



MIKE COLLINS

FROM PAGE 3

LIAM DUNNE

(He is a songwriter and a member of the famous Beat group, *The Pagan Pancakes*)

Basically I think this country always gets what it deserves or what it needs. So maybe we deserve the election we got because we weren't paying attention and perhaps we need it to get our attention to the flaws in our system. Democracy is a work in progress and not an end result.

It seems with the Republicans in power the next four years it will be a minority rule. It is good at times to have a minority in power because majority rule is not always healthy — it leaves too many people out. Majority rule can mean everybody gets fooled all the time. A continual succession of majority rule can turn into mob rule.

Minority rule opens up fresh perspectives. A rotating minority rule can give all points of view. We need to get right-wingers in power for awhile, also the left and moderates so that everybody gets a chance or tension will build up among those who will say they never got a chance and that will ultimately be destructive to the country.

URIAH HULSEY

(He is owner & chef of the world famous Columbian Cafe and a lifetime alumnus of the Vietnam Veterans Against the War.)

There wasn't a Presidential election.

There was a Presidential appointment.

The new Bush is like the old Bush — because he's obligated to Big Oil and is religious right like his dad.

I think people who say there was not any difference between Gore and Bush Jr. are now seeing a vast difference between them.

JOHN PAUL BARRETT

(He is a writer and owner of Gaff Press, author of 'Sea Stories: Vol. 1. Of Dolphins & Dead Sailors; Vol. 2. Seagods & Sundogs')

I was born in Texas, grew up in Houston and left the day I turned 17 to join the Navy.

I thought I was going to die young in October of 1962 as a young sailor aboard a destroyer in the West Pacific headed south toward nuclear oblivion. I had witnessed the Kali of a test nuclear detonation at sea a few months earlier and understood something of the gravity of the situation.

But it didn't happen. That makes me a lucky bastard. And it's much too late to die young now, or as Art 'Hurricane' Honeyman says, "I'm too old to die."

The country's in better shape than it has been in 30 years, so hoards of citizens vote for change.

A candidate visits a middle school and decries the deplorable state of education while standing before a bank of state-of-the-art Apple Mac computers.

A Republican-appointed Supreme Court majority stops a vote count that would have given the presidential victory to the Democrat.

We should have had a run-off election. Just the two candidates.

Bush is almost too easy. Problem is he has many morons on his side. Government by morons is so easy to say...but of course these folks aren't really "morons." I say that reluctantly, but I must acknowledge that these people with whom I disagree on so many things are nonetheless my neighbors, peers, fellow citizens. Hell, they're in charge. They must be gotten along with. We are not Jews & Arabs, Protestants & Papists — at least we aren't killing each other full scale yet.

I tell myself I need to polish my delivery, hone my logic, debating skills, to learn to be more convincing, to change minds — but then I think: How arrogant of me it is to think I know the right way. Aren't I doing the same thing as those whose views I oppose when I do assume I am right and they are wrong, so I need to change their minds? Who am I to do this? What makes me think I'm right and they're wrong?

Thinking deeper in these categories (to the best of my ability) I consider individual issues and come yet again to the reason I am right and they are wrong is that my philosophy does not dictate what they may or may not do in their private lives— so long as they don't bother anyone else.

"Yes," said my conservative acquaintance, "but with abortion you're talking about another life."

And I still ponder just how to answer this assertion. Almost any response is bound for failure in terms of moving such a person from their viewpoint even the tiniest bit.

The only thing I'm able to come up with is this: "You may not use your definitions for my life and the elements in it. You may not demand that I adhere to the same religious or moral standards that you do or that I believe in the same cosmographies. What constitutes a viable human life is still a matter of opinion rather than scientific fact."

And there is where we differ: I am not trying to push my views on anyone asking to be left alone. "YESSS!" she hissed, "to be left alone to kill babies."

I'm tired of pushing this rock up the mountain only to have it roll back every time.

So just how much more angst at having a simian President can I afford? How many more of my increasingly precious moments shall I squander fretting?

I've come to believe that whoever it was who said that people get the governments they deserve was right. Hell, I knew



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THINK GLOBALLY SHOP LOCALLY.



AN ARTIST'S OBSERVATIONS OF NATURE IN & AROUND THE UPPER LEFT CORNER OF OREGON

By SALLY L. LOCKAFF
LEFT COAST GROUP

GREENS & OTHER LEPERS

Think globally, act locally.
~Rene Dubos

Many friends told me months before the Presidential election of 2000 that if I were to vote for Ralph Nader and Winona LaDuke on the Green Party ticket, they would hold me personally responsible if Republican George W. Bush Jr. was elected instead of Democrat and Clinton heir Albert Gore.

I argued that the two party system does not represent the incredible variety and tenor of American politics and that especially in recent years, as population and cultural diversity have multiplied immensely, the two parties seem to be merging into a single megaparty dominated by a country club apartheid of wealth, property and multinational corporations. A new party is necessary to represent the unrepresented majority that does not possess equivalent wealth, property or power; and also to reflect gender and racial equity — several new parties! My choice of the Green Party is that it is an international party, active in 80 countries, and its origins and organization are grassroots.

We must have an international party if we are to have a global economy dominated by amalgamated megacorporations which are fundamentally interlocking commercial empires that command vast wealth, capacity and political influence. Parochial politics are inadequate to the global power structures that are forming beyond the shores of the USA yet are dominated by its economic and military power. In a world community political parties as well as labor unions, medical/health and environmental organizations must think and act globally, and the Green Party offers the best opportunity for the globalization of political power, in particular for the representation of the immense and rapidly expanding global underclass.

The paradox is that the USA simultaneously acts worldwide as the New Rome, intruding incessantly into global political and economic affairs while rejecting global influence in its own internal affairs. One opinion originating in Europe but perhaps held all over the world is that American Presidential elections in particular should be a worldwide suffrage.

As Election Day 2000 neared and the Presidential race rapidly narrowed, the Green Party became a focus of both major party campaigns, the Republicans encouraging votes for Ralph Nader in hopes of taking away votes from Al Gore, and the Democrats insisting that every vote for Nader was a vote for George Bush.

Now is not the time for a 3rd party, my liberal/leftist friends insisted — the specter of a Bush victory too threatening to contemplate: all the hard-won victories of racial and gender equity, abortion rights, environmental protection (paltry as they are) undone.

The closer Election Day 2000 and the possibility of an extremely narrow margin between Bush and Gore, the more frantic and abusive my liberal-minded friends became about my intention to vote the Green ticket. I was maligned as an "imbecile" and a "swine" (in so many words), and more than one person avowed to sever our friendship.

Virtually everyone I know who intended to vote Green, women and men, suffered similar intimidation and intolerance for exercising political independence and personal choice. Among Greens themselves the close election created a rift between older voters who were appalled by a Bush Presidency and decided to vote their fears rather than their hearts, and young Greens who kept the faith.

I think of the John Anderson syndrome of 1980 — At least half of the people who claimed to prefer Anderson over the two party candidates (Reagan and Carter) but did not vote for him because they said he didn't have a chance of winning, could probably have elected him by a huge majority if they hadn't choked on their pragmatism.

I wonder how our friends will treat us Greens for keeping faith now that Bush has squeaked into the Presidency (perhaps the USA's truly first nonelected President, except for Gerald Ford appointed to pardon Nixon, both also Republicans). They were right that most Nader votes siphoned votes from Gore and other Democrats, although many Greens voted only because of the 3rd party option.

Are Greens going to be isolated as lepers (historically) or furiously purged like medieval Jews held responsible for the Plagues rather than rats (and fleas)?

And how will we leftist/liberals react to the Bush Presidency? Are we going to shirk back out of political involvement, hide and not be noticed? Kiss the jackboots — go along to get along?

Or will we show true political and personal mettle and act aggressively with collective and individual strength and resoluteness against the 'Iron Heel Age' we alarmingly expect ahead for the nation and world?

~MICHAEL McCUSKER