

Can-West Global National Post Dying!

CanWest's albatross on the balance sheet

DEREK DeCLOET
Globe and Mail Update

In the final analysis, it was always going to end up this way — with Leonard Asper scrounging for a few desperate dollars and learning that on Bay Street, friends and money are hardest to find when you really need them.

CanWest Global, the largest owner of television, newspapers and radio in Canada, has reached the wall. Maybe it can stay out of bankruptcy protection. Maybe, somehow, the Asper family can keep a grip on their once-great, but now tattered, company. The former might still be possible, but with each passing week, the latter gets

more improbable. As the CEO and the controlling shareholder, Mr. Asper will get the most blame. But he had plenty of help.

Every addict has his enablers; debt addicts do, too. CanWest, starting up at a \$4-billion pile of bonds and bank loans, is in a financial bind because it never fixed its balance sheet after the high-priced deal in 2000 for most of Conrad Black's Canadian newspapers. And it never fixed the balance sheet because of an awful combination of poor timing, rotten luck, blundering and bad advice.

Among his failings as chief executive officer, Mr. Asper's greatest might be that he put too much faith in investment bankers. Just like a lot of other people, come to think of

it, before the bubble burst. If the beginning of the decline can be traced back to that expensive dive into the newspaper business, Mr. Asper can hardly be faulted for that decision. The deal was his father's, and the son, then 36, was still a green CEO-in-training. Besides, the Aspers were hardly the only ones to go for pricey deals. Quebecor backed an acquisition for Videotron. BCE paid \$2.3-billion for CTV and billions more for Teleglobe. Each of those deals looked bad a year or two later.

The difference was that those companies set to fix their debt problems with alacrity as the markets improved. CanWest never attacked debt with the same urgency. Buying Alliance Atlantis for

\$2.3-billion in that complicated deal — renting Goldman Sachs' balance sheet to do it — was not the problem. It made sense for CanWest to get into specialty cable, even if the cost was high. Even before that deal had been approved by the CRTC, tremors were starting to emerge from the U.S. economy. CanWest had two obvious options for repaying debt. It could sell its majority stake in Australia's Ten Network or a portion of its Canadian newspapers. Both businesses were already publicly traded. Together, the two would have raised most of the money needed to pay for Alliance.

If CanWest slips into creditor protection — many will point to Mr. Asper's stubbornness in hanging on to Austra-

lia. But the decision to repurchase the newspaper trust, just before advertising went off a cliff, was nearly as damaging because it sent \$500-million in cash out the door just as the Alliance debt was coming on the books. Who told him that was a good idea?

What you see here is a pattern — not just of making bad deals, but a pattern of thinking, or, if you want to be less charitable, of hubris.

Like the person who has too much pride in his home and when selling, even in the face of evidence that the market is worsening, Mr. Asper could never bring himself to shed a trophy asset.

McDonald's: No workers' comp for employee shot while protecting patron

By Muriel Kane
Fast food giant McDonald's has denied workers compensation benefits to a minimum wage employee who was shot when he ejected a customer who had been beating a woman inside the restaurant.

A representative for McDonald's workers compensation plan explained that "we have denied this claim in its entirety as it is our

opinion that Mr. Haskett's injuries did not arise out of or within the course and scope of his employment."

Nigel Haskett, then aged 21, was working at a McDonald's in Little Rock, when he saw a patron, identified as Perry Kennon, smacking a woman in the face. A surveillance video of the incident, which had been posted to YouTube, was taken down after McDonald's charged copyright infringement, but according to written descriptions of the video, Haskett tackled Kennon, threw him out, and then stood by the door to prevent him from reentering.

Kennon went to his car, returned with a gun, and shot Haskett multiple times. Haskett staggered back into the restaurant and collapsed. Kennon, with a long criminal record, was arrested a few days later and charged with first-degree battery. The judge at his arraignment praised Haskett as a hero. Haskett has since undergone 3 abdominal surgeries and has incurred over \$300,000 in medical bills. McDonald's has declined to comment on their reasons for refusing his claim, because the case is still pending before the Workers Compensation

Commission, but according to Haskett's lawyer, Philip M. Wilson:

"McDonald's position now is that during 30-minute orientation Mr. Haskett and the other individuals going through the orientation were supposedly told that in the event of a robbery or anything like a robbery not to be a hero and simply call 911. Mr. Haskett denies that anything like that was even mentioned during orientation or at any time during his employment with McDonald's."

McDonald's may be on shaky legal ground in their attempt to deny benefits. As explained by the blog "Joe's Union Review," courts have repeatedly ruled that injuries incurred in the course of "good samaritan" acts while on the job are entitled to compensation, especially if they result in good will towards the employer.

"McDonald's is really living up to its reputation as an evil empire," another blog comments. "They're no longer merely all about moving in on the little guy, or clogging kids big chunkers, but are also now turning on their employees."

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Urban Warfare Drills Linked To Economic Rage

Expectancy of riots leads authorities to prepare for mass civil unrest

Paul Joseph Watson/Prison Planet.com

Urban warfare training drills are taking place across the U.S. as top analysts as well as officials predict a potential "summer of rage" across Europe and America as civil unrest from the economic fallout.

Earlier this month, 150 U.S. troops from the U.S. Special Operations Command whizzed around the streets of New Orleans in military helicopters and even dropped bombs in what officials described as a "training event".

An Iowa National Guard training exercise in Arcadia, Iowa, scheduled for April was originally billed as an "invasion" before public opposition caused the drill to be scaled back. The exercise included Guard troops patrolling streets, searching houses and confiscating firearms.

No less than 2,200 U.S. Marines were also involved in urban operations training in Richmond, Virginia, throughout January, drills that involved landing troops in populated areas, allowing military pilots to "familiarize themselves with the area."

Military choppers hovered precariously low over parking lots as citizens were acclimated to seeing active duty military assets engaged in law enforcement style activities.

Watch a clip filmed by a startled Richmond resident who wasn't even aware that Marines were conducting drills due to scant forewarning on behalf of authorities and the media.

Are such drills really for the purpose of preparing troops for foreign combat zones? Undoubtedly - but other factors indicate that the drills may very well also be aimed at preparing troops for dealing with mass civil unrest as the economic crisis worsens.

There's no question that U.S. authorities have

been closely observing riots that have toppled governments in Iceland and Latvia and also threatened to do so in several other European countries. The fact that they have contingency plans in place to deal with such scenarios should they unfold in America cannot be disputed.

Indeed, before a media exposé forced them into a denial, Northcom revealed that one of the duties of at least 20,000 active duty troops that are being placed inside the U.S. would be dealing with "civil unrest and crowd control".

Meanwhile, millions of dollars that were set aside as part of the so-called bailout have in fact been handed over to local police departments and spent on military tools like armored vehicles, unmanned aerial surveillance drones and high-powered firearms for SWAT teams.

In addition, with many predicting that Mexico is

would likely be used to detain illegal immigrants as well as rioting American citizens.

The prospect of widespread rioting at some stage this year is a scenario feared by many.

Police in the UK are preparing for a "summer of rage" and mass protests against the mishandling of the economic crisis by the government.

The U.S. Army War College released a white paper called **Known Unknowns: Unconventional Strategic Shocks in Defense Strategy Development**. The report warned that the military must be prepared for a "violent, strategic dislocation inside the United States," which could be provoked by "unforeseen economic collapse," "purposeful domestic resistance," "pervasive public health emergencies" or "loss of functioning political and legal order." The "widespread civil violence," the document said, "would force the defense establishment to reorient priorities in extremis to defend basic domestic order and human security."

Numerous other public figures, including Senator Christopher Dodd, leading economist Nouriel Roubini, top trend researcher Gerald Celente, the head of the International Monetary Fund, the head of the World Trade Organization, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, former national security director Zbigniew Brzezinski, and Director of National Intelligence Dennis C. Blair have all warned of coming civil unrest and global instability.

Considering the expectancy for riots, it would be naive to dismiss the notion that the increasing amount of



urban warfare drills taking place across the U.S. are not at least partially to prepare troops to undertake law enforcement duties should civil unrest as a consequence of the economic fallout threaten a collapse in social order.

Monsanto in Illinois: Homeland Security and USDA Plan Attacks Against Animals

From: Dee Nicholson
Do not sign email petitions, WRITE (and sign) a letter to your representative... no postage required... opposing this horror! If you don't make a noise, there will be no choice in what you eat, because all livestock will be patented and genetically altered. This is far more important than you may know: the consumption of genetically modified foodstuffs is already proving to be dangerous and damaging to living organisms. This is literally genocide on the hoof... and the target is YOU AND ME.

No joke. If you're smart, you won't hesitate to become aware of what is planned, and you won't be so naive as to think there is nothing you can do. Your silence, however, is your consent, so remember for whom you speak with your choice: Yourself, your loved ones, friends and neighbours, your children, your grandchildren, and all your generations to follow... and theirs as well.

In this case, we will reap what we allow Monsanto to sow.

From: Croft Woodruff
Subject: Monsanto in Illinois: Homeland Security and USDA Plan Attacks Against Animals

Monsanto in Illinois: Homeland Security and USDA Plan Attacks Against Animals
By Linn Cohen-Cole

Editor's note: This is documented fact. First the grain, veggies and now the meat. Monsanto, in collusion with the FDA, USDA, etc. - in other words, the bad guys - are set to take over every aspect of food supply.

Here is a collaborating article from straight from the FDA site.

Below is a letter to livestock producers in Illinois asking them and others to contact the Governor's office to ask to be allowed to be present at a meeting between

Homeland Security and the USDA which involves NAIS and "surge capacity" under Homeland Security to attack and seize and destroy - "depopulate" an area of animals. This meeting is about what will be done TO THEM but they are shut out.

Many of you already know about Monsanto's "rural cleansing" in southern Illinois of 200 - 400 farmers for using Steve Hixon as their seed cleaner. One is being sued for \$400,000. Do the math. In 2006, Monsanto made \$160,000,000 in this Mafia-like extortion.

Many of you already know that Monsanto was involved in the development of NAIS which, to me, appears to be the set up on the animal side, to do what Monsanto has done with seeds - eliminate normal animals and substitute genetically engineered animals. I've written about how Homeland Security is set to military type warrantless raids against farms to seize and destroy animals crops and equipment using "animal disease" as the excuse - no due process, no means of checking to see if any of the animals are fine, no way to stop the slaughter. I've also written how the USDA has already proved it operates this way.

Homeland Security is the centralization of power bequeathed to us by Bush's "War on Terror," something many believe was not based on an enemy attack at all. Amnesty International is calling for an elimination of laws that were passed under Bush's "War on Terror" justification. NSA-spying is one such abuse.

NAIS is NSA-spying on steroids - imagine paying for the equipment used to spy on you, yourself, having to keep it up, having to let the government know in advance of every move your animals make (a trail ride, for instance, your child bringing a pet chicken to school), and to have to file paperwork within 24 hours afterwards or face penalties so draconian, the second infraction if your chicken crosses the road and you fail to report it on time, is \$500,000.

NAIS is backed up by Homeland Security. Both are connected to Monsanto and, as is typical of Monsanto,

both are resulting in terror for farmers.

Food and Water Watch, the Organic Consumers Association, the Center for Food Safety, Public Citizen, the Campaign for Liberty, Amnesty International, the ACLU, and every farming, food, anti-GMO, animal rights, economic justice groups in this country must come together and with many other organizations, to need to demand NAIS be eliminated entirely. Homeland Security regulations are in place to provide the required destruction of normal animals and small farmers that Monsanto needs for taking over with genetically engineered and patented animals and making them the only option. This is happening in Asia already with poultry as small farmers are being destroyed for the benefit of multinationals. Biotech companies are ready now to replace all poultry in the world with their patented, thus privatized "bird flu-resistant" super chickens.

Homeland Security is the corporate muscle behind the takeover of the US food supply. And the liquidation of our farmers is long planned - by executives. Homeland Security must be stripped of warrantless, military, search-seize-destroy power over our small farmers and all of us.

So, in addition to this horrific meeting of the USDA (run by Vilsack, Monsanto's crony) and Homeland Security (also corrupted by Monsanto) to which no farmers are allowed though they are the targets, in southern Illinois, in a six county area, right now, hundreds of crop farmers are living in terror of what is going to happen to them, no longer speaking to neighbors, because Monsanto people lied to them and told them their neighbors turned them in or that Hixon did.

Meanwhile, the Speaker of the House in Illinois who just pushed through an ethics bill because of the lack of all ethical there has a staff filled with Monsanto lobbyists.

This is Obama's state. Why is Monsanto so comfortable taking over there? Because Obama overrode im-

mense public objections and put in Vilsack, Monsanto's boy? It is time to make him responsible for his agencies and stop this assault on American farming.

WHERE IS THE TRANSPARENCY OBAMA PROMISED?

It is interesting that this closed - to those affected - meeting is occurring immediately after Vilsack (Monsanto) just promised transparency.

As you read this, realize that the people posting this out have been doing immense and difficult work now for years to stop NAIS, are fighting for their lives, battling agencies without our help, while being lied to, coerced, threatened, forced, and even involuntarily and/or without their knowledge being forced into NAIS and Premises ID.

Read this message to livestock producers in Illinois to get a sense of how totalitarian things have become and how shut out the public is from decisions that affect it directly and threaten its livelihoods and even existence.

All calls, emails and letters you can send to let the Governor of Illinois know how you feel about this outrage and to demand that the public be allowed into this meeting of two abominably corrupted agencies - the USDA and Homeland Security - would be appreciated. And if you are members of any of the organization listed above, please tell them you expect them to demand a complete halt to NAIS and to seek with as many organizations as possible, a criminal investigation into congressional and governmental agency corruption into USDA, FDA, EPA, and Homeland Security regulations that threaten the very existence of our REAL American farmers.

Every farmer and person in the entire country who has even a single farm animal - even a chicken or pet duck, is in trouble - and at a time of unemployment and impending food shortages when just a few chickens and a small goat could actually provide the protein needed for a family.

on the verge of collapse as a result of the economic crisis and the out of control drug war, Texas officials have already established contingency plans to deal with an influx of immigrants, a program that would only address "law enforcement concerns" and not humanitarian needs.

HR 645, otherwise known as the National Emergency Centers Establishment Act, would mandate the expansion of FEMA detention camps which

devices and Pulsed Energy Projectiles (PEPs) which hurl plasma at crowds, causing pain and temporary paralysis.

These weapons were originally intended for the urban battlegrounds of the Third World. But if Barack Obama fails to reactivate the ailing US economy, they may well find themselves deployed in the United States,' writes Carr. 'The news from Wall Street that US financiers awarded themselves a staggering \$18.4bn in bonuses in 2008 hardly helps the new president's cause.'

Next time your switch on your Raytheon radar, watch out!

drills taking place across the U.S. are not at least partially to prepare troops to undertake law enforcement duties should civil unrest as a consequence of the economic fallout threaten a collapse in social order.

Sci-fi Raytheon riot control

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What has Raytheon, the USA company that made radar equipment for yachts, got in common with sci-fi riot control?

Two years ago the UK Ministry of Defence's Strategic Trends depicted an alarming futuristic scenario in which middle-class radicals could engage in revolutionary activity with violent 'flashmobs', threatening the authorities with lawless disorder.

There are growing signs that these predictions may turn true. Remember the Greek riots following the police shooting of a teenager? Recently, police confronted demonstrators protesting deteriorating economic conditions and political corruption in Latvia, Lithuania and Bul-

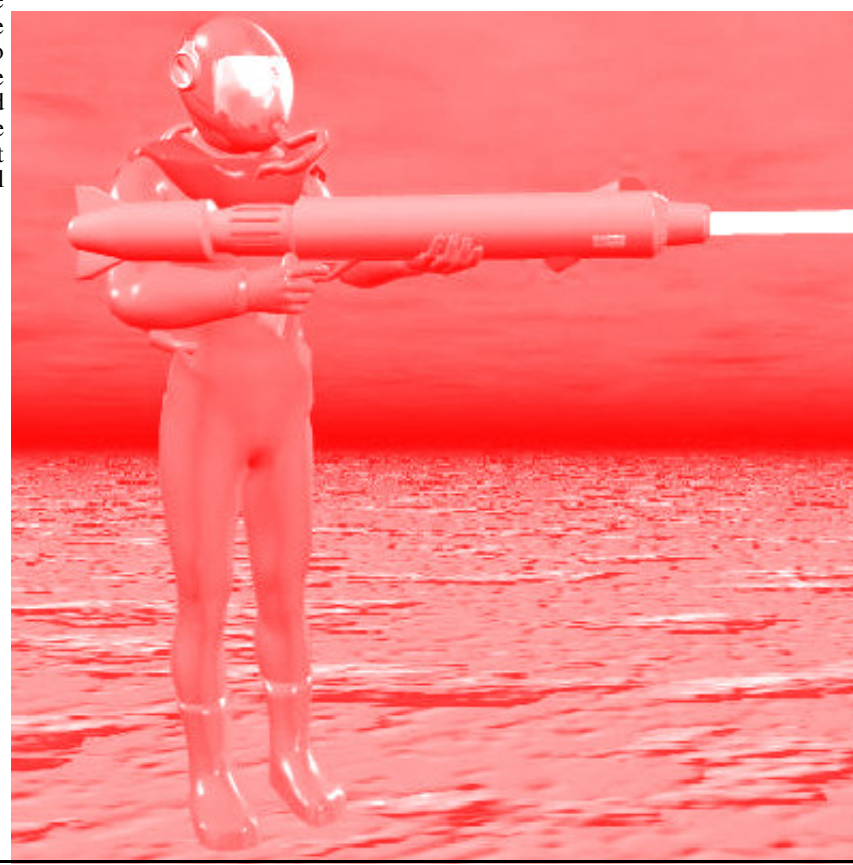
garia. There have been smaller demonstrations in Spain, Turkey, Denmark and Italy.

These disturbances are another consequence of the bursting of the speculative capitalist bubble and the illusion of unlimited prosperity that once sustained it,' says journalist Matthew Carr. 'The US military sees the modern city as the battleground of the 21st century. Now it's reported that the Pentagon is experimenting with an array of weapons, including the Active Denial System (ADS), a microwave 'ray gun' designed by Raytheon, which directs unbearable heat on the skin from a 2km distance and is specifically designed for crowd dispersal.

Other ongoing projects include acoustic

that if more junk accumulates, the likelihood of similar collisions — currently very rare — will increase by 2050.

To Johnson, the "true solution" in the long run is to go get the junk — or push it away



Air Force to Unleash 'Gorgon Stare' on Squirting Insurgents

By Noah Shachtman Email February 19, 2009 1:48:27 PM Categories: Drones

Gorgon Stare The award for best -- and creepiest -- military name of the week? No contest, that's "Gorgon Stare," the Air Force's \$150 million project to outfit its latest spy drones with super high-powered cameras.

By next year, 10 Reaper unmanned aircraft should have a Gorgon Stare sensor, which will film an area, two-and-a-half miles around, from 12 different angles.

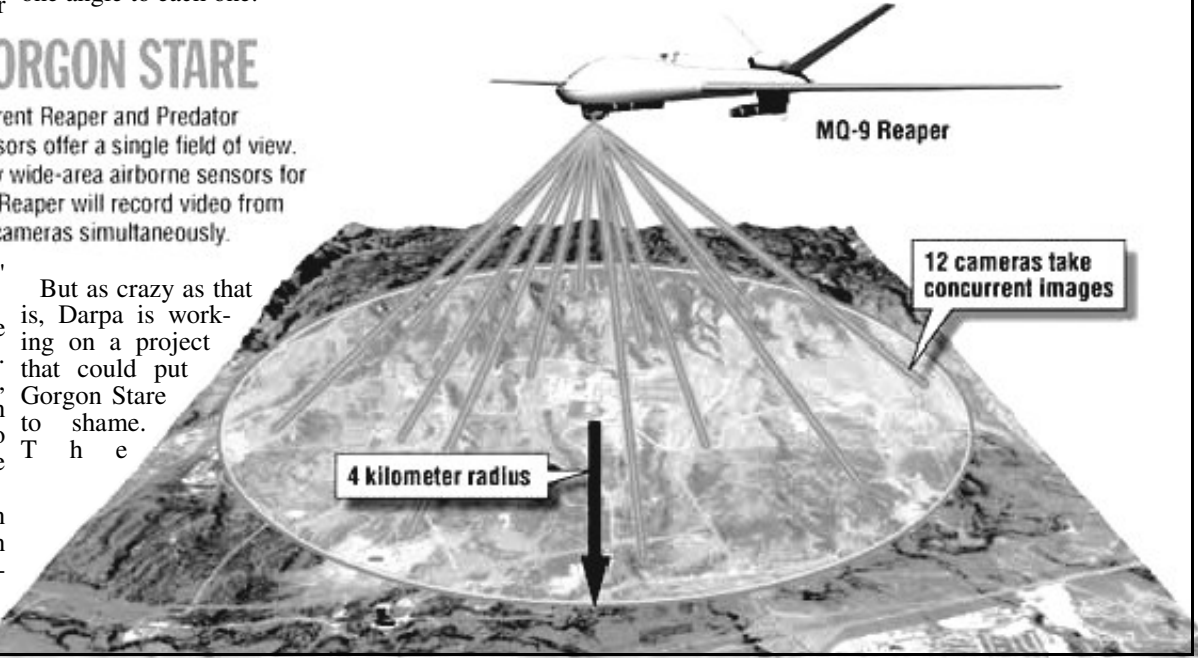
"Gorgon Stare will allow a combat controller on the ground, a commander at headquarters and an intelligence officer back in the U.S. all to choose a different angle from the same Reaper," according to Air Force Times' Michael Hoffman.

The Reaper — and its little drone brother, the Predator — already have video cameras, of course. Gorgon Stare won't replace those sensors. Instead, it's meant to supplement the full-motion video with a jumpier, but wider, view. That'll allow airmen to 'see the bigger picture' and have a better idea where to point full-motion video sensors," Hoffman notes.

Reapers and MQ-1 Predators are often called on to track vehicles and hover over buildings to watch for "squirters," or insurgents running out of buildings during U.S. operations. Airmen controlling the sensors sometimes lose track of those vehi-

cles or squirters if they drive or run out of view too fast.

Gorgon Stare will be invaluable in such instances, Bower said. Even if a vehicle drives out of the view of the full-motion video sensor, it will still be within Gorgon Stare's range. Even if 12 squirters run in 12 directions, Gorgon Stare could dedicate one angle to each one.



Experts ponder space junk problem
By VERONIKA OLEKSYN Associated Press
Feb. 19, 2009, 9:15AM
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Space Junk Problem

ging up the orbit around the Earth.

Some suggest a cosmic cleanup is the way to go. Others say time, energy and funds are better spent on minimizing the likelihood of future crashes by improving information

investigation, generated space junk that could circle the Earth and threaten other satellites for the next 10,000 years; it added to the already worrying amount of debris surrounding the planet.

ploring ways of extracting space debris from Earth orbit.

Some of the suggestions sound pretty spaced out.

Crowther, an expert on space debris and so-

Richard Crowther, the chief British delegate to the meeting, suggested extracting debris from space was costly and risky causing more collisions or explosions that, in turn, would generate more debris.

"very good" about making its data publicly available.

To Brian Weeden, technical consultant at the nonprofit Secure World Foundation, the ideal scenario would involve the creation of a global network that would funnel data on the whereabouts of space debris into a clear-

ting up uniform standards to prevent future collisions far above the planet.

Launched in January, the 50 million euro (\$64 million) program — dubbed Space Situational Awareness — aims to increase information for scientists on the ground about the estimated 13,000 satellites and