

Acclaimed Civil Rights leader to speak at King Commemoration

By DAN ONORATO

After three years of hearing, “Sorry, the Congressman can’t make it,” YES was oh so sweet. So, Modesto, Stanislaus County, mark your calendars: legendary Civil Rights leader Congressman John Lewis from Georgia is coming to town, Saturday February 9, keynote speaker for the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration at Modesto Junior College West Campus in the Mary Stuart Rogers Student Learning Center, 7:00 p.m.

The free event will include a piano selection by Gregori High student Odalis Caro and a capella singing by the family of Rev. Charles Ware, Pastor of New Birth Christian Center in Stockton. Following the music, the Fifth Annual Martin Luther King Legacy Award will be presented to The Bridge, a West Modesto community group that works mainly with Southeast Asians. A brief video biography will introduce Lewis, and, I anticipate, a full house will rise in standing ovation to welcome to our community this genuine American hero.

A prominent leader in the Civil Rights



Movement and, since 1987, in the U.S. House of Representatives, Congressman John Lewis continues to walk the walk with rare integrity and utmost commitment.

By age 23 he was already recognized as one of the principle leaders of the American Civil Rights Movement, along with Martin

Luther King, Jr. The son of sharecroppers in rural Alabama, he led his first demonstrations while studying theology in Nashville, Tennessee. As Chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, he was a leader in many of the most dramatic campaigns of the movement: the lunch counter

sit-ins, the Freedom Rides, and the March on Washington. He suffered serious injuries from mob violence and personal physical attacks, and would be arrested more than 40 times, but John Lewis would not be deterred from

COMMEMORATION. cont. p. 8

Civil Rights Leader Rep. John Lewis Responds To Limbaugh’s Gun Claim: We Chose Non-Violence

CHELSEA RUDMAN of Media Matters For America reported “that Rush Limbaugh “had asked on his radio show, “If a lot of African-Americans back in the ‘60s had guns and the legal right to use them for self-defense, you think they would have needed Selma?” He continued, “If John Lewis, who says he was beat upside the head, if John Lewis had had a gun, would he have been beat upside the head on the bridge?”

During the 1965 march from Selma, Alabama, to Montgomery in support of voting rights for African-Americans, state troopers beat the unarmed protesters on the Edmund Pettus Bridge. Lewis suffered a concussion.

Responding to Limbaugh, Lewis said in a press release:

“In an effort to encourage people to resist new gun control legislation, a statement was made on The Rush Limbaugh Show today which misrepresents Civil Rights Movement history. In the shadow of the Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service, in the year we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the March on Washington in August, and a little more than a month before the annual celebration of the events in Selma, Rep. John Lewis was glad to address this inaccuracy.

“Our goal in the Civil Rights Movement was not to injure or destroy but to build a sense of community, to reconcile people to the true oneness of all humanity,” said Rep. John Lewis. “African Americans in the 60s could have chosen to arm themselves, but we made a conscious decision not to. We were convinced that peace could not be achieved through violence. Violence begets violence, and we believed the only way to achieve peaceful ends was through peaceful means.

We took a stand against an unjust system, and we decided to use this faith as our shield and the power of compassion as our defense.

“And that is why this nation celebrates the genius and the elegance of Martin Luther King Jr.’s work and philosophy. Through the power of non-violent action, Dr. King accomplished something that no movement, no action of government, no war, no legislation, or strategy of politics had ever achieved in this nation’s history. It was non-violence that not only brought an end to legalized segregation and racial discrimination, but Dr. King’s peaceful work changed the hearts of millions of Americans who stood up for justice and rejected the injury of violence forever.”

WHAT HAPPENED IN SELMA ALABAMA?

On March 7, 1965, 600 peaceful nonviolent Civil Rights workers attempted to march from Selma to Montgomery to demonstrate the need for voting rights in Alabama. The march was led by John Lewis and Hosea Williams. They were met on the Edmund Pettus Bridge by Alabama state troopers who beat the unarmed marchers. Lewis suffered a concussion on the bridge. A few days after the march President Lyndon Johnson introduced a bill to the Congress which became the Voting Rights Act of 1965, described as one of the most effective pieces of legislation Congress has issued in the past 50 years. An important section of the Voting Rights Act is currently in jeopardy and will be reviewed by the U.S. Supreme Court in February.

See <http://mediamatters.org/blog/2013/01/18/civil-rights-leader-rep-john-lewis-responds-to/192333>

Modesto Peace/Life Center Annual Meeting

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2013

PEACE/LIFE CENTER, 720 13th ST., MODESTO

- 8:30 AM — Coffee and Conversation
- 9:00 AM — Business Meeting:
 - Financial Report
 - Committee Reports
 - Election of Board Members
- Discussion:
 - Action plans, ideas and strategies
- 12:00 PM — Adjournment



For over 40 years the Modesto Peace/Life Center has been a meeting place for people concerned about peace, justice, equality, a sustainable environment, education and working to make our community and world a more peaceful and equitable place. Please join us!

INSIDE CONNECTIONS

LOCAL	2	MLK LEGACY AWARD	6-7
LETTER TO PROGRESSIVES.	3	END DRONE STRIKES.	8
LIVING LIGHTLY	4	GATHERING OF VOICES	9
NEW SOCIAL COVENANT	5	GREEN TIPS	10
		FASCISM	11



Peace & Justice Network
of San Joaquin County

We invite you, your organization or a representative from your organization to the Peace & Justice Network of San Joaquin County's Annual Potluck and Community Discussion on February 10, at the John Morearty Peace & Justice Center at 231 Bedford Rd., Stockton, Just off Pacific Ave (the Miracle Mile)

2013 - Education and Activism in Stockton and San Joaquin County: Where are you on the web of Connections, what is your organization doing? How we all are connected? How can we boost our collective visibility, our relevance and our collective power for the good of this community – locally and wider?

How about a winter boost! Bring a pot of soup, munchies, bread or a spread to share with others. Stay for stimulating talks and discussions.

4:30 PM Doors open. *Web of Connections* activity

5:00 PM: Guest Speaker: Barbara Barrigan-Parilla, Campaign Director for Restore the Delta. A Stockton resident of several years, Ms. Barrigan-Parrilla developed a love and appreciation of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta while observing its changing landscape during the 1996-97 floods, which she chronicled in a manuscript of poems, published in various literary publications throughout the United States.

5:30-7:00: Pot Luck Dinner and discussions

7:00 Election of officers Peace & Justice Network Board, followed by short board meeting.

RSVP: Message phone: 209-467-4455 or email: pjsjc@sbcglobal.net

Videographers wanted or people interested

The Modesto Peace/Life Center is looking for a program on the "invisible people." These are the poor or homeless people that live in our area. If you are interested, email or call John Lucas at johnlucas1947@gmail.com or 527-7634.

The finished video will be aired on the Peace/Life Center's public access television time slot on Wednesdays and Saturdays at 9 PM on Comcast Channel 26.



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Sierra Club and Audubon Society offer scholarships

By ANITA YOUNG

The local Yokuts group of the Sierra Club and Stanislaus Audubon Society are offering two \$500.00 scholarships for Fall 2013. High school seniors and continuing college students may apply.

The Donna Durham Memorial Scholarship and the Bob Corey/Paul Illick Memorial Scholarship honor former members of the Sierra Club and Audubon Society. These scholarships are offered to students who are currently working on a conservation or environmental project/activity, or have worked on one in the past, and are also residents of Stanislaus

County or attend school in Stanislaus County.

Besides submitting an application, qualified students must submit a short essay. Postmarked deadline for submissions is March 31, 2013.

Information will be available through high school counseling offices, Modesto Junior College, UC Merced, or CSU Stanislaus. Applications are available at <http://motherlode.sierraclub.org/yokuts/Yokuts/Home.html>

For more info., contact Yokuts Chair Anita Young, young-books@sbcglobal.net

State Theatre presents "Science on Screen"

The State Theatre is one of only 20 art houses in the United States to receive a grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation for the establishment a "Science On Screen" program.

"Science On Screen" is a pioneering program that pairs popular Hollywood films with lively introductions by notable experts from the world of science, technology, mathematics and medicine. Each film serves as a jumping off point for the speaker to discuss current scientific discoveries, research, or technological advances. A Q&A after the film gives the audience a chance to engage the speaker in a discussion about the relevance of the film to the reality of current scientific knowledge.

"Science On Screen" is a perfect combination of entertainment and enlightenment! We enlisted an advisory committee of scientists and educators and the result is an impressive series of four programs, each with its own engaging film, and an enthusiastic, expert speaker. There will also be interactive displays and demonstrations in the lobby prior to each film, such as a demonstration of the DaVinci Surgical Robot courtesy of Doctors Medical Center and a display of student-made robots from a local high school (*Robot and Frank*); a display out all-weather outerwear from Royal Robbins (*The Day After Tomorrow*); and a hands-on look at rare and unusual fossils and papier-mâché dinosaurs made by Salida school kids (*Jurassic Park*).

There are many more surprises in store so we hope you will attend not one but all of these unique programs designed to bridge the widening gap between the "two cultures" of science and the humanities through the universal language of film.

Sunday, March 10, 2013: Film: *Robot and Frank*, starring Frank Langella and Susan Sarandon, is an offbeat buddy movie about an elderly ex-jewel thief and his new, caretaker robot. **Speaker: Kevin Gucwa, Ph.D.** — "Turning Fictional

Robotics Into Reality." Doctor Gucwa is Director Assistant at the UC Davis C-STEM Center, a program designed to improve computing, science, technology, engineering and mathematics education in K-14 education. He is also pursuing a Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering with a focus on robotics. Sponsored by Doctors Medical Center

Sunday, April 14, 2013: Film: *The Day After Tomorrow* starring Dennis Quaid as Jack Hall, a paleoclimatologist who makes a daring trek across America after a sudden storm plunges the planet into a new Ice Age. **Speaker: Michael P. Branch** — "Popular Cinema Takes On Climate Change." Dr. Branch, a professor of Literature and Environment at the University of Nevada, Reno, teaches courses in literature, film and environmental studies. He has published five books and more than 150 articles and reviews on environmental literature. His environmental creative nonfiction has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize.

Sunday, May 12, 2013: Film: *Jurassic Park*, Steven Spielberg's blockbuster in which a theme park suffers a major power breakdown that allows its dinosaur exhibits, cloned from prehistoric DNA, to run amok. Starring Sam Neill, Laura Dern, Jeff Goldblum and Richard Attenborough. **Speaker: Garry Hayes, M.S.** — "Dinosaurs: From Fossils to Film." Mr. Hayes, noted geologist, local scientist, teaches geology at Modesto Junior College where he's shared his passion and popularized paleontology with thousands of students since 1988.

Doors open at 2 p.m.; presentation and films 3 p.m. (Q&A following the films.) More information at <http://www.thestate.org/calendar/event/668/view>

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A Letter I Wish Progressive Groups Would Send to Their Members

By **NORMAN SOLOMON**

Dear Progressives,

With President Obama's second term underway and huge decisions looming on Capitol Hill, consider this statement from Howard Zinn: "When a social movement adopts the compromises of legislators, it has forgotten its role, which is to push and challenge the politicians, not to fall in meekly behind them."

With so much at stake, we can't afford to forget our role. For starters, it must include public clarity.

Let's face it: despite often nice-sounding rhetoric from the president, this administration has continued with a wide range of policies antithetical to progressive values.

Corporate power, climate change and perpetual war are running amok while civil liberties and economic fairness take a beating. President Obama has even put Social Security and Medicare on the table for cuts.

Last fall, the vast majority of progressives voted for Obama to prevent the presidency from going to a Republican Party replete with racism, misogyny, anti-gay bigotry and xenophobia. Defeating the right wing was cause for celebration. And now is the time to fight for genuine progressive policies.

But let's be real about our current situation. Obama has led the Democratic Party — including, at the end of the legislative day, almost every Democrat on Capitol Hill — deeper into an abyss of corporate-driven austerity, huge military outlays, normalization of civil-liberties abuses and absence of significant action on climate change. Leverage from the Oval Office is acting as a brake on many — in Congress and in progressive constituency groups — who would prefer to be moving legislation in a progressive direction.

Hopefully we've learned by now that progressive oratory is no substitute for progressive policies. The soaring rhetoric in Obama's inaugural address this week offered inspiring words about a compassionate society where everyone is respected and we look out for each other. Unfortunately and routinely, the president's lofty words have allowed him to slide by many progressives despite policies that often amount to a modern version of "social liberalism, fiscal conservatism."

The *New York Times* headline over its front-page coverage, "Obama Offers a Liberal Vision in Inaugural Address," served up the current presidential recipe: a spoonful of rhetorical sugar to help the worsening austerity go down. But no amount of verbal sweetness can make up for assorted policies aligned with Wall Street and the wealthy at the expense of the rest of us.

"At their inaugurals," independent journalist I.F. Stone noted long ago, our presidents "make us the dupes of our hopes."

Unlike four years ago, Obama has a presidential record — and its contrasts with Monday's oratorical performance are stark. A president seeking minimally fair economic policies, for instance, would not compound the disaster of four years of Timothy Geithner as Secretary of the Treasury by replacing him with Jack Lew — arguably even more of a corporate flack.

Superficial "access" has scant impact. The kind of empowered access we need will come from mobilizing grassroots power.

On foreign policy, it was notably disingenuous for Obama to proclaim in his second inaugural speech that "enduring security and lasting peace do not require perpetual war" — minutes after completing a first term when his administration launched more than 20,000 air strikes, sharply escalated the use of weaponized drones and did so much else to make war perpetual.

Meanwhile, the media hype on the inaugural speech's passage about climate change has lacked any indication that the White House is ready to push for steps commensurate with the magnitude of the real climate crisis.

The founder of the Sustainable Energy and Economy Network, Daphne Wysham, points out that the inaugural words "will be meaningless unless a) the Obama administration rejects the Keystone XL tar sands pipeline; b) Obama selects a new EPA administrator who is willing to take action under the Clean Air Act to rein in CO2 emissions from all sources; c) he stops pushing for dangerous energy development deep offshore in the Gulf, in the Arctic and via continued fracking for oil and gas; d) he pursues a renewable energy standard for the entire country; and e) he directs our publicly

financed development banks and export credit agencies to get out of fossil fuels entirely."

The leadership we need is certainly not coming from the White House or Congress. "A genuine leader is not a searcher for consensus but a molder of consensus," Martin Luther King Jr. observed. The leadership we need has to come, first and foremost, from us.

Some members of Congress — maybe dozens — have shown commitment to a progressive agenda, and a larger number claim a progressive mantle. In any event, their role is not our role. They adhere to dotted lines that we should cross. They engage in Hill-speak euphemisms that we should bypass. Routinely, they decline to directly confront wrong-headed Obama administration policies. And we must confront those policies.

If certain members of Congress resent being pushed by progressives to challenge the White House, they lack an appreciation for the crucial potential of grassroots social movements. On the other hand, those in Congress who "get" progressive social change will appreciate our efforts to push them and their colleagues to stand progressive ground.

When we're mere supplicants to members of Congress, the doors that open on Capitol Hill won't lead very much of anywhere. Superficial "access" has scant impact. The kind of empowered access we need will come from mobilizing grassroots power.

We need to show that we'll back up members of Congress who are intrepid for our values — and we can defeat others, including self-described "progressives," who aren't. Building electoral muscle should be part of building a progressive movement.

We're in this for the long haul, but we're not willing to mimic the verbiage or echo the silences from members of Congress who fail to challenge egregious realities of this administration's policies. As Howard Zinn said, our role is to challenge, not fall in line.

Norman Solomon is founding director of the Institute for Public Accuracy and co-founder of RootsAction.org. He co-chairs the national Healthcare Not Warfare campaign organized by Progressive Democrats of America. His books include "War Made Easy: How Presidents and Pundits Keep Spinning Us to Death" and "Made Love, Got War: Close Encounters with America's Warfare State".

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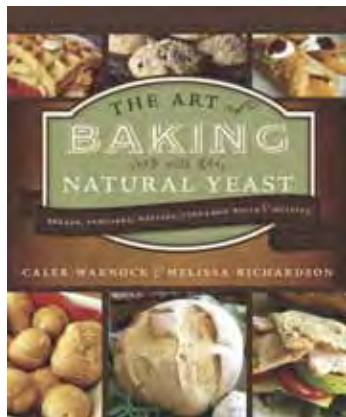
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The Art of Baking with “Natural Yeast”

By JENIFER WEST

I recently received a wonderful book: *The Art of Baking with Natural Yeast* by Caleb Warnock and Melissa Richardson. (Available at Lehi’s Tree, in the Raley’s shopping center at Tully & Standiford, and on Amazon.com.)



In my never-ending pursuit of self-sufficiency, I had hit a roadblock in the area of baking bread. I’ve been making our bread from scratch for several years (occasional croissants from Costco notwithstanding), and, some time ago, made a sourdough starter. It makes a loaf of fiercely tart peasant bread. However, I’m the only “fiercely tart” fan in the house. Besides, I wanted to learn to make regular, mild-mannered, everyday bread without depending on store-bought yeast.

And on that subject, the book was a real eye-opener. As it happens, the yeast most of us are familiar with isn’t naturally occurring! This, the authors suggest, is a plausible explanation for the dramatic increase in wheat allergies and gluten intolerance. But it certainly does raise bread! And for those who can tolerate it, want to make homemade bread but don’t care to learn the art of baking with “natural yeast” (a very mild-flavored sourdough), it’s certainly a respectable option.

But for anyone willing to put in a little time and effort, natural yeast is the way to go. The benefits are impressive: it “unlocks” the nutrients in whole grains; bread made with it doesn’t cause a blood sugar spike, and even seems to reduce one’s glycemic response to all carbohydrates. For the cook, baking with natural yeast allows a good deal more flexibility than the commercial variety. And just as some people who are lactose-intolerant can tolerate yogurt, some people with celiac disease can tolerate bread made with it.

Here’s the best thing about the book: It suggests several sources for mild-flavored natural yeast. Anyone who buys it is invited to email the authors and request a free start. Failing that, mild starter is also available from Original Fast

Foods, 1221 N 1270 E, American Fork, UT 84003. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope and a small monetary contribution (presumably a dollar or two would be adequate).

To care for your starter, just feed it twice a week: Simply remove some, and add water and flour in roughly a 1 to 1 ratio. Keep your starter mild by putting it right back into the fridge after feeding. It’s a good idea to keep both mild and tart starter on hand. If you won’t be using it for awhile, the book even gives instructions for drying some of your starter for long-term storage – which is a good idea anyway, so you’ll have a backup on hand, just in case.

Breads of many descriptions can be made with natural yeast, including the “no-knead” variety, English muffins, flat breads, pancakes, waffles, crepes, muffins, cinnamon rolls – the book even has a recipe for a whole wheat chocolate cake! I’m waiting for my mild starter to arrive, and will share what I learn from working with it in a later column. In the meantime, to help you get started, here’s a quick & easy tart starter recipe, along with my favorite recipe for Sourdough Peasant Bread:

Tart Sourdough Starter

Use the 2, 1, 2 method: 2 cups flour (white, whole wheat, whatever), 1 envelope (2-1/4 tsp) packaged yeast, 2 cups lukewarm water; stir together in a glass or crockery container to form a thick paste. (If you’re in a hurry, add a teaspoon or two of sugar, and/or substitute pineapple juice for some or all of the water to really get things going.) Cover loosely and leave on the counter for 2 – 5 days, stirring twice a day; when ready, the starter will be bubbly, and smell pleasantly sour. Feed up to 3 days before using.

Sourdough Peasant Bread

- 1 cup Starter (fed 1 – 3 days before using)
- 1 cup Water
- 1 – 2 tbsp Butter or Oil (optional – for softer crumb)
- 3 cups Wheat Flour
- ½ cup Barley, Oat and or Rye Flour
- 2 tbsp Potato Flakes (optional – for softer crumb)
- 2 tbsp Powdered Milk (optional – for softer crumb)

Combine ingredients until well mixed. Let rest 10 minutes. Knead 7 - 9 minutes, until dough holds together and is translucent when stretched gently. Put into lightly greased bowl, cover and let rise 6 – 12 hours. Shape as desired (I usually line a Dutch oven with parchment paper, and gently put the dough into it). You could bake it at this point, or let it rise another couple of hours, until it springs back when gently pressed with a finger. Cover and bake at 425 for 20 – 30 minutes, until lightly browned. Remove the cover, reduce heat to 375 and bake another 30 – 40 minutes, or until nicely browned. Let cool completely before cutting. Makes excellent garlic bread.

Gardener’s Note: Direct sow lettuce, beets, carrots, radishes, Swiss chard and potatoes now. Start tomatoes, peppers and eggplant indoors if growing from seed.



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**Modesto Homeopathy
Elise Osner, C Hom**
1015 12th St., Suite 4
Modesto, CA 95350

209-527-4420
209-988-7883
eosner@ainet.com

LAW OFFICES OF
ROCKWELL, KELLY & DUARTE, LLP

1600 G Street
Suite 203

DAVID N. ROCKWELL P.O. Box 0142
SHARON E. KELLY Modesto, CA
JEFFREY DUARTE 95353-0142
MARKUS URSTOEGER (209) 521-2552
Attorneys/Abogados FAX (209) 526-7898

A Call for a New Social Covenant

By JIM WALLIS

In the past 20 years, the world has witnessed the death of social contracts. We have seen a massive breakdown in trust between citizens, their economies, and their governments. In our own country, we can point to years of data painting a bleak picture of the confidence Americans have in any of our traditional institutions.

Former assumptions and shared notions about fairness, agreements, reciprocity, mutual benefits, social values, and expected futures have all but disappeared. The collapse of financial systems and the resulting economic crisis not only have caused instability, insecurity, and human pain; they have also generated a growing disbelief and fundamental distrust in the way things operate and how decisions are made.

This week at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, we are looking to the future and asking “what now?” At a Saturday session — “The Moral Economy: From Social Contract to Social Covenant” — a document will kick off a year-long global conversation about a new “social covenant” between citizens, governments, and businesses.

This is really “a call” for worldwide discussion about what values are needed to address the many difficult challenges and choices the world is now facing. Inequality, austerity, retrenchment, constraints, mal-distribution, growing conflicts over resources, and extreme poverty all raise questions about our values.

The introduction to the covenant says:

“The choices made about each issue are determined by the values we hold—the values applied by government, business, civil society, and individuals. Those choices need to be self-conscious—not based on the inertia of accumulated interests. This is not merely a philosophical enterprise; it is an urgent matter that requires moral courage. The stakes are high.”

While the social covenant call acknowledges the great diversity of global values, it puts forward three that express a consensus across cultures and religions. They are: 1) the dignity of the human person, 2) the importance of the common

good, which transcends individual interests, and 3) the need for stewardship of the planet and posterity.

“Together these offer a powerful unifying ideal: Valued individuals, committed to one another, and respectful of future generations.”

We urgently need a new social covenant between citizens,

They are: 1) the dignity of the human person, 2) the importance of the common good, which transcends individual interests, and 3) the need for stewardship of the planet and posterity.

businesses, and government. Contracts have been broken, but a covenant adds a moral dimension to the solution that is now essential. By definition, this will require the engagement and collaboration of all the “stakeholders” — governments, businesses, civil society groups, people of faith, and especially young people.

We should discuss social covenants many contexts, and the results will vary from place to place. But they should all include shared principles and features — a value basis for new agreements, an emphasis on jobs that offer fair rewards for hard work and real contributions to society, security for financial assets and savings, a serious commitment to reduce inequality between the top and the bottom of society, stewardship of the environment, an awareness of future generations’ needs, a stable and accountable financial sector, and the strengthening of both opportunity and social mobility.

Such a covenant promotes human flourishing, happiness, and well-being as social goals, and it elevates the movement from a shareholder model to a stakeholder model of corporate

governance. Such new social covenants are already being discussed in a variety of settings and countries. The discussion itself will help produce the conversation leading to the results that we need.

A moral conversation about a social covenant could ask what a “moral economy” should look like and for whom it should exist. How can we do things differently, more responsibly, more equitably, and yes, more democratically? In forums where business and political leaders meet, the conversation should focus on the meaning of a moral economy as a way to safely interrogate our present failed practices. Such a discussion could lead to new practices driving both ethical and practical decisions about the economics of our local and global households.

Lack of trust is bad for politics, bad for business, and bad for overall public morale. It undermines people’s sense of participation in society as well as their feelings of social responsibility, and makes them feel isolated and alone—more worried about survival than interested in solidarity. Because the “contract” was broken, a sense of “covenant” is now needed, fused with a sense of moral values and commitments. And the process of formulating new social covenants could be an important part of finding solutions.

What better conversation could we have for the common good?

I had the opportunity to co-author this new social covenant and help lead the Global Action Council on Values, which issued this new call and document. I invite all of you to read the *New Social Covenant* and join the conversation! Read it at http://sojo.net/sites/default/files/file_attach/NewSocialCovenant.pdf

Jim Wallis is the author of Rediscovering Values: A Guide for Economic and Moral Recovery, and CEO of Sojourners. His forthcoming book, On God’s Side: What Religion Forgets and Politics Hasn’t Learned about Serving the Common Good, is set to release in April. Follow Jim on Twitter @JimWallis

The price of our freedom

By GEORGE LAKOFF, Reader Supported News

Are we prepared to say that such violence visited on our children year after year after year is somehow the price of our freedom?” — Barack Obama, Newtown Address, December 16, 2012

That sentence, uttered by President Obama in his Newtown Address, may turn out to be a turning point in American history. The president, in one sentence, turned the beautiful faces of the 20 first-grade children murdered brutally by assault weapons into the moral measure of our nation. Conservatives have argued that guns = freedom, and that there should be no limit on such freedom. The president trumped their argument: The price of not protecting the nations’ children is too high. Permitting the mass murder of our children is not freedom.

It comes as a shock at a certain point where you realize no matter how much you love these kids, you can’t do it by yourself. That this job of keeping our children safe and teaching them well is something we can only do together, with the help of friends and neighbors, the help of a community, and

the help of a nation.

And in that way we come to realize that we bear responsibility for every child, because we’re counting on everybody else to help look after ours; that we’re all parents; that they are all our children.

This is our first task, caring for our children. It’s our first job. If we don’t get that right, we don’t get anything right. That’s how, as a society, we will be judged.

Democracy, as the president has said, begins with the people taking care of one another responsibly, importantly through government as an instrument of freedom. That how we get our public schools, our roads, our sewers, our patent office, our scientific research, our energy, communication and transportation systems, our food safety, our protectors, and all the rest that we need to be free in our private lives. It is a truth: the private depends on the public. We, all together, constitute the public. Unless we take care of one another and one another’s children, we can’t get democracy — and freedom — right.

The gun lobby rests on conservative ideology: Democracy supposedly gives each of us individually the “liberty” to seek our own self-interests with no responsibility for the interests or well-being of anyone else. After and Obama’s Newtown Address, the whole idea of such “liberty” makes no sense.

The time is ripe to end the conservative grip over nearly half of America. That starts with an all-out effort to put in place responsible gun safety laws. Total registration, just like with cars. An end to automatic and semi-automatic weapons. And an end to blaming massacres on crazies. Gun massacres require guns that can massacre. Eliminate them.

The president set just the right tone. We’re in this together. We bear joint responsibility for one another and all our children. If you accept this, really accept it, you can’t keep conservative ideology, not just on guns, but on anything.

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2013 MLK Legacy Award honors The Bridge

By DAN ONORATO

For five years the Martin Luther King, Jr. Annual Commemoration Committee has honored individuals or groups whose steadfast work on behalf of often under-served people in our area is a model of Dr. King's vision of building the Beloved Community. This year's recipient, The Bridge, is a grassroots community center in West Modesto that focuses mainly on the needs of Southeast Asians.

The Bridge was the dream child of Ida Bowers and Cammie Lear. In the aftermath of the Vietnam War, Cambodia and Laos fell to Communist forces. Tens of thousands of people suffered terribly and fled the Khmer Rouge's genocide in Cambodia and the Pathet Lao in Laos into refugee camps in neighboring Thailand. Many lived in these camps for 5 to 7 years before resettling in several countries, including the United States. By the late 1980s several thousand Southeast Asians were living in Modesto and nearby valley cities. Ida was a well-known professor of cultural geography at CSU Stanislaus. Cammie, once Ida's student and now her close friend, taught anthropology at Modesto Junior College. Because both had lived in the region or visited it and shared a deep appreciation of its peoples, they were frequently invited to give talks and workshops to social service agencies about Southeast Asian culture, belief systems, and traditional health. The most common question was, why don't the Southeast Asians make use of our services?

Ida had lived in Indonesia and understood culture shock, the experience of fear, confusion, and aloneness when first living in a culture totally different from your own. She knew that trust had to be built slowly through person-to-person relationships, often around simple everyday activities. She also knew that people needed to feel valued for this trust to grow. Out of this vision of creating a community of mutual sharing, respect, and appreciation The Bridge was born.

Local agencies wanted the new refugees to go to them, but Ida and Cammie realized "we had to go to the refugees." Since many Cambodians lived in the large apartment complex at 620 Paradise, the two dauntless women, with Mayor Carol Whiteside's help, secured \$17,000 from the City of Modesto in 1989 to fix up a free apartment and turn it into a comfortable, friendly, non-threatening community center, more like a village gathering place in Asia than an office in America. Community people, students, and teachers rolled up their sleeves to help renovate it. Asian residents, mainly children at first, began dropping by out of curiosity. Gradually American and Asian women were sitting around talking, sewing, and laughing together, with the kids doing the translating. Soon tutoring started, American students from Stan State and MJC helping their new young friends with their schoolwork. The Americans saw the Asian women tending their vegetable garden and started learning about their special foods. In time, through the children and this mutual interchange of skills and interests, more adults came around and discussed their needs. Public Health told the Asians they could no longer sell their food because they had no license and were not in compliance with health codes. What could they do? Elders had medical problems, both physical and psychological, and they didn't

know where or how to get help. Many felt estranged from their children because the youth were taking on the ways and wanting the foods of their new culture. In turn, many young people were burdened with having to translate wherever their elders needed to go.

Carla Emig was the first site coordinator at 620 Paradise, and became intimately involved in the joy, pain, and chal-

Many of them suffer from multiple health problems and find the maze of paperwork and electronic modes of communication required to function in American society confusing and overwhelming. Other services include being liaisons between clients and agencies; after school activities for children and teens; and parent education and women's support groups emphasizing preventive medical and mental health education.



lenges of her new Asian refugee friends. As she shared her growing understanding with Ida and Cammie, little by little programs developed and hard-won grants paid the bills. In 2002 when Carla left, current Program Director Marge Leopold, who'd also been Ida's student and had volunteered at The Bridge for years, took over the day-to-day leadership, and The Bridge moved to its present address on 605 Chicago Avenue, a block off Paradise Road.

Today, even though funding remains a perennial challenge, The Bridge, working under the umbrella of Sierra Vista Child and Family Services, is highly regarded in the local network of social service agencies. Its staff is busy, often beyond regular working hours, providing an array of services. Interpretation in Cambodian, Hmong and Laotian languages is still critically needed for older family members.

In all its work, The Bridge's mission remains paramount: to build bridges of understanding and friendship between individuals and families from different backgrounds; to help them learn about and from each other; and to assist them in developing strong help networks in their neighborhood and a sense of pride and unity in their community.

As someone who has observed The Bridge over the years and served on its Board of Directors, I see it as unique and very special. At the door might be Marge Leopold, or Senior Cambodian Interpreter and Cultural Advisor Mao Roth, or maybe Lao Outreach Worker Bouapanh Boudsady or Jean Kea, Cambodian Outreach Worker. Up to a few months ago

The Bridge

from page 6

it might have been Tun Van Long, but he recently retired. Whoever's there, their welcome is warm and genuine. And no matter how much is happening, no one is loud or acts rushed. They listen carefully. Each person who enters their center is the focus of their full attention. "It's like a family," explains Cammie Lear. "We've been through a lot together." Cultural Services Director Dr. Pao Lee, who's worked at The

like others, demonstrates to the Southeast Asian community that their knowledge and skills are valued and respected, and need to be preserved. It also exemplifies an integral part of The Bridge's purpose: to help people in the larger, mainstream community understand and appreciate Southeast Asian cultures and people.

Gardening and cooking are great loves of Bouapanh

on outings to places like Pinecrest. They're planning to help with neighborhood clean-up days, collecting food and clothing for the homeless and needy families in West Modesto, and lobbying local government to install a traffic light at a dangerous intersection on Paradise Rd.

I was deeply moved when I interviewed Dr. Pao Lee in a brief respite from his busy schedule. His story and what he

said summarize the spirit of tenacity and loving generosity at the heart of The Bridge. Laotian Hmong Dr. Lee had a university education before he fled Laos to refugee camps in Thailand, where he worked as a medic. Here in the U.S. he earned his B.A. in Liberal Studies at CSU Stanislaus with a specialty in Teaching English as a Second Language, and then continued on for his Masters Degree in Interdisciplinary Studies under the tutelage of Dr. Bowers, who inspired him



Bridge almost since it started, comments with deep feeling, "This is like my home. My house is my small family. This is a big family, more diverse." Leopold, who was a hospital nurse before dedicating herself to The Bridge, adds: "This is totally different from the big world. Here everyone respects one another. If someone needs something, people meet that need. Even when The Bridge ran out of money and had to lay off staff, they all came back to work, even though unpaid."

Current projects at The Bridge are the CSU Stanislaus-sponsored effort to document the knowledge and use of medicinal herbs among Cambodians, Laotians, and Hmong in Modesto; the gardening and cooking program; the Elders Music Program; and The Bridge Youth Builders. With cooperation from The Bridge staff, CSU Stanislaus professors Dr. Richard Wallace, Anthropology, and Dr. Stuart Wooly, Biology, and some of their students began interviewing older Cambodians, Laotians, and Hmong who have extensive knowledge of medicinal plants and how to grow, prepare, and use them. Their information is being documented and later their subjects' personal life stories will be videotaped. Each family will receive a DVD of the story of the healer in their family, and the results of this project will be made available to Western doctors interested in learning about Southeast Asian traditional medicinal remedies. This project,

incorporating more vegetables into the "American" diet the second and third generation children often prefer. The cooking project brings women and their children together to cook Lao cuisine in an effort to help the youth treasure and pass on their culinary heritage.

The Elder Music Project involves a small group of musicians demonstrating the use of their traditional instruments by playing the timeless melodies of their cultures. Their hope is to attract young people to listen, watch, and learn. Their music also comforts elders who may be depressed and ill, and in public celebrations at The Bridge exposes non-Asian people in Modesto to Southeast Asian culture and history through the region's traditional music. Youth involved with The Bridge Youth Builders will film and archive their presentations to preserve some of their cultures' musical traditions.

The Bridge Youth Builders is thriving under the guidance of Jean Kea. A service-learning club for youth ages 14 – 20, the BYB currently includes Cambodian, Hmong, Laotian, and Latino youth. They mentor young children who come to The Bridge, plant new gardens, and have painted murals on the front wall of the Center's barn. To build their own friendships, they also do fun activities such as playing basketball and other games at the Center, bowling together, or going



Boudsady. The community garden project enables Bouapanh and other Bridge staff to model skills needed for a productive garden and hold discussions about healthy food choices and

to volunteer at The Bridge in its early days. Later in 1999 he earned his PhD in International-Multicultural Education from the University of San Francisco. All this while he and his wife were raising their ten children, and Dr. Lee was working for The Bridge, teaching and interpreting. He has been offered other better paying jobs but he chooses, as the Chinese adage says, to grow where he's planted. Lao and Hmong people, not only in Stanislaus County but also from Sacramento to Merced, seek him out because they trust him and know he'll do all he can to help. "We don't know the future," he told me. "While I breathe I have to do my best, not only for my children and family but also anybody that needs help. . . . When people ask you for help, you need to help them so they don't feel alone." Before he left to interpret for someone, he looked at me and said humbly, "It's a gift from God to help people."

Dr. King spent the last months of his life organizing a Poor People's Campaign and in his last week joined Memphis garbage workers in their strike for decent pay and better working conditions. He was increasingly concerned about the distorted social and economic priorities of this country, and was committed to galvanizing people to join his effort on behalf of "the least of my brothers and sisters." For 24 years in its persevering effort to meet the needs of Southeast Asian refugees and their families, The Bridge has shared King's commitment. How fitting it is that this modest but utterly dedicated community group is being honored with this year's MLK Legacy Award.

Prominent Americans Call for End to U.S. Drone Strikes in Pakistan

The following letter was delivered to the US embassy in Pakistan on October 3, 2012. Read the press release at <http://www.justforeignpolicy.org/pressreleases/pakistan-drones-letter>

To: U.S. and Pakistani officials who have influence over the U.S. policy of conducting drone strikes in Pakistan

From: Citizens of the United States

We urge you to do everything in your power to end U.S. drone strikes in Pakistan;

to bring the drone strike policy into compliance with international and U.S. law; to permanently end all “signature strikes” against unknown persons; to permanently end “secondary strikes,” particularly those that target and endanger civilian rescuers, in grave violation of international law; to address questions about civilian casualties from drone strikes publicly and in detail; and to compensate civilian drone strike victims and their families.

US drone strikes in Pakistan have killed and harmed too many civilians. The Bureau of Investigative Journalism has reported 474 to 884 civilian deaths caused by US drone strikes in Pakistan since 2004, including 176 children. [1] Moreover, as a recent study from researchers at NYU and Stanford law schools notes, “US drone strike policies cause considerable and under-accounted for harm to the daily lives of ordinary civilians, beyond death and physical injury,” as civilians live in a state of constant fear, since drones could strike at any time. [2] Families are afraid to attend weddings or funerals, because US drone operators might strike them. [3]

US drone strikes in Pakistan haven’t made America safer. The Stanford/NYU study notes, “Publicly available evidence that the strikes have made the US safer overall is ambiguous at best ... The number of ‘high-level’ militants killed as a percentage of total casualties is extremely low – estimated at just 2%. Evidence suggests that US strikes have facilitated recruitment to violent non-state armed groups, and motivated further violent attacks.” [4]

US drone strikes in Pakistan have helped turn the Pakistani public against the United States. Three quarters of Pakistanis now consider the U.S. an enemy. Only 13% of Pakistanis think relations with the U.S. have improved in recent years; four-in-ten believe that US economic and military aid is having a negative impact on Pakistan, while only about one-in-ten think the impact is positive. Only 17% back U.S. drone strikes, even if they are conducted in conjunction with the Pakistani government. [5]

US drone strikes in Pakistan violate international law. Christof Heyns, the UN special rapporteur on extrajudicial killings, has said that US drone strikes in Pakistan threaten fifty years of international law, and that some drone strikes may constitute war crimes. [6] A recent Congressional Research Service report noted that the US claims that drone strikes in Pakistan are in “self-defense” run afoul of international law which limits self-defense against prospective threats to ones which are “imminent.” [7] And international law experts say that “secondary” attacks on civilian rescuers are clearly illegal, regardless of whether they take place in a legal conflict or not. [8]



US drone strikes in Pakistan violate U.S. law. The Administration claims the drone strikes in Pakistan were authorized by the 2001 authorization of military force after the 9/11 attacks. The 2001 AUMF authorized attacks on those who carried out the 9/11 attacks and those who harbored them. Judge Katherine Forrest

has held that the 2001 AUMF did not cover mere “supporters” of such groups, and she questioned whether it covered associated forces [9] Under this ruling “signature strikes” and “secondary strikes” would be illegal under U.S. law.

US drone strikes in Pakistan undermine democracy. US officials claim that the Pakistani government has secretly approved the strikes by not opposing them in private [10]. But in public, Pakistani officials vigorously oppose the strikes. The Pakistani parliament has unanimously demanded that the drone strikes stop. [11] Meanwhile, the US government refused to give the US public, Congress, or US media basic information about the drone strike policy, claiming the policy is “secret” even as US officials publicly boast of the policy’s

claimed successes. This lack of transparency undermines Americans’ ability to democratically control US foreign policy in the public interest. [12]

We demand an immediate moratorium on the drone strikes. We demand that U.S. policy in Pakistan be brought into compliance with U.S. and international law, that the U.S. government come clean about civilian casualties, that civilian victims and their families be compensated, and that “signature” drone strikes and attacks on civilian rescuers be permanently abandoned, in Pakistan and everywhere else.

Signed:

Alice Walker, Author

Noam Chomsky, Author

Naomi Wolf, Author

Oliver Stone, Film Director

Danny Glover, Film Director

Jody Williams, Nobel Peace laureate

Tom Hayden, Author

Robert Naiman, Just Foreign Policy and 18 others

See all signers and references at <http://www.justforeignpolicy.org/node/1312>

Sign the petition at http://salsa.democracyinaction.org/o/1439/p/dia/action/public/?action_KEY=11670

MLK Commemoration

from page 1

the pursuit of justice. In 1965 he and Hosea Williams led the historic “Bloody Sunday” march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama. The marchers were attacked by Alabama State Troopers, and John Lewis had his skull fractured, but the subsequent march from Selma to Montgomery led directly to the passage of the Voting Rights Act, finally committing the federal government to enforcing voting rights for all Americans. In Congress he stands out as one of America’s most courageous champions of human rights.

Lewis has authored two books, *Walking With the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement*, and *Across That Bridge* (the latter available for purchase and signing at the MLK Commemoration). He’s received numerous awards, including the John F. Kennedy “Profile in Courage” Lifetime Achievement Award (the only one of its kind ever awarded), the NAACP Spingarn Medal, and the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor.

At the core of John Lewis’s life is his commitment to nonviolence. Influenced by Methodist minister Jim Lawson in Nashville in 1960, he became imbued with what Dr. King called the “Beloved Community,” a society based on simple justice that values the dignity and the worth of every human being. Lewis believed that holding a community at peace with itself as the goal, “the way, the means, must be peace, love, nonviolence.” The means and the ends, Lawson taught, are inseparable. So for Lewis, nonviolence is a way of life.

In *Across That Bridge* he explains:

We constantly ask how we can effectively thwart a threatening adversary with the posture of peace. But this power has been demonstrated on our own shores, yet its guidance remains invisible to us. The philosophy of nonviolence is studied and revered around the world, yet we fail to see the

avenues it opens to us here at home. It was a gateway to the Arab Spring, to nonviolent change in Serbia and Poland, in Germany and South Africa. Why don’t we recognize the power of what we accomplished here at home? If we can use light to heal and see, why not use light to secure ourselves against darkness? If we take the time, we can understand that the philosophy and strategies of nonviolence were a kind of genius that enabled even the undefended to fight back without the black arts of destruction. It taught an entire generation how to stand up without compromising their spiritual integrity and how to reform the most powerful nation on earth using methods that heal the human soul and uplift human society.

President Eisenhower warned us decades ago against feeding the enormous appetite of the military industrial complex. And since that time we have disregarded the admonition of a president and general and proceeded to revolved our entire economy around the industries of war. If we are ever to heed Eisenhower’s advice, it will mean cooperation and collaboration between nations in efforts that finally admit this world is not ours to hoard or waste, but it can only be ours in future generations if we share it equitably among one another. That is the only way each of us can survive and thrive. We must use what we need and then protect what remains for the betterment of future generations.

This shift in priorities does not mean demonizing industry or defaming profit. Even Gandhi saw business as an aid to human advancement, and profit as a powerful incentive to create But we must work together to creatively transform industry to reflect a reverence for the earth, the development of sustainable, renewable manufacturing processes, and a

Connections is pleased to include submissions from this season's New Year Poetry Challenge (NYPC), initiated by Modesto Poet Laureate Gillian Wegener, now in its third year. We want to thank the Poets and "non-poets" from the Modesto Area and around the US who have had great fun with Gillian's creative prompts, several of which focused upon peace, justice and a sustainable environment. More poetry was submitted than could fit into the print copy, and Connections has gone digital. Be sure to sign up online to receive the digital copy, and please check for hard copies at our distribution sights.

Poetry Challenge 2012-13

Quote: "There is nothing to see here." Write a poem.

The streets are quiet here early mornings.
Seagulls hunker in the school yard.
Juncos peck at the winter lawns.
Someone comes out in a bathrobe and socks
and picks up the paper. Inside,
there's coffee, buttered toast. Inside,
the radio's on, tuned to the news
which is tuned to the latest despair.
O love, it's blind luck that we find ourselves here
and not in a land where souls lift themselves
daily out of rubble and ash. Dumb luck
that we have enough food, that we move freely,
read freely, that so far our child has survived.
We've done nothing to earn this from our craven world.
And yet, here we are, ten thousand busy days ahead,
mostly ordinary, mostly safe in our tidy spaces,
mirrors reflecting back our slight discomfort.
The seagulls will rise into the coming days.
The juncos will head for the trees.
The radio news will keep reporting its lists of sorrows.
And we'll hold our breaths that our luck will hold,
that we'll never make news at the top of the hour,
that there will always be nothing to see here.

— Gillian Wegener

WILD HONEY

It started with honey from wild bees in a stone wall, black
as molasses brewing in the hidden hive perhaps for
decades.
We strained out the wax and bee bodies, funneled the
honey
into jars and lined them up in rows along the kitchen shelf.
Next the home baked bread, living yeast at its soaring
heart,
hands kneading the dough in loving massage, shaping it
into the simple warm golden wonder that has amazed for
centuries. Real butter always and this time wild honey.

— Sheila D. Landre

Arctic Tanka

Solitary flocs
Carry polar bears away
From one another.

I dream of heat and silence
and vanishing white on blue.

— Linda Scheller

LITANY OF EXCUSES

Vietnamization has been taken down the road.
If only the villagers might become our friends.
Each soldier packs a miniature Arabic dictionary.
Everyone remembers the French children snapping up the
American gum.
How have we managed to blow up yet another wedding
procession.
The lieutenant only wanted to look under her burka.
I think it's fair to remind everyone we have changed sides.
A tour of duty repeats itself but is not refundable.
The mayor seemed encouraging and awarded us contracts.
How do you say "we didn't know" and "we're going
now"?

— Sharon Olson

BOXES

Bodies in boxes jettied for home
Carefully lowered within earth's loam

Flags in graveyards honor their fights
Do we really embrace our precious rights?

War in boxes, bits, bytes, high def-TV
Do we acknowledge freedom? Choose liberty?

Remember those boxes beneath our earth
And pause for liberties we have inherited from birth

— Jenny Krajewski

HAIKU ON WAR

a country destroyed
weary from ten years of war
Afghanistan weeps

bunker busters drop
rocket propelled grenades land
prospects for peace dim

we are safe at home
war zone news sanitized
reduced to sound bites

surge troops return home
to hospital or graveyard
sacrifice supreme

a son goes to war
post traumatic stress syndrome
a hero's reward

— Lynn M. Hansen

HAIKU FOR THE NRA

No good guys with guns
bring gifts of peace on this earth.
Hate-silencers, please...

— Gary Thomas

Prompt #8 December 15 (in response to the Connecticut school shooting) Write a poem for someone you love...Perhaps...for someone who would least expect it...

A KINDER PLACE

A six year old girl plays dead
and escapes with her life.
"This was not a dream."
I feel so sad that this was not
a nightmare, a horrible creation
of my mind that I can wake up from,
that we can all wake up from,
then everything will be alright.
Instead, my heart is racing. I know
this to be a horrible creation of my culture.

We fear any restrictions
on our Second Amendment;
We are quick to go to war;
We produce most of the world's
violent films, video games,
violent and misogynistic song lyrics.
We glorify hard-ass, "Your fired" bullies;
We rarely reach out to the
elderly, isolated, homeless, different.
We let corporations buy our politicians,
Who then repeatedly shrink
funding for our schools, mental health,
and community service programs.

I want the world to wake up from this nightmare;
I want every person to have a full belly,
a warm home, good medical care. I want each
person to be surrounded with love and compassion,
especially when they feel like hurting
themselves, or suiting up in body armor,
grabbing semi-automatic weapons,
and killing as many people as they can.

I want to turn back the clock to the
First Moment this hurting Person was
feeling deep pain and self-loathing.
I want to hold him in my arms and say,
"Your mind is being a terrorist right now."
Let all of us who love you help you heal your pain
and turn these hellish thoughts around

When you are healed, you can help
one other person who is suffering,
because you will have the Great Compassion
that comes from the Deep Place of Knowing
what it feels like to be alone and afraid.
You can change your thoughts;
You can learn to love yourself;
You can save lives rather than take them;
You can be a part of something very big...
transforming the world into a kinder place."

— Chyrrill Turner

Green Tips for a Green Planet: “Chasing Ice” – Canaries in the Global Coal Mine

By TINA ARNOPOLE DRISKILL

Chasing Ice, shown recently at Modesto’s State Theater, is an up close and personal accounting of global climate change seen through the camera’s of environmental photographer James Balog.

Balog, a former climate change skeptic, now calls glaciers the “canaries in the global coal mine.” He began the amazing Arctic photo journal while on assignment for National Geographic in the spring of 2005, which led to his bold and stunning Extreme Ice Survey (EIS), employing an adventurous group of committed young people over the next several years in an epic Arctic time-lapse chronicle of the brutal reality of climate change.

“His hauntingly beautiful videos compress years into seconds and capture ancient mountains of ice in motion as they disappear at a breathtaking rate.” Continued visits to his beloved glacial climes have taken a toll on his health, but have set him on a mission “to deliver evidence and hope to our carbon-powered planet.”

A Gallup Poll conducted in 128 countries found that “1/3 of the world was completely unaware of climate change and 1/3 are simply confused,” suggesting that “a minimum of 4.6 billion people are in need of guidance.”

Understanding that “climate change is a universal human issue, with health, economic, environmental and national security consequences for every person on the planet, now and for generations to come,” Balog has founded the **Earth**



Vision Trust (EVT). “Earth Vision Trust’s mission is the creation of innovative visual evidence of our impact on ice, air, water, forests and wildlife.” Visit <http://earthvisiontrust.org>

ACTION: Get involved with EVT to help educate and inspire the public by “fostering the prosperity and health of human society through innovative visual exploration of our changing environment.”

The www.chasingice.com website invites everyone to help make a difference by seeing the film, hosting a screening or helping to bring it to your local theater, then spreading the message. The site suggests numerous options for shrinking your carbon footprint, many of which have been discussed in Green Tips for a Green Planet.

Advocacy is encouraged through the global conversation about

climate change:

- Be public. Tell your friends you are taking climate change seriously and making changes in your own life to make a difference.
- Take a skeptic to see *Chasing Ice*. Our experience is that many skeptics leave the theatre much less skeptical if not persuaded that climate change is real.
- Contact your elected officials. Tell them that making policy changes to help slow global warming is important to their constituents.

Donate time and money to help educate the world about climate change and the importance of environmental protection.

Sign up on the site to receive Chasing Ice News at www.chasingice.com

Local Public Radio
FM 104.9
www.ValleyMedia.Org
Local Bands, Real News

B&F

MICHAEL R. BAUDLER, CPA
DONNA E. FLANDERS, CPA

Office (209) 575-2653
Fax (209) 575-0629
e-mail b_f@modestocpas.com

1120 14th Street, Suite 2
Modesto, CA 95350

Commemoration

from page 8

respect for human dignity across the globe. Instead of an economy based on the buildup to conflict, we must pursue an economic center based on the enduring power of peace. (125-127)

It is my hope the leaders of today will heed the warning the people have so patiently tendered and shake off the shackles of inertia. Let us remove the false burdens of partisanship, personal ambition, and greed, and begin to do the work we were all appointed to do to move this country forward. Let us appeal to our similarities, to the higher standards of integrity, decency, and the common good, rather than to our differences, be they age, gender, sexual preference, class, or color. If not, the people will put aside the business of their lives and turn their attention to the change they are determined to see, just as the Occupy movement so adamantly demonstrates. The international scope of the Occupy movement suggests people are beginning to see that their relationship to one another is greater than the differences of borders, culture, and language. They are beginning to awaken to an idea we gave meaning to in the sixties: We are one people, one family, the human family, and what affects one of us affects us all. (8-9)

The Occupy Movement represents a growing sense of discontent in America and around the world; a growing feeling of dissatisfaction that the community of nations is spending the people’s resources on more bombs, missiles, and guns and not enough on human needs. People are crying out. They want to see the governments of the world’s nations humanize their policies and practices. They want to see business leaders and their corporations be more humane and more concerned about the problems that affect the whole of the world’s population, rather than just the overrepresented rich. (13)

John Lewis is truly a rare human being. His faith is unbreakable, his courage undaunted, and his actions a beacon of light toward a more hopeful future. Don’t miss him. If you haven’t already, mark your calendars: Saturday, February 9, 7:00 p.m.

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Dear Whole Foods CEO, This is what a Fascist looks like

By **THOM HARTMANN** and **SAM SACKS**

Whole Foods CEO, John Mackey, doesn't know what a fascist is.

Speaking with NPR this week, multimillionaire Mackey tried to express how much he hates Obamacare. Back in 2009, he hated Obamacare so much that he called it "socialism." But now, in 2013, Mackey thinks Obamacare is "fascism."

"Technically speaking, [Obamacare] is more like fascism," he said. "Socialism is where the government owns the means of production. In fascism, the government doesn't own the means of production, but they do control it, and that's what's happening with our healthcare programs and these reforms."

Mackey has since walked back this description saying he "regrets using that word now" because there's "so much baggage attached to it."

But, whether Mackey meant to or not, it's about time someone injected the word fascism back into our political debate. Especially now that corporations wield more power today than they have in America since the Robber Baron Era.

First, let's take on Mackey's definitions of socialism and fascism, which he likely procured from the Google machine after typing in, "What are the differences between socialism and fascism?"

Yes, socialism encourages more democratic control of the economy. Or, if Mackey insists, more government ownership of the economy – in particular, ownership of the commons and natural resources.

Fascism, on the other hand, is something completely different. Reporter Sy Mukherjee, who blogged about this story over at ThinkProgress.org notes, "Although fascist nations do often control their 'means of production,' Mackey seems to have forgotten that they usually utilize warfare, forced mass mobilization of the public, and politically-motivated violence against their own peoples to achieve their ends."

The 1983 American Heritage Dictionary defined fascism as: "A system of government that exercises a dictatorship of the extreme right, typically through the merging of state and business leadership, together with belligerent nationalism." Fascism originated in Italy, and Mussolini claims to have invented the word itself. It was actually his ghostwriter, Giovanni Gentile, who invented it and defined it in the Encyclopedia Italiana in this way: "Fascism should more appropriately be called corporatism because it is a merger of state and corporate power."

In other words, fascism is corporate government – a Libertarian's wet dream. It's a government in which the Atlas's of industry are given free rein to control the economy, just how they're regulated, how much they pay in taxes, how much they pay their workers. It should be noted here that, ironically, John Mackey describes himself as a Libertarian.

In 1938, Mussolini finally got his chance to bring fascism to fruition. He dissolved Parliament and replaced it with the "Camera dei Fasci e delle Corporazioni" - the Chamber of the Fascist Corporations. Members of the Chamber were not selected to represent particular regional constituencies, but instead to represent various aspects of Italian industry and trade. They were the corporate leaders of Italy.

Imagine if the House of Representatives was dissolved

and replaced by a Council of America's most powerful CEOs – the Kochs, the Waltons, the Blankfeins, the Dimons, the Mackeys, you get the picture.

Actually, that's not too difficult to imagine, huh? But, that'd be similar to what Mussolini defined as fascism.

As we know, fascism was eventually defeated in World War 2. But just before the end of the war, with the fascists on the ropes, the Vice President of the United States at the time, Henry Wallace, penned an op-ed for the New York Times warning Americans about the creeping dangers of fascism – or corporate government.

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He defined a fascist as, "those who, paying lip service to democracy and the common welfare, in their insatiable greed for money and the power which money gives, do not hesitate surreptitiously to evade the laws designed to safeguard the public from monopolistic extortion."

Under that definition we can throw those CEOs who've decided to evade Obamacare's mandate to provide health insurance to their employees, like New York City Applebee's franchise owner Zane Terkel, Papa John's CEO John Schnatter, and executives at Darden Restaurants.

Or, perhaps, Wallace is referring to the banksters at Goldman Sachs who knowingly evaded laws and sold investors "shitty deals" or scammed entire cities into bankruptcy or illegally foreclosed on thousands of Americans through fraudulently robo-signing all in the name of short term profits and all in the name of preserving their monopolistic, too-big-to-fail status.

Either way, evading laws meant to protect the public in order to pad your own pockets has become the name of the game in Corporate America today.

Wallace goes on to write, "The American fascists are most easily recognized by their deliberate perversion of truth and fact. Their newspapers and propaganda carefully cultivate every fissure of disunity, every crack in the common front against fascism."

Can anyone say Fox News, or the rest of the Conservative media complex? Or, those on the Right who divide working people and turn them against each other: makers versus takers, public sector workers versus private sector workers, and white people versus brown people.

"They use every opportunity to impugn democracy," wrote Wallace. Does that sound familiar after months of Republican efforts to disenfranchise large swaths of the electorate with voter suppression ID laws, as well as restrictions on early voting and voter registration in largely Democratic areas?

Or what about what Republicans in Pennsylvania are doing right now to rig the next Presidential election by changing how Electoral votes are counted in the state?

Wallace continues, "They demand free enterprise, but are the spokesmen for monopoly and vested interest. Their final objective toward which all their deceit is directed is to capture political power so that, using the power of the state and the power of the market simultaneously, they may keep the common man in eternal subjection."

We often hear of free enterprise from the likes of Wall Street, Big Oil, and the defense industry. Yet these are the same corporations that also lobby to keep generous taxpayer subsidies, bailouts, and no-bid contracts in place that allow them to reign supreme over the markets and crush their smaller, more independent competition.

And the common man suffers as a result. Wages as a percentage of GDP are lower than they've ever been. Unionization rates are lower than they've ever been in more than a half-century. And yet, corporate profits as a percent of GDP are higher than they've ever been in American history.

At the time Wallace was writing this op-ed, he was confident that the fascists had been adequately held in check in America by the Roosevelt Administration. As he wrote, "Happily, it can be said that as yet fascism has not captured a predominant place in the outlook of any American section, class or religion."

But, he went on to warn that in the future, "[Fascism] may be encountered in Wall Street, Main Street or Tobacco Road. Some even suspect that they can detect incipient traces of it along the Potomac."

Sure enough, the bastions of fascism can be found on Wall Street. Main Street, which used to be lined with local independent businesses, is now lined with predatory, transnational giants. And along the Potomac, we find politicians who are more than happy to do the bidding of their corporate overlords.

Today in America, we are dangerously close to seeing Wallace's fascistic, dystopic America come into fruition. We see the traces of it everywhere.

Unfortunately, too many Americans just didn't have a word to define what's happening. But, thanks to John Mackey, and thanks to the foresight of Vice President Henry Wallace, we do have the right word now: Fascism.

Source Altnet: <http://www.altnet.org/dear-whole-foods-ceo-what-fascist-looks>

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Group and Private Instruction

Linda Knoll, Art Instructor
phone: 209.247.2626
email: lknoll@sbcglobal.net
www.lindaknollart.blogspot.com