for and are apparently underway. In response, the European Union has suspended the irradiation of beef and other foods (except for certain spices and herbs) until research can demonstrate that irradiation is safe.

What a concept! Start with thorough testing. THEN, if safety is completely assured, proceed with the technology. Gee, why didn't WE think of that?

In a *New York Times* article about irradiation last year, Carol Tucker Foreman (the director of the Food Policy Institute at the Consumer Federation of America) stressed the uncertain health risks of irradiation, saying, "There is nowhere in the world where a large population has eaten large amounts of irradiated food over a long period of time."

In other words, every time someone picks up a package of irradiated ground beef at their neighborhood grocery, and every time they order chicken or steak from a restaurant that buys irradiated meat, they're participating in an experiment they didn't even know they signed up for.

At least this way, SureBeam and other irradiation companies don't have to waste a lot of money buying laboratory guinea pigs.

— To Your Good Health,
Jenny Thompson, Health Sciences Institute

Sources: "Irradiated Meat: Safer But A Little Off - Consumer Group Says Irradiated Meat Not as Safe or Tasty as Claimed" Daniel DeNoon, *WebMD Medical News*, 7/9/03, content.health.msn.com

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Crimes Against Nature

technologies gave this alliance of dark populists and polluters a deafening voice in American government.

Coors founded the Mountain States Legal Foundation in 1976 to bring lawsuits designed to enrich giant corporations, limit civil rights and attack unions, homosexuals and minorities. He also founded the right-wing Heritage Foundation, to provide a philosophical underpinning for the anti-environmental movement. While the foundation and its imitators — the Competitive Enterprise Institute, the American Enterprise Institute, the Reason Foundation, the Federalist Society, the Marshall Institute and others — claim to advocate free markets and property rights, their agenda is more pro-pollution than anything else.

From its conception, the Heritage Foundation and its neoconservative cronies urged followers to “strangle the environmental movement,” which Heritage named “the greatest single threat to the American economy.” Ronald Reagan’s victory gave Heritage Foundation and the Mountain States Legal Foundation immeasurable clout. Heritage became known as Reagan’s “shadow government,” and its 2,000-page manifesto, *Mandate for Change*, became a blueprint for his administration. Coors handpicked his Colorado associates: Anne Gorsuch became the EPA administrator; her husband, Robert Burford, a cattle baron who had vowed to destroy the Bureau of Land Management, was selected to head that very agency. Most notorious, Coors chose James Watt, president of the Mountain States Legal Foundation, as the secretary of the interior. Watt was a proponent of “dominion theology,” an authoritarian Christian heresy that advocates man’s duty to “subdue” nature. His deep faith in *laissez-faire* capitalism and apocalyptic Christianity led Secretary Watt to set about dismantling his department and distributing its assets rather than managing them for future generations. During a Senate hearing, he cited the approaching Apocalypse to explain why he was giving away America’s sacred places at fire-sale prices: “I do not know how many future generations we can count on before the Lord returns.”

Meanwhile, Anne Gorsuch enthusiastically gutted EPA’s budget by sixty percent, crippling its ability to write regulations or enforce the law. She appointed lobbyists fresh from their hitches with the paper, asbestos, chemical and oil companies to run each of the principal agency departments. Her chief counsel was an Exxon lawyer; her head of enforcement was from General Motors.

These attacks on the environment precipitated a public revolt. By 1983, more than a million Americans and all 125 American-Indian tribes had signed a petition demanding Watt’s removal. After being forced out of office, Watt was indicted on twenty-five felony counts of influence-peddling. Gorsuch and twenty-three of her cronies were forced to resign following a congressional investigation of sweetheart deals with polluters, including Coors. Her first deputy, Rita Lavelle, was jailed for perjury.

The indictments and resignations put a temporary damper on the Sagebrush Rebels, but they quickly regrouped as the “Wise Use” movement. Wise Use founder, the timber-industry flack Ron Arnold, said, **“Our goal is to destroy, to eradicate the environmental movement. We want to be able to exploit the environment for private gain, absolutely.”**

By 1994, Wise Use helped propel Newt Gingrich to the speaker’s chair of the U.S. House of Representatives and turn his anti-environmental manifesto, “The Contract With America,” into law. Gingrich’s chief of environmental policy was Rep. Tom DeLay, the one-time Houston exterminator who was determined to rid the world of pesky pesticide regulations and to promote a biblical worldview. He targeted the Endangered Species Act as the second-greatest threat to Texas after illegal aliens. He also wanted to legalize the deadly pesticide DDT, and he routinely referred to the EPA as “the Gestapo of government.” In January 1995, DeLay invited a group of 350 lobbyists representing some of America’s biggest polluters to collaborate in drafting legislation to dismantle federal health, safety and environmental laws.

Gingrich and DeLay had learned from the James Watt debacle that they had to conceal their radical agenda. Carefully eschewing public debates on their initiatives, they mounted a stealth attack on America’s environmental laws. Rather than pursue a frontal assault against popular statutes such as the Endangered Species, Clean Water and Clean Air acts, they tried to undermine these laws by attaching silent riders to must-pass budget bills.

But the public got wise. Moderate Republicans teamed up with the Clinton administration to block the worst of it. My group, the NRDC, as well as the Sierra Club and the U.S. Public Interest Research Group, generated more than 1 million letters to Congress. When President Clinton shut down the govern-

ment in December 1995 rather than pass a budget bill spangled with anti-environmental riders, the tide turned against Gingrich and DeLay. By the end of that month, even conservatives disavowed the attack. “We lost the battle on the environment,” DeLay conceded.

Undermining the Scientists

Today, with the presidency and both houses of Congress under the anti-environmentalists’ control, they are set to eviscerate the despised laws. **White House strategy is to promote its unpopular policies by lying about its agenda, cheating on the science and stealing the language and rhetoric of the environmental movement.**

Even as Republican pollster Luntz acknowledged that the scientific evidence is against the Republicans on issues like global warming, he advised them to find scientists willing to hoodwink the public. “You need to continue to make the lack of scientific certainty a primary issue,” he told Republicans, “by becoming even more active in recruiting experts sympathetic to your view.”

In the meantime, he urged them to change their rhetoric. “Climate change,” he said, “is less threatening than ‘global warming.’ While global warming has catastrophic connotations attached to it, climate change suggests a more controllable and less emotional challenge.”

The EPA’s inspector general received broad attention for his August 21st, 2003, finding that the White House pressured the agency to conceal the public-health risks from poisoned air following the September 11th World Trade Center attacks. But this 2001 deception is only one example of the administration’s pattern of strategic distortion. Earlier this year, it suppressed an EPA report warning that millions of Americans, especially children, are being poisoned by mercury from industrial sources.

This behavior is consistent throughout the Bush government. Consider the story of James Zahn, a scientist at the Department of Agriculture who resigned after the Bush administration suppressed his taxpayer-funded study proving that billions of antibiotic-resistant bacteria can be carried daily across property lines from meat factories into neighboring homes and farms. In March 2002, Zahn accepted my invitation to present his findings to a convention of family-farm advocates in Iowa. Several weeks before the April conference, pork-industry lobbyists learned of his appearance and persuaded the Department of Agriculture to forbid him from appearing. Zahn told me he had been ordered to cancel a dozen appearances at county health departments and similar venues.

In May, the White House blocked the EPA staff from publicly discussing contamination by the chemical perchlorate — the main ingredient in solid rocket fuel. The administration froze federal regulations on perchlorate, even as new research reveals alarmingly high levels of the chemical in the nation’s drinking water and food supply, including many grocery-store lettuces. Perchlorate pollution has been linked to neurological problems, cancer and other life-threatening illnesses in some twenty states. The Pentagon and several defense contractors face billions of dollars in potential cleanup liability.

The administration’s leading expert in manipulating scientific data is Interior Secretary Gale Norton. During her nomination hearings, Norton promised not to ideologically slant agency science. But as her friend Thomas Sansonetti, a coal-industry lobbyist who is now assistant attorney general, predicted, “There won’t be any biologists or botanists to come in and pull the wool over her eyes.”

In autumn 2001, Secretary Norton provided the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources with her agency’s scientific assessment that Arctic oil drilling would not harm hundreds of thousands of caribou. Not long afterward, Fish and Wildlife Service biologists contacted the Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility, which defends scientists and other professionals working in state and federal environmental agencies. “The scientists provided us the science that they had submitted to Norton and the altered version that she had given to Congress a week later,” said the group’s executive director, Jeff Ruch. There were seventeen major substantive changes, all of them minimizing the reported impacts. When Norton was asked about the alterations in October 2001, she dismissed them as typographical errors.

Later, she and White House political adviser Karl Rove forced National Marine Fisheries scientists to alter findings on the amount of water required for the survival of salmon in Oregon’s Klamath River, to ensure that large corporate farms got a bigger share of the river water. As a result, more than 33,000 chinook and coho salmon died — the largest fish kill in the history of America. Mike Kelly, the biologist who drafted the original opinion (and who has since been awarded federal whistle-blower status), told me that the coho salmon is probably headed for extinction. “Morale is low among scientists

here,” Kelly says. “We are under pressure to get the right results. This administration is putting the species at risk for political gain — and not just in the Klamath.”

Norton has also ordered the rewriting of an exhaustive twelve-year study by federal biologists detailing the effects that Arctic drilling would have on populations of musk oxen and snow geese. She reissued the biologists’ report two weeks later as a two-page paper showing no negative impact to wildlife. She also ordered suppression of two studies by the Fish and Wildlife Service concluding that the drilling would threaten polar-bear populations and violate the international treaty protecting bears. She then instructed the Fish and Wildlife Service to redo the report to “reflect the Interior Department’s position.” She suppressed findings that mountaintop mining would cause “tremendous destruction of aquatic and terrestrial habitat” and a Park Service report that found that snowmobiles were hurting Yellowstone’s air quality, wildlife and the health of its visitors and employees.

Norton’s Fish and Wildlife Service is the first ever not to voluntarily list a single species as endangered or threatened. Her officials have blackballed scientists and savaged studies to avoid listing the trumpeter swan, revoke the listing of the grizzly bear and shrink the remnant habitat for the Florida panther. She disbanded the service’s oldest scientific advisory committee in order to halt protection of desert fish in Arizona, New Mexico and Texas that are headed for extinction. Interior career staffers and scientists say they are monitored by Norton’s industry appointees to ensure that future studies do not conflict with industry profit-making.

Cooking the Books on Global Warming

There is no scientific debate in which the White House has cooked the books more than that of global warming. In the past two years the Bush administration has altered, suppressed or attempted to discredit close to a dozen major reports on the subject. These include a ten-year peer-reviewed study by the International Panel on Climate Change, commissioned by the president’s father in 1993 in his own efforts to dodge what was already a virtual scientific consensus blaming industrial emissions for global warming.

After disavowing the Kyoto Protocol, the Bush administration commissioned the federal government’s National Academy of Sciences to find holes in the IPCC analysis. But this ploy backfired. The NAS not only confirmed the existence of global warming and its connection to industrial greenhouse gases, it also predicted that the effects of climate change would be worse than previously believed, estimating that global temperatures will rise between 2.5 and 10.4 degrees by 2100.

A May 2002 report by scientists from the EPA, NASA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, approved by Bush appointees at the Council on Environmental Quality and submitted to the United Nations by the U.S., predicted similarly catastrophic impacts. When confronted with the findings, Bush dismissed it with his smirking condemnation: “I’ve read the report put out by the bureaucracy...”

Afterward, the White House acknowledged that, in fact, he hadn’t. Having failed to discredit the report with this untruth, George W. did what his father had done: He promised to study the problem some more. Last fall, the White House announced the creation of the Climate Research Initiative to study global warming. The earliest results are due next fall. But the White House’s draft plan for CRI was derided by the NAS in February as a rehash of old studies and established science lacking “most elements of a strategic plan.”

In September 2002, administration censors released the annual EPA report on air pollution without the agency’s usual update on global warming, that section having been deleted by Bush appointees at the White House. On June 19th, 2003, a “State of the Environment” report commissioned by the EPA in 2001 was released after language about global warming was excised by flat-earthers in the White House. The redacted studies had included a 2001 report by the National Research Council, commissioned by the White House. In their place was a piece of propaganda financed by the American Petroleum Institute challenging these conclusions.

This past July, EPA scientists leaked a study, which the agency had ordered suppressed in May, showing that a Senate plan — co-sponsored by Republican Sen. John McCain — to reduce the pollution that causes global warming could achieve its goal at very small cost. Bush reacted by launching a \$100 million ten-year effort to prove that global temperature changes have, in fact, occurred naturally, another delay tactic for the fossil-fuel barons at taxpayer expense.

Princeton geo-scientist Michael Oppenheimer told me, “This administration likes to emphasize what we don’t know while ignoring or minimizing what we do know, which is a prescrip-

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Crimes Against Nature

tion for paralysis on policy. It's hard to imagine what kind of scientific evidence would suffice to convince the White House to take firm action on global warming."

Across the board, the administration yields to Big Energy. At the request of ExxonMobil, and with the help of a lobbying group working for coal-burning utility Southern Co., the Bush administration orchestrated the removal of U.S. scientist Robert Watson, the world-renowned former NASA atmospheric chemist who headed the United Nations' IPCC. He was replaced by a little-known scientist from New Delhi, India, who would be generally unavailable for congressional hearings.

The Bush administration now plans to contract out thousands of environmental-science jobs to compliant industry consultants already in the habit of massaging data to support corporate profit-taking, effectively making federal science an arm of Karl Rove's political machine. **The very ideologues who derided Bill Clinton as a liar have institutionalized dishonesty and made it the reigning culture of America's federal agencies.** "At its worst," Oppenheimer says, "this approach represents a serious erosion in the way a democracy deals with science."

Inside the Cheney Task Force

There is no better example of the corporate cronyism now hijacking American democracy than the White House's cozy relationship with the energy industry. It's hard to find anyone on Bush's staff who does not have extensive corporate connections, but fossil-fuel executives rule the roost. The energy industry contributed more than \$48.3 million to Republicans in the 2000 election cycle, with \$3 million to Bush. Now the investment has matured. Both Bush and Cheney came out of the oil patch. Thirty-one of the Bush transition team's forty-eight members had energy-industry ties. Bush's cabinet and White House staff is an energy-industry dream team — four cabinet secretaries, the six most powerful White House officials and more than twenty high-level appointees are alumni of the industry and its allies.

The potential for corruption is staggering. Take the case of J. Steven Griles, deputy secretary of the Interior Department. During the first Reagan administration, Griles worked directly under James Watt at Interior, where he helped the coal industry evade prohibitions against mountaintop-removal strip mining. In 1989, Griles left government to work as a mining executive and then as a lobbyist with National Environmental Strategies, a Washington, D.C., firm that represented the National Mining Association and Dominion Resources, one of the nation's largest power producers. When Griles got his new job at Interior, the National Mining Association hailed him as "an ally of the industry."

It's bad enough that a former mining lobbyist was put in charge of regulating mining on public land. But it turns out that Griles is still on the industry's payroll. In 2001, he sold his client base to his partner Marc Himmelstein for four annual payments of \$284,000, making Griles, in effect, a continuing partner in the firm.

Because Griles was an oil and mining lobbyist, the Senate made him agree in writing that he would avoid contact with his former clients as a condition of his confirmation. Griles has nevertheless repeatedly met with former coal clients to discuss new rules allowing mountaintop mining in Appalachia and destructive coal-bed methane drilling in Wyoming. He also met with his former oil clients about offshore leases. These meetings prompted Sen. Joseph Lieberman to ask the Interior Department to investigate Griles. With Republicans in control of congressional committees, no subpoenas have interrupted the Griles scandals.

With its operatives in place, the Bush energy plan became an orgy of industry plunder. Days after his inauguration, Bush launched the National Energy Policy Development Group, chaired by Cheney. For three months, the task force held closed-door meetings with energy-industry representatives — then refused to disclose the names of the participants.

For the first time in history, the nonpartisan General Accounting Office sued the executive branch, for access to these records. NRDC put in a Freedom of Information Act request, and when Cheney did not respond, we also sued. On February 21st, 2002, U.S. District Judge Gladys Kessler ordered Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham and other agency officials to turn over the records relating to their participation in the work of the energy task force. Under this court order, NRDC has obtained some 20,000 documents. Although none of the logs on the vice president's meetings have been released yet and the pages were heavily redacted to prevent disclosure of useful information, the documents still allow glimpses of the process.

The task force comprised Cabinet secretaries and other high-level administration officials with energy-industry pedigrees. The undisputed leader was Cheney, who hails from

Wyoming, the nation's largest coal producer, and who, for six previous years, was CEO of Halliburton, the oil-service company. Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill was chairman of the Aluminum Company of America for thirteen years. Aluminum-industry profits are directly related to energy prices. O'Neill promised to immediately sell his extensive stock holdings in his former company (worth more than \$100 million) to avoid conflicts of interest, but he delayed the sale until after the energy plan was released. By then, thanks partly to the administration's energy policies, Alcoa's stock had risen thirty percent. Energy Secretary Abraham, a former one-term senator from Michigan, received \$700,000 from the auto industry in his losing 2000 campaign, more than any other Senate candidate. At Energy, Abraham led the administration effort to scuttle fuel-economy standards, allow SUVs to escape fuel-efficiency minimums and create obscene tax incentives for Americans to buy the largest gas guzzlers.

Joe Allbaugh, director of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, sat next to Abraham on the task force. Allbaugh's wife, Diane, is an energy-industry lobbyist and represents three firms — Reliant Energy, Entergy and TXU, each of which paid her \$20,000 in the three months of the task force's deliberation. Joe Allbaugh participated in task-force meetings on issues directly affecting those companies, including debates about environmental rules for power plants and — his wife's specialty — electricity deregulation.

Commerce Secretary Don Evans, an old friend of the president from their early days in the oil business, was CEO of Tom Brown Inc., a Denver oil-and-gas company, and a trustee of another drilling firm. Interior Secretary Gale Norton, a mining-industry lawyer, accepted nearly \$800,000 from the energy industry during her 1996 run in Colorado for the U.S. Senate.

In the winter and spring of 2001, executives and lobbyists from the oil, coal, electric-utility and nuclear industries tramped in and out of the Cabinet room and Cheney's office. Many of the lobbyists had just left posts inside Bush's presidential campaign to work for companies that had donated lavishly to that effort. Companies that made large contributions were given special access. Executives from Enron Corp., which contributed \$2.5 million to the GOP from 1999 to 2002, had contact with the task force at least ten times, including six face-to-face meetings between top officials and Cheney.

After one meeting with Enron CEO Kenneth Lay, Cheney dismissed California Gov. Gray Davis' request to cap the state's energy prices. That denial would enrich Enron and nearly bankrupt California. It has since emerged that the state's energy crisis was largely engineered by Enron. According to the *New York Times*, the task-force staff circulated a memo that suggested "utilizing" the crisis to justify expanded oil and gas drilling. President Bush and others would cite the California crisis to call for drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Energy companies that had not ponied up remained under pressure to give to Republicans. When Westar Energy's chief executive was indicted for fraud, investigators found an e-mail written by Westar executives describing solicitations by Republican politicians for a political action committee controlled by Tom DeLay as the price for a "seat at the table" with the task force.

Task-force members began each meeting with industry lobbyists by announcing that the session was off the record and that participants were to share no documents. A National Mining Association official told reporters that the industry managed to control the energy plan by keeping the process secret. "We've probably had as much input as anybody else in town," he said. "I have to take my hat off to them — they've been able to keep a lid on it."

When it was suggested that access to the administration was for sale, Cheney hardly apologized. "Just because somebody makes a campaign contribution doesn't mean that they should be denied the opportunity to express their view to government officials," he said. Although they met with hundreds of industry officials, Cheney and Abraham refused to meet with any environmental groups. Cheney made one exception to the secrecy policy: On May 15th, 2001, the day before the task force sent its plan to the president, CEOs from wind-, solar- and geothermal-energy companies were granted a short meeting with Cheney. Afterward, they were led into the Rose Garden for a press conference and a photo op.

While peddling influence to energy tycoons, the White House quietly dropped criminal and civil charges against Koch Industries, America's largest privately held oil company. Koch faced a ninety-seven-count federal felony indictment and \$357 million in fines for knowingly releasing ninety metric tons of carcinogenic benzene and concealing the releases from federal

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Avoid Gum Surgery

New Technique Fights Harmful Gum Disease

by Vas Gardiakos

If you suffer from periodontitis you now have a natural home-care breakthrough available to help you save your teeth. This proven technique can help you avoid gum surgery, root planing and dentures.

Briefly, bacteria (plaque) force the gum to detach from the teeth, forming a pocket. Brushing, flossing and irrigating cannot reach let alone kill the bacteria at the base of the pocket. If the bacteria in the pocket are not killed, the pocket deepens further and destroys more of the bone supporting the teeth.

If you have periodontitis, bacteria has already formed pockets and destroyed some of the bone which supports the teeth. Untreated more bone will be lost, your gum will recede, the teeth loosen and fall out! Your health will suffer. Fortunately, now there is a way to kill the deep bacteria and improve your gum health.

Save Your Teeth!

The VitaPick™ is a high quality applicator uniquely designed to deliver antiseptics into deep pockets. You may use salt solution which you make at home with table salt. You may also add hydrogen peroxide. The reason the VitaPick™ works is because it applies these natural antiseptics that quickly kill the bacteria at the base of even the deepest pocket.

**Kill the destructive bacteria,
the disease process stops
and the healing begins.**

Twenty one years ago, I was diagnosed with periodontitis and scheduled for gum surgery. I have very deep pockets which the VitaPick™ keeps healthy. It helped me avoid painful and disfiguring gum surgery. My gums no longer bleed. My breath is no longer offensive. My teeth are tighter. My gum stopped receding. I no longer get gum abscesses. Best of all I have not lost any teeth during this time.

Using the Smile Method I saved over three thousand dollars on dental bills. Even if your periodontitis is advanced, the result of diabetes, osteoporosis or improper dental care, use the VitaPick™ and I am confident it can also help you.

Proven - Simple - Painless

My 160 page easy to understand book, "The Smile Method - How to Avoid Gum Surgery and Dentures" covers all aspect of the natural home treatment of periodontitis. It lists all the problems associated with gum surgery and root planing. Illustrations will show you how to use the VitaPick™. So that you are not guessing about your gum health you will learn a few simple ways to verify that the VitaPick™ is working for you.

**Save Hundred of Dollars
on Dental Bills!**

The VitaPick™ applicator and the book, "The Smile Method - How to Avoid Gum Surgery and Dentures" are now available for only \$33.95 plus \$6.00 postage and handling (total \$39.95). Florida residents add \$2.40 sales tax (total \$42.35).

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Crimes Against Nature

regulators. Koch executives contributed \$800,000 to Bush's presidential campaign and to other top Republicans.

Last March, the Federal Trade Commission dropped a Clinton-era investigation of price gouging by the oil and gas industries, even as Duke Energy, a principal target of the probe, admitted to selling electricity in California for more than double the highest previously reported price. The Bush administration said that the industry deserved a "gentler approach." Administration officials also winked at a scam involving a half-dozen oil companies cheating the government out of \$100 million per year in royalty payments.

Southern Co. was among the most adept advocates for its own self-interest. The company, which contributed \$1.6 million to Republicans from 1999 to 2002, met with Cheney's task force seven times. Faced with a series of EPA prosecutions at power plants violating air-quality standards, the company retained Haley Barbour, former Republican National Committee chairman and now governor-elect of Mississippi, to lobby the administration to ignore Southern's violations.

The White House then forced the Justice Department to drop the prosecution. **Justice lawyers were "astounded" that the administration would interfere in a law-enforcement matter that was "supposed to be out of bounds from politics."** The EPA's chief enforcement officer, Eric Schaeffer, resigned. **"With the Bush administration, whether or not environmental laws are enforced depends on who you know,"** Schaeffer told me. **"If you've got a good lobbyist, you can just buy your way out of trouble."**

Along with Barbour, Southern retained current Republican National Committee chairman and former Montana Gov. Marc Racicot. Barbour and Racicot repeatedly conferred with Abraham and Cheney, urging them to ease limits on carbon-dioxide pollution from power plants and to gut the Clean Air Act. On May 17th, 2001, the White House released its energy plan. Among the recommendations were exempting old power plants from Clean Air Act compliance and adopting Barbour's arguments about carbon-dioxide restrictions. Barbour repaid the favor that week by raising \$250,000 at a May 21st GOP gala honoring Bush. Southern donated \$150,000 to the effort.

Cheney's task force had at least nineteen contacts with officials from the nuclear-energy industry — whose trade association, the Nuclear Energy Institute, donated \$100,000 to the Bush inauguration gala and \$437,000 to Republicans from 1999 to 2002. The report recommended loosening environmental controls on the industry, reducing public participation in the siting of nuclear plants and adding billions of dollars in subsidies for the nuclear industry.

Cheney wasn't embarrassed to reward his old cronies at Halliburton, either. The final draft of the task-force report praises a gas-recovery technique controlled by Halliburton — even though an earlier draft had criticized the technology. The technique, which has been linked to the contamination of aquifers, is currently being investigated by the EPA. Somehow, that got edited out of the report.

Big Coal and the Destruction of Appalachia

Coal companies enjoyed perhaps the biggest payoff. At the West Virginia Coal Association's annual conference in May 2002, president William D. Raney assured 150 industry moguls, "You did everything you could to elect a Republican president." Now, he said, "you are already seeing in his actions the payback."

Peabody Energy, the world's largest coal company and a major contributor to the Bush campaign, was one of the first to cash in. Immediately after his inauguration, Bush appointed two executives from Peabody and one from its Black Beauty subsidiary to his energy advisory team.

When the task force released its final report, it recommended accelerating coal production and spending \$2 billion in federal subsidies for research to make coal-fired electricity cleaner. Five days later, Peabody issued a public-stock offering, raising \$60 million more than analysts had predicted. Company vice president Fred Palmer credited the Bush administration. "I am sure it affected the valuation of the stock," he told the *Los Angeles Times*.

Peabody also wanted to build the largest coal-fired power plant in thirty years upwind of Mammoth Cave National Park in Kentucky, a designated UNESCO World Heritage site and International Biosphere Reserve. With arm-twisting from Deputy Interior Secretary Steven Griles and another \$450,000 in GOP contributions, Peabody got what it wanted. A study on the air impacts was suppressed, and park scientists who feared that several endangered species might go extinct due to mercury and acid-rain deposits were silenced.

At the Senate's request, Griles had signed a "statement of disqualification" on August 1st, 2001, committing himself to avoiding issues affecting his former clients. Three days later, he nevertheless appeared before the West Virginia Coal Association and promised executives that "we will fix the federal rules very soon on water and soil placement." That was fancy language for pushing whole mountaintops into valleys, a practice worth billions to the industry. As a Reagan official, Griles helped devise the practice, which a federal court declared illegal in 2002, after 1,200 miles of streambeds had been filled and 380,000 acres of Appalachian forestlands had been rendered barren moonscapes.

Now Griles was promising his former coal clients he would fix these rules. In May 2002, the EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers adopted the language recommended by his former client, the National Mining Association. Had Griles not intervened, the practice of mountaintop-removal mining would have been severely restricted. Griles also pushed EPA deputy administrator Linda Fisher to overrule career personnel in the agency's Denver office who had given a devastating assessment to a proposal to produce coal-bed methane gas in the Powder River basin in Wyoming. Although Griles had recused himself from any discussion of this subject because it would directly enrich his former clients, he worked aggressively behind the scenes on behalf of a proposal to build 51,000 wells. The project will require 26,000 miles of new roads and 48,000 miles of pipeline, and will foul pristine landscapes with trillions of gallons of toxic wastewater.

Blueprint for Plunder

The energy-task-force plan is a \$20 billion subsidy to the oil, coal and nuclear industries, which are already swimming in record revenues. In May 2003, as the House passed the plan and as the rest of the nation stagnated in a recession abetted by high oil prices, Exxon announced that its profits had tripled from the previous quarter's record earnings. The energy plan recommends opening protected lands and waters to oil and gas drilling and building up to 1,900 electric-power plants. National treasures such as the California and Florida coasts, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and the areas around Yellowstone Park will be opened for plunder for the trivial amounts of fossil fuels that they contain. While increasing reliance on oil, coal and nuclear power, the plan cuts the budget for research into energy efficiency and alternative power sources by nearly a third. "Conservation may be a sign of personal virtue," Cheney explained, but it should not be the basis of "comprehensive energy policy."

As if to prove that point, Republicans simultaneously eliminated the tax credit that had encouraged Americans to buy gas-saving hybrid cars, and weakened efficiency standards for everything from air conditioners to automobiles. They also created an obscene \$100,000 tax break for Hummers and the thirty-eight biggest gas guzzlers. Then, adding insult to injury, the Energy Department robbed \$135,615 from the anemic solar, renewables and energy-conservation budget to produce 10,000 copies of the White House's energy plan.

To lobby for the plan, more than 400 industry groups enlisted in the Alliance for Energy and Economic Growth, a coalition created by oil, mining and nuclear interests and guided by the White House. It cost \$5,000 to join, "a very low price," according to Republican lobbyist Wayne Valis. The prerequisite for joining, he wrote in a memo, was that members "must agree to support the Bush energy proposal in its entirety and not lobby for changes." Within two months, members had contributed more than \$1 million. The price for disloyalty was expulsion from the coalition and possible reprisal by the administration. "I have been advised," wrote Valis, "that this White House 'will have a long memory.'"

The plan represents a massive transfer of wealth from the public to the energy sector. Indeed, Bush views his massive tax cuts as a way of helping Americans pay for inflated energy bills. "If I had my way," he declared, "I'd have [the tax cuts] in place tomorrow so that people would have money in their pockets to deal with high energy prices."

Looting the Commons

Although congress will have its final vote on the plan in November, the White House has already devised ways to implement most of its worst provisions without congressional interference. In October 2001, the administration removed the Interior Department's power to veto mining permits, even if the mining would cause "substantial and irreparable harm" to the environment. That December, Bush and congressional Republicans passed an "economic-stimulus package" that proposed \$2.4 billion worth of tax breaks, credits and loopholes for Chevron, Texaco, Enron and General Electric. The following February, the White House announced it would abandon regulations for three major pollutants — mercury, sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide.

Early in the Bush administration, Vice President Cheney had solicited an industry wish list from the United States Energy Association, the lobbying arm for trade associations including the American Petroleum Institute, the National Mining Association, the Nuclear Energy Institute and the Edison Institute. The USEA responded by providing 105 specific recommendations from its members for plundering our natural resources and polluting America's air and water. In a speech to the group in June 2002, Energy Secretary Abraham reported that the administration had already implemented three-quarters of the industry's recommendations and predicted the rest would pass through Congress shortly.

On August 27th, 2002 — while most of America was heading off for a Labor Day weekend — the administration announced that it would redefine carbon dioxide, the primary cause of global warming, so that it would no longer be considered a pollutant and would therefore not be subject to regulation under the Clean Air Act. The next day, the White House repealed the act's "new source review" provision, which requires companies to modernize pollution control when they modify their plants.

According to the National Academy of Sciences, the White House rollback will cause 30,000 Americans to die prematurely each year. Although the regulation will probably be reversed in the courts, the damage will have been done, and power utilities such as Southern Co. will escape criminal prosecution. As soon as the new regulations were announced, John Pemberton, chief of staff to the EPA's assistant administrator for air, left the agency to work for Southern. The EPA's congressional office chief also left, to join Southern's lobbying shop, Bracewell, Patterson.

By summer 2003, the White House had become a virtual piñata for energy moguls. In August, the administration proposed limiting the authority of states to object to offshore-drilling decisions, and it ordered federal land managers across the West to ease environmental restrictions for oil and gas drilling in national forests. The White House also proposed removing federal protections for most American wetlands and streams. As an astounded Republican, Rep. Christopher Shays, told me, "It's almost like they want to alienate people who care about the environment, as if they believe that this will help them with their core."

EPA: From Bad to Worse

On August 30th, president bush nominated Utah's three-term Republican Gov. Mike Leavitt to replace his beleaguered EPA head, Christine Todd Whitman, who was driven from office, humiliated in even her paltry efforts to moderate the pillage. In October, Leavitt was confirmed by the Senate.

Like Gale Norton, Leavitt has a winning personality and a disastrous environmental record. Under his leadership, Utah tied for last as the state with the worst environmental enforcement record and ranked second-worst (behind Texas) for both air quality and toxic releases. As governor, Leavitt displayed the same contempt for science that has characterized the Bush administration. He fired more than seventy scientists employed by state agencies for producing studies that challenged his political agenda. He fired a state enforcement officer who penalized one of Leavitt's family fish farms for introducing whirling disease into Utah, devastating the state's wild-trout populations.

Leavitt has a penchant for backdoor deals to please corporate polluters. Last year he resurrected a frivolous and moribund Utah lawsuit against the Interior Department and then settled the suit behind closed doors without public involvement, stripping 6 million acres of wilderness protections. This track record does not reflect the independence, sense of stewardship and respect for science and law that most Americans have the right to expect in our nation's chief environmental guardian.

The Threat to Democracy

Generations of Americans will pay the Republican campaign debt to the energy industry with global instability, depleted national coffers and increased vulnerability to price shocks in the oil market.

They will also pay with reduced prosperity and quality of life at home. Pollution from power plants and traffic smog will continue to skyrocket. Carbon-dioxide emissions will aggravate global warming. Acid rain from Midwestern coal plants has already sterilized half the lakes in the Adirondacks and destroyed the forest cover in the high peaks of the Appalachian range up into Canada. The administration's attacks on science and the law have put something even greater at risk. **Americans need to recognize that we are facing not just a threat to our environment but to our values, and to our democracy.**

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Crimes Against Nature

Growing up, I was taught that communism leads to dictatorship and capitalism to democracy. But as we've seen from the the Bush administration, the latter proposition does not always hold. **While free markets tend to democratize a society, unfettered capitalism leads invariably to corporate control of government.**

America's most visionary leaders have long warned against allowing corporate power to dominate the political landscape. In 1863, in the depths of the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln lamented, "I have the Confederacy before me and the bankers behind me, and I fear the bankers most." Franklin Roosevelt echoed that sentiment when he warned that "the liberty of a democracy is not safe if the people tolerate the growth of private power to a point where it becomes stronger than their democratic state itself. That, in its essence, is fascism — ownership of government by an individual, by a group or by any controlling power."

Today, more than ever, it is critical for American citizens to understand the difference between the free-market capitalism that made our country great and the corporate cronyism that is now corrupting our political process, strangling democracy and devouring our national treasures.

Corporate capitalists do not want free markets, they want dependable profits, and their surest route is to crush competition by controlling government. The rise of fascism across Europe in the 1930s offers many informative lessons on how corporate power can undermine a democracy. In Spain, Germany and Italy, industrialists allied themselves with right-wing leaders who used the provocation of terrorist attacks, continual wars, and invocations of patriotism and homeland security to tame the press, muzzle criticism by opponents and turn government over to corporate control. Those governments tapped industrial executives to run ministries and poured government money into corporate coffers with lucrative contracts to prosecute wars and build infrastructure. They encouraged friendly corporations to swallow media outlets, and they enriched the wealthiest classes, privatized the commons and pared down constitutional rights, creating short-term prosperity through pollution-based profits and constant wars. Benito Mussolini's inside view of this process led him to complain that "fascism should really be called 'corporatism.'"

While the European democracies unraveled into fascism, America confronted the same devastating Depression by reaffirming its democracy. It enacted minimum-wage and Social Security laws to foster a middle class, passed income taxes and anti-trust legislation to limit the power of corporations and the wealthy, and commissioned parks, public lands and museums to create employment and safeguard the commons.

The best way to judge the effectiveness of a democracy is to measure how it allocates the goods of the land: Does the government protect the commonwealth on behalf of all the community members, or does it allow wealth and political clout to steal the commons from the people?

Today, George W. Bush and his court are treating our country as a grab bag for the robber barons, doling out the commons to large polluters. Last year, as the calamitous rollbacks multiplied, the corporate-owned TV networks devoted less than four percent of their news minutes to environmental stories. If they knew the truth, most Americans would share my fury that this president is allowing his corporate cronies to steal America from our children.

(© *Rolling Stone* #937, via www.TomPaine.com)

For more information on the Bush administration's environmental actions, see The Bush Record from NRDC, the Natural Resources Defense Council: www.NRDC.org

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Questioning Authority: At the Root of the Problem

stage for the future worldwide damage of our environmental, governmental, and cultural commons. The plutocracy that had arisen with the East India Company in 1600 and been fought back by America's Founders, had gained a tool that was to allow them, in the coming decades, to once again gain control of most of North America and then the world. [Emphasis added]

— *UNEQUAL PROTECTION, The Rise of Corporate Dominance and the Theft of Human Rights* by Thom Hartmann

The perpetual corporations, with their claim of personhood, unmitigated wealth and power have taken control of government and the press. Corporations have, as my friend John Lambie once said to me, the mentality of an *amoeba*, they go towards food and away from waste. They have no social conscience whatsoever.

And that, dear readers, is at the root of many of the problems facing us today. The solution is to address the problem of the inequality of the natural person (*i.e.*, you and me) versus the artificial person (*i.e.*, the very large and powerful corporation). I encourage you to read Hartmann's book for a full understanding of what can be done to rectify the condition we find ourselves in.

The Internet (TomPaine.com, Truthout.org, Alternet.org and InformationClearingHouse.info among many others of a similar venue), *The ECO Report* and other like-minded independent newspapers are all that stand between you and total corporate and government control of media information. Fascism, after all, is nothing more than the union of government and big business, a condition which, if not yet achieved in America, is on the brink of being achieved.

We need your help and support.

Here's what you can do:

1. Make as generous a tax-deductible donation to the *ECO Report* as you can.
2. Support our advertisers. They generate most of the funds that get the paper printed. While some of them put ads in to support the paper, most are small businesses that depend on response to their ads. Tell them you saw it in the *ECO Report*.
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The *ECO Report* has expanded its mission of empowerment of the people to champion the principals of Locke and Jefferson. It's not about politics, it's about our God-given natural rights.

We are, after all, in this together. What we do now, especially in the face of the current administration (see "Crimes Against Nature" page 1) will determine the nature of our quality of life for our children.

— Guy Alland, editor/publisher

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Agribusiness Adding Inches to Your Waist

Disease runs rampant among commercial livestock, and the use of antibiotics is so widespread among these animals that whether from my site or elsewhere, I urge you to try grass-fed beef and bison and ostrich. Not only do these meats provide a healthy, clean source of protein and minerals, but they are great tasting too.

See www.Mercola.com for related Articles:

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