

**dominion, n.** 1. Control or the exercise of control. 2. A territory or sphere of influence; a realm. 3. One of the self-governing nations within the British Commonwealth.

# The Dominion

CANADA'S GRASSROOTS NEWSPAPER

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# Careers & Occupations



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# “It’s the Best We’ve Got”

## Kyoto off to a slow, late start in Montréal

by Hillary Lindsay

Jon Bennett, Director of Climate Action Network, is not prone to praise when discussing the international process to address climate change, “It is very slow. It is very laborious. It has its own timetable and doesn’t respect the reality and urgency of what it’s trying to deal with. However,” he adds, “it has moved forward. And it’s the best we’ve got.”

Whether “the best we’ve got” will be enough to halt and reverse dangerous climate change remains to be seen. Since 160 countries agreed to the Kyoto Protocol in 1997—an international treaty that requires countries around the world to cut emissions that cause climate change—global greenhouse gas emissions have continued to rise, and Canada has been no exception. In fact, Canada has frequently been accused of blocking progress at the United Nations Climate Change Negotiations. According to Bennett, this has often been due to the country’s attempt to pander to the demands of the United States.

President Bush has close ties with the oil industry, explains Bennett. “He is the US’s oil advocate to stop the rest of us from weaning off fossil fuels.” In attempting to please the Americans and protect its own interests, “Canada has supported a lot of conditions that the environmental community has not appreciated.”

It was only when the United States announced that it would not ratify the Kyoto Protocol—and Canada ratified it anyway—that Canada’s role in international negotiations began to shift. “Everyone knows that Canada is connected both economically and physically to the US, so it was a really big step to go ahead and ratify without them,” explains Bennett. “It gave Canada a great deal of respect in



**Stéphane Dion in 2003. The Environment Minister will be chairing upcoming international climate talks.**

*Canadian Heritage*

the international community.”

Those who want action on climate change are hoping this new trend will continue when Canada assumes the role of Chair at the next round of international climate change talks. From November 28th until December 9th, Montréal will be hosting the 11th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the 1st Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (otherwise known as CoP11/MoP1). The talks are important, as they are the first to occur since the Kyoto Protocol entered into force in February of this year.

Environment Minister Stéphane Dion will be hosting the negotiations, and according to Matthew Bramely, Climate Change Director at the Pembina Institute, Dion has shown promising signs that he will take the role of Chair seriously. A speech given on behalf of the Minister at the Cologne Carbon Expo stated, “CoP11/MoP1 will be an important meeting, and we need to set the bar high.... Canada is firmly engaged in the global effort to address climate change and is determined to play a leadership role in the search for long-term solutions.”

As Canada’s greenhouse

gas emissions continue to rise far above Kyoto targets, however, the country’s commitment to addressing climate change may come into question in Montréal. “Will Dion be able to exert the leadership he needs to in light of Canada’s progress on greenhouse gas emission reductions?” asks Bramely. Considering the urgency and complexity of negotiations, both Bramely and Bennett are hoping he will.

Dion will have to negotiate several delicate and critical matters as Chair, says Bennett, one being the problem of Protocol compliance. The Kyoto Protocol is legally binding, but to date there has been no agreement on how to enforce compliance. “There is the possibility of a having a system of penalties and fines [for those countries that do not meet Kyoto Protocol targets],” explains Bennett. “The problem is that any country can withdraw from the Protocol with one year’s notice.” The result is the regrettable situation in which it makes more economic sense for a country to withdraw from the treaty than to try to reach its Kyoto goal but fail.

The question of Protocol compliance will be an especially delicate one for Dion, considering Canada’s poor progress on

emission reductions thus far. By 2012, industrialized countries that ratified the Kyoto Protocol should have collectively decreased greenhouse gas emissions to 5.2% below 1990 levels. Canada’s emissions are now 20% higher than they were in 1990.

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[www.dominionpaper.ca](http://www.dominionpaper.ca)  
[dru@dominionpaper.ca](mailto:dru@dominionpaper.ca)

PO Box 741 Station H  
Montréal, QC H3G 2M7  
(514) 273-9936

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# What makes a scandal scandalous?

## The media and Pierre Pettigrew's apartment on rue Aristide Bruant

by Dru Oja Jay

Foreign Minister Pierre Pettigrew has been under fire in the press in recent months for his alleged misuse of taxpayer dollars. The allegations, which include spending too much time in Paris and bringing his chauffeur on overseas trips, are apparently serious enough that one report cited "whispers from within government that he will be shuffled out of the job".

While expense reports make for gripping reading material, what is perhaps more interesting about the recent "scandals" that have plagued Pettigrew's office is that they present an opportunity to examine what the media consider to be career-ending missteps. Conversely, it allows us to take note of what is, according to the media, not scandalous at all.

How do the media decide what is and isn't scandalous? This question is not easy to answer, but an examination of the resulting reporting renders a sense of the priorities of Canadian journalism.

On September 4, the *Ottawa Citizen* published a 1200 word examination of Pettigrew's propensity for spending time in Paris penned by Glen McGregor. A reporter was sent to Pettigrew's apartment in the district of Montmartre, finding it occupied by a timber industry lobbyist and former Pettigrew staffer. The report ended by speculating that Pettigrew might soon be spirited away to a diplomatic post, to be replaced by Stéphane Dion.

A week later, Pettigrew was under fire for taking his chauffeur Bruno Labonté on trips to Europe and South America at a cost to taxpayers of \$10,000. This merited a front page article in the *Globe and Mail* and an interview on CTV's Canada AM, among others.

On September 20,



**Pierre Pettigrew is presented with the University of Miami report on human rights violations by Canadian-trained police in Haiti in February. In June, Pettigrew called the report "absolutely propaganda, which is absolutely not interesting".**

Dru Oja Jay

*Maclean's* continued the narrative with a report by Louise Elliott and Paul Wells. They wrote that Pettigrew, once "the Federal Liberals' fair-haired boy, hand-picked for cabinet," had become "the most harshly criticized member of the government". Pettigrew's various missteps were subjected to a fine-grained examination in the remainder of the article.

The journalistic resources dedicated to examining Pettigrew's recent movements—sending a reporter to Paris, interviewing dozens of unnamed government sources, and combing through expense reports—indicates something beyond your run-of-the-mill journalistic tenacity.

Such close examination of a top-level cabinet minister is not random. It likely represents a political fight or realignment inside the Liberal party—the ostensive source of the "whispers" cited under the *Globe's* page A1 headline.

While charges of slacking off in Paris while occupying a key cabinet post and misusing taxpayer funds to take staff members on expensive excursions are serious, seriousness of charges alone is not enough to spur such a spirited inquiry

into the minutiae of a minister's comings and goings. Further motivation is needed.

What if, for example, Pettigrew had denied knowledge of reports that police trained and vetted by the RCMP under the auspices of his department had slaughtered unarmed peaceful protesters? What if Pettigrew had dismissed a fifty page human rights report as propaganda? For example.

Surely a lack of basic knowledge about a project he was responsible for is at best a symptom of incompetence, and an outright lie at worst. Surely an outright denial of knowledge of facts that had been, for example, reported by Reuters, the Associated Press, and even the CBC would set off a few warning bells among Canada's watchdogs of democracy. And one might further think that incompetence that affects the very substance of policy in matters of life and death would be treated more gravely than a few questionable trips abroad.

In fact, warning bells didn't go off, the substance wasn't treated with gravity, and as the reader has undoubtedly guessed, the situation is not at all hypothetical.

At a June 20th press confer-

ence in Montréal, the *Dominion* asked Pettigrew if Canada bore any responsibility for multiple instances where the Haitian National Police—trained, vetted, and ultimately accountable to the RCMP—had shot and killed unarmed, peaceful protesters who were demanding the return of Jean Bertrand Aristide - the elected president who was removed in a military coup financed and led by the US, Canada and France.

Pettigrew responded: "I think the Haitian police are doing their very best in extremely difficult circumstances, and obviously, obviously, Canada would never condone any activity [which] would not respect the rule of law."

The *Dominion* followed up, asking about reports of police violence in the Associated Press and Reuters. Pettigrew responded: "if they did, I have not heard of that." He followed up by blasting the human rights report conducted by a team from the University of Miami—which concluded that a massive campaign of political repression was being undertaken by the Canadian-trained Haitian Police—saying, "I absolutely think that it is propaganda which is absolutely not interesting."

The last comment alone merits a followup, or at least a mention, as it represents significant contesting of well established facts. But Pettigrew's ignorance of news reports verges on the unbelievable.

A few samples. The *Miami Herald*, March 1: "Haitian police opened fire on peaceful protesters Monday, killing two..." *Associated Press*, April 7: "Police fired on protesters demanding the release of detainees... killing at least five demonstrators." *Reuters*, June 5: "As many as 25 people were killed in police raids..." Reports

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# “Spiritual Wife” or Single Mother?

*Banking On Heaven* explores polygamy and religion in Colorado City

by David Sanderson

Recently premiered at the Vancouver International Film Festival, *Banking on Heaven* condemns what one American senator calls, “Arizona’s dirty little secret”—the community of Colorado City, AZ.

Colorado City is home to one of the world’s largest congregations of Fundamentalist Latter Day Saints (FLDS), a term broadly applied to splinter sects from mainstream Mormonism, claiming to be the true church and practicing “celestial unions”—polygamy. Through interviews with outcasts and escapees, interspersed with hidden camera footage, *Banking on Heaven* presents a compelling case that systematic sexual, physical, and mental abuse is inherent to this community and, indeed, to fundamentalist Mormonism. The premiere provoked a strong audience response and was attended by both director Dot Reidelbach and writer/producer Laurie Allen, who grew up in Colorado City before leaving at age eighteen.

*Banking on Heaven* will not be one of the documentaries making the leap to mainstream. It builds no story arc. Its filming is basic. While lacking polish, its raw aesthetic emphasizes the primacy of its message and manages to give sensationalism a wide berth.

Colorado City is home to the largest North American FLDS sect, the United Effort Plan (UEP), now headed by the Prophet Warren Jeffs. Warren inherited this role and an estimated seventy-five wives from his father, Rulon Jeffs. According to *Banking on Heaven* Warren, like Rulon before him, commands absolute obedience. When asked if Warren’s followers were capable of “drinking the kool-aid” if he



“Our crew needs to know not just how to use a camera but a .357 too.”

Over the Moon Productions

told them to, (referring to the mass cult suicide of Jonestown) several former UEP members responded, “Absolutely.” The mayor, law enforcement officials, and superintendent of public schools in this remote area all report to Warren, giving the prophet control over education and civil appointments. It also makes it far harder to leave—there is effectively no one local to ask for help, and the town’s remote location makes leaving unaided extremely difficult.

Life in the UEP is strictly and sometimes violently regimented; forbidden are television, radio, and books not approved by church leaders. Contact with outsiders is banned. Followers are taught that the non-faithful are agents of Satan—the truck used by *Banking on Heaven*’s crew drives a wave of fleeing children and adults before it, though not before one mother takes the time to raise her middle finger. The film crew was constantly followed by groups of young men in trucks who at one occasion tried to drive the director and writer’s car off the road. When asked during a post-film Q&A if they feared any violence, writer Laurie Allen replied, “Our crew needs to know not just how to

use a camera but a .357 too.”

In the UEP women and children are property of the church itself, meaning that they can be stripped from one man at any time and given to another. Girls are married off and impregnated as early as possible; incestuous unions are not uncommon. Colorado City depends on what the filmmakers call, “an economy of women,” referring not to their treatment as chattel but as literally the community’s primary source of income. Because polygamy is illegal in Arizona, the state considers church members’ multiple “spiritual wives” to be single mothers. They are thus eligible for government funding such as welfare and food stamps, which are passed to the prophet. This is known as “bleeding the beast” and has swelled UEP assets to an estimated US\$400 million even as many of the faithful families struggle to get enough to eat.

The UEP is not the dirty little secret of only Arizona. One of the largest satellite communities of the UEP is located in the Creston Valley, in Bountiful, British Columbia. The traffic of girls between Bountiful and Colorado City has a history over generations, and Bountiful escapees’ tales of sexual abuse

mirror those in Arizona. Winston Blackmore is the so-called Bishop of Bountiful, leading the Canadian UEP, school system, and community newspaper. He is also father to more than a hundred children and has at least thirty wives. In a last minute surprise to all, including the filmmakers, *Banking on Heaven*’s premiere was attended by Jane Blackmore, who until recently was one of Winston Blackmore’s wives. She is related to or familiar with many of the interviewees, and attested to the film’s accuracy before its audience. Before leaving in 2002, Jane was Bountiful’s midwife, delivering babies for mothers as young as fourteen. She knows everyone involved—including the fathers demonstrably guilty at the very least of statutory rape—and has spoken to the RCMP, but to little response.

Writer Laurie Allen supplies the voiceover accompanying the shaky hidden-camera footage and archival photographs. Though there is no doubting the earnestness of her words, these brief editorial interludes are unable to match the strength of the film’s core of interviews with victims and political figures. Had the sub-

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*Futureways*  
Eds. Rita McBride &  
Glen Rubsam  
Arsenal Pulp, 2005

Futureways is the second in a series of four 'ways' books, which aim to "exploit and decipher genre writing with an entertaining and refreshing collective structure." This is certainly genre writing—any reader who does not enjoy science fiction should steer well clear of this book, which does not transcend any of that genre's limitations. Readers who do like sci-fi, however, should run

out and buy it right away. The writing is highly intelligent and precise, posing questions about contemporary science and technology in the challenging way that the masters of this genre have always done. The pieces in the collection, penned by a diverse group of authors—who are also artists, architects, writers, journalists, curators and critics—is haunting as well as thought-provoking. The only

place where the editors may have fallen short of their goal is in the "collective structure." The collection works as a typical anthology, but loses this reader when it describes itself as a "beguiling novel." Don't distract yourself trying to find the stories' linking elements, or figure out the references to the exhibition. Simply enjoy these incredible science fiction stories.

—Matthew J. Trafford

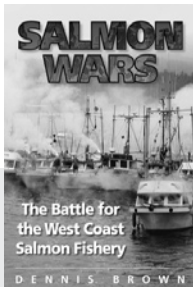
*Mermaid:*  
*A Puppet Theatre in Motion*  
by Alice Walsh  
Gaspereau, 2005

Walsh's book, which aims to give readers an in-depth examination of the Maritime theatre company Mermaid, entirely lacks the liveliness and awe that the company continues to bring to stages across the world. *Mermaid: A Puppet Theatre in Motion* takes the reader on a lengthy tour through Mermaid's history, from its formation in Windsor, Nova Scotia in 1972 up to

the present day. Following the lead of Jim Henson's Muppets, artistic directors Jim Morrow and Sara Lee Lewis, along with the acclaimed Evelyn Garbary, sought to offer entertaining children's puppet theatre. Walsh discusses Garbary at unnecessary length. Although Garbary is a controversial figure of Mermaid's past, the narrative sparks that ought to have been created by tensions between the

company's founders are smothered out by Walsh's bad habit of fiddling with miniscule details of performances that span over three decades. This finicky approach, along with an attempt to offer too wide a scope on the history of Mermaid, prevents the chronicler from effectively bringing Mermaid's magic to the page.

—Jessica Grant



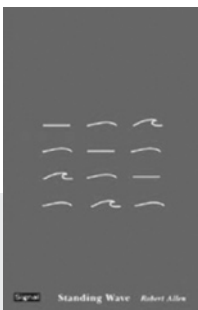
*Salmon Wars*  
by Dennis Brown  
Harbour, 2005

Brown provides a thorough and well-balanced examination of the West Coast salmon fishing industry, addressing the various methods currently used by commercial fishers and introducing the major figures in the industry over the past century. If that sounds like something that should interest you, but doesn't, you are certainly not alone. While Brown's book is

competently written and he approaches his topic with a certain passion, the style he employs is not gripping enough to inspire a similar passion in his readers. This failure aside, his description of the key controversies in the field during the past decades—over issues such as licensing, quotas, native rights and environmental impacts—displays an impressive

depth of knowledge in the field. It is impossible to read this book without being convinced of the importance of the issues surrounding commercial fishing; Brown does an excellent job of untangling these while emphasizing the industry's impact on the people whose livelihood depends upon it.

—Guil Lefebvre



*Standing Wave*  
by Robert Allen  
Gaspereau: NS, 2005

"I have it/ all here in my head," Allen tells us early on in this, his thirteenth book. "I don't know what it's worth." *Standing Wave* opens on a note of non-promise, a refusal to indulge readers' expectations. This allows Allen to hold words and thoughts down until they've given up to him a certain essential energy that more permissive writers lose. Much of the book is lyrically bare—"I am writing you because the night/

would not listen"—the better to capture themes of sadness and loss of certainty. Allen works both with sonnet forms and, in the last section, with a jolting arrangement of free verse that recalls fragments of Greek lyric in its deliberately sundered lines. This section is also a narrative challenge, as it continues a story published elsewhere about a turtle on a Ulyssean voyage. This kind of daring allows Allen to move from dryly

precise to jubilantly tangential, and I could wish that he had sustained this sense of pushing at conceptual or formal boundaries throughout. The middle section was the collection's only slight disappointment, representing a retreat onto the well worn ground of nature poetry, and for whose located tone Allen gives up the intriguing ambiguity of his original standpoint.

—Linda Besner

# Haiti's Biometric Elections

## A High-Tech Experiment in Exclusion

by **Andréa Schmidt**

PORT-AU-PRINCE—A lot of people agree that the upcoming elections in Haiti—the first since Aristide and his government were expelled in the February 29, 2004 coup d'état—are important.

Members of the international community who supported the coup agree: Canada's special advisor to Haiti, Denis Coderre, has called them “a crossroads,” and “a historical turning point.” The Haitian business elite who orchestrated the coup—and who are referred to here without irony as “civil society”—also agree. They see the election as a process through which their people can consolidate power. And many Lavalas activists in both rural and urban parts of the country believe that now that plans for an election are underway, it is a critical moment to demonstrate that they are still the party that represents the poor majority in this country. (Lavalas is the political party of Jean Bertrand Aristide, which held the presidency and the majority of Parliament before it was removed from power in a coup led by the US, Canada and France.)

But there is another reason this election process is a significant one—a reason made all the more important because almost no one seems to be talking about it. Haiti is about to experience its first biometric elections.

In order to vote, every Haitian over the age of eighteen must register for a new national identification card, which will replace previous forms of identification. After the elections, the card will become mandatory for all Haitians, linking them to government services and financial records.

Each new card includes both a digital photo and digital fingerprints. At this point, about 2.9 million voters of a possible 4 million have gone to register for



**Biometrics are used at Disney World to prevent people from sharing multi-day passes.**

*Wikimedia*

their cards at registration offices set up around the country by the Conseil Électoral Provisoire (CEP), with substantial logistical support from the Organization of American States (OAS).

The question of whether or not biometric national ID cards are desirable has not been publicly debated in the Haitian press, by the interim government, or by Haitian society at large. Most discussion on the registration process has focused on its accessibility to the rural and urban poor: One registration office serves all of Cité Soley, and it is positioned on the outskirts of the area. Peasants in some areas of the country have to walk for four or five hours in order to just reach the registration centers. They will have to make the trip again in order to pick up the card once it is ready.

No one seems to be concerned or particularly aware of the ramifications—threats to privacy, government and inter-governmental surveillance—that accompany biometric identification. People look amused when I relate how a biometric national ID card for Canadians was rejected by parliament in 2003 after much outcry about citizens' right to privacy. The card was proposed by Denis Coderre, Canada's immigration minister at the time, who cited its importance for national

security after 9/11. Immigration Canada ended up instituting a mandatory national ID card only for immigrants with permanent resident status. The card has not yet become biometric, though it carries a digitized strip that contains a range of information that helps the Canadian government track permanent residents.

Patrick Féquiere is a member of the CEP, the temporary administrative body that decided to use this election process to institute national biometric identification. He sees the new system as a victory for a country where 450,000 people—primarily the rural poor—are effectively disenfranchised because they do not have any form of state identification at all. These people will finally “exist in the eyes of the state.”

It makes sense that in a post-coup elections context characterized by massive unemployment, paramilitary violence and reorganization, police impunity, social violence, and heavy international intervention at all levels of governance, a national debate over biometrics is low on Haiti's list of priorities.

But in spite of the rhetoric of inclusion used by the cards' promoters, the biometric IDs threaten to inaugurate a new and high-tech form of national and hemispheric exclusion for many Haitians.

Biometric identification relies on a computer-driven system that collects unique biological identifiers like fingerprints, retina scans, or digital photos, digitizes them, and stores them in a central database. Each time you present your ID, the computer system checks the identifying data against that which is contained in the database under your name. Other information, such as your date of birth, address, medical history, credit rating, political history, or information collected through surveillance agencies, can also be collected in the database and linked to your identifiers. The information can be shared between governments, which are able to cross-reference the data held in different country databases, used to track people entering their country, and to flag people they consider “security risks” or potential terrorists.

A biometric identification system is supposed to make identification more secure by making identity theft—the fraudulent use of someone else's identification to vote, to access social services, or to cross borders—more difficult.

Critics of such systems cite concerns about the privacy and security of the data collected, and its possible uses by the state to profile, track, and exclude individuals or groups based on their identifiers.

Féquiere claims that the Haitian government does not plan to open its databases to other countries in the hemisphere. But he does say that post-9/11 security considerations influenced the CEP's choice of a high-tech registration system. Moreover, he foresees that when Haitians travel to the US, their biometric ID will be checked against the U.S.'s own biometric registries. (Submitting to digitalized fin-

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# The Co-Option

## A Montréal housing co-op experiments with sustainable living

by Juliet Lammers

Marc, a stout curly haired redhead, is alone in the huge communal living room when I arrive. It is messy with people's stuff, building materials, signs, notes, posters, garbage pails full of grains, random works of art, and the occasional quote, scribbled haphazardly on the walls. "Death is imminent, wake with fervor", one warns. The room feels warm, alive, and free.

"This is one of my favourite spaces in the house," says Marc. There are four large couches and countless easy chairs and beanbags throughout the room. A couple of turntables and piles of records are set up in one corner, while another corner is host to a small library. Six large windows and a huge skylight over the kitchen flood the room with warm yellow sunlight, while a refreshing breeze blows through the middle. The dining room table has space for fifteen.

Co-op Genereux is a housing experiment initiated by a group of students exploring sustainable living practices. The co-op began as a spin-off of a larger project called MUCS, McGill Urban Community Sustainability Project. Since MUCS is still in its planning phase, some of its founders decided to put their research and theories to practice. By June 2003 they had gathered a group of ten guinea pigs that were committed enough to the project to each lay down a personal loan of \$2,000 to finance Sur Genereux's beginnings. Next they secured a five-year lease for two 1600 square foot loft spaces and convinced the landlord to allow them to make the necessary renovations to house a large community of people. "We wanted to be able to finance the project ourselves, we wanted to avoid loans in order to be completely autonomous," explains Spencer Mann,



A co-op resident in the co-op's spacious communal area. *Dru Oja Jay*

one of the founders.

Loft beds are the fashion at Co-op Genereux, where an eight by eight foot space marked or divided by colorful curtains and tapestries could be home to two people. There are nine bedrooms for fifteen people. Each bedroom houses one to four, depending on its size. "We do have to forsake some intimacy," Marc, a more recent member, admits. "It is both fun and difficult. It is definitely a more efficient way of living. You have access to a much greater pool of resources. There is always someone around with the knowledge and tools to do whatever needs to be done. The whole is greater than the sum of its parts," Marc laughs.

What the co-op members forsake in space and privacy they reclaim in financial reward. The average monthly cost of living at the Genereux Co-op is \$320. This includes rent, bills, three telephone lines, high speed wireless Internet, and three square meals a day, five days a week. Monetary gain is not the only advantage to having fourteen roommates. Both Marc and Spencer spoke of the experience they have gained in group facilitation and agenda setting, not to mention such other worthwhile skills as cooking mass amounts of food, making homemade soy milk, building walls and doing renovations, drying herbs, and the plethora of skills and abili-

ties inherent in a group of fifteen. "It is interesting in terms of resource use," Marc explains, "In North America people don't tend to share things. Here we share everything from books and music to space and food. It teaches one to be conscious of the space one occupies in terms of both things and behavior."

The group has weekly meetings to discuss house logistics, politics, and long-term planning and visioning. They rely on 100% consensus to make their decisions and have developed facilitation roles and a series of hand gestures to help their meetings run smoothly and efficiently. Co-op Sundays are a recent invention, where those who can get together to toss a Frisbee in the park, to participate in skill sharing workshops or anti-oppression training sessions.

Mealtime is at the heart of the community. Five out of seven days a week a team of two to three cooks prepares a meal for the household. They always make enough for thirty so that anyone may feel free to invite guests and to ensure leftovers for lunch the next day. The food is vegan in order to accommodate everyone. There are two other kitchens that people use for personal cooking and snacking purposes. "The meal preparation and clean-up take about four hours, but you only have to do it once a week, the

rest of the week you come home and sit down to a warm meal," says Spencer.

The cleaning responsibilities are divvied up to one chore per week per person. Spencer admits, "The chores are what we struggle with the most. Sometimes it is difficult to keep everyone accountable for their share of the cleaning. It is important to find a level of cleanliness that everyone is comfortable with and can live with."

Beyond being an interesting experiment for the young and daring, the Co-op Genereux is a model of an alternate lifestyle possibility. "There is a narrow range of lifestyles that is perceived as fulfilling, happy, healthy, and feasible in North America. We want to explore possibilities and provide options by putting different ideas into the world," explains Spencer, "This type of lifestyle acknowledges the impacts of choices we make in our lives about everything from food, to money, to decision making, to socializing. It is freeing to acknowledge and understand the destruction of communities and eco systems and to then be empowered to make changes."

Spencer also speaks of communal living as a remedy to the loneliness and disconnection that many in urban society feel. "It is challenging, but also a very powerful experience. Living with so many people broadens the caring that I feel. Some of my roommates come from very different backgrounds and situations. Cooking together, building beds, and throwing Frisbees connects us on a more personal level and makes me feel more connected to their differences and changes. It is powerful to have such a sense of community. It is a very tangible feeling. They care about me and I care about them."

# 'Disengagement' Affords Some Relief for Gazans

Coastal villages no longer a veritable prison; access to fishing, export remain blocked

by Jon Elmer  
The NewStandard

AL-MAWASI, PALESTINE—Few Gaza communities stand to benefit more from Prime Minis-

Israeli army called the lowest level of access restriction—was enforced by an unseen soldier on a loudspeaker and a magnetic ID-card system, and was restricted to women, men

Israel, is enormously costly and time-consuming, resulting in spoiled produce and inflated prices for merchandise.

According to a report by B'Tselem, the Israeli government successfully cut movement of goods to and from Al-Mawasi by 90 percent from pre-intifada levels, with closures beginning after the September 2000 uprising.

The back-to-back transportation system and suffocating restrictions crippled the enclave's economy. Farmers and fishermen who depend on the export of their goods for survival were forced to seek employment as day laborers in Gaza's Jewish settlements. "We were left with no other options," Ismail Abu Zahr said, casting his fishing line into the sea for the first time in years.

But even the pool of Palestinians able to find labor in Jewish settlements was limited, falling from more than 1,000 workers in 2000 to less than 150 by 2005 as Israeli security concerns increased and even cheaper, primarily Asian and Eastern European, migrant laborers filled the positions.

The houses of Al-Mawasi stood in stark contrast to the villas of the Gush Katif settle-

ment. Dilapidated shanties made of sheet metal and discarded building supplies are only meters away from the remains of what were once the lavish seaside homes of Jewish settlers.

A row of a dozen homes on the beachfront in Al-Mawasi—originally summer homes for Palestinians—were taken over and occupied by settlers from Gush Katif. When the settlers and the IDF quit Gaza this year, the military effectively destroyed the structures along with the settler's villas in Gush Katif.

Living in conditions of crushing poverty, less than 15 percent of Al-Mawasi residents were connected to the electricity grid; the rest relied on two generators that operated only in the evenings. With tight army checkpoints, residents had sporadic and unpredictable access to fuel, dictated by the apparent whims of Israeli authorities.

## Withdrawal from Gaza

The departure of the settlers offers modest relief for the population of Gaza, but the optimism here is still very guarded.

"To make this pullout a



ter Ariel Sharon's August "disengagement" than the coastal area of Al-Mawasi. Abutting the Gush Katif settlements, Al-Mawasi, a 14 kilometer strip of land just one kilometer wide, had been a veritable prison for years.

The enclave's 5,000 residents were wedged between the settlement and the sea, cut off from the rest of Gaza. Restrictions were so harsh that the Israeli human rights group B'Tselem characterized them as "incarceration... strangulation... and collective punishment."

For the past five years, people could only access Al-Mawasi through a single checkpoint, and it was virtually impossible for non-residents to enter the area—be they family, friends or merchants.

"Life here was impossible," Ismail Abu Zahr told *The NewStandard* while standing on the Al-Mawasi beach.

"Free movement"—as the

over 40 and children under 12. Residents, however, say this eased level of restriction was almost never in place, and traffic through the checkpoint by anyone was essentially non-existent.

Al-Mawasi's residents are primarily fishermen, farmers and their families, the land being some of Gaza's most fertile. Israel's harsh closure regime left Al-Mawasi's fishermen without access to the sea, and farmers without a market for their goods.

## Back-to-back Shipping

Goods entering Al-Mawasi were subject to a "back-to-back" system, whereby trucks offloaded their produce or merchandise at the checkpoint and reloaded them into another truck on the other side.

This form of transport, which is still the system in place between the Gaza Strip and



Former Palestinian summer home occupied by settlers and destroyed upon their departure.

© Jon Elmer 2005





An Al-Mawasi fisherman holding his day's catch along the Gaza coastline. Al-Fishermen here are delighted by the recent evacuation of the settlers and soldiers from the area, but are still unable to access the sea because of a de facto prohibition by Israeli warships patrolling the coast. © Jon Elmer 2005

positive development," said Dr. Mustafa Barghouthi, General Secretary of the Palestinian National Initiative, a political reform organization, "Palestinians must have freedom of movement, the freedom to import and export goods, control of air and sea, and free passage between Gaza and the West Bank."

It is the continued military control that Israel exerts over Gaza that worries Barghouthi, who finished as runner-up in the most recent Palestinian presidential election.

Indeed, Israeli F-16s continue to roar overhead daily, the coastline is spotted with Israeli warships patrolling Gaza's waters, and the borders with Israel and Gaza are effectively sealed.

"Israel must give up Gaza completely and stop interfering in the daily life and affairs of Palestinians," Barghouthi told *The NewStandard*, noting his concern that the back-to-back shipping regime and lack of an economic link even to the West Bank—let alone the rest of the world—would stifle Gaza's economy.

"This is very important," he said. "Gaza is a very small

area: only 1 percent of the land of historic Palestine, and less than 6 percent of the occupied territories. Alone, it is not viable economically: it has 1.4 million people in an area that is 366 square kilometers... and Israel remains in control of its land, air and sea."

The World Bank cites similar concerns. In a comprehensive June 2004 report commissioned by both the Israeli government and the Palestinian National Authority, the World Bank warned that unless Israel's restrictions on the freedom of movement and goods are overhauled the disengagement will have "very little impact" on Gaza's economy and "would create worse hardship than is seen today."

The World Bank points to Israel's closure regime as, "above all," the source of the Palestinian economic recession, which it characterized as "among the worst in modern history," exceeding the scale of losses experienced during America's Great Depression and the Argentine collapse of 2001-2002.

**Still, Much Work to be Done**

Despite the hardships, there is a tangible sense of relief among Al-Mawasi residents with the departure of the Gaza settlements, army sniper towers and internal checkpoints.

"There was a huge celebration here," Ali Maharbe told TNS on the Al-Mawasi shoreline. "And the sheer joy of finally going to the sea again," he said, smiling.

"When the settlers were here, I was prevented from fishing," Maharbe continued.

"The situation is a lot better but we are still forbidden from using our boats, so the fishing is tough," he added, digging into his sand-covered cache to show off the day's modest catch gained by casting his line into the ocean from the beach.

Many of Al-Mawasi's fishermen described the same prohibitions. When TNS visited the enclave, there was not a single Palestinian boat at sea, but scores of fisherman were casting their lines and plying their trade with improvised nets from the beach.

The IDF denies that there are still formal restrictions on Palestinian boats in the sea off Al-Mawasi, but it is apparent that the unofficial rules are well-understood by Palestinians, who say it is not uncommon for the Israeli warships to shoot at the fishermen and their boats, even on the shore.

Israeli warships and patrol boats are clearly visible, as are Israeli trawlers. Fishing well within the coastal waters of the Gaza Strip, the Israeli fishing boats are "guarded" by the naval vessels. "That is part of the operational duties of the Navy," the IDF media office told TNS.

Still, for the first time in years the beach is full of Al-Mawasi's fishermen visibly enjoying their new freedom, however limited.



An Israeli warship patrols the sea off the Al-Mawasi coast. Local fishermen say that while official restrictions against them taking their boats offshore have been lifted, they still risk having Israeli gunboats fire upon them. © Jon Elmer 2005

# Drilling For Oil And Gas

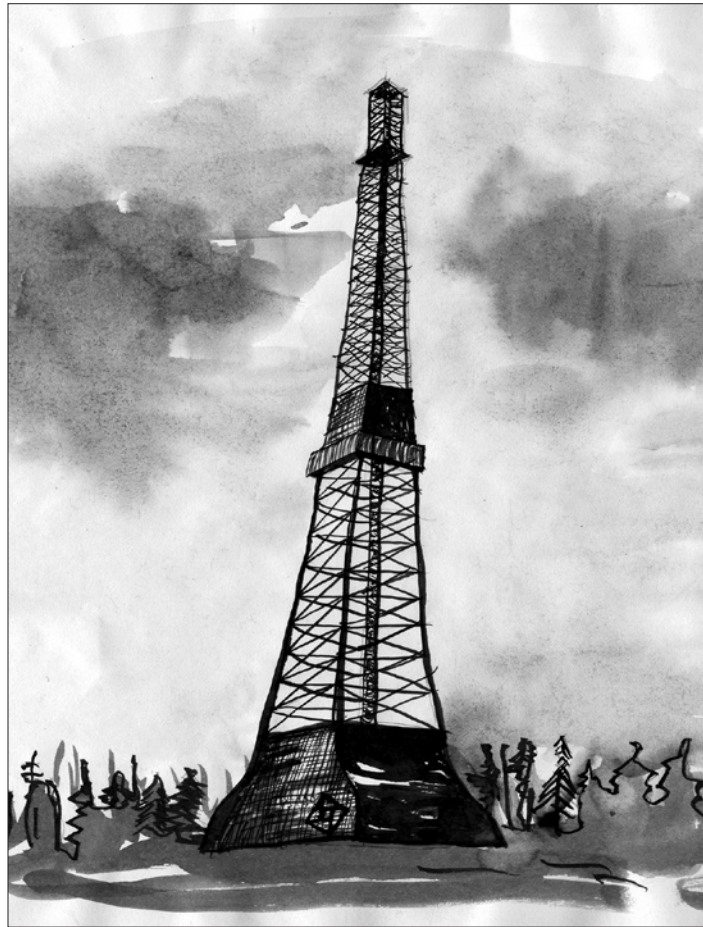
Down at the intersection of racism, patriarchy, capitalism, and imperialism

by Stewart Steinbauer

Whether it's turtles all the way down, or the mysterious forces of quantum mechanics, Turtle Island stands on something. The multi-millennia old human societies existing on Turtle Island stand on something, too. Sitting in the circle at a pipe ceremony, I'm reminded of this foundation, because it's "written" right into the pipe ceremony. The pipe is offered to our relative, the bear, and we ask that, when we see the four legs of the bear, we will remember the four legs of Indigenous society: humble kindness, sharing, honesty, and determination.

The European society that arrived on our shores aboard Columbus' ships was also based on a foundation. In homage to Ancient Greece, the wellspring of western civilization, I'll use the image of hand-carved stone pillars, holding up the superstructure of modernity. Perhaps genuine members of western civilization may not agree with me, but I see these pillars as human-crafted social institutions, built over a 5500 year period with a lot of blood, sweat and tears. These pillars are racism, patriarchy, capitalism, and imperialism, and I can't think of a better example of these pillars in action than Canada's Indian Act.

In 1876, the subjects of the Indian Act were not Canadian citizens. Approximately 85 years passed before they were; I was about ten years old when I was arbitrarily made a citizen of Canada. When I researched international law to see by what legal mechanism a nation passes legislation over people not its citizens, the report I got back, from several professional sources, was that there is no legal mechanism. I believe that the correct term for this mechanism is "imperialism". Imperialism is the oldest of the four



*Sylvia Nickerson*

pillars of western civilization.

The 1876 version of the Indian Act was formulated to send Indigenous Peoples on a forced march through European feudal history, in order to prepare us for some future entry into capitalism. When looked at through the sociologist's lens, we see Indigenous Peoples as serfs, the Indian Agents as local managers, and the Minister of Indian Affairs as the Lord of the Manor. The notion, in the 1800s, that Indigenous Peoples needed to be brought up to speed in order to join civilization, is a display of racism ("you're sub-human") and patriarchy ("this might hurt, but I'm doing it for your own good").

The real point of the Indian Act is genocide; the forced march through feudalism was just an exercise to occupy

bureaucratic minds as they went about their routine desk-killer functions, perhaps most vividly demonstrated by Canada's poet laureate, Duncan Campbell Scott. However, as another Scotty poet, Robbie Burns said: "The best laid plans of mice and men aft gang aglay." Ottawa's thumb-twiddling exercise inadvertently protected Indigenous Peoples from a full exposure to capitalism. The Delgamuuk decision, which established the legal principle of Aboriginal Title, was an alarm bell wake up call. Did somebody fall asleep at the switch? It's the 21st century, and we still have the Indian Act, with its feudal relationships. The crux of Canada's dilemma today is that the physical genocide has failed, and there are still Indigenous Peoples who can access, though oral history

in Indigenous languages, a shadowy image of the past, with its political and cultural implications for the future.

If we look into the shadow past, as people like the late Harold Cardinal did, we can see the faint outline of a non-racist, non-patriarchal society. The first lost and wandering European "explorers" were greeted by Cree Peoples as "kiciwamwinihwak", a term literally translating as "distant cousins". At that time, identity was assumed to be based on a way of life, not skin, hair or eye colour, as Tanya Wasacase has brilliantly argued in her Empty Mirror thesis, available online at [darknightpress.org](http://darknightpress.org). Over the passing centuries, the term "wapskewiyas" has been added on, literally translating as "white meat"; our distant white meat cousins have brought the concept of race to us, and most Indigenous Peoples have embraced this concept.

Those first lost and wandering Europeans were men, traveling thousands of miles from home without women. What kind of people behave like this? In pre-European contact societies it was well understood that we men are very insecure about our value to society, having, as we do, just one essential task to perform. Over time, Indigenous women created roles for men to calm this potentially disruptive insecurity, ingeniously weaving us into the fabric of society. Here, on the northern prairies, that society revolved around the grandmothers, and ghost shadows of that matriarchal past still flit about. For instance Cree people who can't speak Cree still know one word: "kokum", literally, "your grandmother". In ceremony, the grandmothers sit in the background, observing the Elder men performing ritual, ready in an instant to discreetly correct any errors of commission or omission. The grandmothers hold the oral

history of the People. Even modern family structures show the ghost shadow; women still have children with two, three or four men. Legitimacy is conferred upon the child by the mother, not the father. And, of course, like everywhere else in the world, “existence” work is performed by women.

Shadows of the past are one thing, but you don’t need to hunt for ghost shadows to see the outline of a former matriarchal society. You can do as I have done, take tobacco to an Elder woman who still knows her role, and sit down to listen to the whole picture being reframed.

However, two centuries of fur trade, culminating in the Treaties and the Indian Act, taught us about patriarchy, and, along with racism, most Indigenous Peoples have embraced that, too. The so-called traditional Cree headman system is actually a product of the fur trade, amplified by the Treaty negotiations, and broadcast by the Indian Act. In 1876, Treaty Commissioner Alexander Morris records, in his autobiography, bribing Cree men to think of themselves as “Headmen”. Then, in a special addendum to the 1876 Annual Report to the Indian Department, he worries about having created a class of Indian men who will think of themselves as the Queen’s servants. These worries bore fruit in 1990, when Canada’s Supreme Court ruled that Chief and Councils are a legal arm of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

Did I say “embraced”? Perhaps “clung to” is more accurate than “embraced”. Imperialism, with its state monopoly on organized violence, can have a huge influence on how people choose to live their lives. Sir John A MacDonald formed the North West Mounted Police to, in his own words, “keep the Indians and Metis of the west under a firm hand until the settler population far outnumbered them.” Today, the RCMP, descendants of the NWMP, are busy in Haiti, helping to train

former paramilitary and military thugs, including convicted murderers, as the new Haitian National Police, a police force who actively arrests, tortures, and murders Haitians based on their political beliefs.

In 1992, a constable at the nearest RCMP detachment, in St. Paul, Alberta, told me that the St Paul RCMP detachment was known as a “rough holds” training center. New RCMP officers come fresh out of the Regina training headquarters, the place where Canada hung



Louis Riel, and get some real on-the-job training; the seven Indian Act Bands surrounding St. Paul provide perfect rough holds training opportunities. How many Indigenous People have died in custody, or as a result of RCMP actions, or as a result of RCMP inactions?

I asked this question of the Commission for Public Complaints Against the RCMP; months passed with no response. Then I received an apology for the delay in responding, followed by another long interval. Finally, I discovered that the head of the Commission was having difficulty with the RCMP, and had gone to the national media with her tale of woe. Under these kinds of conditions, I could argue that we’ve adopted racism and patriarchy as a temporary survival tactic, to physically survive the genocide unleashed by imperialism. But what about Capital?

Capitalism is the most revolutionary force ever visited upon humankind. It sweeps into a region and blows away all of the pre-existing social institutions, replacing them with capitalist laws of motion. The impera-

tives of competition and profit-maximization, the compulsion to reinvest surpluses, and the systematic and relentless need to improve labour-productivity and develop the forces of production override all other concerns. This is plainly seen in Haiti, today: what does the poorest country in the western hemisphere have that made it worthwhile for the US, Canada, and France to join forces and stage a military coup to overthrow Aristide’s democratically elected government? Why, that most basic commodity of all, the one that builds all other commodities: labour. Just ask Canadian corporations like SNC Lavalin, or Gildan Activewear, or Andy Apaid, Gildan’s main subcontractor in Haiti.

Certain unmentionable economists have speculated that a primary driver for genocide on Turtle Island has been the unwillingness of Indigenous Peoples to see ourselves as a commodity. Mentionable economists have called this reluctance “backwardness”, and used it to justify....well, genocide. The ignoble savages have, in the meantime, been resisting commodification, giving rise to pow-wow circuit jokes like: “Why can an Indian man make love all night, while a White man can’t? Answer: Because he doesn’t have to go to work in the morning!” Don’t you just love racism and patriarchy dolled up in buckskin? Ah, but the heady days of feudalism are coming to an end. Ready or not, Canada is preparing me for full participation in capitalism, with or without my consent, whether I understand what’s going on, or not. Canada wants to solve “my problem” by putting me to work.

If we turn a blind eye to the phenomena of “offshore outsourcing of labour”, our local “aboriginal” politicians have begun echoing the political mantra of “jobs jobs jobs”. Here, in northeastern Alberta, “jobs jobs jobs” means oil and gas. So what kind of political animal is this “jobs jobs jobs” beast?

There are two types of work: existence work, and exploitative (capitalist) work. My search of history, both written and oral, reveals a prequel to post-modern society, perhaps the first leisure society, right here on the northern plains. Important technology was held in intellectual property form, rather than in physical property form, and existence tasks included contemplation, discussion, play, ceremony, travel, recreation, celebration, and procreation, along with the usual concern



for “food, shelter and clothing”. There was nothing nasty, short or brutish about day-to-day life in any way.

In contrast, capitalist work, under the guise of providing food, shelter, and clothing, is actually a totalitarian social control system, producing so-called “wealth” as a mere by-product. Over 5 millennia, racism, patriarchy and imperialism have provided a good measure of totalitarian control, but, arising in agrarian England in the 1600s, capitalism nicely completes the control system. This gang of four work together, through something called “the market”, with the first three providing excellent profit-making “externalities” for the fourth.

Okay. Over in this corner, badly bruised and beaten, we have our rag-tag Indian Act Bands, and over in the other corner we have the global oil and gas industry....got the picture? The Delgamuuk bell rings, and oil and gas comes out swinging.

Yes, Exxon-Mobil, Royal Dutch Shell, and the rest of the gang are here, but we’re going

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# Tending the Flower or Cutting the Stem?

## Canadian-sponsored democracy in Haiti

by Justin Podur

PORT-AU-PRINCE—The post-coup Haitian presidential election, currently planned for November 20, has a list of 54 candidates. The Canadian Prime Minister's "special advisor on Haiti," Denis Coderre, suggested yesterday that this lengthy list of candidates was a good thing, a sign that "democracy is like a flower that needs to be constantly tended."

But that long list of candidates has a notable absence. His name is Father Gerard Jean-Juste, and he is absent because he is in jail (discussion of why he is in jail will have to be deferred, but he is a political prisoner facing accusations that would not hold up to standards of evidence). Because he is in jail, he was unable to present his registration in person, which is what Haiti's Provisional Electoral Council requires of presidential candidates. According to the Haitian Constitution, someone can register as a presidential candidate even if he is unable to do so in person, as long as two lawyers and a justice of the peace present his candidacy. This, we were told, is what Jean-Juste's people tried to do but were rebuffed.

I didn't meet Father Jean-Juste today, but I did see his face on a T-shirt in the huge working-class neighbourhood of Bel Air this morning. A Lavalas militant named Samba Boukman met us in a small yard. As he approached, he pointed to the picture of Jean-Juste on his T-shirt and said, "This is the president of the people."

The UN headquarters is just outside the yard where we were talking to Boukman and a few other young people. Brazilian troops were there, in jeeps, armoured cars, and on foot. They had fortified control points on the street corners. MINUSTAH, the UN "Stabili-



UN forces patrolling in the Port-au-Prince neighbourhood of Bel Air.

*Haiti Information Project*

zation Mission," was there in force.

MINUSTAH was doing what is called "DDR" (Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration). From what we heard, though, a more appropriate label might be "DAM" (Disarmament, Arrest and Misery). The idea of the program is that MINUSTAH collects the weapons from youths and helps them "reintegrate" into society. But the process seems to break down after the "disarmament" part. There is no point denying it: there are poor youths here who live in conditions that mean they have to steal to survive and who would feel only more helpless, and vulnerable to those who would prey upon them, if they lacked weapons. What they need—what organizations like Samba Boukman's Zakat youth programs are trying to provide—are basic necessities, as well as political and social infrastructure. Zakat, for example, runs a breakfast program for young people, but this morning they were out of rice, so the kids went hungry.

MINUSTAH is not in the business of giving out rice. It is in the business of taking away guns. It is also in the business of

arresting kids and handing them over to the Haitian National Police (Police Nationale Haïtienne, PNH). The PNH, in turn, is still very much in the business of repression and abuse. Eighteen young people who handed in their weapons last week were arrested shortly afterwards. A young man who gave up his weapon was arrested by MINUSTAH and was later seen in the street with his face badly smashed by the PNH.

"The elections are our last chance to solve the problems of this country," Boukman told us. Unfortunately there are too many who want that chance to be missed. Bel Air is a huge neighbourhood with 34 districts. During the 2000 election, each of the national state schools had a polling station—at least one for each district. Today there is one for all of Bel Air, the St. Martin electoral registry. Was the Lavalas base in Bel Air registering to vote? They had been, until September 13, when Jean-Juste was barred from candidacy. Since then, they've stopped.

The scene at St. Martin confirmed Boukman's story. There were one or two people registering and five or six people

working. The coordinator of the polling station explained to us that at this currently empty station, they had registered 3,000 people in a single week (the last week of August). People had been coming in droves until around September 15, but after that no one had come in. Her explanation, different from Boukman's: the registration deadline keeps on being delayed, so people stopped feeling the immediate pressure to register.

The registration cards are not designed to please civil libertarians. Haitians registering to vote give fingerprint, signature, and photo information, which will eventually be collected in a single database. They will get a single identification card that will be good for 10 years. They may not get breakfast, but they can get some high-tech identification. They will certainly need it—from social services to the tax office, no Haitian will be able to do without the new identification card, or so goes the plan.

Meanwhile, the Haitian police, when they are doing SWAT operations, wear masks to hide their identity.

# Solidarity Soccer

## Activists decry presence of Minutemen, demand open border

by Shaughn McArthur

On a rainy Saturday afternoon in October, Montréal's Solidarity Across Borders visited a sleepy border town 150 km southeast of Montréal. Activists from Vermont and Québec converged for a game of "solidarity soccer" in symbolic defiance of a US border patrol militia known as the Minutemen.

Named after elite colonial militia units predating the American Revolution, the contemporary Minutemen are a group of American civilians—an estimated two-thirds of whom carry handguns—who this April began patrolling the US-Mexico border for "illegal aliens." They have since expanded their operations north, to the US-Canada border.

The historical Minutemen are known for their role in defeating British forces during the Revolutionary War, but according to USHistory.org, "Native-American uprisings... and potential for local insurrections, social unrest, and rioting" were key reasons for maintaining the hand-picked militia.

Today, the Minutemen are concerned about the "political, economic and social mayhem" they say would result from their nation "devoured and plundered by the menace of tens of millions of invading illegal aliens."

"The Minutemen are basically Nazis, and we're here to show them they aren't welcome," said Henry Harris, standing under an umbrella on the US side of a granite pillar marking the border, with his daughter Louisiana on his shoulders.

Harris was one of about 50 protesters on the Vermont side of the Tomafobia River, in the town of Derby Line, where Minutemen have been operating since last week. A mere 50 metres away, in the granite quarrying community



Montréal activist Aaron Lakoff passes out flyers near the Québec-Vermont border.

Stefan Christoff

of Stanstead, Québec, 25 protesters from Montréal chanted their support.

While most stayed safely on the Canadian side of customs, passing out flyers to motorists, a delegation of three crossed into the "no man's land" to meet their American counterparts.

A North Eastern Federation of Anarchist Communists (NEFAC) member who asked to be identified as Benoit said that the simple acts of shaking hands, lighting their US comrades' cigarettes, and partaking in a brief soccer ball rally across the invisible border demonstrated its absurdity.

The game came to an end when an American trooper seized the ball, imprisoning it unchanged in the trunk of a US Border Patrol Canine Unit cruiser to cries of, "we just want to play football!" and "yeah for solidarity soccer!"

"Protests aren't common around here," said an amiable but anonymous Canadian Customs officer. "These guys pretty much broke the ice for that."

Benoit concurred. "We've already made an impact in this village, just by our presence."

Within 45 minutes of marching, the group had covered downtown Stanstead, drawing residents to their doors and windows, curious to find out the cause of the uncharacteristic fuss.

"Communities on both sides [of the border] seemed supportive of the protesters," Benoit observed.

"There's an understanding here because this is a community traversing the border," said David Gow, who crosses the border many times every day. The line runs through his house, with one driveway on the American side and another on the Canadian. He said it is not uncommon to get checked ten times while going about a day's business, especially since 9/11.

"This Minutemen thing, this idea they're going to defend this border is absurd. Borders are an absurd concept themselves; the birds don't know about them, the deer don't know them, but here we're clenching down while in Europe borders are opening up."

Nevertheless, Gow said he wouldn't take his views as far as some of the protesters: "If there

were no borders George Bush would be running this place, so borders are good."

The protesters found the strongest show of solidarity in the shelter of Millie's Diner. "My name is Bashar Shbib. I'm an independent filmmaker, and I'm really glad you're here," announced the beaming proprietor, passing out steaming plates of food and cups of coffee at half price or on the house to tables of cold and hungry protesters.

Shbib understands borders better than most. "My last film was about borders." An ethnic Syrian and Concordia film school graduate, for eleven years Shbib lived and made films in Los Angeles, until in the aftermath of 9/11 he was forced into hiding for safety. "A Jewish family protected me," he said. "[Arabs] were getting killed and the press wasn't reporting it. Then, when I decided to come home [to Canada] I was strip-searched three times."

For all his support of the protesters, however, Shbib suggested the Minutemen were inviting their own fate. "The stronger a border becomes, the sooner it falls; so in that sense it's good to strengthen it."

"It's a scary thing to see citizens in the US enforcing state policy," said Stefan Cristoff of the Coalition Against the Deportation of Palestinian Refugees. "There is a long tradition of oppression and vigilantes in the States, (but) the Minutemen are aware we were there, and that anywhere they go they face resistance."

So where were the Minutemen? While the group has been campaigning for recruits further south in Newport, Vermont, it seems their presence in Derby Line was limited to what one source referred to as "three old men camping out in Winnebagoes."

# US Military Establishes Base in Paraguay

## Preparations made to “spread democracy”

by Benjamin Dangl

Controversy is raging in Paraguay, where the US military is conducting secretive operations. 500 US troops arrived in the country on July 1st with planes, weapons and ammunition. Eyewitness reports prove that an airbase exists in Mariscal Estigarribia, Paraguay, which is 200 kilometers from the border with Bolivia, and which may be utilized by the US military. Officials in Paraguay claim the military operations are routine humanitarian efforts and deny that any plans are underway for a US base. Yet human rights groups in the area are deeply worried.

White House officials are using rhetoric about terrorist threats in the tri-border region (where Paraguay, Brazil and Argentina meet) in order to build their case for military operations, in many ways reminiscent of the build up to the invasion of Iraq.

The tri-border area is home to the Guarani Aquifer, one of the world's largest reserves of water. Near the Estigarribia airbase are Bolivia's natural gas reserves, the second largest in Latin America. Political analysts believe US operations in Paraguay are part of a preventative war to control these natural resources and suppress social uprisings in Bolivia.

Argentine Nobel Peace Prize laureate Adolfo Perez Esquivel commented on the situation in Paraguay, “Once the United States arrives, it takes it a long time to leave. And that really frightens me.”

The Estigarribia airbase was constructed in the 1980s for US technicians hired by the Paraguayan dictator Alfredo Stroessner, and is capable of housing 16,000 troops. A journalist writing for the Argentine newspaper *Clarín* recently visited the base and reported it to be in perfect condition,



The Estigarribia airbase.

*Clarín*

capable of handling large military planes. It's oversized for the Paraguayan air force, which only has a handful of small aircraft. The base has an enormous radar system, huge hangars and an air traffic control tower. The airstrip itself is larger than the one at the international airport in Asuncion, the Paraguayan capital. Near the base is a military camp which has recently grown in size.

“Estigarribia is ideal because it is operable throughout the year...I am sure that the US presence will increase,” said Paraguayan defense analyst Horacio Galeano Perrone.

### Denials and Immunity

“The national government has not reached any agreement with the United States for the establishment of a US military base [in Paraguay],” states a communiqué signed by Paraguayan Foreign Minister Leila Rachid. The US Embassy in Paraguay has also released statements officially denying plans to set up a military base in the country.

The Pentagon used this same language when describing its actions in Manta, Ecuador, now the home of an \$80 million US military base. First they said the facility was an archaic “dirt strip” which would be used for weather monitoring and would

not permanently house US personnel. Days later, the Pentagon stated that Manta was to serve as a major military base tasked with a variety of security-related missions.

Paraguayan political analyst and historian Milda Rivarola said that, “in practice, there has already been a (US) base operating in Paraguay for over 50 years.” The US armed forces have had an ongoing presence in the country, she said. “In the past, they needed congressional authorization every six months, but now they have been granted permission to be here for a year and a half.”

On May 26, 2005 the Paraguayan Senate granted the US troops total immunity from national and International Criminal Court jurisdiction until December 2006. The legislation is automatically extendable. Since December 2004, the US has been pressuring Peru, Ecuador, Venezuela and Paraguay into signing a deal which would grant immunity to US military. The Bush administration threatened to deny the countries up to \$24.5 million in economic and military aid if they refused to sign the immunity deal. Paraguay was the only country to accept the offer.

### Coup Warning in Bolivia

The proximity of the Esti-

garribia base to Bolivian natural gas reserves, and the fact that the military operations coincide with a presidential election in Bolivia, has also been a cause for concern. The election is scheduled to take place on December 4 2005. Bolivian Workers' Union leader Jaime Solares, and Movement Toward Socialism (M.A.S.) Legislator Antonio Peredo, have warned of US plans for a military coup to frustrate the elections. Solares said the US Embassy backs rightwing ex-President Jorge Quiroga in his bid for office, and will go as far as necessary to prevent any other candidate's victory.

The most recent national poll conducted showed leftwing M.A.S. congressman Evo Morales barely one point behind Quiroga in the race. Solares said there were calls in June 2005 for a military coup during the massive protests that toppled President Carlos Mesa. Recent US military operations in neighboring Paraguay would facilitate such an intervention.

The Bush administration played a key role in the 2002 coup against President Hugo Chavez in Venezuela and the 2004 ousting of Haitian president Bertram Aristide.

### The Tri-Border Terror Theory

In March, William Pope, the US State Department's principal deputy coordinator of counterterrorism, said that 9/11 mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed is believed to have visited the tri-border area for several weeks in 1995. Defense officials say that Hezbollah and Hamas, radical Islamic groups from the Middle East, “get a lot of funding” from this tri-border area, and that further unrest in the region could leave a political “black hole” that would erode other democratic efforts.

Military analysts from Uru-

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# EPA Proposes New Rules for Human Dosing Experiments

## Critics argue too many loopholes remain

by Andrea Smith

The US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) unveiled a new set of guidelines this month that, according to the agency, “establish stringent enforceable ethical safeguards” on research conducted by third-parties intentionally exposing human subjects to pesticides. Susan Hazen, from the EPA’s Office of Prevention, Pesticides, and Toxic Substances, says that the agency wants “to send a clear signal to the public that unethical research should never be conducted and will not be accepted by EPA.” The rules pertain to third-party human dosing studies, where human subjects are intentionally exposed to chemicals which have no medical benefit. While previously banned by the EPA, they are now mandated by the Appropriations Act, 2006, signed by Bush on August 2nd, which states the EPA must have a set of rules in place for third-party intentionally human dosing studies no later than February 1, 2006.

The Act bans testing chemicals on “volunteers” who are children, infants or pregnant women.

But such a clear ethical message isn’t readily found in the details of the rules. The thirty-page document, intended for public comment, holds numerous contradictions and loopholes. Testing on “abused or neglected” children is acceptable without permission from parents or guardians. Another ethically contentious rule is the EPA’s ability to use industry studies conducted overseas, performed in countries that have minimal or no ethical standards for testing, so long as the tests are not done directly for the EPA. And while numerous sections detail the strict conditions of subjecting



Pesticides.

USDA

pregnant women, children and infants to intentional chemical exposures, they are ultimately undermined by a rule stating that unethical research (which includes research on pregnant women and kids) can be used should they provide important data needed for a regulatory decision.

And what of the consequences for conducting unethical research? Action the EPA can take includes refusing to rely on unethical research and disqualifying the institution that approved or conducted the research from receiving federal funding.

The revised rules require that studies, whether conducted or sponsored by the EPA or by another party such as industry or academia, comply with the Common Rule: the current ethical standards for research conducted or supported by the US federal government. Researchers are required to submit study protocols to the agency’s Human Studies Review Board for scrutiny before they are conducted. Once the study is completed, researchers must report to the EPA on how the ethical standards were met.

Such a process is meant to prevent the ethical violations of previously submitted trials.

To date, the EPA has received 24 human dosing studies. Most have not been published, and are therefore not peer reviewed. Some bioethicists and scientists have raised additional concerns with the studies. In a report examining six of the human dosing experiments submitted by industry to the EPA, Dr. Alan Lockwood stated that “all had serious ethical or scientific deficiencies—or both.” These deficiencies include inappropriate methods and distorted result, and lack of informed consent. For example, in one study investigating the health effects of the pesticide chlorpyrifos, the subjects were informed that “low doses of these agents [cholinesterase inhibitors] have been shown to improve performance on numerous tests of mental function.” What subjects weren’t told was that none of the chemicals classified as performance enhancers are organophosphates, a class of chemicals well-known to negatively affect the central nervous system.

Another ethical issue not addressed by the proposed rules is conflict of interest. The \$10 billion dollar chemical industry certainly has a lot at stake in the issue. When the EPA proposed a moratorium on the submission

of human dosing experiments in 2001, the chemical industry sued—and won. Welcoming the decision to allow human pesticide testing, industry representatives stated that “the EPA does not need to be overly restrictive when it sets pesticide exposure levels.” Industry favours human dosing studies because they can be used to establish levels of no adverse effect (NOELs), often at levels higher than those from animal studies. In terms of environmental regulation, that means that more pesticides can be applied, and higher exposures seen as acceptable.

However, many scientists agree with industry’s position on the need for human studies. Reversing the prior moratorium on the use of human subjects, a National Academy of Science (NAS) panel reviewing the issue stressed that the use of human subjects was appropriate only to answer important regulatory questions that could not be answered without such studies, and in such incidences, there exists a public benefit to using “the best available science.” The logic is that other methods, such as animal testing, often provide limited and inaccurate answers as to the health effects in humans. Yet human dosing studies are often conducted over short durations, such as a period of 6 months, and are therefore not long enough for most negative health conditions, such as cancer, to manifest. Moreover, EPA’s proposed rules diverge from the NAS recommendations in a number of important respects. They ignore the recommendation for an independent review panel, and permit a far broader range of research than initially proposed. Erik Olsen with the Natural Resource Defence Council suggests, “if the rule stays as this draft has proposed, the floodgates will open for human testing.”

# ‘War Makes Terrorists’

## Hundreds of thousands march for peace in DC

by Carey Jernigan

Between two and three hundred thousand people descended on the streets of Washington, D.C. on September 24th to protest the war in Iraq — to demand an end to violence overseas and to demand resources for the impoverished at home in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. Hundreds of others, traveling to the capital on Amtrak trains from New York, were delayed or prevented from coming because of “electrical problems.”

The march kicked off a festival at the Washington monument with live music (from Joan Baez to the Thievery Corporation) and speakers (including Rev. Jesse Jackson, basketball player Etan Thomas, and Cindy Sheehan — the mother who set up camp outside of Bush’s Texas ranch after her son was killed in Iraq). The next day, a small counter-demonstration was held by those in support of the war. There were also workshops on non-violent civil disobedience in preparation for Monday when three hundred and seventy people were arrested after refusing to back off the sidewalk in front of the White House where they were asking to present President Bush with one million reasons to end the war in Iraq — reasons assembled by people around the world. Participants were given a \$50 fine. There were also protests outside of the World Bank and IMF meetings.

I travelled to Vienna, Virginia from my home in Ontario, then took the metro into D.C. to attend the march. Sitting beside me on the subway were two young men. One wore a t-shirt that said “innocent bystander” and a hat reading “Veteran — U.S. Marine Corps.” His friend wore a beer shirt. They were joking around: “We should have made signs saying: ‘I’m angry at... something.’”



Protesters argued that resources going to Iraq would be better spent in New Orleans.

Carey Jernigan

“Yeah, or ‘Damn whatever.’”

The train was packed. We squeezed our way up the escalator to get out of the station and onto the Mall, past the National Book Fair, and on to the grounds of the Washington Monument where thousands had already gathered. We passed a silent standoff between a line of protesters and police on horseback, and then followed a throng of people up 15th Street to begin the march. We would eventually pass the White House, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the Bank of America, the FBI Building, the Department of Justice, the IRS, and the National Museum of American History — building after grand building, colossal columns and marble bricks. Several people carried signs that were provided by protest organizers: “Troops out now,” for example, or “The world can’t wait; drive out the Bush regime.” Perhaps most interesting, though, were the thousands of home-made signs:

“Proud of my soldier, ashamed of this war.”

“Boo Bush.” (This in a five-year-old’s scrawling hand).

“Somebody lied.” (This carried by a veteran well into his eighties).

“Dissent is patriotic.”

“War makes terrorists.”

“Breasts not bombs.” (Four women posing as examples.)

“Make levees, not war.”

“Who Would Jesus Bomb?”

“You can’t be pro-life and pro-war.”

“Guerra de los ricos, sangre de los pobres.”

“Bush’s Hijacker Math: 15 Saudis + 4 Egyptians = Attack Iraq.”



In a few spots along the way, groups of men with bibles shouted ‘Fear God’

Carey Jernigan

Some people carried signs saying that they had been here to protest the war in Vietnam, and now again for Iraq. At that earlier protest, people carried candles and shouted the names of those who had died in Vietnam as they passed the White House.

At one point we decided to work our way up to the front. We never made it — people had been marching for hours already and continued to fill the streets into the night.

There was street theatre — a dance troop with perhaps fifty paper-mâché people moving to the beat of a drum, facing off with well-dressed women in tiaras carrying shopping bags, getting shot down, getting back up.

In a few spots along the way, groups of men with bibles shouted “Fear God” or “You’re marching with communists!” calling the passers-by traitors. One had a sign featuring an automatic rifle: “God bless america. Curse our enemies.” Other war supporters lined a sidewalk behind police in front of the FBI building. They held signs saying “support our troops” and “freedom is not free.”

There were some harsh words on both sides of the barricade, but for the most part, the march of thousands was quiet — line after line of protesters of

all ages and upbringings, walking with dedication and silent anger, or sometimes sadness. Perhaps, as my neighbours on the metro had joked, they were “angry at something” perhaps too disturbing or too difficult to shape into the words of brief protest rhymes.



# Settler Acculturation

## Confronting myths and misconceptions about Indigenous culture, spirituality, and worldview

by Wilma van der Veen

Recent court rulings acknowledging native rights to natural resources, such as timber and fisheries, have fed existing tensions between corporate interests, resource industry workers and indigenous nations. These tensions have highlighted a lack of understanding, often fed by disinformation, about the history of relations between settlers and First Nations peoples and the agreements that continue to govern that relationship.

In mid-September, a group of people met in Tata-magouche, Nova Scotia, to attempt to address this lack of understanding. "The times, they are a-changing: A Treaty Education Workshop" event, was sponsored by Lnapskuk: The Neighbours Project and the Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nation Chiefs. Margaret Tucz-King, staff at the Lnap-skuk Project explained that the workshop "was designed to promote awareness about Indigenous culture and history among Maritimers; to promote positive, peaceful ways of working through the divisive issues; and to encourage participation in new relationship-building initiatives in communities and neighbourhoods.

"To constructively address the deep concerns of all involved, spaces need to be created which allow everyone to engage in transformational discussions and activities where myths and misconceptions about our history and current issues can be corrected," said Tusz-King. This gathering was such a space, where Wabanaki storytellers and other presenters shared their knowledge, helping non-Indigenous people to experientially learn about



**gkisedtanamoogk and Margaret Tucz-King helped lead the workshop.**

*Tatamagouche Centre*

Indigenous culture, spirituality, and worldview.

Gwen Bear, a Wulustukiuk educator presented Medicine Wheel teachings to the group. She spoke passionately about the representation of the four peoples in the wheel: the Red, caretakers of earth, given the gift of vision and dreams; the Black, caretakers of water, given the gift of compassion; the Yellow, caretakers of air, given the gift of introspection; the White, caretakers of fire, given the gift of knowledge and action. Bear described the caretaker role as "a sacred contract—each group needing to take care of their Creator-assigned element," adding, "As all elements are required for life, each people were also united and connected at a fundamental level."

Other wheel-based lessons included that of the four directions beginning in the East representing spirit, heart (South), body (West) and mind (North): respectively corresponding to cultural, social, economical and political realms. "Many of us are in imbalance due to the nature of our current societies, where too much focus is placed on the realms of body and mind, and not enough on the heart and spirit," stressed Bear.

Donna Augustine, a Mi'kmaw cultural educator

from Elsipogtog (Big Cove First Nation) aims to bring healing to the ancestors by having their remains repatriated. During her presentation, she noted how Original Peoples of this continent are the most studied group of people on the planet. She claimed that there are more remains of Original Peoples lying in museums than there

are Original Peoples alive now. There is a great and disturbing hypocrisy regarding respect for European graveyards compared to the disrespect for the burial grounds of First Nations she said. This is exemplified by the invasive work of anthropologists and also by developers seeking to build on excavated areas. Currently her work takes her to Europe to bring back the bones of those Original Peoples who fought and died in the world wars.

On the final day, Ed Bianchi, Program Coordinator of Aboriginal Rights KAIROS, provided some grounding in the legal aspects of treaties, Canadian court systems and international human rights law. Bianchi explained that under international law, the government of Canada is not upholding the various international treaties it has signed which impact upon Original Peoples. Bianchi also stressed, "In land rights and treaty negotiations across the country the objective of the federal government is to terminate or extinguish Aboriginal rights. This policy, which the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples concluded was discriminatory, paternalistic and wrong, persists despite the fact that the treaties signed hun-

dreds of years ago recognized the sovereignty of Aboriginal nations, and despite sundry Supreme Court of Canada decisions confirming the ongoing validity and legality of those treaties."

gkisedtanamoogk, a Wabanaki spiritual man, educator and a member of the Aboriginal Rights Coalition Atlantic, led the welcome of the first light early each morning in observance of traditional Mi'kmaw ceremony, and shared prophecies with the group. He stressed "the importance of the Wabanaki people in determining the future, as they are the first to see the light being on the easternmost edge of Turtle Island".

This event was unique. From the method of teaching, to the schedule and proceedings of each day, to the communication and interaction, this was a representation of an Indigenous way of walking the path. Participants found this path to be more in balance with the needs of the people, respecting the power of the Creator, Mother Earth, and the spirits of the ancestors. One participant, Selena Gitpu'Iskw noted afterwards, "Having recently returned home to Nova Scotia after an absence of more than 30 years, I found the talks given most informative. Particularly with regard to current issues surrounding Aboriginal Sovereignty. I learned a great deal about the historical context of the Treaties and their true meaning and purpose to Aboriginal Peoples". So that others may network and develop new insights and understandings into shared history and the current issues that challenge people today, the organizers and participants plan to make this an annual event.

**Scandals, continued from page 3 »**

cited “witnesses and UN officials”. Amazingly, the top UN official, Juan Valdez, was standing next to Pettigrew as he claimed ignorance of what the UN had reported.

The room was full of journalists, but not a single report in the newspapers or broadcast reports of the press conference

mentioned Pettigrew’s claims.

There could conceivably be an explanation for Pettigrew’s claims, however unlikely that might be. But the total lack of interest among the press for finding out *what that explanation is*—or if it exists—suggests that when it comes to lying and incompetent behaviour, some

scandals are more worthy than others.

Individual indiscretions and misappropriation of funds are worthy of attention—especially when they are on the losing end of a political in-fight—but when it comes to the effects of policy, incompetence or lying are not considered career-

threatening acts.

If this wasn’t the case, journalists investigating Pettigrew’s apartment in Paris might have noticed the irony in the name of its location: on rue *Aristide Bruant*.

**Kyoto, continued from page 2 »**

The reasons for the painfully slow progress are complex, says Bramely, and closely tied to the global economic system. “Greenhouse gas emissions go to the heart of an energy economy. Any constraints on emissions lead to constraints on the energy industry, and that underpins the whole economy.” As a result, says Bramely, the industry—specifically coal and oil—is lobbying hard to protect its interests.

In a recent *New York Times* article on the environmental impact of the Alberta oil sands and the expected sextupling of the current daily production—of 1 million barrels of oil a day—by 2030, Minister Dion admitted,

“There is no environmental minister on earth who can stop the oil from coming out of the sand, because the money is too big.”

Whatever big money is saying, big science—or what Dion himself calls “the most authoritative scientific advisory body on climate change science in the world,” the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change—has been saying the same thing for years. Humans are causing climate change, and unless we seriously curb our emissions, we’re in big trouble. “The science is telling us that if we’re to prevent dangerous climate change we need to achieve reductions in emissions of 80%

below 1990 levels by 2050 and 25% below 1990 levels by 2020,” says Bramely.

Bramely hopes Dion will keep these kinds of targets in mind when he kick-starts talks for the post 2012 emission reduction targets. But right now, there are no targets to speak of. Coming to consensus on what they should be, and who should commit to them, could prove rather difficult, considering that some countries, like Canada, have not yet met their first set of targets; other countries that have contributed the least to climate change, like Bangladesh, are suffering the most; up-and-coming developing countries, like India and China, are still

plagued by poverty but poised to surpass the United States as leading emitters; and the United States itself is doing everything it can to destroy the process altogether.

Despite the overwhelming challenge, however, both Bramely and Bennett are genuinely optimistic. The tide has turned, they say. It is now no longer a question of if, but when.

If “when” proves soon enough to halt and reverse climate change, “it will go down in history as one of the greatest achievements of humankind,” says Bennett.

**Banking on Heaven, continued from page 4 »**

ject matter been less compelling or appalling, *Banking on Heaven* would not succeed as it does—a documentary in the simplest sense, recording that which speaks for itself. *Banking on Heaven*’s excellence lies in its ability to have its audience’s jaws on the floor for ninety minutes, incredulous that such communities are possible.

The credibility of its information is important, especially given the community’s closed nature; however, *Banking*’s allegations are supported by other public information. Indeed, to the UEP, polygamy and massive welfare fraud are points of open pride; moved audience members quickly noted that in any secular situation, public authorities would have intervened years ago. Regarding more specific allegations of incest and sexual abuse, the film’s evidence is largely based on testimonials

(with such notable exceptions as a wedding photo of Rulon Jeffs and two new brides, sisters aged fourteen and fifteen), but those telling their stories have nothing discernable to gain by lying and seem to have little interest in being tabloid spectacles. Here too the understated style of *Banking on Heaven* works well: the direct, listening-stance camerawork invites you to bear witness as well, and to draw your own conclusions.

The filmmakers’ stated aim is to raise awareness and demonstrate that these communities have little to do with religion and everything to do with money, misogyny, and sexual and physical abuse. It calls its viewers to consider the distinction between freedom of religious belief, and freedom of religious practice. Raising awareness to pressure politicians to act is an obvious first

step, but as a call to arms *Banking on Heaven* is not as clear as one might hope; the filmmakers and Jane Blackmore were repeatedly questioned after the show as to what people can do to help. They stressed a need for education and a long-term support network for those coming out of these communities. The frustratingly vague nature of these answers has as much to do with the problem as it does the format of the film.

Last month all of the UEP’s assets in the United States were frozen and a warrant was issued for Warren Jeffs’ arrest on charges of child abuse (he remains at large), but even if Warren Jeffs or Winston Blackmore were arrested, others would undoubtedly take their place. How does one help a group whose most vocal and powerful members adamantly resist outside interference, and

even those who do want their situations of abuse to change have been raised from birth to categorically mistrust outsiders? It is not who is in charge or the resources “bled” or even showing the people of these communities how to make better choices that is most important; it is, as Jane Blackmore puts it, showing them that there are choices at all.

Doubtlessly, the film screening benefitted from the filmmakers’ presence, and for a Canadian audience to have Jane Blackmore answering questions further increased the film’s relevance. This demonstrates not any failure or lack of information in the film, but rather its tremendous success in achieving its stated aim—*Banking on Heaven* fascinates and enrages, demonstrably inspires questions, and may well inspire action as well.

## Drilling for oil and gas, continued from page 11 »

to get out the microscope, and focus in on two energy corporations acting locally for their global thinkers. First is Western Lakota Energy Services, with its two income streams: building state-of-the-art drilling rigs to sell to Indian Act Bands, and performing contract drilling. Isn't that cute, sticking "Lakota" into their corporate name, with a feather as a logo? The feather in their cap is the recent announcement of the appointment of Victor Buffalo, former Indian Act chief for Samson Cree Nation, to their board of directors.

Looking at Western Lakota Energy Services' (WLES) Q2-05 report, I see that their EBIT-DAS (earnings from continuous operations before interest) have increased by 155% over the same reporting period in 2004, and net profit has increased by 188%. Looking at WLES' two income streams I see that gross profits from contract drilling for Q2-05 are \$11,955,000, a 117% increase over last year's Q2. WLES reports the construction and sale of three new rigs in the Q2-05 period, for revenues of \$8,982,000, reporting gross profits from rig construction, after net revenue recovery, to be \$4,886,000.

A 50% share in one of those three rigs was sold to my band, Saddle Lake First Nation. WLES has 50% share limited partnerships with 6 so-called "First Nations"—incidentally, a term coined by Canada's Justice Department, and handed off to the National Indian Brotherhood at the time of the formation of the AFN, as a diversionary tactic. Is that the Metis war cry of "we're being left out again!" I hear? The Metis Nation of Alberta has a 50% share in a WLES drilling rig, too.

Correct me if I'm right, but it looks like Indian Act Bands pay WLES what it costs WLES to construct a drilling rig, with WLES' 50% share being the profits from the sale of those rigs. WLES then operates those rigs, performing contract drill-

ing, charging these Indian Act Bands management fees, and also making private loans to these bands so that they can pony up their 50% share. WLES' 2004 annual report states that so-called FNs (those FN Indians!) paid WLES \$755,000 in management fees, and \$111,000 in interest.

This is the second drilling rig that Saddle Lake First Nation has purchased a 50% share in; Saddle Lake leadership's reasoning for partnering with WLES in drilling rigs was to create jobs for band members. According to my math, capitalist jobs equal assimilation equal genocide. Grass roots band members haven't fallen for it. Saddle Lake's on-reserve unemployment rate ranges from 70% to 90%, but very few band members have stayed at the drilling rig work. Those who tried to work on the rigs have found the combination of racism, patriarchy, imperialism and exploitative labour overwhelming. As a result, WLES primarily employs non-Indigenous people to perform contract drilling with Saddle Lakes' 2 rigs.

Contract drilling, hmm? It's time to introduce Encana, formed in 2002 by a merger between the Alberta Energy Corporation, a privatized provincial energy corporation, and the Canadian Pacific Railroad. Encana is one of the largest regional energy corporations, who, as part of their operations, hire contract drillers, and is therefore WLES' main employer. Both of Encana's parent corporations got their assets from illegal expropriations of Indigenous property. Alberta's 1931 Natural Resources Transfer Act, source of Alberta Energy Corporation's assets, violates Treaty Six, as do the CPR's land grants. Alberta's Premier, Ralph Klein, publicly stated that Alberta doesn't have to worry about the implications of Delgamuuk because Alberta is covered by Treaties with Indigenous Peoples. Treaty Six, for

instance, Premier Klein believes that Treaty Six is a land surrender. However, the UN, which featured Treaty Six as the best example of a negotiated Treaty between a modern nation-state and nations of Indigenous Peoples, at the conclusion of the UN's 25 year study on such treaties, agreements, and constructive arrangements, agreed with our Elders. Our Elders have always maintained that Treaty Six is a shared use agreement, and that, in spite of genocide, Indigenous Peoples still agree to share.

Alright, I'll culture a little sample of WLES in my Petri dish, and slip it under the microscope. To solve Canada's Indian Problem with "jobs jobs jobs", my band, Saddle Lake, purchased a 50% share in a drilling rig. Against my express wishes, I and my fellow band members put up the cash for WLES to build a drilling rig, through a combination of band funds and borrowed money. WLES built the rig, and it immediately went to work for Encana, in the natural gas-rich "greater sierra region" in northeastern BC, which, believe it or not, is Cree territory implicated by the Delgamuuk decision.

BC's Premier Gordon Campbell is following the practical solution employed by Alberta in the Lubicon situation: get in there and exploit as much resource as possible while the whole issue is being thrashed out. Last year I overheard a comment made by a Saddle Lake manager, reporting that Campbell's government was paying Encana a \$100,000 per hole incentive to drill as many holes as possible, as quickly as possible, in the greater sierra region.

Let's check the score card. Saddle Lake gets a 50% limited partnership in 2 rigs, with an accompanying debt of about 7 million dollars, no permanent jobs, and few temporary jobs, while WLES gets paid in cash what it costs them to build these rigs. WLES then gets to perform

contract drilling with these rigs, being paid a premium by Saddle Lake to manage the rigs, as well as being paid interest on the loan that they've made to Saddle Lake so that Saddle Lake can purchase the limited 50% share. Saddle Lake First Nation helps WLES help Encana help Gordon Campbell's BC government in the emergency action of drilling as many holes as possible in unceded Cree territory in northern BC.

WLES and Encana get national awards, and lots of positive media coverage about their humanitarian efforts to help the "poor Indians", and Gordon Campbell gets re-elected, while the whole bunch of them rob us "poor Indians" blind at every step.

Sweet deal! And, if you consider Canadian law to be legal, it's all legal.

Our local band leadership, almost all men, all deeply indoctrinated into racist, patriarchal thinking, want to impose the "jobs jobs jobs" mantra on our band population. After all, they have to; they've been given their marching orders by Ottawa. By Canada's laws, our Chief and Council don't represent us, they represent Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. Every three years we have a little pseudo-election to see who will be the next local representatives of the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, while in the background, this Department pulls local Council's strings. Hidden in the deeper background, transnational corporations, and the global wealthy elite who "own" these corporations, pull the Department's strings.

Nowhere in any of this discussion do I hear reports of the petro-chemical industry's links to global warming, the global cancer epidemic, and resource wars without end. In the 2004 film, "The Corporation", Dr. Samuel Epstein, an expert witness, says, "If I put a gun to your

*continued on next page »*

**Drilling for oil and gas, continued from previous page »**

head and shot you, it's murder. If I knowingly expose you to something which will kill you, it's the same thing." He's talking about the petro-chemical industry.

My proposed solution? Here goes the broken record: adhere to international law, recognize Indigenous Peoples' title to land, and sovereignty over that land, which will place us in the "owner" slot. Then we can see if the genocidal assimilation project has succeeded in

crippling the four legs of our society. Back in the day, when we were savages, there was plenty for all.

Under capitalism, with its planned scarcity as a cover for the "natural" and "inevitable" rise of privilege, enshrined in individualistic liberal philosophy, there can never be enough to satisfy even one man's greed. When I quit using alcohol, in 1980, I met an elder at an all-night AA meeting held in a tipi, who said: "The white man tried

to borrow our ideas for democracy and for communism, but he got them both wrong." Karl Marx had become fascinated by Indigenous philosophy, towards the end of his life; the Brits, in a UK-wide poll, just voted Marx as the most important philosopher of all time.

Perhaps the real "Indian Problem" is that we had a minimum of 15,000 years to develop social organization independently from Europe; the keystone of our social organization,

our intellectual property, was invisible to the Euro-centric eye. 160 years ago, one of the most advanced European thinkers was starting to catch a faint glimmer; how much time do we humans have left to figure it out, before we stupidly destroy our lovely little nest floating in space?

**Next:** How to deconstruct a Canadian Indian in the privacy of your own home.

**Paraguay, continued from page 14 »**

guay and Bolivia maintain that the threat of terrorism is often used by the US as an excuse for military intervention and the monopolization of natural resources. In the case of Paraguay, the US may be preparing to secure the Guarani water reserves and Bolivia's natural gas.

In spite of frequent attempts to link terror networks to the tri-border area, there is little proof of the connection. However, this did not prevent the US from "liberating" Iraq in 2003. As Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld argued during the debate over weapons of mass destruction

in Iraq, "Simply because you do not have evidence that something does exist does not mean that you have evidence that it doesn't exist."

Paraguayan and US officials contend that much of the recent military collaborations are based on health and humanitarian work.

Col. Hugo Mendoza of the Paraguayan army said he's thankful the US military is helping Paraguay meet security threats through the joint exercises. "We're learning new things and working with new equipment and the latest technology which we would not be able to afford otherwise."

Journalist and human rights activist Alfredo Boccia Paz, said, "These missions are always disguised as humanitarian aid...What Paraguay does not and cannot control is the total number of agents that enter the country."

Meanwhile, neighboring countries have not warmly received the news of the military activity. The Chilean Communist Party demanded that Paraguayan President Nicanor Duarte "reconsider and cancel" recent military deals with the US as they are "extremely serious for Latin America."

In Paraguay, human rights and activist organizations have

mobilized against the military activity. When Donald Rumsfeld visited the country in August, protesters greeted his entourage with chants such as, "Rumsfeld, you fascist, you are the terrorist!" as a military band welcomed him by playing the "Star Spangled Banner".

*Benjamin Dangl has traveled and worked as a journalist in Paraguay and Bolivia. He is the editor of [www.Toward-Freedom.com](http://www.Toward-Freedom.com), a progressive perspective on world events and [www.UpsideDownWorld.org](http://www.UpsideDownWorld.org), an online magazine about activism and politics in Latin America. Email: ben (at)*

**Haiti's biometric elections, continued from page 6 »**

gerprinting is currently the condition of most foreigners' entry to the US.)

Used in this way, biometric identification on a mandatory identification card could prove dangerous because of the efficiency with which it institutionalizes and exacerbates the double standards and exclusions that stratify not only Haitian society but the globe. Haiti is a country in which people fighting to survive in the poorest slums are profiled as terrorist "chimères", while ex-military commanders responsible for massacres—Jodel Chamblain, for example—move about freely. It is also a trafficking port through which much cocaine enters the United States. As in

Colombia, the rhetoric of a war against drugs is easily employed to profile, terrorize and kill poor people and progressive activists, while notorious members of the cartels, like Guy Philippe, are allowed to run for the presidency, with the silent blessing of international "protectors" like Canada and the United States.

In a global political context in which people like Maher Arar, a Canadian citizen, are already being deported to torture in Syria when they are racially profiled and labeled "terrorist" on a US Flight Watch list, the potential dangers of hemispheric biometric profiling are high.

Haiti's ID cards are being manufactured and digitized

out of country, by the Mexican branch of Digimarc, an Oregon-based company that is on the International Foundation for Elections Systems' (IFES) list of suppliers. (IFES works with such organizations as USAID, the National Democratic Institute, and Elections Canada, to provide "targeted technical assistance to strengthen transitional democracies.") Digimarc signed the 1.5 million dollar contract with the OAS, and the company's systems are used throughout the hemisphere. It has produced or is producing biometric voter registration cards for a number of Latin American countries, including Colombia, Honduras, Brazil, Mexico, and Puerto Rico. Addi-

tionally, it has created biometric drivers licensing systems for thirty-two states in the U.S.

The collaboration of IFES, Digimarc, and the OAS suggest that "democracy strengthening" programs in countries like Haiti are being used to facilitate the implementation of an integrated hemispheric tracking and surveillance program.

What better way to integrate an entire country into a biometric surveillance program than to sponsor a coup and take advantage of the silence as political repression, human rights abuses, falling revenues and fear of perpetual political instability preoccupy those who might question such a process?

# C'est à cela que ressemble la « responsabilité de protéger » ?

## Statut, élections et le Canada en Haïti

par Justin Podur

Je suis parti en Haïti pour découvrir un pays qui ne comprend pas vraiment sa place dans le monde ou sur le continent américain. Un pays dont le peuple éprouve trop de fierté et pas assez de responsabilité vis-à-vis du passé, et continue d'agir ainsi par leur gouvernement et leurs élites. Un pays dont la situation semble très difficile à mettre en perspective pour mieux l'appréhender.

Je parle bien entendu du Canada.

Puisque Paul Martin est allé aux Nations Unies la semaine dernière et a remporté la « responsabilité de protéger » -une déclaration signifiant la perte officielle de toute protection légale internationale de la souveraineté des pays- il serait intéressant de voir à quoi ressemblerait un cas d'étude de cette « responsabilité ».

Etant donné mon emploi du temps, il semblait approprié de commencer mon voyage en me rendant à l'ambassade du Canada, un immeuble neuf et brillant avec un terrain de tennis et une piscine, construit par SNC-Lavalin, l'entreprise d'ingénierie canadienne connue pour son contrat d'approvisionnement en munitions passé avec l'armée américaine et pour ses nombreuses autres opérations globales.

J'ai assisté à une conférence de presse de Denis Coderre, « conseiller spécial » du gouvernement canadien en Haïti. D. Coderre, tout comme SNC-Lavalin, apparaît dans les endroits les plus imprévus. Il est venu en tant que ministre de l'immigration. Encore une nomination spéciale pour s'occuper de la question des « Autochtones sans statut » au Canada.

Cela mérite une discussion. Le système canadien, pour «



**Annette Auguste, alias So Ann, chanteuse populaire de musique folklorique, détenue par la Police Nationale d'Haïti.**

*Projet d'information Haïti*

l'octroi » et le retrait du « statut » des autochtones sur la terre desquels le Canada existe, est soigneusement bâti de manière à faire disparaître les « autochtones » dans quelques générations.

La législation canadienne offre deux types de statut. L'enfant de parents ayant un plein statut autochtone bénéficiera de ce même statut. Mais l'enfant dont l'un des parents sera sans statut autochtone (quel que soit son statut) cet enfant ne se verra pas octroyer un plein statut.

En créant deux degrés de statut, l'Etat canadien s'assure ainsi de voir les autochtones se marier uniquement entre personnes de plein statut (ce qui est presque impossible dans une petite population) ou bien les descendants perdre le « statut ». Quoi qu'il en soit, la carrière de D. Coderre, entre le ministère de l'immigration et la question « autochtone », semble tout avoir à faire avec celui du «

statut ».

D. Coderre avait annoncé 2,25 millions de dollars pour les élections en Haïti. Cet argent devait servir à rémunérer 25 officiers de police retraités canadiens. Ces officiers de police vont, selon D. Coderre, aider à « stabiliser » le pays avant les élections qui devraient se tenir le 20 novembre.

D. Coderre a également annoncé un « concert pour l'espoir » le 23 octobre au Théâtre Rex. Nous avons pris un CD échantillon.

Quelques-uns de ses propos méritent d'être soulignés.

A propos du nombre ahurissant de 54 candidats aux présidentielles, D. Coderre a affirmé que la « démocratie était comme une fleur qui nécessite des soins permanents ».

Concernant le faible taux d'inscription, avec 2,4 millions de votants sur quelques 4,5 millions d'électeurs potentiels, D. Coderre a répondu qu'il respectait le processus engagé

par le peuple haïtien, en assurant que de nouvelles personnes s'inscrivent continuellement.

Restant à savoir si le gouvernement haïtien verrait réellement une partie des 2,25 millions de CAD promis. D. Coderre a conseillé au journaliste d'adresser cette question à l'Agence Canadienne pour le Développement International (ACDI).

Le discours de D. Coderre, qui s'est adressé à 25 journalistes haïtiens venant des médias du courant dominant (radio et télévision) et semblant vouloir à tout prix trouver quelque chose d'intéressant à l'oeuvre, était littéralement parsemé du mot « terroriste ». « Les terroristes voulaient prévenir la tenue d'élections, mais nous avons gagné cette bataille, et, en février 2006, il y aura un événement historique en Haïti. Nous sommes, pour ainsi dire, à la croisée des chemins ». Même le Fanmi Lavalas, parti politique

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de J-B. Aristide, devenait impliqué dans les élections, a-t-il dit, comme pour prouver son argument.

Ce n'est pas le cas d'Yvon Neptune. Le Premier ministre constitutionnel est en prison depuis plus d'un an, accusé d'un « massacre » à St. Marc sur la base de preuves contestables. Les agents de l'ONU ont ainsi demandé sa libération ou du moins que la procédure judiciaire soit proprement suivie. Incarcéré depuis juin 2004, Y. Neptune n'a été formellement mis en accusation que le 20 septembre 2005.

Finalement, peu importe le vainqueur des élections. Le Canada a promis un « engagement à long terme » afin d'accompagner le peuple haïtien. Quinze minutes d'annonce, trois questions, et D. Coderre était parti.

De là, ce n'était qu'un court trajet jusqu'au commissariat de police où Annette Auguste (appelé aussi So Ann) est également détenue depuis le 10 mai, 2004. Les Marines ont défoncé sa porte, tiré sur ses chiens, menotté sa petite-fille de 5 ans, et emmené cette grand-mère et chanteuse de 70 ans.

So Ann est enfermée dans un commissariat de police avec 147 autres femmes. Lorsque l'on lui demande, assise dans un coin de cellules et sous le regard des gardiens et des jeunes prisonnières, combien de ces femmes sont prison-

nières politiques, elle répond « toutes ». Selon elle, ces femmes ont toutes été recueillies dans les quartiers pauvres, et accusées de « s'associer » avec des malfaiteurs - un terme qui a été pris au code civil napoléonien.

Quant à So Ann, elle nous a expliqué les complexités étranges de l'action engagée contre elle. En premier lieu, les Marines l'ont accusée de planifier une attaque en collusion avec des musulmans d'une mosquée locale. Etant donné que cela est arrivé le 10 mai 2004, nous avons conclu à une erreur dans le système d'accusations des forces américaines, lesquelles doivent avoir accidentellement pris un dossier d'accusation relatif à l'Irak.

Lorsque l'absence de mosquée dans le quartier de So Ann a jeté un doute sur cette accusation, ils ont tenté de rectifier celle-ci en attaque contre l'opposition qui fit face au président Aristide en septembre 2003. Elle était à l'hôpital à l'époque. Puis, ils ont fait apparaître un témoin prétendant l'avoir vue broyer et bébé à l'aide d'un mortier et d'un pilon pour que J-B. Aristide puisse boire son sang. Le témoin a dit que So Ann l'avait appelé pour assister au rituel et a même présenté un numéro de téléphone que So Ann n'a acquis que quelques mois après la tenue du prétendu rituel. Puisque cette accusation est soutenue par au moins un témoignage (même

si le témoin se trouve actuellement en France et ne s'est pas manifesté depuis longtemps), c'est ce chef d'inculpation qu'ils ont retenu.

Nous n'étions pas les seuls à rendre visite à So Ann. Quelques mois auparavant l'ambassadeur américain James B. Foley avait envoyé Gérard Gilles, l'ex-sénateur du Fanmi Lavalas et candidat aux présidentielles de 2005, et Roudy Heriveaux, une autre figure du parti, pour lui demander son soutien. So Ann a refusé la proposition.

Plus surprenant encore, So Ann avance que les chefs paramilitaires Guy Philippe et Louis Jodel Chamblain lui ont rendu visite dans le but d'obtenir son soutien pour leurs propres projets électoraux. Imaginant une erreur de traduction, j'ai demandé la confirmation de ces propos. « Vous ne pouvez pas en croire vos oreilles ? Je leur ai dit : vous êtes la raison pour laquelle je suis ici », a réagit So Ann. Jodel Chamblain était un des auteurs clé du massacre des Gonaïves sous le régime militaire de 1991-94, et son jugement a été un des rares actes louables du système judiciaire haïtien pendant les années où le Lavalas était au pouvoir. Amnesty International s'en était d'ailleurs félicité. Par contre, l'ONG fut choquée d'apprendre l'annulation du verdict condamnant J. Chamblain sous le nouveau gouvernement.

Sous l'afflût de ce genre de

sollicitation, quelle peut-être la position de So Ann sur les prochaines élections ? Elle dit vouloir l'inscription des partisans de Lavalas. « Si on s'inscrit, on sera préparé, quoi qu'il arrive », annonce-t-elle. Elle n'a aucune intention de se présenter aux élections elle-même parce qu'elle considère que le Lavalas devrait se tenir à sa décision de boycotter les élections tant que les prisonniers politiques n'auront seront pas été libérés. Bien que les autorités rendent l'inscription particulièrement difficile dans les quartiers populaires pro-Lavalas tels que Bel Air et Cité Soleil, So Ann pense néanmoins que le Lavalas peut gagner en appelant à l'unité, même en considérant le faible taux actuel de 2,4 millions d'inscrits.

So Ann réagit aux accusations absurdes lancées contre elle et à son éventuelle libération, laquelle apporterait un semblant de démocratie avant les élections. « S'ils me libèrent, ils vont se créer des soucis », a-t-elle répondu, « parce qu'ils savent que les gens vont se mobiliser ».

So Ann est lumineuse, brillante, vive, mais dans une prison misérable. D. Coderre est froid, bureaucrate et sur la défensive dans un univers aux multimillions de dollars. Quelle est son excuse, à votre avis ?

**Traduit de l'anglais par  
Aroa El Horani**

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# Air Raids Terrorize Gaza Residents

## Homes, roadway, school bombed; sonic booms are new tactic

by Jon Elmer  
The NewStandard

GAZA CITY—Israeli pilots carried out a series of air and artillery strikes throughout the Gaza Strip, targeting civilian infrastructure, assassinating militants and striking fear into the population with deafening noise as low-flying F-16 fighter jets shatter the sound barrier overhead day and night.

Coming only two weeks after the completion of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's Gaza "disengagement," the offensive by the Israeli Air Force is officially ongoing, though strikes have been suspended for some days following a unilateral ceasefire observed by Hamas militants.

Dubbed "Operation First Rain," the offensive is ostensibly designed to target terrorists responsible for firing improvised rockets into the southern Israeli town of Sderot, injuring several people. A spokesperson for the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) told *The NewStandard* that militants fired a total of 37 rockets and three mortar shells from Gaza between Friday, September 23 and Tuesday, September 27, when the leaders of Hamas and Islamic Jihad declared an end to the rocket attacks.

Israeli Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz said publicly that Israel would respond to the attacks with an "iron fist," and Israeli retaliation continued for days after Hamas's missiles fell silent.

"If the sleep of Sderot's children is disturbed and there's a feeling of insecurity among some Sderot residents, the same will be true for Hamas and [Islamic] Jihad leaders," he told reporters on the Gaza-Israel border.

The insecurity in Gaza, however, is felt far beyond the Palestinian militias. In addition to political offices, metal



The collapsed ceiling of the Al-Arqam elementary school in Gaza City. An Israeli military spokesperson told *The New Standard* the school was bombed because "it was bringing up the next generation of Hamas members."  
© Jon Elmer 2005

shops and warehouses, Israeli warplanes and helicopters have fired missiles at civilian infrastructure including a roadway, school, bridge, residential homes, and two power generators that were struck early Wednesday morning, cutting off electricity to Gaza City's 500,000 residents for hours.

The sonic booms that erupt when F-16 fighter jets break the sound barrier over the tiny coastal strip often knock pictures from the walls of Palestinian homes. Residents are compelled to keep their windows open lest the pressure blow them out. The sporadic, thunderous claps rattle the nerves of adults and children alike.

Sajida Srour, the director of a kindergarten and nursery school in Gaza City, said the children – long accustomed to F-16s – scream whenever the sonic booms rip through the air, and it is not uncommon for the children to wet themselves.

If insecurity is the goal,

the air raids have been effective, added Fadi Srour, who is among the staff at his mother's nursery. "It works. People are terrified."

Gaza residents told *TNS* that deafening booms from low-flying supersonic aircraft constitute a tactic that was not used by the Israeli Air Force when Jewish settlers lived in Gaza.

### Assassinations Resume

Israel also resumed its policy of assassination this week, killing senior Islamic Jihad leader Mohammad Sheikh Khalil on Sunday with a targeted strike at his car on a busy Gaza City street. The Israeli military killed four others it said were suspected militants in two separate attacks in Gaza.

Mofaz threatened to widen the targeted killings. "If Hamas [leaders] Mahmoud Al-Zahar, Ismail Haniyeh and others continue to shoot Qassam [rockets], we will send them to where

Yassin and Rantisi are now," the minister said, referring to the assassinations of Hamas co-founders Sheikh Ahmad Yassin and Abdel Aziz Rantissi, killed by Israeli air strikes in early 2004.

Israel has assassinated more than 150 Palestinian military and political leaders during the five-year uprising.

According to a Palestine Red Crescent Society report, the Israeli air strikes injured at least 32 civilians throughout the week, including an infant who was among the 22 wounded when Israel bombed the Dar Al-Arqam school in Gaza City on Saturday.

Abu Yassin, who lives across the street from the school, said the two missiles that struck the school sounded similar to the sonic booms, "except this time we saw a huge flash of light, followed by screaming and crying and then the sound of sirens as

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A classroom in the Al-Arqam elementary school. The school was one of numerous targets bombed so far by Israel during “Operation First Rain,” which the army said was designed to target militants responsible for homemade rocket fire from Gaza into Israel. © Jon Elmer 2005

ambulances came to evacuate the wounded.”

Large sections of the school were destroyed as floors collapsed on top of one another. Crushed and mangled desks and chairs were left covered in a thick concrete dust. Several nearby houses were sprayed with large pieces of shrapnel, and a large chunk of the school’s floor tiling lay in Abu Yassin’s garden.

Dar Al-Arqam is an Islamic boys school in the Tufah district of Gaza City. The school is part of Hamas’s expansive social infrastructure throughout Gaza, which includes daycares, hospitals and economic welfare programs.

Al-Arqam’s more than 1,000 students are predominately in the elementary grades; enrollment is open to all Palestinians, and the school operates under a Palestinian Authority

license.

Israel, however, makes no distinction between the civilian and military infrastructure of Hamas. Israeli Captain Yael Hartmann told *TNS* that the school was targeted because “it was bringing up the next generation of Hamas members.”

The day after the attack, hundreds of school children took to the streets in protest of the bombing.

### Increased Tensions

The Palestinian rocket fire began early on the morning of Friday, September 23 in response to an Israeli raid in the West Bank city of Tul Karm during which Israel killed three Islamic Jihad militants. The rockets increased following an explosion at a Hamas rally in the Gaza refugee camp of Jabalya on Friday afternoon,

which killed 21 Palestinians and injured more than 60, including many children. Hamas blamed Israel, but most other sources claim the explosion was an accident involving Hamas weaponry. Hamas has since formally discontinued all armed rallies.

On Wednesday, Israel fired artillery into the Gaza Strip, hitting a field outside Beit Hanoun from where many of the rockets were fired.

The chief of Operation First Rain, Major General Yisrael Zvi, told reporters that Israel may use artillery against civilian homes in the densely populated area of northern Gaza. “We will warn residents, make sure they leave, and then fire artillery into the area,” he said without elaborating on how they would ensure the population – some 100,000 people – had fled.

“The Israel Defense Forces will turn this town into a demil-

itarized zone,” Zvi added in reference to Beit Hanoun.

Israeli forces, armor and artillery are currently amassed on the Gaza border, threatening a ground invasion.

On Sunday, Captain Hartmann characterized Operation First Rain as a “success” and told *TNS* that the offensive would continue despite Hamas’s public statements and adherence to a ceasefire since Tuesday.

Meanwhile, Wednesday marked the end of the fifth year of the Palestinian uprising that began on September 28, 2000. In the fifth year, the least deadly thus far, 425 Palestinians and 56 Israelis died in violence, according to data collected from the IDF, Israeli Foreign Ministry and human rights group B’Tselem, the Israeli newspaper *Ha’aretz* reported.