

Oregon Socialist

Summer 2007

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The Part Best Forgotten

by Michael C. Marino

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"Philosophical pragmatists say (I think correctly) that you don't really believe any proposition if it has no effect on your choices." -Sandra LaFave

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The recent past in the SPUSA has been rocky, but the 2007 Convention, according to most participants and observers, has been a step forward. Many of the power struggles from before will continue, to be sure, but we can at least hope that there will be a short break.

Well, except for me – hilariously, the new NC is already gunning for me. They haven't even come up with an accusation, so far, just threats.

The biggest concern was for the strained relations between the Socialist Party of Wisconsin and the SPUSA's National Committee. The incoming NC seems to have been tasked with finding a better way to resolve conflicts – I have not seen the wording for this, but some have referred to it as "generous".

We have a new SEC and, hopefully, a more active one. The last SEC collapsed entirely near the end of their term, causing problems with the State Convention meeting notice and one other problem of which I am aware:

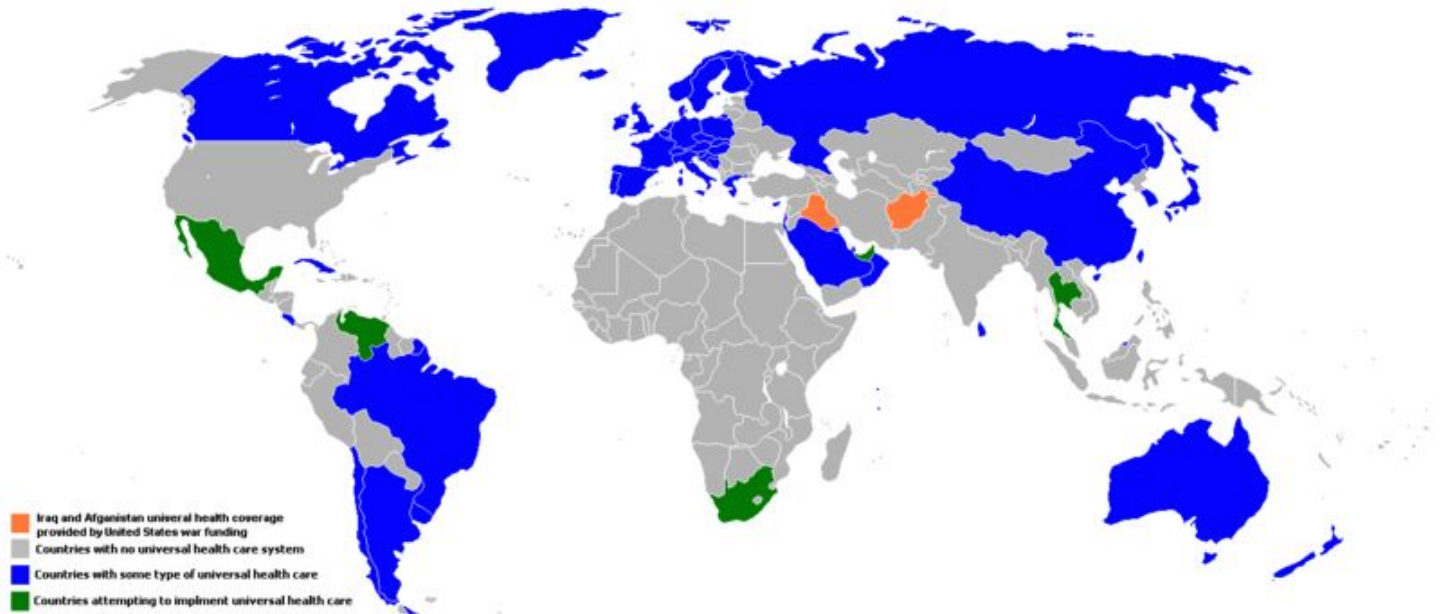
In the previous issue, I was intending to include an editorial on the Socialist Party of Wisconsin. Time being short, I cut that down to a simple slogan to the effect that Oregon stands with the Socialist Party of Wisconsin. The problem with that is that I never got authorization from the SEC (not that there was much of one to ask, but, anyhow...) -- so it should not have been printed as an endorsement of the issue one way or the other. My bad.

The minor issue of the VERY late notice before the State Convention will be taken up shortly. I plan on suggesting a balloted vote of confidence; if that vote does not confirm the elections held, we'll re-do them. (One can but suggest these things...)

UNIVERSAL HEALTHCARE

Look around the world

by Melvin Little



Portland Universal Health Care

Greetings,

Just take a look at the world map here. The nations in blue are the ones with universal healthcare. Take a look at nations covered in gray; they don't have universal healthcare. The nations painted in orange has universal healthcare financed by the United States, yet we don't have it *here*. That's right; the people of Iraq and Afghanistan get a medical system that's deemed wrong for our country by our elected officials. The nations which are colored in green are attempting to create universal healthcare. Get the picture now? Isn't odd that many of America's closest allies around the world have universal healthcare coverage which covers 100% of the population? Take a look at communist states like North Korea and Vietnam; they do NOT have universal healthcare. Look at both the continent of Europe and South America. Many of them have universal healthcare. Look at North America as well; Canada has universal healthcare. Take a look at Africa. Did you noticed that South Africa is a nation in the process of having universal healthcare? When Apartheid existed, they were like the United States. After the end of decades of "white only rule," South Africa which has racial equality today are creating a healthcare for everyone regardless of race.

Cheers!
Melvin Little

Portland Jobs with Justice maintains a Health Care Committee

www.jwjpdx.org/
(503) 236-5573, 6025 E. Burnside

US Action is pushing for a referendum on single payer health care in Portland

www.usaction.org/

The Black Cross Collective has its base in Portland

www.blackcrosscollective.org/
"Fight the power, do no harm!"

Activists continue to push health care, and people continue to express a desire for an encompassing universal health insurance system – but, time and again, efforts to put in place expanded health access systems have been rejected by the voters (as with Measure 23 [Health Care for All Oregon] and the more recent Measure 50 [Kids' Health Care]).

The voters might want "free" health care, but they don't like the cost, it seems.

Multnomah Local

Offices open in the SPUSA Chapter in Multnomah:

County Chair
County Secretary

Electoral procedure is being changed slightly to be more inclusive.

November 18 is the Convention of Nomination. The 1pm regular meeting of the Multnomah County Local, at its usual location of the Belmont Library. Be there to nominate yourself or another SPUSA member. Send in by mail if you can not be there in person.

Ballots will be sent out and need to be returned on or before the following meeting on December 16: the Convention of Election at which the winning candidates will be seated. We have not done balloted votes previously; the change is to help promote a feeling of involvement among the members and responsibility among the officers.

Part of the November meeting will be one to see who our prospective officers (and each other) are.

What we need the Chair to do: announce meetings to the press, handle contact with the outside world (ooh, scary), prepare agenda, routine familiarity with Robert's Rules, and, of course, be ready to be blamed for everything.

What we need the Secretary to do: keep track of records regarding membership, deal with the SPUSA National Office, take minutes, have minutes and other reports ready for the next meeting.

For the duties of officers, all responsibilities should be read as: "shall keep" means "shall keep more cause to be kept" – i.e., there's a number of us, we can spread tasks out a little.

Why Organize?

by William A. Pelz

I think the key is to remember that as our Hungarian friend pointed out in *History & Class Consciousness*: "The struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie is not only an external struggle but also a struggle against the degrading effect the bourgeoisie has on class consciousness." Now, that I've scared half of the readers away, I would like to make my point another way. In a society that worships success and instant gratification, we (leftists) are always going to have to figure out how to keep our focus on the main enemy and our main tasks. It will never be easy and (increasingly) impatience will be a major problem. People give up the left and become "High for Hillary" or "In fact with Barrack" because these campaigns offer something that *appears* real. Our project does not appear real. I'm not complaining so much as pointing out the obvious.

So we have to think outside the box a bit –or– I would say go back to past to reach the future. That is, most of America's socialists were drawn by a broad based culture that included such varied (and seemingly apolitical) activities as singing societies. By the 21st century, politics (particularly on the left) is counterpoised to anything interesting, social or fun. We can't recreate Debs old SP (nor should we if we could) but we can certainly learn from it. More bowling and less boring I say.

Just some random thoughts.

Bill

Debs vs. Debs

"Some groups propose to take orders from men in Moscow who know absolutely nothing about American conditions. I know more about American psychology and conditions than all the leaders in Russia know in five years, and I will not accept my orders from a maniac like Zinoviev. Since when, I want to know, has socialism become synonymous with Communism? I am not a Communist and I don't want to be one, and I do not believe in minority rule." -Eugene V. Debs, 1922

"From the top of my head to the tip of my toes, I am a Bolshevik, and proud of it." -Eugene V. Debs

A Magnolia Tale

by Hunter Gray [copyright Hunter Gray]

[Hunter Gray / John R, Salter, Jr. was Chairman of the Strategy Committee of the Jackson Mississippi Movement -- a massive, non-violent struggle and one of the major civil rights campaigns of the '60s.]

Every now and then, as I did this morning, I catch pieces of the fine Mississippi film, A Time to Kill, based on the John Grisham novel. I saw it when it initially appeared in 1996, intrigued by the fact that it was filmed on location at Canton, Madison County -- a small city just north of Jackson -- and one of the worst racist settings of them all in the Bad Old Days. I have many Canton stories, some as early as '61.

I am not known for admitting mistakes, but . . . here is a big one that directly involved me and Eldri.

On June 18, 1963, at Jackson, in the heat of our Movement, I was lethally targeted via a rigged car wreck. I was seriously injured, almost killed as was a friend riding with me. My vehicle, a '61 Rambler, was totaled. Healing fast, I was functionally out of the hospital in a matter of days [my friend was there much longer.] A few days before the wreck, I had sent Eldri and Baby Maria out of state via airplane to her parents in Minnesota because of constant threats -- especially bomb threats. She had not wanted to go but I forced it. [There is a very poignant scene in A Time to Kill in which the young liberal lawyer, defending a Black man in Canton, does the very same thing with his wife and child -- in relatively contemporary times. Can't help but wonder if Grisham read my book!]

Anyway, Eldri returned via air as soon as she learned of the wreck and our profound injuries. Maria remained with her grandparents. We had no car. Very soon after I was back at Tougaloo, still obviously quite physically damaged, the car salesman from McKay Motors in Jackson arrived driving a brand-new Rambler. He was accompanied by a colleague in another car [to drive him back, obviously],

and he came into our on-campus house with a handful of papers. [McKay Motors was one of the few white firms that we all were not boycotting. Medgar Evers, who knew the scene intricately, had indicated they had repeatedly declined to contribute to white Citizens Council causes.]

"I have a car for you," our salesman said cheerfully. "And I have all the papers right here for your signature. All worked out with CIT [credit.]"

I didn't even go out to look at the new car. I signed and, when I had inished, our man added, "You understand, of course, that, under the circumstances, I can't give you the CIT life insurance policy that normally goes along with this kind of arrangement."

"I understand perfectly," said I -- and then pointed to the old Winchester '73 44/40 that Medgar had loaned me some weeks before. "That's my life insurance policy," I added.

He and his friend nodded in understanding fashion, then left. [I had other firearms as well -- and also a life insurance policy from Phoenix Local 1010 of AFT to which I belonged on an at-large basis. That had been arranged by Bill Karnes, its president and a national AFT vice-president.]

We now had a car which we drove around with its temporary license sticker. But we needed a regular plate. About one half of Tougaloo College and grounds are in Hinds County [Jackson] and the other half -- the one in which we lived -- is in Madison County [Canton, of course.] One quiet, hot afternoon, that early July, Eldri and I decided to just drive up to Canton in leisurely fashion and get it.

In an extraordinary omission, we told no one where we were going. When we got to Canton, we went to the old white courthouse [same one that's in the film] and I parked adjacent to the nice green lawn. Leaving Eldri, I went into

the building and down, as I recall, to its rather dim lower level. Seeing the sign for license plates, I wandered over. The little lady at the window, dressed in Western style and smoking a cigarette, [could have come out of my home county in Arizona], smiled cordially as I gave her my vehicle papers. She gave me something to fill out personal info-wise and, as I did, I saw two men behind her -- wearing widebrimmed hats -- seated at a table, their backs to me. [They were working on papers.] Completing the form she had given me, I plunked down the cash, turned and walked a very few feet down the corridor to glance momentarily at a bulletin board, then returned for my plate.

But much had changed in that moment. My little lady was truly ashen-faced, frozen save for badly trembling hands. The two men had turned around and, mouths open, were staring at me. One was Sheriff Billy Noble, one of the worst racist officials in the state, and the other was his Chief Deputy, Jack Cauthen. Cauthen, a month earlier, had come with a bevy of heavily armed deputies to Tougaloo to serve me and others with the sweeping anti-Movement injunction issued by the Hinds County Chancery Court: *City of Jackson vs. John R Salter, Jr et al.* I had gone outside to them, struck by the fact that it was truly an Old West scene or at least something out of Salt of the Earth. Cauthen had smirked as he gave me the sheaf of papers which he obviously saw as Holy Writ and had, pro forma, shaken hands. The others had looked on coldly.

We defied the injunction, of course.

And now here we were. I was deep in their bailiwick -- if not in their hearts. There they were. And sweet Eldri was sitting in the new car outside.

And then, through my mind, came a few lines from the old Arizona cowboy ballad, *The Sirey Peaks* [a big range in the north central part of the state]: "And who should they see but the Devil Himself come riding down the draw." There was an extremely long moment, during which I realized the fool thing I had done to

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come by ourselves under these circumstances.

But I remained expressionless, didn't blink an eye nor move. Slit-eyed and stony faced.

And then suddenly the Sheriff and the Chief Deputy abruptly turned their chairs and returned to their paper work.

And the little lady, still shaking, hastily pushed the metal license plate out to me.

"Thank you, Ma'am," said I in my very best homegrown Northern Arizona twangy drawl. She did not acknowledge.

I left the courthouse very casually and Eldri and I returned to Tougaloo. Then and only then, did I tell her the events inside the big old white building.

She is not comfortable watching [A Time to Kill](#).

HUNTER GRAY [HUNTER BEAR/JOHN R SALTER JR] Mi'kmaq /St. Francis Abenaki/St. Regis Mohawk

Protected by Na'shdo'í'ba'í' and Ohkwari'

Check out our Hunterbear social justice website: www.hunterbear.org

[The site is dedicated to our one-half Bobcat, Cloudy Gray:

http://hunterbear.org/cloudy_gray.htm

Hunter Bear's Movement Life Interview [Lengthy]:

<http://hunterbear.org/HUNTER%20BEAR%20INTERVIEW%20CRMV.htm>

. . . Well they sets 'em up and they turns around
And they started in the other way,
And to tell the God-forsaken truth
Them boys got drunk that day.

They was on their way, goin' back to camp
A-packin' that awful load,
When who should they meet but the Devil himself
Come a-traipsin' down the road. . . .

From "Tying the Devil by the Tail" by Gail Gardner, 1917

SPUSA Oregon Chapter

SPUSA Convention

State Convention 2007 August 12

Elected on October 21, 2007

Members present: Walt Brown, Beverly Honeycutt, Michael C. Marino (facilitator and minutes), Telma de Oleivera

Guests: Cassidy Martinez

3:30pm – Call to Order by facilitator

Report: State executive Committee is almost gone – Chair removed by National Committee without cause; Vice-Chair has not joined; Secretary unresponsive; Treasurer was present at the meeting.

Delegates to Convention: Ballots counted, results:

Male:

Welp, Timothy 6
Marino, Michael 5
Brown, Walt 4
Sakurai, Richard 2
Wynns, Chuck 2

Female

Honeycutt, Beverly 5
Saranpa, Kathy 5
de Oleivera, Telma 4
Mckinney, Linda 1
(Support expressed for L. Jill Ford)

Welp has previously accepted, according to Bob Rossi; Honeycutt accepted; Marino declined and asked to be an Alternate; Saranpa unknown; Walt Brown accepted; de Oleivera accepted; Sakurai and McKinney unknown; Wynns ineligible (non-member, according to National Office)

Election of a new State Executive Committee

Slate nominated by Walt Brown:

Michael C. Marino, Chair
Charley Nims, Vice-Chair
Beverly Honeycutt, Secretary
Walt Brown, Treasurer
Walt Brown, Chair Emeritus

Slate elected, 2-0.

Socialist Party USA National Committee

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Co-Chairpersons

Andrea Pason Jerry Levy

Co-Vice Chairperson

Nan Pfefferle Peter Moody

**National Committee Member
(in order of election)**

| | |
|------------------|---------------|
| Doris Lake | Bill Stodden |
| Sharin Chiorazzo | Greg Pason |
| Susan Dorazio | Steve Sears |
| Myrtle Kastner | Eric Chester |
| Anita Zeidler | Dwight Welch |
| Alice Kelsey | Mark Luzietti |

National Committee Alternates

| Female [sic] (in order of election) | Male [sic] (in order of election) |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| Dan Jakopovich | Beverly Brown |
| Peter Diamondstone | Linda Randolph |
| Matthew Andrews | Teresa Salo |
| Matt Erard | Kristin S. |
| Mwara Ngoima | Emily Roth |
| Jerry Stasny | |

**National Secretary
Greg Pason**

**National Treasurer
Jennifer Robbins**

***The Socialist* Editor
Terry Williams**

**Archivist
Steve Rossignol**

Socialist Party USA National Action Committee
The National Action Committee (NAC) is a body elected to decisions between National Committee Meetings. The NAC is composed of the National Secretary, National Treasurer, Editor and the following members elected by the NC: Andrea Pason, Nan Pfefferle, Jerry Levy and Peter Moody.

HR1955: Jane Harman's "Thought Police"

by Ralph E. Shaffer

You may want to distribute this widely. Feel free to do so. If you find grammatical or typo errors please correct them.

The text of the bill can be found on the Internet at:

<http://www.govtrack.us/congress/billtext.xpd?bill=h110-1955>

If the link doesn't work, simply search for "HR 1955" and the first site will probably take you to the text.

I have carefully read and considered Representative Jane Harman's HR 1955 - *VIOLENT RADICALIZATION AND HOMEGROWN TERRORISM PREVENTION ACT OF 2007*. I've also read forums where people have logged their comments about the bill. Here are some random thoughts of mine.

The defenders of the bill are right - it does not "criminalize" anything, and in opposing it we need to be careful not to suggest that it does. Its great harm is not in any legal penalties that its provisions include. No, its danger is the Joe McCarthy possibilities of the Commission it creates,

- *with the power of hearings - and therefore of subpoena, a power that is expressly authorized for even a single member of the commission - little Joe McCarthy's running around the country holding their own private hearings;

- *with the power implied in the effect of the report that it is obligated to issue;

- *in the danger inherent in the legislative that it is called upon to propose;

- * in the insidious means of operation that the bill proposes for the commission: the infiltration of targeted organizations;

- * in the hiring of consultants and contractors to carry out its work;

- * and in the creation of the misnamed "Center of Excellence" which will continue to exist after the Commission is disbanded.

The following items are simply listed in the order of their appearance as I went through the lengthy bill.

It is clearly a "thought police" bill since in Sec. 899A (2) it refers to "violent radicalization" as "promoting an extremist *belief system*." Now, it is true that the

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sentence in which that occurs places that belief system in the context of "facilitating ideologically based violence to advance...change." But there is a long history of government interpretation of "belief systems" as by their nature leading to violence as a means of promoting change. We have only to look at the use of the criminal syndicalism law in California from 1919 to the mid-1930s, and efforts to use it again in the 1960s - when the court declared it unconstitutional. The point is that the government argued that by definition certain groups were violent and therefore membership in them, regardless of whether or not a particular individual had engaged in violence, was enough to convict one of the crime of advocating the violent overthrow of the government under the syndicalist act.

In this case, there is nothing in the bill that provides for arrest and punishment, but the commission is created on the premise that it will suggest legislation to stop the activities listed - A: violent radicalization B: homegrown terrorism and C: ideologically based violence - and that suggests that criminal penalties will emerge from this commission's report. [A, B and C are mentioned frequently below and this is what those initials refer to.]

The Commission's findings will surely be cited by those who see a terrorist under every bed as cause for passage of criminal penalties that will further restrict free speech and assorted other civil liberties. Personal or group actions taken that are contrary to the Commission's findings will be interpreted as a sign of treason, at worst, and as an indication of a lack of patriotism at the least.

In Sec. 899A (2) "Home grown Terrorism" is defined as "planned" or "threatened" use of force to coerce the government or the people in an effort to promote "political or social objectives." That means that no force need actually have occurred as long as the government can argue that the individual or group "thought" about doing it. Any social or economic reform is thus brought under the gun. Have a march of 100 or 100,000 people in support of a reform - amnesty for illegals or overturning Roe v. Wade - and someone can perceive that to be a use of force to intimidate the people, the court, the government, an election recount board, etc.

"Ideologically based violence" is defined in that section

in virtually the same way for the purpose of promoting political, religious or social beliefs.

Sec. 899B (3) Singling out the Internet as a "facilitator" of A, B and C suggests that government ought to be policing the ideas that pass over that medium.

The Commission that is created is apparently designed to participate [899B (6)] in "preventing the potential rise" of "self radicalized, unaffiliated terrorists" by coordinating efforts of the Feds, State and local authorities.

899B (7) and (8) are lines that supporters of the bill love to cite: That (7) since people prone to commit A, B and C "span all races, ethnicities and religious beliefs... individuals should not be targeted based solely on race, ethnicity or religion" and that (8) no measure to prevent A, B or C should "violate the constitutional rights, civil rights or civil liberties." The rebuttal to that is the water-boarding example. 'The U.S. does not engage in torture.' Is water-boarding torture? We can't discuss that, but it must not be torture since we don't engage in torture. The analogy? None of the activities the Commission will engage in will violate the Constitution et al because the U.S. government is committed to abiding by the Constitution.

The purposes of the Commission, 899C (b) (1) is difficult to understand because one doesn't know how to interpret the clauses following all of the commas BUT it appears the Commission has sweeping power to study and report on whatever it is that it is supposed to do.

899C b (2) (B) makes the Commission a propaganda and public relations agency for promoting the ideas of any governmental agency from the feds to local gov't dealing with the subjects A, B and C, including the views of foreign governments. Thus any crank who heads an anti-terrorist committee in some little, or big, town can get his views disseminated by the Commission.

899C (e) Note the qualifications that the 10 members of the Commission must have. And note that Islam is the only specific group of any sort singled out in the section on qualifications. Also note that while a lot of other disciplines may contribute candidates to the Commission membership, not history or political science.

899C (h) and 899C (i) (1) (A) Here comes one of the most dangerous clauses: *Any Member* of the Commission may hold hearings. Joe McCarthy rides again.

"True literature can exist only where it is created, not by diligent and trustworthy functionaries, but by madmen, hermits, heretics, dreamers, rebels, and skeptics." -Yvgeny Zamiatin

In 899C (i) (1) (B) reference is made to "contractors." Private anti-terrorist organizations will have their finger in the pie, reaping contracts full of government money to promote their views - the Blackwater of anti-terrorism.

899C (i) (2) (A) Government agencies are required to furnish information to the Commission upon request. Unclear if this means state and local government or just the Feds.

899C (n) (5) Those private citizens or organizations that don't get lucrative contracts can benefit from (5) on this page: Consultant Services, whereby they can be hired by the Commission.

899C (q) (1) REPORTS- The public report that will be made after 18 months comes close to being a non-criminal grand jury indictment. In it the Commission recommends legislation not only to counteract but to prevent A, B and C from developing in the U.S. Technically it refers to violence, but again the point is that historically we know that the argument that will be made is that the violence erupts from the beliefs that certain groups have. Therefore, by curtailing those beliefs you stop the violence before it begins.

AH - and while there will be a public report beware of that *CLASSIFIED ANNEX*, the non-public report that will be cited by those in power as reason why, in order to protect the homeland, we have to accept even more restrictions on our freedom - but because national security would be compromised if the annex document was made public what is in it cannot be revealed.

899C (q) (2) (A) (ii) Reference is made to a *grant program* designed to prevent, *disrupt* and mitigate the effects of A B and C. Sounds like we are going to pay people to infiltrate and disrupt potentially dangerous organizations - which are any group the Homeland Security Secretary deems dangerous.

899C (s) Well, at least the Commission goes out of existence at the end of the 18 months.

899D BUT the "Center of Excellence" goes on forever. Now this is curious. In Sec. 899D (a) the Center is set up

to study A and B, but there is no mention of C [ideologically based violence]? Is that significant? Did the author of the bill purposely omit C from the Center's study? If so, why? This is repeated in (b) in the next paragraph.

899D (c) (2) Also curious - The Center will utilize theories from a variety of academic disciplines including the social sciences - but earlier social scientists were not listed as qualified for membership on the Commission.

899E (b) A "national policy," based in part on what other countries have done to squelch home-grown radicals, is to be developed - to the extent that those other methods are applicable to our Constitution. Sounds like states will be forced to follow whatever national pattern the Homeland Secretary comes up with.

899F (a) Here, again, is that disclaimer about staying within the Constitution *BUT* the way Sec. 899F (a) is worded *only* B and C have to abide by the Constitution. Apparently efforts to prevent "violent radicalization" are not subject to Constitutional restrictions since that part of the trilogy [A, B and C] is omitted from this section of the bill.

899F (b) guarantees that the suppression of liberty authorized by this act will be racially neutral.

On or about Oct. 23, 2007, 404 Representatives voted for this bill and sent it to the Senate. And only 6 Representatives - 3 Republicans and 3 Democrats - voted NO, while 22, about equally divided among parties, abstained. Madness prevails!!!

From: Ralph E. Shaffe
Professor Emeritus, history
Cal Poly Pomona
reshaffer@csupomona.edu

"You appeal to ignorance when your only premise in support of a claim is that you or your opponent can't show the claim is false, i.e., you are ignorant of any evidence that would disprove it. But that kind of ignorance doesn't prove anything." -Sandra LaFave

Terrorist Song

Copyright 2003 John Dengate
Tune: Knickerbocker Line

As I was walking down the road, he suddenly appeared:
A bloody turbaned Moslem with a big Bin Laden beard;
I asked, "Are you a terrorist, is that your bloody lurk?"
He said, "No, I'm a carpenter, I'm on my way to work."

Chorus

I watched him, tracked him, rang up A.S.I.O.
I dobbed him into Alan Jones on talk-back radio.
I may not be a beauty and I don't have any sense
But, by God, I know my duty to the national defence!

They're going to bomb the Harbour Bridge then quiet
as a mouse,
They'll sneak up with explosives and blow up the Opera
House.
They're going to blow up Murphy's pub. I've heard
about the plot?
I hope they get the pokies 'cause I'm losing quite a lot.

There's terrorism everywhere; it makes a man afraid?
I'm buying a machine gun and I'll build a barricade.
You'll have to know the password if you come and visit
me.
Shoot first, ask questions later mate, that's my
philosophy.

My Auntie May's eccentric; "You're paranoid," she
said.
She doesn't believe the terrorists are underneath the
bed.
She reckons it's "hysteria"? I don't know what she
meant?
She said she's far more frightened of the Federal
Government.

John Howard will protect us, he is very strong and
brave;
He's passing legislation that will make you all behave!
You won't be facing Mecca on that silly bloody mat
You'll all be Church of England, Abdul, cogitate on
that!

"When the gods wish to punish us, they answer our prayers." - Oscar Wilde

SPO
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