

PREVIOUSLY ON "MEDIA EDGE" (July - December, 2008)

Episode #190 (December 28-29)

Segment 1 -- "Peak Moment"

Peak Oil and its Effect on Climate Change.

The peak oil message is slow to gain acceptance, says energy analyst Randy Udall, because it's at odds with our optimistic It's-Morning-in-America mentality. Politicians "Don't Do Depletion." Randy describes challenges, mitigations, and exciting opportunities to create a prosperous path to a lower- energy future. In an excerpt from his presentation at the Association for the Study of Peak Oil (ASPO-USA) conference in September 2008, the co-founder of ASPO-USA points out cornucopian myths about energy that are being shattered by reality. His concern is that the peak oil crisis, while less known than the climate crisis, will impact us sooner, and is not being factored into climate policy decisions. Ironically, it may well make resolution of the climate crisis easier.

Segment 2 -- "Five Ways You Can Reduce the Impact of Climate Change"

UC-Davis Professor Deb Niemeier's keynote address was a highlight at the Fifth Annual Dinner of the Sacramento Chapter of Physicians for Social Responsibility. This event also included a moving tribute to Dr. Herbert Bauer, and a reading by PSR Essay Contest scholarship winner Margaret Freiwald. Recorded by a Media Edge crew on October 4, 2008.

Segment 3 -- "Resolution!"

On October 12, 2008, a group of students from the "Natomas Charter Performing and Fine Arts Academy" in Sacramento used their performance talents to take a stand against the Iraq War. Recorded by a Media Edge crew on the steps of the California State Capitol.

Episode #189 (December 21-22)

Segment 1 -- "Peak Moment"

Making Financial Sense of the Coming Energy Crisis.

"We are living in historic times", says financial consultant Jim Puplava. As reflected in his weekly Financial Sense Newshour (actually several hour-long podcasts), Jim has been factoring peak oil into his financial picture for several years. In this interview, plus excerpts from his presentation at the Association for the Study of Peak Oil (ASPO-USA) conference in September 2008, Jim talks about the "crisis window" opened by the current 2008 global credit crunch, and deepening over the next several years as oil supply begins its permanent decline. He provides some basic investment guidance for navigating the coming "perfect financial storm," noting that our society will move of necessity from consumption to conservation.

Segment 2 -- "What Mainstream Media Don't Tell Us About Iran, Iraq and U.S. Foreign Policy"

On January 16, 2008, the Teach Peace Foundation hosted this event that featured dynamic presentations by Scott Ritter, a former UN weapons inspector in Iraq, and Jeff Cohen, founder of Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR). Recorded by a Media Edge crew at the JFK High School in Sacramento.

Episode #188 (December 14-15)

Segment 1 -- "Fourth World War"

While our airwaves are crowded with talk of a new world war, narrated by generals and filmed from the noses of bombs, the human story of global conflict remains untold. "Fourth World War" brings together the images and voices of the war on the ground. It is a story of a war without end and of those who resist, produced through a global network of independent media and activist groups.

Segment 2 -- "The School of the Americas"

A "music video" by Media Edge producer Michael Stavros, about the notorious US military academy at Fort Benning, Georgia and a major protest there in 2005. Graduates of this school have perpetrated many of the worst human rights violations in recent Latin American history.

Segment 3 -- "Notes on the War"

This film, by Rosie Bsheer and Maya Mikdashi for the Deep Dish TV "Nothing is Safe" series, highlights the voices of citizens who were displaced during the 2006 war in Lebanon. It addresses the debates within Lebanese society that were sparked by the conflict, the Lebanese government response to the crisis, the role of Hizbollah and how the U.S. attempted to define the Israeli attack as part of the "war on terrorism."

Episode #187 (December 7-8)

Segment 1 -- "The Battle Over Prop 8 Continues"

On November 5, 2008, disappointed Prop 8 opponents held a candlelight vigil in front of the State Capitol in Sacramento. They were met by a small vocal group of Prop 8 proponents. By Media Edge producer, Michael Stavros.

Segment 2 -- "Entering the Booth"

From Access Sacramento's "A Place Called Sacramento" Film Festival: Walk in Midtown and you are surrounded by stories in need of telling -- let's listen. The spirit of neighborhood camaraderie is captured in this film, a project of Sac City College faculty member Travis Silcox and students.

Segment 3 -- "Peak Everything: Waking Up to the Century of Declines"

Ecologist and author Richard Heinberg delivered this presentation at "A Renaissance of Local," an event last year in Boulder, Colorado. He says that "There is no hope...for a soft landing."

Segment 4 -- "Steadfastness"

Democracy Now! reporter Ana Nogueira traveled to Lebanon during and after the 2006 war. Her reports document Israeli's massive use of cluster bombs, the immense ecological destruction and the war's toll of civilian casualties.

Episode #186 (November 30-December 1)

Segment 1 -- "Peak Moment"

Middle Class Lifeboat - Careers and Life Choices for Staying Afloat.

Paul and Sarah Edwards are authors of a timely book "Middle-Class Lifeboat: Careers and Life Choices for Navigating a Changing Economy." In a world of decreasing resources, they ask, how do we financially support ourselves while moving towards sustainable lives? Emphasizing independent income sources, they consider dozens of possible careers from basic services to local-scale technologies. Life choices include lowering costs through simplifying, getting out of debt, and demonetizing (e.g., bartering). Or one can consider an "off-the-map" lifestyle like living abroad, off-grid, or an intentional community. This downturn is not just a cycle, they emphasize: it heralds a sea change.

Segment 2 -- "33 Days"

This film follows the stories of four people during the 2006 war in Lebanon: A theatre director working with children, an emergency relief worker, a journalist for an underground TV station, and a mother trying to cope with her new-born baby.

Segment 3 -- "Beef Recall: The Inside Scoop on the Largest Beef Recall in US History"

In response to the undercover work of the Humane Society, exposing inhumane and unsafe slaughter house practices, the USDA recalled 143 million pounds of beef from a Chino, California slaughterhouse. Executive Vice President of the Humane Society, Wayne Pacelle, talks about his investigation, and Dr. Bill Durston speaks about his vision for working toward a healthier future for all living species.

Segment 4 -- "SHADA"

A photographic journey with Haiti's Forgotten Children by Sacramento area photographer and activist Leisa Faulkner. Video created by Michael Stavros.

Episode #185 (November 23-24)

Segment 1 -- "Peak Moment"

Finding Opportunity in Peak Oil.

Molly Brown sees Peak Oil as both a challenge and an invitation to create a better world. After awakening to Peak Oil, she explored her own responses — inner attitude and outer action. Personal changes include creating a veggie garden and bicycling. Noting that individual survivalist mentality is insufficient ("we are all interconnected"), she helped form a local group to awaken and prepare her community. As a therapist, Molly sees this predicament on several levels, noting how crises have the potential to bring out the best in us.

Segment 2 -- "Abuse of Power"

This Common Cause panel discussion with legal scholars explores the problems created by an unchecked executive branch and a compliant Congress over the last seven years. The panel was held at George Washington University on June 10, 2008, and was recorded by Media Edge producer Steve Kolb, now based in Washington, DC. This program is the first in a series of Common Cause events to engage scholars and activists to identify specific ways to restore the checks and balances set forth in our Constitution and restore America's image in the eyes of the rest of the world.

Segment 3 -- "The Children of Ibdaa - To Create Something Out of Nothing"

The lives of several adolescents in a Palestinian children's dance troupe from a West Bank refugee camp. They use their performance to express the history, struggle, and aspirations of their people.

Episode #184 (November 16-17)

Segment 1 -- "AB 540"

A short film by Sacramento teacher Travis Silcox, about the challenges facing undocumented students raised in the United States. "AB 540" is the 2002 California law that allows undocumented youths to pay in-state tuition at state colleges if they grew up here and graduated from California high schools.

Segment 2 -- "A Really Inconvenient Truth"

Al Gore's "An Inconvenient Truth" woke the world up to the dangers of global warming. But, argues Joel Kovel, while we should be grateful to Gore for sounding the alarm, we also need to go far beyond his reading of the causes of this crisis and of what needs to be done about it.

Segment 3 -- A Question of Balance"

We often hear of "the destruction on both sides" caused by the 2006 war in Lebanon. Without minimizing the loss of any innocent lives or justifying "collateral damage, is that destruction comparable? The three segments in this program look at the destruction in both Lebanon and Israel. (From the "Nothing is Safe" series by Deep Dish TV.)

Segment 4 -- "Make a Better World"

This music video by Media Edge producer Michael Stavros, blending inspirational images with the music of Maria Muldaur, was also shown during her recent concert in Sacramento.)

Episode #183 (November 9-10)

Segment 1 -- "Five Ways You Can Reduce the Impact of Climate Change"

UC-Davis Professor Deb Niemeier's keynote address was a highlight at the Fifth Annual Dinner of the Sacramento Chapter of Physicians for Social Responsibility. This event also included a moving tribute to Dr. Herbert Bauer, and a reading by PSR Essay Contest scholarship winner Margaret Freiwald. Recorded by a Media Edge crew on October 4, 2008.

Segment 2 -- "The July War"

A powerful look at the 2006 Lebanon War (the July War) and its devastating impact on Lebanon's people, economy, and environment. This film, by Brandon Jourdan and Francesca Caporali, examines the reasons behind the war and its impact on all parties involved. (From the "Nothing is Safe" series by Deep Dish TV.)

Episode #182 (November 2-3)

Segment 1 -- "Peak Moment"

Oil and Gas - The Next Meltdown?

Drawing parallels with the current financial meltdown, Matthew Simmons expresses his alarm about gasoline stocks being the lowest in several decades and refinery production down following recent hurricanes. He warns that if there were a run on the "energy bank" by everyone topping off their gasoline tanks, the U.S. would be out of fuel in three days, and grocery shelves largely emptied in a week. In an interview plus excerpts from his presentation at the Association for the Study of Peak Oil (ASPO-USA) conference in Sacramento on September 22, 2008, Matt highlights the risks and vulnerabilities in the finished oil products system, and answers questions from the audience.

Segment 2 -- "Resolution!"

On October 12, 2008, a group of students from the "Natomas Charter Performing and Fine Arts Academy" in Sacramento used their performance talents to take a stand against the Iraq War. Recorded by a Media Edge crew on the steps of the California State Capitol.

Segment 3 -- "Yes, We Can"

With over 12,000,000 views to date on YouTube, this song and video by Will.i.am of The Black Eyed Peas was inspired by Barack Obama's "Yes, We Can" concession speech after the New Hampshire primary.

Segment 4 -- "John, He Is"

Inspired by the interest in and popularity of the "Yes, We Can" video about Barack Obama, this YouTube video lampoons the words of John McCain.

Segment 5 -- "The Real McCain"

While John McCain gets a free ride from the mainstream press, the good folks at Brave New Films compiled this accurate portrayal of the so-called Maverick. Clearly, McCain's record is something the public wants to discuss, and yet the corporate media is doing NOTHING to present the truth. This video includes a series of clips to expose the Double Talk Express in action.

Segment 6 -- "Struggle"

This documentary, set primarily in Ohio, examines several conditions that lead to George W. Bush's victory in the 2004 Presidential election. This film places the audience right in the action with a unique "street level" perspective on the struggle to protest publicly or vote democratically in this society.

Segment 7 -- "Yes We Can, Can"

A music video by Media Edge producer Michael Stavros, blending inspirational images with the music of Maria Muldaur. This video was shown during her recent concert in Sacramento.

Episode #181 (October 26-27)

Segment 1 -- "Peak Moment"

Kris Holstrom, Sustainability Coordinator for Telluride, Colorado, enlightens us about green codes, household energy audits, and more. At the heart of sustainability is building relationships within the community and with the land, wherever we live.

Segment 2 -- "NCFM: Media Reform Pioneers"

Panel discussion at the National Conference for Media Reform, with George Stoney ("father of public access TV"), former FCC Commissioner Nicholas Johnson ("How to Talk Back to your Television Set") and investigative reporter Randall Pinkston.

Episode #180 (October 19-20)

Segment 1 -- "August Peace Event"

The 22nd Annual Day of Remembrance and Action commemorated the atomic bomb attacks in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Taped by a Media Edge crew at the Sacramento State Alumni Center on August 9, this event featured Congressional candidate Bill Durston, Grammy Award winner Mary Youngblood, Reverend Bob Oshita of the Buddhist Church of Sacramento, and Pamela Vergun, translator and editor of "A Dimly Burning Wick".

Segment 2 -- "The Battle at Blue Diamond for Workers' Rights"

On September 26, Blue Diamond workers in Sacramento officially petitioned for a Union election. In this video, we hear from elected officials in Sacramento and across the country who support the union cause.

Segment 3 -- "John, He Is"

Inspired by the interest in and popularity of the "Yes, We Can" video about Barack Obama, this YouTube video lampoons the words of John McCain.

Episode #179 (October 12-13)

Segment 1 -- "Slacker Uprising"

"Slacker Uprising" traces Michael Moore's 62-city tour of the swing states during the 2004 Presidential election and records the thrilling -- and frightening -- response he received across the country. Part concert tour, part stand-up comedy performance and part rock concert, "Slacker Uprising" is an uplifting and patriotic look at the birth of a new political generation in America -- a generation of young people who would signal the era of "Obamania" that would take place just four years later.

Segment 2 -- "McCain's Distortions"

Alternative media must spread the truth about McCain because it's clear the corporate media won't. This video includes clips from McCain's ads and provides the truth in response to his lies and distortions. Once the truth gets out, it's hard to stop.

Segment 3 -- "Robert F. Kennedy, Jr."

Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. talks to "Democracy Now!" host Amy Goodman about how the Bush Administration has turned America into the most hated and feared nation on earth.

Segment 4 -- "Make a Better World"

This music video by Media Edge producer Michael Stavros, blending inspirational images with the music of Maria Muldaur, was also shown during her recent concert in Sacramento.

Episode #178 (October 5-6)

Segment 1 -- "Yes, We Can"

With over 12,000,000 views to date on YouTube, this song and video by Will.i.am of The Black Eyed Peas was inspired by Barack Obama's "Yes, We Can" concession speech after the New Hampshire primary.

Segment 2 -- "Voices of Patriots"

Dedicated career military professionals address key issues surrounding U.S. war policy in Iraq.

Segment 3 -- "Reaching Out to Our Veterans and Their Families"

Dr. Judith Broder, psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, and Zohreh Whitaker, whose son recently returned from Iraq, share their experiences of the effect of war and working with returning veterans and their families. Recorded by a Media Edge crew on June 14, 2008 at the St. Mark's United Methodist Church in Sacramento.

Segment 4 -- "The Healthcare Solution: California OneCare"

The solution to the healthcare crisis in California is Senate Bill 840, which would provide comprehensive healthcare coverage for all...for life...for less. This film explains how it works.

Episode #177 (September 28-29)

Segment 1 -- "Meet the Bloggers"

Two episodes of this series dedicated to news analysis, opinion and progressive issues from the blogosphere, tailored to appeal to political reporters, opinion leaders and a politically-aware audience. Featured guest: Filmmaker Michael Moore.

Segment 2 -- "The Real McCain"

While John McCain gets a free ride from the mainstream press, the good folks at Brave New Films compiled this accurate portrayal of the so-called Maverick. Clearly, McCain's record is something the public wants to discuss, and yet the corporate media is doing NOTHING to present the truth. This video includes a series of clips to expose the Double Talk Express in action.

Segment 3 -- "Iraq Body Count Exhibit"

The Iraq Body Count Exhibit was displayed in Sacramento from May 21-27. The purpose of this traveling exhibit is to raise awareness of the human cost of the Iraq War. The Exhibit is non-political, as the numbers speak for themselves.

Segment 4 -- "Let the Show Begin"

This film documents a 5 day international short film festival held in Baghdad in extremely difficult circumstances in September 2005. The young organizers of the event are determined to do something constructive and to assert a sense of creativity in a situation where daily violence traumatizes and paralyzes people.

Segment 4 -- "Letters from Beirut"

An intimate, personal and powerful telling of the story of the 2006 war in Lebanon. A series of letters written by Hanady Salman - a mother living through the war in Beirut - carve a narrative arc through the intense and haunting images of conflict.

Episode #176 (September 21-22)

Segment 1 -- "Peak Everything: Waking Up to the Century of Declines"

Ecologist and author Richard Heinberg delivered this presentation at "A Renaissance of Local," an event last year in Boulder, Colorado. He says that "There is no hope...for a soft landing."

Segment 2 -- "William Rodriguez, National Hero: What Really Happened on 9/11?"

William Rodríguez is a former janitor who was at the North Tower of the World Trade Center during the 9/11 attacks, and who helped several people to safety. Mr. Rodríguez has since become involved with the 9/11 Truth Movement, and alleges governmental involvement and coverup during the attacks. This video includes his gut-wrenching presentation in Los Angeles last year, and is not to be missed by those who want to know what really happened on 9/11 from a survivor who had the World Trade Center collapse around him.

Segment 3 -- "Yes We Can, Can"

A new music video by Media Edge producer Michael Stavros, blending inspirational images with the music of Maria Muldaur, also shown during her concert last month in Sacramento.

Episode #175 (September 14-15)

Segment 1 -- "Peak Moment"

Little House on a Small Planet: Builder and author Shay Salomon finds that the happiest home builders are often the ones with the smallest houses. They're less costly to build and maintain, more likely to be finished, use fewer resources and help people simplify their lives. One version of "smaller" is to share a house, which can ease our loneliness while building our social network. Co-founder of the Small House Society, Shay notes that scaling down can enable a ratcheting up of our whole lifestyle, as we revalue quality over quantity. Declaring "Enough", she says, is the most ecological thing one can do.

Segment 2 -- "Meet the Bloggers"

Two episodes of this series dedicated to news analysis, opinion and progressive issues from the blogosphere, tailored to appeal to political reporters, opinion leaders and a politically-aware audience. Featured guests: Air America and MSNBC host Rachel Maddow and Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont.

Segment 3 -- "Dr. Nabil"

A gentle and committed surgeon, with literary talents, works at a small understaffed Baghdad hospital, which suffers from lack of equipment and medicines. While many other doctors have been killed or have fled the country in fear of their lives, Dr Nabil has decided to stay. He worries, though, about the effect that the atmosphere of violence and brutality is having on his young son.

Segment 4 -- "Crack the CIA"

Connecting the dots between drug traffic and the CIA. Did the CIA bring drugs into the inner city? An explosive look at a story that won't go away. This short film was the Winner of the 2002 Sundance Online Film Festival.

Segment 5 -- "Make a Better World"

A music video by Media Edge producer Michael Stavros, blending inspirational images with the music of Maria Muldaur, also shown during her concert last month in Sacramento.

Episode #174 (September 7-8)

Segment 1-- "2008 Scholarship Essay Awards Event"

The fourth annual High School Scholarship Essay Contest, sponsored by the Sacramento Chapter of Physicians for Social Responsibility, was recorded by a Media Edge crew on May 4 at the Sacramento State Alumni Center. The winning essays were chosen from a field of 114 entries from greater Sacramento area high school students that reacted to this year's prompt, "War is a racket...in which the profits are reckoned in dollars and the losses in lives," by Marine Corps Medal of Honor Winner, Major General Smedley Butler. The student authors of the top three essays earned \$2,500, \$1,500 and \$1,000 scholarships.

Segment 2-- "5th Year Anniversary of the Invasion of Iraq"

Thousands of Iraqis have been displaced by sectarian violence and have had to seek refuge in other parts of the country. This is a portrait of Abu Ali, a refugee from Kirkuk living in a displaced person's camp on the outskirts of Kerbala. He is a peace-loving man with a keen sense of justice, trying to find a way to survive and provide for his family in the difficult circumstances in which they now find themselves.

Segment 3-- "Baghdad Days"

Hiba Bassem, a young woman from Kirkuk, returns to Baghdad after the war, to finish her studies at the Academy of Fine Arts. The film is a diary of her year as she tries to find a place to live, looks for work, graduates from college, deals with family problems and struggles to come to terms with her position as a woman on her own. This film won a New Horizon silver award at the Al Jazeera International Film Festival in Doha (2006) and a golden award at the Rotterdam Arab Film Festival (2006).

Episode #173 (August 31 - September 1)

Segment 1-- "August Peace Event"

The 22nd Annual Day of Remembrance and Action commemorated the atomic bomb attacks in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Taped by a Media Edge crew at the Sacramento State Alumni Center on August 9, this event featured Congressional candidate Bill Durston, Grammy Award winner Mary Youngblood, Reverend Bob Oshita of the Buddhist Church of Sacramento, and Pamela Vergun, translator and editor of "A Dimly Burning Wick".

Segment 2-- "A Stranger in His Own Country"

Thousands of Iraqis have been displaced by sectarian violence and have had to seek refuge in other parts of the country. This is a portrait of Abu Ali, a refugee from Kirkuk living in a displaced person's camp on the outskirts of Kerbala. He is a peace-loving man with a keen sense of justice, trying to find a way to survive and provide for his family in the difficult circumstances in which they now find themselves.

Segment 3-- "Documentary Film Course - March 2006"

Ahmed Kamal documents the lives of his fellow students at the Independent Film & Television College in Baghdad as they try to get into classes, find the subjects for the films they want to make and deal with the difficulties of trying to film in Iraq at the moment. In the end the college has to close down when two people are abducted from the building and an explosion in the street below shatters all its windows.

Episode #172 (August 24-25)

Segment 1-- "Meet the Bloggers"

News analysis, opinion and progressive issues from the blogosphere, tailored to appeal to political reporters, opinion leaders and a politically-aware audience. Featured guest: Arianna Huffington.

Segment 2-- "Green for All: An Evening with Van Jones"

In a personal and deeply inspiring talk to an audience in Grass Valley, Van Jones lays out his vision of "Green For All" in which the emerging economy of energy conservation and renewables also includes "green collar" jobs, especially for the economically disadvantaged. He regales us with stories of his hard-earned admission to Yale Law School, where his passion to work for social justice was ignited, and a pivotal meeting with Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi.

Segment 3-- "Iraq Body Count Exhibit"

The Iraq Body Count Exhibit was displayed in Sacramento from May 21-27. The purpose of this traveling exhibit is to raise awareness of the human cost of the Iraq War. The Exhibit is non-political, as the numbers speak for themselves.

Episode #171 (August 17-18)

Segment 1-- "Peak Moment"

Take a tour of a plug-in electric hybrid modification of a 1996 Mercury Sable, with UC Davis graduate students Patrick Kaufman and Bryan Jungers. Under the hood you'll see modifications and some interesting new components. Unlike commercial hybrids -- primarily combustion engines with an electric-motor assist -- theirs is primarily an electric vehicle with a small combustion engine to extend its range beyond the all-electric 60-70 miles. Batteries recharge in 6-8 hours with electricity costing about 75 cents per gallon of gas equivalent (2006 prices).

Segment 2-- "NCRM: Media Reform Pioneers"

A panel discussion at this year's National Conference for Media Reform, held in June in Minneapolis. This video features George Stoney, the "father of public access TV", former FCC Commissioner Nicholas Johnson, author of "How to Talk Back to your Television Set", and investigative reporter Randall Pinkston.

Segment 3-- "Freeze In"

On June 26, a group of Sacramento peace activists staged a symbolic gesture in the California State Capitol building to express discontent with the war in Iraq. Six of them were arrested.

Episode #170 (August 10-11)

Segment 1 -- "Peak Moment"

Students at UC Davis Hybrid Vehicle Research Center have been creating plug-in hybrids for national competitions for some time. "Team Fate" members Bryan Jungers and Patrick Kaufman describe how they "gut" the drive train of a standard vehicle, replacing it with an electric motor, a bank of batteries, continuously variable transmission, and some smart electronics. The resulting vehicle runs on electricity, assisted by a much smaller flex-fuel internal combustion engine only when needed. Bryan and Patrick also enlighten us on topics ranging from battery technology to hydrogen fuel cells.

Segment 2 -- "Omar Is My Friend"

student at Baghdad University works as a taxi driver to support his wife and four daughters. As he negotiates his clapped out taxi around checkpoints, tanks and traffic jams, he talks about work, lack of petrol, electricity, having daughters in a male-dominated society, his personal aspirations and those of his society.

Segment 3 -- "Hiwar"

For years a group of Iraqi artists and writers had wanted to establish a cultural centre in Baghdad. After 8 years of devastating war with Iran, the Gulf War of 1991 and the ongoing sanctions, it was clear that there was no point in waiting for peace. So the Hiwar centre was opened in an old house in 1992 and is now being re-built.

Segment 4 -- "Abuse of Power"

This Common Cause panel discussion with legal scholars explores the problems created by an unchecked executive branch and a compliant Congress over the last seven years. The panel was held at George Washington University on June 10, 2008, and was recorded by Media Edge producer Steve Kolb, now based in Washington, DC. This program is the first in a series of Common Cause events to engage scholars and activists to identify specific ways to restore the checks and balances set forth in our Constitution and restore America's image in the eyes of the rest of the world.

Episode #169 (August 3-4)

Segment 1 -- "An Evening with Jim Hightower"

On April 11, best-selling author and national radio commentator Jim Hightower delighted and inspired a huge audience in Sacramento at the Coloma Community Center. He encouraged people to break away from conventional wisdom and live their progressive values. Recorded by a Media Edge crew.

Segment 2 -- "Peace Vigil"

On March 19, 2008, people gathered all across America and around the world to protest the US occupation of Iraq. This Peace Vigil was one of the many events that occurred in Sacramento on the day marking the 5th year anniversary of the invasion of Iraq.

Segment 3 -- "Iraq Body County Exhibit"

The Iraq Body Count Exhibit was displayed in Sacramento from May 21-27. The purpose of this traveling exhibit is to raise awareness of the human cost of the Iraq War. The Exhibit is non-political, as the numbers speak for themselves.

Segment 4 -- "A Candle for the Shabandar Cafe"

Founded in 1917, the Shabandar Cafe in Al Mutanabbi Street in the heart of the old centre of Baghdad, was a cultural landmark, where generations of Iraqis came to discuss and debate literature and politics - a living repository of Iraqi intellectual history and one of the last places where people could gather to exchange ideas. Director Emad Ali had shot most of his film by the end of 2006, but in March 2007, a massive car bomb destroyed the Shabandar Cafe, all the bookshops on Al Mutanabbi Street and killed and wounded scores of people. Days later, Baghdad's poets and artists held a wake in the ruins of the street they loved so much and Emad took a small camera and went back to film. As he was leaving he was attacked, his camera stolen and he was shot in the legs and chest, and his own story is an epilogue to his film about the Shabandar Cafe and Mutanabbi Street - before and after they were destroyed.

Episode #168 (July 27-28)

Segment 1 -- "Leaving"

Threatened with kidnap and facing escalating and horrific violence in their neighborhood, a Mandaean family from Baghdad reaches the difficult decision to leave their home of more than 30 years and go to live in Damascus. The film documents the painful process of selling all their goods and dividing up their house so it can be rented out and finally it records their dangerous road trip to the Syrian border and their arrival to their new, temporary home.

Segment 2 -- "Corporate Pillaging and Military Contractors"

This segment of the "Winter Soldier: Iraq and Afghanistan" hearings includes a panel of war veterans with journalists Jeremy Scahill and Antonia Juhasz. The speakers examined the US government's use of private contractors to replace soldiers in military operations. Testimony included the role of corporations in the management of the occupations, and instances of waste, fraud and abuse involving these corporations. The panel also examined the implications of US tax dollars supporting private security forces, which are not bound by the rules of engagement.

Episode #167 (July 20-21)

Segment 1 -- "Peak Moment"

A vocal proponent of going local, Dave Smith co-founded the Briarpatch Cooperative Market, co-founded "Smith & Hawken" and now owns a book store he can walk to. His book To Be Of Use: The Seven Seeds of Meaningful Work honors "creative action heroes" who meet real needs rather than just desires. He suggests judging others not by their stated values but by their virtues - their character and actions.

Segment 2 -- "Reaching Out to Our Veterans and Their Families"

Dr. Judith Broder, psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, and Zohreh Whitaker, whose son recently returned from Iraq, share their experiences of the effect of war and working with returning veterans and their families. Recorded by a Media Edge crew on June 14, 2008 at the St. Mark's United Methodist Church in Sacramento.

Segment 3 -- "The Healthcare Solution: California OneCare"

The solution to the healthcare crisis in California is Senate Bill 840, which would provide comprehensive healthcare coverage for all...for life...for less. This film explains how it works.

Segment 4 -- "Yes, We Can"

With over 10,000,000 views to date on YouTube, this song and video by Will.i.am of The Black Eyed Peas was inspired by Barack Obama's "Yes, We Can" concession speech after the New Hampshire primary.

Episode #166 (July 13-14)

Segment 1 -- "Freeze In"

On June 26, a group of Sacramento peace activists staged a symbolic gesture in the California State Capitol building to express discontent with the war in Iraq. Six of them were arrested.

Segment 2 -- "Winter Soldier: Iraq and Afghanistan"

Part Two of a session entitled "Rules of Engagement", at the March 14, 2008 event sponsored by the Iraq Veterans Against the War. This panel features a large group of US veterans who have come forward to speak out about what they saw during their time in Iraq and Afghanistan. They tell about the killing and injuring of innocent civilians and unarmed combatants, as well as the destruction of property, infrastructure and natural resources of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Episode #165 (July 6-7)

Segment 1 -- "Peak Moment"

Santa Barbara is serious about lowering carbon emissions. Guided by a comprehensive greenhouse gas emissions study, they're adding solar panels to city buildings, requiring lower energy usage for new buildings, switching to biodiesel and hybrid vehicles, and giving free bus passes to downtown workers. City councilmember Das Williams urges citizens to push officials to make substantive (i.e., funded) changes to mitigate the effects of peak oil and climate change.

Segment 2 -- "A Really Inconvenient Truth"

Al Gore's "An Inconvenient Truth" woke the world up to the dangers of global warming. But, argues Joel Kovel, while we should be grateful to Gore for sounding the alarm, we also need to go far beyond his reading of the causes of this crisis and of what needs to be done about it.

Segment 3 -- "Peace Vigil"

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