



From The Wilderness

A Nonpartisan Non-sectarian MAP for the Here That Is, Into the Tomorrow of Our Own Making

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Renewables

PART 2 Emphasizing Proximity

By
Mike Kane

[Clearly, a massive program of renewable energy construction is in order. But it is just as clear that neither the federal government nor the majority of American citizens has the insight or the will to undertake such a program - and someday soon (given the [American monetary position in the world system](#)), they may not even have the capital. John C. Pennie and others like him deserve respect for their prudence and foresight, and for the small but real contribution their renewables make to the environmental situation -- but their projects have little to do with the national emergency that FTW expects in the middle term. -JAH]

The following report was based primarily on an interview with John C. Pennie on January 17, 2005. Since then, Mr. Pennie has informed *FTW* that plans to erect three wind turbines on the same property as his residence have been cancelled.

On April 26, 2005, Mr. Pennie sent me the following email:

From: J.C. Pennie
To: Michael Kane
Sent: Tuesday, April 26, 2005 10: 20 AM

Michael,

I have been pondering your article "Renewables Part 1" and agree with your premise. That is why we have decided to focus on 'inland clusters' (of wind turbines) servicing a local area. In Ontario, there are many small community hydro distributors, which could potentially allow for distributed rather than centralized generation of renewables.

Since we last spoke, we have come to a decision concerning our three turbines in Adjala due to excessive delays and costs that we were facing through the Environmental Assessment and re-zoning process (attached).

(Cont'd on page 3)

From the Wilderness

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The Value of the Remaining Wilderness

By
Dale Allen Pfeiffer

April 8, 2005 1300 PST (FTW) – **C**ongress is about to open ANWR to oil drilling. Conservative pro-drilling groups have established propaganda sites on the web (ANWR.com, ANWR.org, etc.) touting drilling as humane and responsible, and claiming that the resources of ANWR will feed our energy demands-state by state-for many years to come. Their figures are unrealistic; they must be considering every bit of oil which has even the remotest possibility of existing within ANWR. And they must also be considering every last drop of it to be extractable.

According to the most reliable figures published by the US Geological Survey, found in their 1998 assessment¹, ANWR contains somewhere between 5.7 and 16 billion barrels of oil (Gb), with the most likely figure being somewhere in the neighborhood of 10.4 Gb. *Recoverable* reserves are estimated to lie between 4.3 and 11.8 Gb, with a mean value of 7.7 Gb. The United States consumed 7.3 Gb of oil in 2003. So, under the best circumstances ANWR could only supply us with a little over one year and a half worth of oil. Compared to other notable oil fields ANWR is 7/100ths the size of Ghawar, and holds about the same comparison to the West Siberian Basin. It is about 1/4th the size of the North Sea Graben deposits. The USGS reports that the entire region of northern Alaska ranks 25 on a listing of world hydrocarbon deposits.² For this we are willing to destroy one of the last pristine habitats on the planet?

The pro-drilling websites claim that drilling will not damage the environment. Some of their material even goes so far as to say that the wildlife will benefit from the careful management of the oil industry. Yet two separate scientific studies point to the opposite conclusion. In an exhaustive study published by the National Academy of Science, a team of researchers studied the cumulative effect of oil and gas activities on the North Slope of Alaska.³ The researchers found environmental degradation across the board, with loss of habitat and diminished quality of life for most of the wildlife. A study by the USGS found similar results, particularly with regard to Caribou herds.⁴ The USGS study looked specifically at caribou within ANWR and found that oil and natural gas

(Cont'd on page 8)

Therefore we are now focusing on two sites in other municipalities west of this location, which will be announced shortly.

Regards,
John

J.C.Pennie
Windrush Energy
Land's End Corporation
Bus: xxx-xxx-xxxx
Fax: xxx-xxx-xxxx
www.Windrush-Energy.com

On April 8, 2005, Pennie was quoted in a Canadian weekly, *The Banner*, as saying the decision to move the project to another jurisdiction "had nothing to do with the concerns of some of the residents because we believe, as a result of our work, that there are no health issues to the public. But time is money and it is simply from a business point of view that it didn't make sense."

Pennie did not respond to the following questions prior to publication.

1. Which municipalities are now being considered?
2. Will you or any of your business partners have the chance to join a wind energy cooperative once the project is complete?

Despite this recent change, *FTW* feels the report produced from the January 17, 2005 interview remains cogent. We present that report now in full, unchanged.
- *FTW*

May 4, 2005 0800 PST (*FTW*): Land's End Corporation is building three wind turbines in Hockley Valley where the company's president has built his home. The aerial photograph of the township of Adjala in Ontario, Canada, below shows the president of Land's End Corp., John C. Pennie, is currently living one mile from where the proposed wind turbines will stand.

[FTW's research](#) indicates that the only way to directly utilize renewable energy is to be near a renewable energy source. In a phone interview, J.C. Pennie was asked if he is aware of peak oil.

"Well I've heard about it," said Pennie. "I haven't done a lot of research on it, but that wasn't the motivation for us to look at this project. I suffer from asthma. I see

many friends and their children, the children more so, have asthma."

He spoke quite idealistically.

"Our motivation initially was that we're going to drown ourselves in pollution if we don't do something. Somebody has to do something. I'm 65 years old and I'm going to do something, and I have a number of partners of similar age - we're going to do something."

"And all of the (wind) power can't be generated along the lakes, and all of it can't be the ideal wind conditions. It has to be distributed and it has to be delivered to users who are close by." Ontario has just approved 2 major wind farms along Lake Superior's north shore,¹ where the wind is quite strong."

But when first asked why he wanted to build this wind farm he stated, "Partly because we are concerned about the environment and partly because Ontario is short of energy."

Sounds like he is concerned with hydrocarbon depletion - peak or no peak.

FTW asked if he planned on using wind energy to heat his home by installing electric heating systems. Currently Pennie heats his home with propane and does not anticipate altering this. He plans on joining a wind energy cooperative with some of his neighbors when the project is completed.

When he first bought the property in Adjala at Hockley Valley, Pennie told his neighbors he wanted to apply for severances to sell the land for horse farms. They supported that use, approving it in the town government. But that support has been withheld from the windmill proposal, which remains unpopular.²

The property is on a plateau in Hockley Valley. Pennie explained it wasn't until construction of his home began that he realized Hockley Valley was a fairly windy area. Coincidentally, he and some partners were looking for land on which to develop a small wind farm and according to Pennie, as luck would have it, his home was well suited for such a project.

"We found that the wind here made construction pretty difficult. They would be lifting a sheet of plywood and it would fly out of their hands, stuff like that. So we decided to test the property and got some reasonable results. It's not the windiest section in Ontario. But my partners and I felt - there were industrial companies in the area - that it would be a good thing for Ontario's energy if all of the windmills weren't along the lakes... so we took the property off the market to sell as real

estate, and decided to work on developing it as an energy site."

Land's End Corporation is made up of six individual investors, including Marilyn Fields who is president of the DAREarts Foundation for children. DAREarts has worked with NATO peace-keeping forces in a card writing campaign designed to garner donations in support of children in war torn nations such as Kosovo. As part of the larger DAREarts program, artist Mark Raynes Roberts has presented windmills as sculptural art forms - both esthetically and philosophically - to Canadian school children.

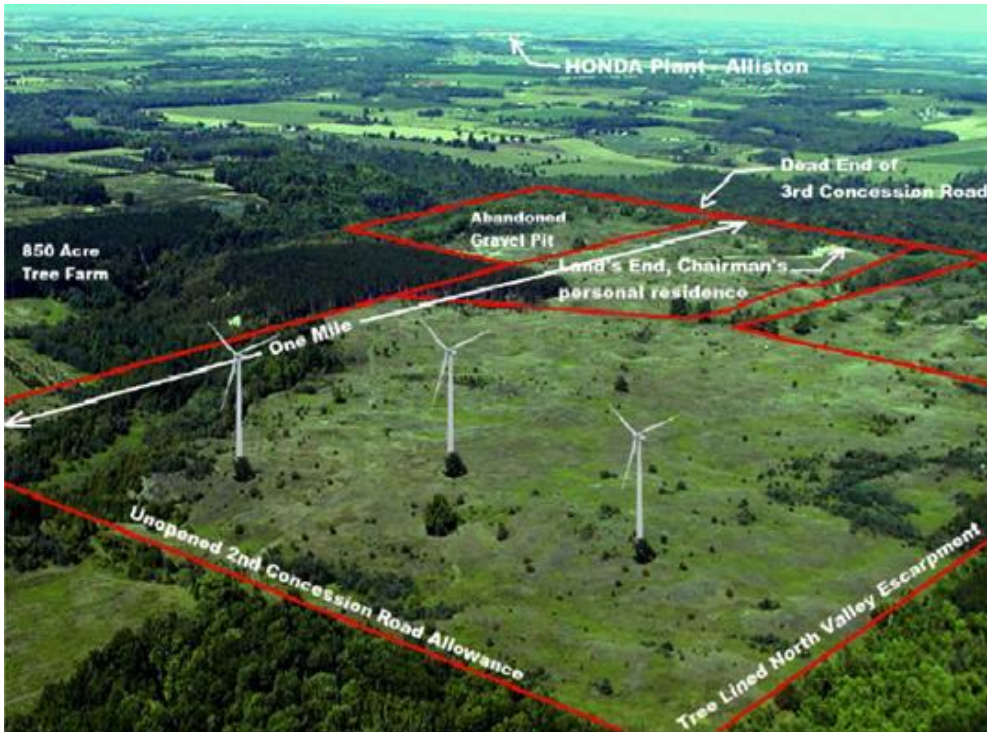
Overall, the Land's End project seems to be good for everyone in the area. If this reporter had \$10 million³ to invest in such a project, he just might. What could be a better investment in the new millennium than energy security? 4.5 megawatts capacity of wind energy en-

electricity regardless of hydrocarbon depletion and its accompanying politics. Wind fluctuation will vary, so there is the possibility of installing battery systems to store energy for when the turbines don't spin.

Renewable energy will be increasingly valuable, especially in the context of Peak Oil. Businesses near Land's End will be more than happy to buy wind energy, helping to curb their CO2 emissions in line with the Kyoto Protocol, which is coming into effect now that Russia has ratified the treaty.

Even military and intelligence professionals have publicly endorsed a massive implementation of renewable energy which they call "Phase Two."⁴

Land's End Corporation's current project at Hockley Valley demonstrates that there are wealthy individuals who are preparing for Peak Oil - whether consciously or by happenstance.



Aerial View of Site with Proposed Wind Turbines Superimposed

photo originally published by Windrush Energy

<http://windrush-energy.com/newspaper.pdf>



The Principals of Land's End Corporation

J.C. PENNIE- *President, Land's End Corporation* - Mr Pennie is the winner of the first Niagara Escarpment Commission architectural award for design and development in Caledon. Mr. Pennie has been Chairman of the international companies in fields as diverse as computer imagery for TV & motion pictures and industrial construction. He is building a residence at Land's End.

photo originally published at <http://windrush-energy.com/index-3.htm#principals>

sures J.C. Pennie, his wife, and neighbors who join the wind energy cooperative will have a steady stream of

best. The renewable projects they endorse cannot replace the level of hydrocarbon consumption we cur-

rently consume. Not even close. Yet the Apollo Alliance presents its information as if renewable energy projects will allow for economic growth to continue at current rates.

Set America Free is an organization of war hawks who have recently -- suddenly - begun to back the implementation of renewable energy projects. Their rhetoric is that dependence on foreign oil is a threat to our "national security." Renewables will certainly make the war machine more efficient as the effects of hydrocarbon depletion set in. It's much easier to talk about terrorism than the geological reality of hydrocarbon depletion.

As pointed out in [Part 1](#) of this series and repeated here, wealthy individuals are preparing themselves while the masses remain exposed to severe scarcity in the coming years.

John C. Pennie is the former Chairman of the now bankrupt American ECO Corporation. This Canadian company was headquartered in Houston, TX, owning multiple American corporations in California, New Jersey, Texas, Louisiana, Ohio, North Carolina and Oregon. Mr. Pennie said he was placed as Chairman for a short period to help the company through difficult times.⁵

¹ "Sites get green light for MNR," staff writer, *The Chronicle Journal*, January 30, 2005 <http://www.chroniclejournal.com/story.shtml?id=25554>

² "Controversy over wind turbines in Hockley continues," by Constance Scrfield-Danby, *The Banner*, December 7, 2004 <http://www.northpeel.com/br/orangeville/news/story/2405351p-2784127c.html>

³ "Residents tilting at wind mills," by Jason Ballantyne, *Alliston Herald*, February 15, 2005 <http://www.simcoe.com/sc/alliston/story/2271659p-2632832c.html>

⁴ "National Security to Lead Renewable Energy Deployment," by Jesse Broehl, *RenewableEnergyAccess.com*, December 14, 2004 http://www.fromthewilderness.com/free/ww3/010305_energy_deployment.shtml

⁵ According to the FEC (Federal Elections Commission), American ECO Corp. had given illegal campaign contributions to the Clinton/Gore campaign as a foreign national interest. This does not appear to have occurred while John C. Pennie was Chairman. <http://www.fec.gov/press/20020927mur.html> document mirrored here <http://www.thememoryhole.org/pol/fec-clinton-gore.htm>

Hope for the Future

The Failure of the Left

By
Dale Allen Pfeiffer

[Once you've heard an elegant formulation of the Second Law of Thermodynamics -- [Entropy is a measure of the disorder of a system; whenever energy freely transforms from one form to another, the direction of transformation is toward a state of greater disorder and therefore toward one of greater entropy](#) - it's hard to sustain any faith at all in the free market as a guarantor of perpetual prosperity. Endless capital accumulation and growth remains modernity's dearest fable, while just beneath its ideological surface the basic truths of the natural world smile at our foolishness. Dale Allen Pfeiffer is FTW's Science Editor, a man well acquainted with the limits of energy exploitation in a finite world. Here he asks why the thinkers, voters, and marchers of the left -- whose critique of capitalism is supposed to be robust and actionable -- have missed the great discreditor of its central illusion. Without endless resources to consume and a bottomless pit into which waste products may drain forever, capitalism simply cannot endure.

Granted, the left has predicted capitalist collapse for two hundred years, yet the Dow hovers above ten thousand. People have been anticipating environmental breakdown for more than two thousand years, yet the wheat keeps coming up in the summer. Why? Well, imagine a spacecraft that has run out of fuel, gradually falling into some distant star. Everyone who observes a section of its fall during his lifetime predicts that it will get there and burn, but it doesn't yet, so he's called a fool. Capitalism is like this falling ship, except that the signs of its descent aren't always obvious to the people locked inside. And now they're sweating.
- JAH]

May 9, 2005 1000 PST (FTW) **I**t would seem natural for the left to take up the topic of resource depletion, and Peak Oil in particular. These problems are indicative of the failure of our current socio-economic system and the need for change. We have squandered our resources in a mad rush of rampant consumption. One would think that the left would have a field day with this. Yet the left has gone out of its way to avoid this issue.

For the most part, progressive voices and alternative media outlets have resisted the message of Peak Oil. Even now that it is staring them in the face, they are

reluctant to admit it and are making no organized attempt to deal with it. Instead, they have either been vehement in their denial of Peak Oil, or they have pointed to a techno-fix without taking a good strong look at the likeliness of such a solution.

This failure to discuss Peak Oil and its implications has left the field open to the other side of the political spectrum. Without so much as an argument from the left, the right will institute their own solution to the problem: a militant grab for the remaining hydrocarbon resources, the opening of protected wilderness to exploitation, corporate welfare, a push for coal and nuclear power, and a restriction of liberties for the general public. The opposition will be left to protest loudly against these tactics-something it has become very good at.

Yet the solution of the right is no solution at all, merely a vain attempt to stay the course and hold on to their position at the top of the heap. Ironically, a sustainable solution calls for many of the same goals which the left has long held dear. What is more, the public-as it wakes up to the problem-is frightened for their welfare and clamoring for a solution.

The Salvation of the Left

It is the duty of the left to point the way to a new sunrise. We must answer the cries of our friends and neighbors with soothing words of hope and promise. We must announce a new age of hope, compassion, quality of life, and freedom from the tyranny of corporate capitalism.

One way or another, energy depletion will spell the end of globalization and conspicuous consumption. Surviving the end of the oil age will require us to get to know our neighbors, to rediscover our local communities, and to become responsible stewards of our local environment. We will learn first hand the humane importance of family planning, birth control and freedom of choice. Are these not goals of the left?

The path will be fraught with hardship. But if we begin preparing now, we can ensure that the future holds a world where the values of freedom, equality and justice are known and cherished, a sustainable world in harmony with nature, a world rich with community and quality of life.

First the left must wake up to the reality of resource depletion. We must loudly and boldly articulate our vision for the future, and we must act to bring this vision to fruition. We need artists-painters, musicians, and above all storytellers-to paint this vision for us, to sound it out and give it substance. We need a renaissance of art, thought and action to bring us out of these dark days of corporate capitalism, conspicuous consumption

and media monopoly.

As activists, we must learn that protesting is the least important of our activities. It is the duty of activists everywhere to organize locally and begin building the world of the future within the hollow husk of today.

12 Fun Activities for Activists

Community Vegetable Gardens

Lobby your communities and neighbors to allow you to plant up and tend vacant lots. If you live in an apartment complex with a suitable roof, lobby the management to allow you to build and tend planting boxes on the roof. This is an activity which can foster a strong sense of community between you and your neighbors.

Operation Johnny Appleseed

Take a cue from that activist of American folklore and just start planting. Always save your apple seeds, pear seeds, peach pits, grape pips, cherry pips, etc. Save them and plant them wherever you find a likely spot. You can do this with any hardy perennial-fruits, roots and a select group of vegetables. You can even donate a little money and time to the purchase and planting of saplings, vines (grapes), bushes and brambles (blueberries and raspberries), or runners (strawberries).

You could also take a tip from the American Indians and other native peoples and promote the propagation of beneficial wild plants. The study of [permaculture](#) lends itself to this activity.

Food Not Bombs

This is perhaps the best single idea to come out of the Anarchist movement in the last fifty years. What is wrong with the Salvation Army, soup kitchens and other charities? For one thing, the majority of food charities expect something in return, usually a religious conversion. But there is a more basic problem with traditional charities: they are charities. People who are well off are taking time to help the downtrodden. However well-meaning, those who come for the food are made to feel like beggars, beholden for the charity they receive and dependent on the charity of others.

In Food Not Bombs, fliers are passed out announcing an open picnic at a local park, or some such place. The food is prepared ahead of time and laid out where everyone can serve her or himself. And then everyone sits down to eat together.

Food Not Bombs picnics can be combined with educational tours to identify local edible plants. You can even show off the fruits of your free plantings or invite folks to help out with the local community garden.

Farmer's Markets and CSA's

If you can locate a nearby Farmer's Market or [Community Supported Agriculture](#) (CSA), then patronize the former or join the latter. CSA's are farms dedicated to serving their subscribers. For a yearly subscription price, members are given a percentage of the produce. Subscribers sometimes pitch in with the harvesting and other activities. The farmers usually accompany their produce with advice for food preservation.

If you can't find a local Farmer's Market or CSA, consider organizing one.

Community Transportation Networks

This is an idea which is bound to become more popular as gas prices go up. Form a community car pool, not just for the commute to and from work, but to shopping centers and elsewhere. You can set up a local network to match up people who need to go to specific places at specific times, so that they can share rides.

With the US becoming increasingly dependent on foreign oil, and with US soldiers dying in oil wars, isn't it unpatriotic for each single person to drive around by him- or herself?

Bicycle Co-ops and Bicycle Trails

Bicycle co-ops can maintain a fleet of bicycles for the use of members, or for temporary rental by non-members. The co-ops maintain the bicycles, collect them and return them to distribution centers. Bicycle co-ops can lobby local communities for bicycle trails and donate time to the maintenance of those trails.

Support Local Businesses, particularly Co-ops

How many local businesses are left in the wake of globalization? While supporting local businesses, press to ensure that those businesses are ethical and responsible.

Form Co-ops

There is no end to the essential services which can be provided through co-ops. Co-ops give a community control over the provision of necessities.

Organize Community Activities

Community entertainments such as barn dances, music and art festivals or community theatres not only provide entertainment, they provide venues where people can socialize. Here you can meet like-minded folks who would be interested in taking part in the other activities mentioned here. These concerts and festivals also provide forums for local artists to reach an audience and/or inspire them with visions of where they can take their community.

Other activities provide a pleasant setting for doing te-

dious work, or group support to get things done. This includes quilting bees, sewing circles, or fix-it fairs where everybody can bring old appliances to fix or salvage.

Community Refurbishing Co-ops

Such groups can help to remodel homes for greater energy efficiency, erect or refurbish community centers, or possibly erect shelters for the homeless.

Community Energy Production Co-ops

Such organizations can provide local, community owned and maintained, low level energy production. Depending on local conditions, potential power sources could be wind turbines, solar cells, hydroelectric, or even geothermal (in select areas).

Ecovillages

Here is the ultimate activity, an entirely self-sustaining community. This is the eventual goal towards which we must all direct our activities if we are to have a free, equitable and just society. That is, a society where the quality of life makes life worth living and where we can reside happy and contented to watch our children grow up in a positive and healthy environment.

This is the vision which the left can hold out to the public, a vision which cannot be matched by the right's appeal to fear, anger and greed.

Emblems of the Left

The left also needs visible emblems to give them a sense of identity and help draw in the public. The right has thoroughly laid claim to the American flag and to the colors red, white and blue. These symbols have been imbued with nationalism, false pride, vengefulness, obedience to authority, selfish insolence, and even divine right. These symbols have been so thoroughly identified with the right in the public mind as to be inseparable from the attitude "My country right or wrong, love it or leave it, blessed by god."

The left needs noble symbols that effectively appeal to higher values than base nationalism. We need symbols that evoke the cherished ideals of liberty, equality and justice.

To this end, I suggest we stake a claim to the bald eagle. Not a cartoon eagle in red, white and blue. Nor an eagle superimposed over a background of stars and stripes. We need images of eagles flying in a blue sky, of eagles flying over mountains and wilderness, with the words "Liberty, Equality and Justice for All."

The bald eagle is not only the national bird, it is also the symbol of what is at risk - endangered wildlife and vanishing wilderness. In its association with the wilder-

ness, it is the perfect symbol of freedom and justice.

Another emblem which could be claimed by the left is the stylized image of a circle of people holding hands, men, women and children of all colors. At the center of their circle could be a house to symbolize home and community, and/or a tree to symbolize harmony with nature. And around the outside of the circle, there could be words like: freedom, equality, justice, democracy, harmony, quality, sustainability. Or there could be a motto such as: "Let not fear, greed or anger destroy what we have."

Conclusion

It is time for the left to step up to bat. There is no need to fearfully deny the reality of resource depletion. And we have every reason not to leave the field of action to the right and confine ourselves to protest and reaction.

There are hard times ahead, but there is no need to give up hope if we can stand together to meet what is to come. The left does have a positive vision to offer, but it must be trumpeted loudly and we must take the initiative.

Failure to do so will lead to a dark and dismal future. Let us reject the darkness and strive toward the light.

*Dale Allen Pfeiffer is a geologist and a novelist. He is the author of *The End of the Oil Age* and *The Linnet's Song*. His most recent book is the novel, *Giants in Their Steps*. He is currently at work on a book about the implications of energy depletion for agriculture.*

(The Value of the Remaining Wilderness -- Cont'd from page 3)

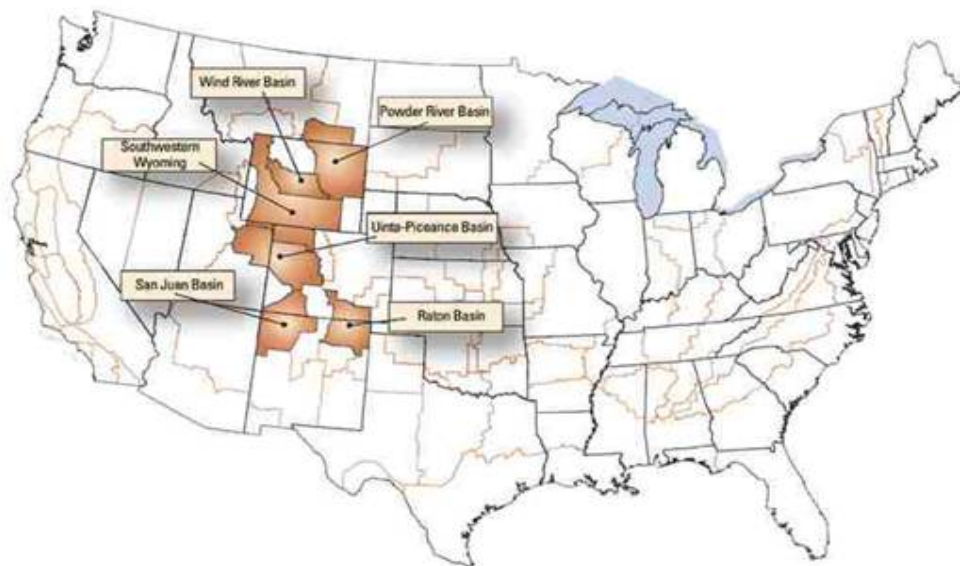
activities would have a negative impact upon the caribou. ANWR holds one of the largest remaining caribou herds in the Arctic. And that herd is now endangered.

But what does a herd of caribou matter when compared to a few years of domestic oil production and a nice profit for a few people in key places? When the lights go out in the lower 48, and gas stations begin rationing, will we allow a bunch of ungulates to stand in the way of a slight increase in domestic energy production?

As goes ANWR...

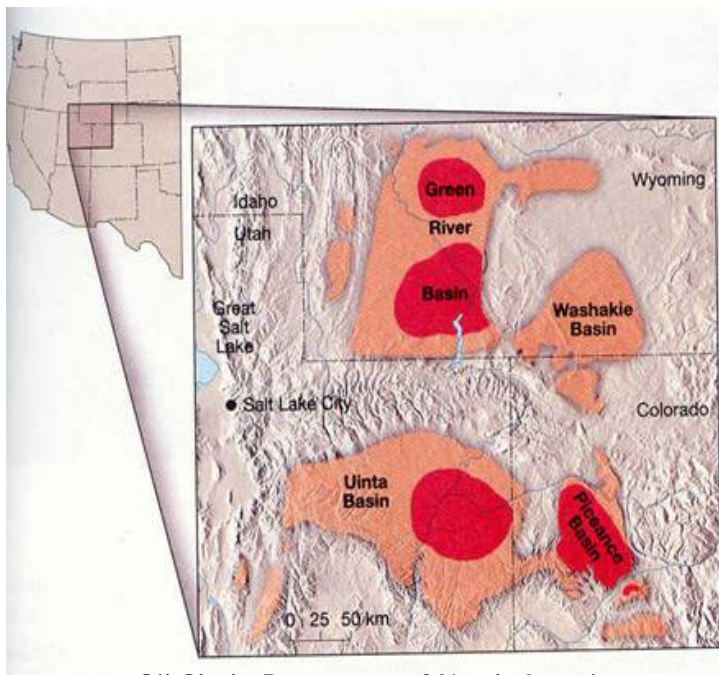
ANWR is only the most noticeable tip of the iceberg here, as the White House and Congress are working together to open our entire remaining wilderness to resource production. Other prominent targets include opening protected

lands in the Rocky Mountain fore-thrust and elsewhere to energy production, and opening all of our national forests to logging (in double-speak language, in order to protect them from forest fires). Nor is this madness confined to the US. Canada is preparing to rip up much of Alberta in order to reach the precious tar sands. In the process they will create a new mountain range composed of tailings, and the world's largest waste water reservoir.



Natural gas resources of the Rocky Mountain Region
Image from **Coal Bed Gas Resources of the Rocky Mountain Region**,
USGS, last modified Jan. 28th, 2004
<http://pubs.usgs.gov/fs/fs-158-02/fs-158-02.html>

We are witnessing the start of a mad scramble for crumbs as Peak Oil announces the end of abundance. Since the dawn of the



Oil Shale Resources of North America

Image from **Earth; an introduction to physical geology, 6th Edition**, Tarbuck & Lutgens
Prentice-Hall, 1999.

man. The web of life is already off balance; if we pillage the remaining wilderness, we risk severing the remaining key threads in that web. And no one can foresee where this chain of effects will lead.

So are we utterly dependent on a modicum of biodiversity to keep our ecosystem from total collapse. But we must also regard the remaining wilderness as the only grounds for hope that life may continue on this planet after humanity is gone.

Others emphasize the aesthetic dimension of the wilderness. To ruin the last areas where the wolves trot and the falcons soar would be tantamount to defacing the Mona Lisa or bulldozing the Sistine Chapel. Sadly, the history of both art and nature at the hands of our species shows that beauty is no defense.

Ethics often gets mentioned in connection with the wilderness, usually in the form of the truism that destroying the remainder of the natural world is morally wrong.

But I want to emphasize a different ethical dimension of the wilderness: it is the sanctuary of freedom, and that this is its greatest value. If we are to take seriously the founding images and stories of American identity, we must regard the wilderness as the soul of America: it gave the native peoples their ways; it called to the frontiersmen, the mountainmen and the explorers; and because it bespoke a dignity and self reliance that Europe had lost, it was the source of an American spiritual strength that found expression in the Declaration of Independence and in Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*.

The Sanctuary of Freedom

In the American lexicon, freedom has come to mean the freedom of corporations to generate profit and the freedom of the public to consume. The ugly irony here is that consumption itself is antithetical to freedom, because chasing the illusory fulfillment of artificial needs prevents us from determining our own real needs. If you own a car, or a house, or any other possessions, then you are tied down by your car insurance, your mortgage, your bills, your consumer debt, and the material things themselves. If freedom is measured by the ability to do whatever you want, whenever you want and wherever you want, the freest person you are likely to see is that homeless guy riding his bicycle and rifling through garbage

industrial age, and mostly within the last century, we have gobbled up resources at a prodigious rate. Within the next few decades we will see shortages of everything from phosphorus to iron, aluminum and other various metals. We will soon face shortages of wood, fertile soil and drinking water. Even if we continue to fend off this initial scramble to open the remaining wilderness, the question is for how long? From here, the situation will only worsen. And how long can we keep the vultures out of the remaining wilderness once resource depletion once resource depletion begins to impact our daily lives?

Is our remaining wilderness only valuable to us as a repository of resources against the fast approaching day when they will be needed? Is that why we set these lands aside and protected them from commercial enterprise? Are we so far removed from the wilderness that we can no longer remember its real value?

The Value of the Wilderness

It's often said that the ultimate value of the wilderness lies in biodiversity. The remaining wilderness holds the tattered web of life on this planet together. Species extinctions are continuing at an alarming rate as a result of the activities of industrial



The Athabasca Tar Sands of Alberta, Canada
Image from **Earth; an introduction to physical geology, 6th Edition**, Tarbuck & Lutgens

bins. He has his risks and his limits, but he isn't toiling for a salary, servicing debt, or storing possessions. Is he free?

As Thoreau understood, those who have lived in the wilderness are the freest people on the planet. So long as there remains some wilderness where people can go to escape the ties that bind, freedom will retain some of its former meaning.

The Enemies of Freedom

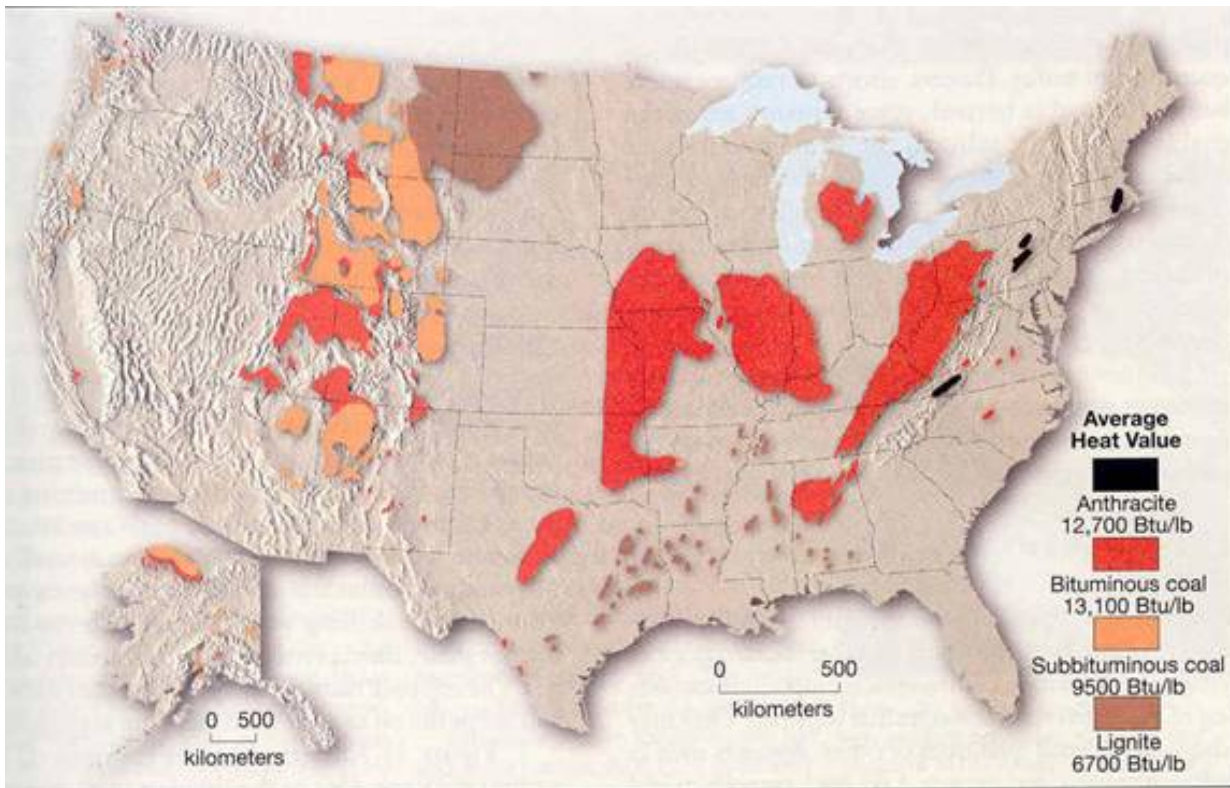
Our economy is based upon debt and consumption. Without mounting debt to create more profit, and without more consumption to drive the whole machine, our economy would grind to a halt. We are the captives of this process, and the freedom of the wilderness is antithetical to our modern way of life. In childhood, we are loaded up with artificial needs for endless non-essential goods and services; throughout our school years we are trained to become productive servants of the economy, and perhaps the main rite of adulthood is now the (debt-financed) ownership of a car. Nowadays, before most young folks even graduate high school, they already have a credit card and a consumer debt.

The wilderness of this entire continent has been reduced to a few fragmentary enclaves of biodiversity in remote ecosystems where survival is hardest. And there are forces at work in our government that want to ban all public use of public lands, leaving them reserved for government and industry.

The knowledge of how to live in the wilderness - that is, the knowledge of how to be free - has been all but forgotten. It is a wonder that this knowledge survives at all. But it can be found in survival manuals and anthropological treatises. Tom Brown Jr. has done a very good job of assembling this knowledge and making it widely available. And if you want to read a very basic overview of the subject, you can read my article, [A Matter of Survival](#). While this article leaves out a great deal, it contains the basics. If you put them into practice, then you will never have to worry about starving or going homeless, and you will have a taste of what freedom really is.

GIANTS IN THEIR STEPS

In each remaining wilderness area there are a few people who are still living the free life. They are reclusive, and it can



Coal Fields of the United States

Image from **Earth; an introduction to physical geology, 6th Edition**, Tarbuck & Lutgens
Prentice-Hall, 1999.

be very hard to make contact with them. But they are to be found, particularly in the Canadian Rockies, British Columbia, the Yukon Territories and Alaska. In this region of the North American Cordillera, there is still a big open land where people can live freely. But this land is coveted for its timber and its mineral wealth. And this age of depleted resources may very well bring these remaining practitioners of freedom into conflict with modern civilization.

I spent many years writing a novel about this very subject, an epic entitled **Giants in Their Steps**. It explores the themes mentioned in this essay, and gives the reader a taste of true freedom - a subjective knowledge of what is at

risk if we do not change our relationship with nature. My hope for **Giants in Their Steps** is that it will make our shared predicament more personal, more deeply felt, and so more likely to be overcome. The book can now be purchased directly from the publisher, through amazon.com, or by special order wherever books are sold.

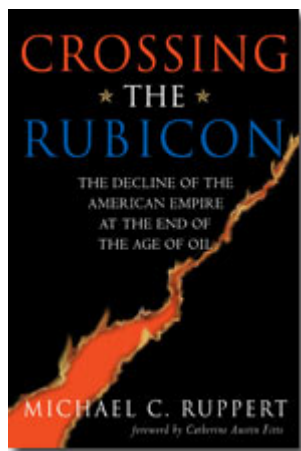
The years to come will be difficult, but we must learn to curb our rampant consumption. We must seek a more sustainable way of living. We must realize the true value of the wilderness. Such is the price of freedom.

¹ **Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, 1002 Area, Petroleum Assessment, 1998, including Economic Analysis**, Bird, Kenneth J. & Houseknecht, David W. USGS, 1998. <http://pubs.usgs.gov/fs/fs-0028-01/fs-0028-01.htm> or <http://pubs.usgs.gov/fs/fs-0028-01/fs-0028-01.pdf>

² **Ranking of the World's Oil and Gas Provinces by Known Petroleum Volume**, Klett, T.R., et al. USGS open file report 97-463, last modified August 2004. <http://pubs.usgs.gov/of/1997/ofr-97-463/97463.html>

³ **Cumulative Environmental Effects of Oil and Gas Activities on Alaska's North Slope**, authors. Nat'l Academies Press, 2003. <http://books.nap.edu/openbook/0309087376/html/index.html>

⁴ **Arctic Refuge Coastal Plain Terrestrial Wildlife Research Summaries**, authors. USGS, date. <http://www.absc.usgs.gov/1002/index.htm>



'The End' Special

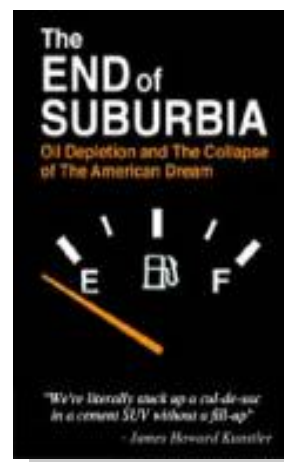
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Jurassic Park, Psuedo-events, and Prisons: The fallout from Abu Ghraib

Part VI

by Stan Goff

[Here's the penultimate installment of Stan Goff's treatise on imperialism, persuasion, and the ethical black hole of contemporary capitalism. The piece is so full of insight that it needs no introduction. But the editors wish to add the following suggestions for further reading: On why the masses vote for the right: Millburn, M.A. and Conrad, S.D., (1996) [The Politics of Denial](#). On the need for meaning: Viktor Frankl, [Man's Search for Meaning](#).

Goff aptly quotes world-systems theorist Alf Hornborg on post-modernism: "a condition where the exhausting attitude of radical skepticism tends to give way to a structurally enforced feigned gullibility. All hope of certainty has vanished, but precisely because no pretense to power or truth can be admitted, any pretense is as good as any other..." This calls to mind a quotation from E. Martin Schotz and Vincent Salandria's [History Will Not Absolve Us: Orwellian Control, Public Denial, and the Murder of President Kennedy](#): "One of the primary means of immobilizing the American people politically today is to hold them in a state of confusion in which anything can be believed and nothing can be known -- nothing of significance, that is." -JAH]



HAMMOND: How can we stand in the light of discovery and... and not act?

MALCOLM: What's so great about discovery? It's a violent, penetrative act that scars whatever it explores.

The paradox of post-Enlightenment modernity. Discovery, conquest, ceaseless transformation, absolute disequilibrium.

The political Left, of which I count myself a part, has missed the driving force behind any belief system, and the very reason that the American working class (that thinks of itself mistakenly as "middle" class) - left on its own - veers inevitably into atavism and reaction in times of crisis.

Belief systems are adopted out of a desire for meaning and a need for reassurance in the face of confusion and incertitude.

"Meaning has to do with a perception of order, intelligibility, and familiarity based on a relationship of compatibility between past and present experience," says Alf Hornborg. "Fundamental to meaning are experiences of recognition and reassurance. Its opposite is an experience of chaos or arbitrariness variously referred to as anomie, alienation, or anxiety."

This has deep implications for activism and for how activists relate to the people. It is the reason we are never "rationally" persuasive on a large scale until conditions create a disruption, and even then people will integrate new information and new emotions as far as possible into a semiotic universe that has been constructed for them since birth.

Various forms of "spirituality" are a revolt against the disequilibrium / anxiety of modernity - in the overdeveloped world as both New Age mysticism and manifold species of religious fundamentalism, and in the underdeveloped world as resistance in the framework of primitive religious cosmologies.

But what is the material basis of this modern, and evermore "post-modern" system that has engendered these pre-modern reactions?

Alf Hornborg describes post-modernism as "a condition where the exhausting attitude of radical skepticism tends to give way to a structurally enforced feigned gullibility. All hope of certainty has vanished, but precisely because no pretense to power or truth can be admitted, any pretense is as good as any other... This is the structural space of Baudrillard's "political economy of the sign," Goffman's "impression management," and Lasch's "culture of narcissism."

It was Lasch who said, in his examination of the social and political transformations occurring as the US was re-positioned after World War II increasingly not as a producer society, but as the consumer of last instance for the world economy:

"Consumer goods spoke so loudly, in fact, that social critics began to fear that the voice of moderation and sobriety was in danger of being completely submerged in the clamorous invitation to buy, to borrow, and to spend without a second thought, and to indulge every whim as quickly as it came to mind. When Dwight Eisenhower engaged an advertising firm to promote his campaign for the presidency in 1952, many commentators objected to this packaging of a candidate by Madison Avenue—a practice that threatened to replace political discourse with advertising slogans. Mass promotion, it was now clear, would not stop with the marketing of washing machines and refrigerators. In *The Image* (1962), Daniel Boorstin pointed out that images of reality threatened to replace reality itself, so that politics came to revolve not around events but around "pseudo-events" staged for the benefit of the mass media."

Boorstin was actually coming from an early neo-conservative perspective that lamented the degradation of "Western civilization" by this substitution of simulation for reality.

Erving Goffman, who coined the term "impression management," prefigures the effect of disruptions in these pseudo-events for the Bush administration, in his 1959 book *The Presentation of the Self in Everyday Life*:

"I have considered some major forms of performance disruption—unmeant gestures, inopportune intrusions, faux pas, and scenes. These disruptions, in everyday terms, are often called "incidents." When an incident occurs, the reality sponsored by the performers is threatened. The persons present are likely to react by becoming flustered, ill at ease, embarrassed, nervous, and the like. Quite literally, the participants may find themselves out of countenance. When these flusterings or symptoms of embarrassment become perceived, the reality that is supported by the performance is likely to be further jeopardized and weakened, for these signs of nervousness in most cases are an aspect of the individual who presents a character and not an aspect of the character he projects, thus forcing upon the audience an image of the man behind the mask. "

The latest example of this is the collection of scenes Michael Moore used in his wildly successful Fahrenheit 9-11 documentary, where—in violation of the unwritten law of mainstream media to never show embarrassing out-takes of prominent leaders—he shows Bush rolling his eyes cluelessly, John Ashcroft telling the make-up

artists to make him look young, and Paul Wolfowitz spitting into his comb to tame his cowlick... where we can all behold these "leaders" as what they are, dangerous geeks who have bullshitted their way into power with the help of advertising psychologists and zillion-dollar PR firms.

The whole pseudo-event of the "good" war in Iraq began to come apart with the photographs from Abu Ghraib prison and the subsequent release of hundreds of heretofore "dangerous" characters who were dramatically and "coincidentally" rehabilitated.

Goffman continues:

"In order to prevent the occurrence of incidents and the embarrassment consequent upon them, it will be necessary for all the participants in the interaction, as well as those who do not participate, to possess certain attributes and to express these attributes in practices employed for saving the show. These attributes and practices will be reviewed under three headings: the defensive measures used by performers to save their own show; the protective measures used by audience and outsiders to assist the performers in saving the performers' show; and, finally, the measures the performers must take in order to make it possible for the audience and outsiders to employ protective measures on the performers' behalf."

Here is where someone, if they intend to spoil the performance altogether, has to run up onto the stage and shout, "Bullshit!" This is what is necessary at this juncture to break the thrall of the audience, force them to accept that they've burned the price of their tickets, and send them walking out of the theater.

On May 26, Robert Fisk wrote of the breaking scandal:

"The re-writing of Iraqi history is now going on at supersonic speed. Weapons of mass destruction? Forget it. Links between Saddam and al-Qa'ida? Forget it. Liberating the Iraqis from Saddam's Abu Ghraib life of torture? Forget it. Wedding party slaughtered? Forget it. Clear the decks for both 'full (sic) sovereignty' and 'chaotic events.' This is, at any rate, according to Mr Bush. When I heard his hesitant pronunciation of Abu Ghraib as 'Abu Grub' on Monday night, I could only profoundly agree."

But we're in danger again of missing the detail. Just as the unsupervised armed mercenaries being killed in Iraq are being described by the occupation authorities as "contractors" or, more mendaciously, "civilians"—so the responsibility for the porno interrogations at Abu Ghraib is being allowed to slide into the summer mists over the Tigris River. So let's go back, for a moment, to

the long weeks in which the Department of Bad Apples allowed its jerks to put leashes around Iraqi necks, forced prisoners to have sex with each other and raped some Iraqi lasses in the jail.

The abuses of prisoners at Abu Ghraib were known and on record, on record in the military and on record for the public, for months. Are we really to believe that the visual images alone added that much power to the reports? In fact, they did.

This confusion between image and reality has been part of American culture for so long that - like the air we breathe - we don't see it, and we don't think about it.

Christopher Lasch, in *The Culture of Narcissism - American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations*, published in 1979, described social phenomena very well, even though Lasch, like Freud, blamed it all on weak men and strong women. His description below, minus Lasch's goofy Freudian misogyny, is actually useful.

"Success in our society has to be ratified by publicity... all politics becomes a form of spectacle. It is well known that Madison Avenue packages politicians and markets them as if they were cereals or deodorants; but the art of public relations penetrates more deeply into political life... The modern prince [an apt turn of phrase for the current member of the Bush political dynasty] ... confuses successful completion of the task at hand with the impression he makes or hopes to make on others. Thus American officials blundered into the war in Vietnam... More concerned with the trappings than with the reality of power, they convinced themselves that failure to intervene would damage American 'credibility...' [They] fret about their ability to rise to crisis, to project an image of decisiveness, to give a convincing performance of executive power... Public relations and propaganda have exalted the image and the pseudo-event."

"...confuses successful completion of the task at hand with the impression he makes or hopes to make on others..."

Remember the May 2003 pronouncement that major combat was over? It is not just the public who has come to suspend its disbelief, it is now the actors themselves.

* * *

In 1994, I was running an A-Detachment in 3rd Special Forces, ODA-354 to be precise, a team that specialized in free-fall parachute infiltration and special (strategic) reconnaissance. 3rd Special Forces Group's area of

operation encompassed sub-Saharan Africa and the Caribbean, and our team was specifically designated for the Dominican Republic and Haiti. So we had two language requirements on the team, Spanish and French (even though most Haitians actually speak Haitian Kreyol).

I had a communications sergeant on my team named Ali Tehrani. His father was an expatriate Iranian who'd married a German, and Ali had been raised in extremely comfortable circumstances in Europe, where his father and the society around him pushed him to fluency in English, German, Spanish, and French. Ali also spoke decent Italian. He was the most fluent French-speaker on the battalion, and a year before we were sent to Haiti with the 1994 invasion, Ali had been sent to the camps constructed by the United States military in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, for the purpose of detaining tens of thousands of Haitians who were trying to escape the brutal repression and grinding poverty of Haiti in ramshackle boats. Ali was needed there because of his language fluency.

Ali was typical of many of the "non-white" members of Special Forces in two respects. He was demonstrably patriotic - compelled, it seemed, to prove his devotion to the American security state - and he adopted the prevailing attitude within much of Special Operations of Negrophobia - a kind of institutional disdain for Black troops that served to bloc other "non-whites" with whites in SF. It's a peculiar mechanism of white supremacy where there is not a master-race mentality so much as a deficient-race ideology from which all others could self-exclude. This - along with an anabolic version of masculinity - served as one form of social glue in SF culture, though there were a few exceptions.

Ali's Negrophobia wasn't virulent like that I had witnessed in other SF troops. In fact, he was willing to grant exceptions among individual Black soldiers fairly easily. It was more part of his obsessive desire to fit in.

Ali had spent six months "working the camps" at Guantanamo in 1993.

When we received word of our mission to invade Haiti in 1994, he reacted violently. His revulsion toward Haitians was visceral and white-hot. Given that my own team's mission might depend on both Ali's language capabilities ("my" language was Spanish) and on our ability to establish rapport with local Haitians, Ali's outburst sent up a warning flare in front of me, and I made time to sit down with him for a long talk.

Ali was, aside from his passive racism and the simmering rage that one could always sense just below his surface, a very intelligent and sensitive man. I always

suspected that he may have suffered either physical or psychological abuse as a child.

When we talked, we fairly quickly concluded together that his aversion to Haitians had something to do with the role he had been thrown into against the Haitians at the camps, the role of jail-boss, and he agreed to keep that in mind and to subordinate his conditioned reflexes on the matter to mental time-outs in order to assure that he would behave appropriately while we were on the mission in Haiti, which he did... most of the time.

But the point I'm getting to is this. The antagonism that Ali experienced as an individual toward Haitians was structured by the institutional antagonism built into the jailer-and-jailed relationship. Ali had internalized the external reality that he was a prison guard and they were the prisoners. His job was to dominate, to bend Haitians to his will, and every exercise of human agency by the Haitians threatened that. Their very humanity - that combination of independent consciousness and will - was structured by the prison-camp phenomenon to be an enemy force in relation to Ali and the other prison-keepers.

In 1971, Stanford University Professor of Psychology Phillip Zimbardo designed an experiment that would come to be known as the Stanford Prison Experiment. Subjects were recruited and paid a modest stipend, whereupon they were separated into "prisoners" and "guards," and placed in a mock prison built in a Stanford basement. The prisoners were stripped, deloused, shackled, and placed in prison clothes, while the guards were given authoritative uniforms, sunglasses, and batons. Long story short - within two days there was a near prison riot, psychosomatic illness began to break out, white middle-class kids in the role of guards became rapidly and progressively more sadistic and arbitrary, and the two-week experiment had to be abandoned after only six days... before someone was badly hurt or killed.

The experiment seemed to support the truism that "absolute power corrupts absolutely." But that conclusion serves as a description, not an explanation. It describes what happens to the individual, but it fails to account for the role of rationalization that legitimates the domination, and it completely fails to account for institutional support of that domination.

When one uses the term "systemic," she is saying that the source of this abuse is not individual moral failure, but a predictable expression of the system and its structures.

The abuses of detainees, by US troops, by CACI International and Titan Corporation mercenaries, and by the

CIA in Iraq, was "systemic."

But in the same way that the system found an expression in the thoughts and emotions of Ali Tehrani, in the same way that the structure of domination and subjection pushed him to rationalize away his shared humanity with his Haitian captives, we can now see in the leering grins of the Abu Ghraib prison guards, who are regular people - like the experimental subjects in the Stanford Prison Experiment - who quickly learned to behave as sadistic torturers. The military has admitted that 60% of these detainees are neither combatants nor threats.

People were not only humiliated and forced to pose in degrading positions with each other naked. They were forced to masturbate in front of taunting guards. Some were sodomized with foreign objects. It appears that some were also beaten to death during interrogation - one whose body was put on ice for a day then carted away the next on a litter with a faked intravenous infusion in the arm.

Now the cover stories are being spun out like webs.

We are being asked to believe that:

(1) The only abuse that occurred against anyone detained by American forces in Iraq was photographed and reported.

(2) No abuses occurred anywhere that were not photographed or reported.

(3) The one percent of US troops who are the "bad apples" all happen to serve together in the same unit... the unit that is the only one guilty, and that happened to get caught because of the photographs.

(4) The aggressive investigation now being proclaimed by everyone from George W. Bush to CENTCOM, about abuses that were already on record in the military (an internal investigation had already been launched in February by Major General Antonio M. Taguba, but was kept from the public), would have happened had the photographs and story not been aired on national television.

(5) The military was not attempting to cover up their own investigation, and that they would have informed the public of these abuses even had Seymour Hersh not put the whole miserable episode into print.

(6) The military did not cover anything up in the two weeks between the time CBS warned them that they were going to air an expose and when they actually did air it.

(7) No one in the chain of command above Brigadier General Janis Karpinski is responsible for the failure to halt these abuses, even though Lieutenant General Ricardo S. Sanchez was informed of the investigation of these abuses, complete with sworn statements and photographs, by General Taguba last February.

Other abuses and violations of the Geneva Conventions and Laws of Warfare are already on record, some with videos available on the web, such as:

(1) Shooting people who are clearly not armed and who are engaged in no threatening behavior.

(2) Shooting into ambulances.

(3) Shooting wounded people who are not armed.

(4) Shooting wounded people who are obviously no longer capable of fighting.

(5) Shooting into crowds.

There has never been a Stanford Military Occupation Experiment to complement the Stanford Prison Experiment, unless we just count the military occupations themselves. There is a structured, systemic antagonism between an occupying military and the people whose land they occupy. And there will be no investigations of any of it, because there never are, unless and until the American public is confronted with them.

The National Command Authority and its cheerleaders cannot say out loud... this is what we are doing, and it can't get done unless we dehumanize the occupied. This reality, this system, will express itself in the thoughts and emotions of you, the troops who carry it out, because this military occupation is in a sense making a prison of Iraq and making you, the troops, its turnkeys.

It will only be those exceptional individuals in the military who refuse to surrender their humanity - no matter how little they may understand the big picture - and who will witness. Those who do break with the system and witness are very important people, important to history, because their refusal to surrender your own moral integrity to the system may lead to our collective salvation by ending this felonious occupation. The troops who filed reports about the abuses at the Abu Ghraib prison were such exceptions.

So were Tom Glen and Ron Ridenhour.

What these images of the Abu Ghraib humiliation and torture have done in the United States is collide with the "exalted image and the pseudo-event" of the Bush

propaganda apparatus, just as the images of the My Lai massacre did in 1969. That collision between the reality and the real image of war startles civilians here in the La-La Land of wide screen TV and suburban SUV's, and it shakes them out of their opiated shopper dream-state.

My Lai is what General Colin Powell was remembering when he implemented "the Powell Doctrine" for the military, which includes a co-opted press and a vigorous attempt to keep things like flag-draped coffins off of those wide screen TVs.

Many of you don't remember My Lai.

On March 16, 1968, units of the Americal Division, to which Powell was assigned as a staff officer in Chu Lai, entered a Vietnamese village called My Lai and spent four hours raping women, burning houses, then finally massacring men, women, and children - including infants whom dying women tried to shield with their own bullet-riddled bodies. The massacre was stopped by a Georgia-born helicopter pilot named Hugh Clowers Thompson who landed his chopper between the few surviving Vietnamese and the blood-intoxicated soldiers, and ordered his door gunners to open fire on the Americans if they failed to stand down.

A few weeks later, General Creighton Abrams, then commanding general in Vietnam, received a letter from a young Specialist-4 in the Americal Division named Tom Glen:

"The average GI's attitude toward and treatment of the Vietnamese people all too often is a complete denial of all our country is attempting to accomplish in the realm of human relations... Far beyond merely dismissing the Vietnamese as 'slopes' or 'gooks,' in both deed and thought, too many American soldiers seem to discount their very humanity; and with this attitude inflict upon the Vietnamese citizenry humiliations, both psychological and physical, that can have only a debilitating effect upon efforts to unify the people in loyalty to the Saigon government, particularly when such acts are carried out at unit levels and thereby acquire the aspect of sanctioned policy... [American soldiers attack Vietnamese] for mere pleasure, fire indiscriminately into Vietnamese homes and without provocation or justification shoot at the people themselves... Fired with an emotionalism that belies unconscionable hatred, and armed with a vocabulary consisting of 'You VC,' soldiers commonly 'interrogate' by means of torture that has been presented as the particular habit of the enemy. Severe beatings and torture at knife point are usual means of questioning captives or of convincing a suspect that he is, indeed, a Viet Cong... It would indeed be terrible to find it necessary to believe that an American soldier that harbors such racial intolerance and disregard for

justice and human feeling is a prototype of all American national character; yet the frequency of such soldiers lends credulity [sic] to such beliefs... What has been outlined here I have seen not only in my own unit, but also in others we have worked with, and I fear it is universal. If this is indeed the case, it is a problem which cannot be overlooked, but can through a more firm implementation of the codes of MACV (Military Assistance Command Vietnam) and the Geneva Conventions, perhaps be eradicated."

Glen's letter was forwarded from Abrams' office to the Americal Division and ended up with Major Colin Powell in Chu Lai.

Powell never followed up by questioning Glen, and instead ended his "investigation" of Glen's allegations after accepting uncritically the claim by Glen's commander that Glen hadn't been close enough to "the front" (whatever that was supposed to be in Vietnam) to have any knowledge of such alleged abuses. Powell then began his career as a damage-control expert in the military by writing a letter, dated December 13, 1968, in which he said, ""There may be isolated cases of mistreatment of civilians and POWs... [but] this by no means reflects the general attitude throughout the Division... In direct refutation of this [Glen's] portrayal is the fact that relations between Americal soldiers and the Vietnamese people are excellent." He went on to impugn Glen's account for having been brought to light only reluctantly and lacking sufficient detail.

This was, of course, horseshit. Abuses were systemic.

Glen had only heard through rumors about My Lai. It was another GI, Ron Ridenhour, an infantryman who was not willing to surrender his humanity to occupier-racism, who finally pieced together, on his own initiative, the story of the My Lai massacre, and brought it to public light. When the photographs of the massacre were combined with Ridenhour's account, and the American public was confronted with the reality of an entire unit participating in a systematic massacre of civilians, it marked a turning point in the loss of political support in the United States for continued military occupation of Vietnam.

Powell himself admitted war crimes in his memoir, *My American Journey*, where he wrote, "I recall a phrase we used in the field, MAM, for military-age male... If a helo spotted a peasant in black pajamas who looked remotely suspicious, a possible MAM, the pilot would circle and fire in front of him. If he moved, his movement was judged evidence of hostile intent, and the next burst was not in front, but at him." Powell would also come to the defense of Brigadier General John Donaldson who had the door gunners on his own helicopter shoot Vietnamese for sport. Donaldson was ex-

onerated, naturally, in a military investigation.

Powell not only developed as a skilled cover-up artist, he would eventually incorporate this ability to manage public perception about war as a key element in the "Powell Doctrine," which he imposed on the military and the press. He never forgot My Lai, and he has always believed that exposure of My Lai and other atrocities were responsible for the US defeat in Vietnam.

Donald Rumsfeld shares these beliefs with Colin Powell. They are both wrong. The two phenomena that collide with this Powell-Rumsfeld orientation were and are (1) the decision of their 'enemy' never to quit, and (2) the inevitability that someone who is part of the occupation force will be confronted with these contradictions between "the exalted image and the pseudo-event" and the real character of war - and that this someone will expose it in an attempt to rescue his or her own humanity.

The war in Vietnam was lost by the French and then by the Americans because they didn't belong there, and the resistance endeavored to do whatever was necessary to make that point. This is also the situation in Iraq.

So I'll leave to others the analysis of whether the troops facing courts martial are scapegoats (they are, and they are also probably guilty as hell), and whether or not the military is letting the officers off with reprimands and walking papers to prevent the fire spreading (which it is). I'll just emphasize that the war in Iraq cannot be won. Not because of the inability of US troops to fight, but because we don't belong there. And since that's the case (which I firmly believe it is) every life - Iraqi, American, or otherwise - that is lost or ruined... is wasted.

All this talk of whether Military Intelligence or the mercenaries working for CACI International or the CIA or the MP commanders were responsible is diversionary bullshit so we won't see how Iraq itself has become the Stanford Military Occupation Experiment. Because if we conclude that the problem is systemic, then the only thing to do to stop this is to walk away. And the Bush administration sent troops there for the purpose not of building democracies, but of building permanent military bases in the heart of oil country, and if they walk away, they can't rightly build bases, can they?

So we can either blithely obey and support our new Neros, or we can continue to cling to the absurd notion that the vandals can rebuild the house they just ravaged, or we can do what we might to make them walk away. Troops that come forward will play a key role in this moral imperative.

Every troop that comes forward with accounts of the inhumanity of this war - while jeopardizing his or her career - is serving to hasten an end to this criminal enterprise of the Military-Petroleum Complex. These troop/witnesses will serve to hasten an end to the suffering of Iraqi families and the suffering of the families of the occupying forces. They will serve to prevent more torture, more humiliation, more suspicion and hatred, and more lives being thrown away on this imperial folly.

Every troop who keeps his secrets, who faithfully serves the system and never bears witness, can travel for the rest of his life.

She can go to Rio de Janeiro.

He can go to Bangladesh.

She can go to Lagos, or Montreal, or Tokyo, or Moscow, or Antarctica.

But no matter where he goes, there he'll be - alone with the growing weight of his own silence on his head, wrapping himself in his own rationalizations, and restlessly turning away from the faces that look back at him in the mirrors of his memory.

* * *

The set collapses and exposes the half-dressed actors backstage. Their names are no longer Terrorism or Democracy, but Abu Ghraib and Fallujah... My Lai, No Gun Ri, Wounded Knee, Jenin, Jakarta, Rwanda, Mozote, Pelican Bay... killing fields and prisons.

And now to prisons.

End, Part Six

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FTW Comments on Key New Stories

1.

[Methane Hydrates remain a dubious energy source. As a solid, they do not migrate and build up reserves the way oil and natural gas do. And while deep sea research suggests that they are plentiful, there is also evidence to suggest that significant concentrations are rare. Beyond that, they require a sophisticated technology to extract. The energy needed to extract methane hydrates results in a very poor net energy profile.

Beyond this, there is the possibility of methane leakage into the atmosphere. As a greenhouse gas, atmospheric methane has ten times the effect of carbon dioxide. There is also a rather remote possibility of disturbing ocean floor methane to the point that it comes out of suspension and begins to outgas into the atmosphere. Finally, there is the potential for ecological damage of the oceans themselves.

It is doubtful that we will ever see more than minor extraction of methane hydrates. Yet, in our desperation to keep our economic apparatus operating at full tilt, we will reach for anything that might fuel the machinery of consumer culture, and damn the costs. -- DAP]

BACKGROUND BOOKS AND LINKS:

- DAN DORRITIE, [KILLER IN OUR MIDST: METHANE CATASTROPHES IN EARTH'S PAST AND NEAR FUTURE](#)
- THE NATIONAL ENERGY TECHNOLOGY LABORATORY, [NATIONAL METHANE HYDRATE PROGRAM](#)
- HAWAII NATURAL ENERGY INSTITUTE, SEMINAR: [CURRENT TOPICS IN METHANE HYDRATES](#). TO BE PRESENTED BY STEPHEN M. MASUTANI ON MAY 5, 2005

US in race to unlock new energy source
Green groups warn against moving methane hydrates from beneath seabed

David Adam, science correspondent
The Guardian
Monday April 4, 2005

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/usa/story/0,12271,1451542,00.html>

2.

[Push for [9/11 Truth](#). Expose the [2004 election fraud](#). But prepare for the oil crash. Support local and national candidates who tell the truth, like Cynthia McKinney. But prepare for the oil crash. Defy the creeping American theocracy that respects no life but the embryo, no God but the white-bearded Nobodaddy, and no peace but the silence at the tyrant's table. But prepare for the oil crash. - JAH]

Global Eye

By Chris Floyd
The Moscow Times
Friday, April 8, 2005

<http://www.themoscowtimes.com/stories/2005/04/08/120.html>

3.

BACKGROUND BOOKS:

- FREDERICK CLARKSON, *ETERNAL HOSTILITY: THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN THEOCRACY AND DEMOCRACY*
- [BROCHURES FROM AMERICANS UNITED FOR SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE](#)

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

- [What God Has Put Asunder: James Madison Quotes On Church And State](#)
- [Jefferson's Letter To The Danbury Baptists](#)
- [Madison's Memorial & Remonstrance](#)
- [James Madison On Government-Issued Religious Proclamations](#)
- [Washington's Letter To Touro Synagogue](#)

The Crusaders
Christian evangelicals are plotting to remake America in their own image
By Bob Moser
04/08/05 *Rolling Stone*

<http://informationclearinghouse.info/article8499.htm>

4.

[The story surrounding the murder of Raymond Lemme is a complicated one, touching upon the software-driven vote fraud in the 2004 election, Chi-

nese influence inside the neocon / Cheney network, Christian Dominionist ambitions, and the pedophilia rings that go back to the Franklin Credit Union coverup during the G.H.W. Bush administration. FTW's purpose in running this material is not to urge our readers to follow out every nuance - other sites are pursuing it including www.onlinejournal.com and the Seminole Chronicle. Instead, we want to point out the reach and the currency of our claims regarding the Dominionist and Saudi connections behind Ptech software:

[There exists] a longstanding and politically potent Christian secret society called "The Fellowship" - with which Dick Cheney, John Ashcroft and other high US government officials are also affiliated. Wayne Madsen has established the involvement of the Fellowship in the rigging of the 2004 presidential election in the United States, and has linked Dick Cheney to that organization."

-- Jamey Hecht, [PTECH, 9/11, and USA-SAUDI TERROR, PART I](#)

Most frightening of all is that this network seems to have links back to the powerful American Christian cult known as "The Fellowship," or "The Family." This organization is tied to American 'Christian' men of high political power including John Ashcroft, Dick Cheney, George W. Bush, multiple Congressional members and prominent business leaders. Some "Family" members have stated they would love to have Osama bin Laden as a guest speaker because of the covenant he has with his followers. Doug Coe, the Family's leader who was praised by George H.W. Bush at the 1990 National Prayer Breakfast for his "quiet diplomacy," openly admires Hitler's "covenant."

-- Michael Kane, [PTECH, 9/11, and USA-SAUDI TERROR, PART II](#)

--FTW]

Unrestricted Warfare: 9/11 Treason
By John Caylor
February 6, 2005

http://www.insider-magazine.com/unrestricted_warfare.htm

5.

[Resurgent Japanese nationalism is a dangerous thing: in part because the cesspool of racist ideology left over from the Axis period has never fully evaporated, and in part because it is the Japanese far-right which will benefit from American opportunism as Asian tensions build. The late [Iris Chang](#) was not only a Chinese whose truth-telling threatened the pride of reactionaries in Japan; she was also a genuine intellectual, a cosmopolitan who identified with humanity first, and a brilliant writer to whom the facts were paramount. When she died last November at the age of 36, the reading public may not have understood what had been lost. Now, however, the times are rapidly moving toward a world-system as polarized as the Cold War, but without the eerie stability of that period. As always, there will be two fundamentally opposing sides: authoritarian militarists, and everybody else. "Moderate" rightists are not merely a glad-handing demographic that has chosen a red-state lifestyle; they are the useful multitude on whom gangsters rely for either support or passive tolerance. As is clear from the recent selection of a former [Nazi Youth member and Wehrmacht soldier as Pope](#), "conservative" forces are to be judged by asking exactly what it is they intend to conserve, and how much harm they are willing to do in its name.

[The Rape of Nanking](#) was a bestseller and continues to reach millions of people in universities and libraries. But as the pattern of global warfare expands in the coming months and years, a much larger readership may come to associate Iris Chang's name with a humanist tradition in which atrocious violence is neither accepted nor forgotten.

What applies to her bitter subject matter should apply to her own death as well.

Ms. Chang is survived by her husband and their two year old child.

Here, [Online Journal](#) editor Larry Chin offers words of solidarity and remembrance. -JAH]

Iris Chang and the curse of the whistleblower

By Larry Chin
Online Journal Associate Editor

<http://onlinejournal.com/Commentary/042105Chin/042105chin.html>

Japan and China: A US Strategic Outlook for the Next Two Minutes

By

Jamey Hecht

April 7, 2005 1200 PST (FTW) - In "[Japan and China Tensions and Washington's Asia Geopolitics](#)," William Engdahl has written of China's recent law forbidding Taiwanese independence:

"This is the background in which China passed its new Anti-Secession law on March 14. It was a clumsy Chinese response to an escalation of pin-prick provocations, carried out by Tokyo but quietly backed by Washington. That Beijing move played well into Washington hands as it made the position of France and Germany suddenly untenable vis-à-vis embargo lifting, and escalated regional tensions significantly, polarizing the relations between South Korea and China on the one and Japan on the other side. This is a major blow to quiet systematic efforts of those countries to build regional trade and economic cooperation."

But [French President Jacques Chirac has just announced that he has no intention of renewing the arms ban against China](#) -- and he announced this in Tokyo right after a meeting with Koizumi. I believe that no "Beijing move" has "played into Washington hands" since Nixon.

In my view, the Japanese are more screwed than anyone in the region. Indonesia has its right wing CIA proxies, Islamic monoculture, and anti-Timorese genocide. But Japan is one vast city; Peak Oil is going to destroy it. Japan has no natural resources left. It's got more dollar exposure than anyone else in the world, and the American military is living all over it. It seems Japan is controlled by three intertwined forces: the Pentagon, the right-wing Yakuza organized crime gangs, and international capital. None of those three gives a damn about the Japanese population. If the United States can **use up** Japanese wealth and Japanese geostrategic position -- rather than preserving those things so Japan can continue to consume energy -- they will. Surely the Joint Chiefs would be pleased to have China exhaust itself in a struggle with the Japanese. The Pentagon and Langley and the White House used Iraq as a

war proxy against Iran for ten years and then threw it in the garbage. How great it would be to repeat this on a truly grand scale, and use Japan as an enormous sacrificial shock-absorber in an anti-China war.

The little hitlers of Abu Ghraib and Gitmo are here to teach China about human rights: "we want to push, prod, and persuade China on a positive course." Robert Marquand of the *Christian Science Monitor* [writes](#):

"The internal evolution of China is still undefined," Rice told an audience at Sophia University in Tokyo. "Issues of freedom of religion, human rights... Taiwan... are matters of concern that could take a wrong turn... and... we want to push, prod, and persuade China on a positive course."

Analysts were quick to note that geographically, alliances with South Korea, Japan, and India appear to "encircle China," as one source noted. Rice herself stated that "these alliances are not against China, but are 'values-based relationships' " among states that have already chosen to be democratic and open.

Japan will be the umbrella for the US Asian presence since the US and Japan have "already chosen" a common set of values and understandings, Rice said.¹

Not a word of this is true. The Koreans want the Americans to get the hell out: [Korea Is One](#). America's Pacific alliances are indeed intended to "encircle China" until that becomes too energy-expensive. While America does enjoy a limited alliance with India because of a shared heritage of British influence, that relationship has been largely ruined by decades of [grimly cynical US-Pakistani ties](#) (which also, ironically, helped to drive India into the arms of the BJP, a rightist Hindu Nationalist party). Japan is on our side because our grandparents defeated it in a war fifty years ago.

Everything about these remarks (even the childish alliteration) suggests that Rice is a substitute, that State has no role left to play in foreign policy, and that whatever the US actually does will depend on three things: how the dollar-exposed Asian countries play their monetary hand, how far and how fast oil prices increase, and the unpredictable course of intra-Asian regional hostilities.

¹ One does not "choose" one's "values and understandings," nor do those terms mean anything on their own. You may well choose the actions which accord with your values, but you don't choose your values themselves: there is no value-free spot on which to stand and choose among competing values. If I seem to choose compassion, I do so because I am already compassionate. The voluntary part of values is the part where you do something about it.

Draft Extradition Update

As regular *FTW* readers know, thirteen months ago we began contacting the embassies and consulates of 75 countries and asking the following question: "Under existing treaties, is _____ obligated to extradite fugitives (back) to the United States for draft evasion?"

Replies have come slowly, but since this chart was first published in the Feb '04 issue of this newsletter, we have received additional replies from the following countries: Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Nigeria, Peru, Poland, and South Africa. Last updated May 12, 2005, this chart will be continually updated until all 75 countries on our list have responded. Updates can be viewed online, in Mike Ruppert's article, "Nowhere to Run, Nowhere to Hide."

	Extradite Yes/No?	FBI LEGAT	NORTH- COM	NATO	ANZUS	CONDITIONS
Argentina	No*	Yes				* "Requested State may refuse extradition for offenses under military law that are not offenses under ordinary criminal law (article 4, military offenses-paragraph 4.)"
Australia	Yes	Yes			Yes	
Brazil	Yes	Yes				
Canada	Yes*	Yes	Yes	Yes		*Case by case basis
Colombia	Yes*	Yes				*Case by case basis
Germany	Yes	Yes		Yes		
Italy	Yes	Yes		Yes		
Mexico	Yes	Yes	Yes			
New Guinea	No					Will not extradite
New Zealand	No				Yes	Will not extradite if violation of military law
Nigeria	No	Yes				"No treaty exists between US and Nigeria to mandate repatriation of draft dodgers."
Norway	No			Yes		Discretion of Foreign Ministry
Panama	Yes	Yes				
Peru	Yes					Case by case basis
Philippines	Yes	Yes				
Poland	No	Yes		Yes		"Extradition can also be denied if military offense does not constitute a felony under existing national penal code (Art 5, subsection 4.)"
Portugal	No			Yes		
Russia	No	Yes				"No agreement for extradition exists."
South Africa	No*	Yes				"The Executive Authority of the Requested State shall refuse extradition for offenses under ordinary criminal law."
Spain	Yes	Yes		Yes		
Sweden	No					No, if only crime is against military law
Switzerland	No	Yes				No, if only crime is against military law
Thailand	Yes	Yes				