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Americans_Think_We_Have_the_World's_Best_College_s._We_Don't_Kevin_Carney_NYT_June_28,_2014.docx;
As_Iraq_fractures_Kurds_find_best_opportunity_yet_to_gain_leverage_ABIGAIL_HAUSLOHNER_&_BEN_VAN_HEUVELEN_July_4,_2014.docx;
The_New_Map_of_the_Middle_East_Jeffrey_Goldberg_The_Atlantic_July_19,_2014.docx;
U.S._Seen_as_Biggest_Oil_Producer_After_Overtaking_Saudi_Arabia_Grant_Smith_Bloomberg_July_4,_2014.docx;
5_of_the_biggest_corporate_fines_ever_WSJ_October_19,_2014.docx;
Eileen_Ford_diesm,_her_agency_set_standards_for_the_modeling_industry_LA_Times_July_11,_2014.docx

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DEAR FRIEND.....



I had heard of **Dr. Vandana Shiva** but never paid much attention and only remembered her because of tilaka on her forehead and her distinctive Indian manner of dress. Then earlier this week I came across an article – ***The Surprising Leading Contributor to Pollution: Agriculture*** – by Dr. Joseph Mercola who on first glance looked like a huckster of Indian organic herbal supplements. Except that on this blog he had a web link to a talk that Dr. Vandana Shiva gave earlier this year at the **Food Otherwise conference** in the Netherlands on why we need another food system another agriculture system. As background to my reading/research for interesting items to cover on **Weekly Offerings**, I let it play. Dr. Vandana Shiva's premise is that we need another food system because the current one was never meant to be – *“every tool of the current system was designed for war.”* **WOW.....** *“Pesticides were designed for the concentration camps. The early generation. Then they were designed for biological warfare and chemical warfare.”* **WOW again.** And she continued, that it was only after the wrap-up of the War that some of these same war industries transformed themselves into an agro-chemical industry.

Background: The first synthetic fertilizers were made in the same explosive factories. And this is why the next time that you read about a terrorist attack, whether it be Afghanistan, India, Nairobi or Oklahoma chances are it will be a fertilizer bomb. These are weapons of war and they are also toxics and poisons. And Dr. Vandana Shiva says that we need a food system without poisons. If there is a single pesticide almost everyone can name, it's DDT. DDT was one of the first chemicals in widespread use as a pesticide. Following World War II, it was promoted as a wonder-chemical, the simple solution to pest problems large and small. Today, nearly 40 years after DDT was banned in the U.S., we continue to live with its long-lasting effects:

- **Food supplies:** USDA found DDT breakdown products in 60% of heavy cream samples, 42% of kale greens, 28% of carrots and lower percentages of many other foods.

- **Body burden:** DDT breakdown products were found in the blood of 99% of the people tested by CDC.
- **Health impacts:** Girls exposed to DDT before puberty are 5 times more likely to develop breast cancer in middle age, according to the President's Cancer panel.

Banned for agricultural uses worldwide by the **2001 Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants**, the use of DDT is still permitted in small quantities in countries that claim that they need it. The treatment of DDT under the Stockholm Convention is strongly supported around the world.

Rachel Carson highlighted the dangers of DDT in her groundbreaking 1962 book *Silent Spring*. Carson used DDT to tell the broader story of the disastrous consequences of the overuse of insecticides, and raised enough concern from her testimony before Congress to trigger the establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Her work attracted outrage from the pesticide industry and others. Her credibility as a scientist was attacked, and she was derided as "hysterical," despite her fact-based assertions and calm and scholarly demeanor. Following the hearings, President Kennedy convened a committee to review the evidence Carson presented. The committee's review completely vindicated her findings.

One of the new EPA's first acts was to ban DDT, due to both concerns about harm to the environment and the potential for harm to human health. There was also evidence linking DDT with severe declines in bald eagle populations due to thinning eggshells. Since DDT was banned in the U.S., bald eagles have made a dramatic recovery.

Recently, Carson's work has again been targeted by conservative groups. Capitalizing on the iconic status of DDT, these groups are promoting widespread use of the chemical for malaria control as part of a broader effort to manufacture doubt about the dangers of pesticides, and to promote their anti-regulatory, free market agenda while attempting to undermine and roll back the environmental movement's legacy.

Many DDT promoters are also in the business of denying climate change. Attacks on Carson from groups like The Competitive Enterprise Institute and Africa Fighting Malaria portray DDT as the simple solution to malaria, and blame Carson for "*millions of deaths in Africa*." Many of these DDT promoters are also in the business of denying climate change and defended the tobacco industry by denying the health harms of smoking.

Today, the agro-chemical industry is unleashing more than 6000 untested chemicals every year. We should understand that the agro-chemical industry for the most part controls government through its lobbying, the media through its PR and advertising and university research through its grant programs. Dr. Vandana Shiva and others say that we can't afford the continuation of these toxics.

As importantly, an agro system designed from inputs that came from war can only function as a monoculture. If all that I am thinking about is the nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium we will only grow crops that can deal with these fixed doses. Whereas if I am growing a corn and a bean, the bean is fixing nitrogen for me and the two can grow together. As soon as you apply synthetic fertilizers plants start to compete. In India farmers have been growing pigeon pea and ragi plants as companions for centuries. The ragi gives you the calcium and iron and the fiber and the pigeon pea give you the

protein and nitrogen to the soil. And when you use synthetic fertilizers only one crop will do well because it doesn't allow the cooperation of the soil and the cooperation of the plant to play their natural roles. Every living system is a self-organizing system. And this is what makes living systems living. And when anything is self-organized it is based on cooperation. Whereas, any system that is externally organized must become competitive. And this applies to external input systems in agriculture and it applies to external inputs in society.

Industrial agriculture is destroying nature's gifts of soil and biodiversity water and even the air and the climate. Agriculture is water intensive. 70% of water used today globally is for irrigation/agriculture except that today more and more of the water table is polluted with nitrates creating dead zones in rivers water bodies and even our oceans. Those mono-cultures based on toxics are destroying biodiversity both by displacing crops and their varieties and species. We use to eat 8500 species of plants as human beans. 2000 varieties of rice, 1500 varieties of mangos and more than 1500 varieties of wheat. Experts estimate that 75% of biodiversity has disappeared in agriculture because of mono-culture. And we are on our way to 90% as Argentina and the Brazilian Amazon is being destroyed at a un precedent rate. And chemical sprays destroy more and it is suggested that the recent 75% destruction of the bee colonies is also part of the collateral damage. The spring of round-up for round-up ready crops is killing the milkweed which support the monarch butterflies and pollen off Bt-corn is killing monarch butterfly larvae. So it is not a surprise that 75% of the monarch butterflies are gone from the Midwest as they have migrated to Mexico. Animals is the same. And trees don't exist in industrial agriculture. Because with chemicals and largest scaled mono-cultures come mechanization. And every perennial that we need as hedge roads and field bounds are seen as an interference for the large tractors, harvesters and other large mono-cultural machinery. So any large scaled industrial farming system is a desert in every meaningful way.

Living soil has millions and billions of organisms creating our soil fertility. As Charles Darwin said, "*no other species has done so much for this planet as the earthworm.*" As they create our soil fertility by turning our earth into dams so water can be store. And by do so, they are doing the work of a tractor, a dam and a fertilizer factory, all at the same time. And today we dumping urea to kill earthworms. Urea is essentially a salt and almost all synthetic fertilizers are based on salt. And today it is estimated that 75% of the soils in the world have been deprived of their organic matter, their living humus, their soil organisms, they have been compacted and of course because they haven't been able to aggregate this is leading to soil erosion.

Experts claim that if you add together industrial agriculture and transportation of industrial trade, they are contributing 40% to the earth's greenhouse gases. This includes the carbon dioxide emissions from mechanization, long distant transport, concentration of cattle and other livestock as well as the nitrogen oxides that come from synthetic fertilizers. And nitrogen oxides is more than 300 times more destabilizing for the climate. For this reason Dr. Vandana Shiva says that industrialized agriculture is contributing 70% to the ecological devastation to the planet. And it survives because the myth is believed that the world can't be fed without industrialized agriculture. And I call it a myth because today in 2014, 70% of the food consumed by the entire 7 plus billion inhabitants comes from small farms. 30% of the world's food comes from industrialized agriculture, yet 75% of ecological devastation comes from it. Think about it if this system is allowed to spread to destroy the remaining 25% of the planet, will we get more food or less food? A destroyed planet will give no food at all. Dead soils, disappearing waters, no seeds, plus a totally chaotic climate is a recipe for disaster if not human extinction. Remember this industrialized agriculture mono-culture is really only 60 years old and it has already destroyed 75% of our ecology. How much longer do you think that it will take to destroy the remaining 25%? Other species will survive, but the life as we know it today, the human species may have screwed itself.

No species has deliberately designed its own extinction but through industrial agriculture we are. It is in the design of industrial agriculture because its first's creed is to place profits over product and as a result it is destroying the base of farming, ecological systems, as well as not being a productive and efficient use of resources. Industrial agriculture uses 10 units of energy to produce 1 unit of food, whereas ecological systems use 1 unit of food to produce 2 units of food.

The mainstay of food security is and should be small farms and urban gardens. Food can only be cared for on a small scale. Food can only be cared for in decentralized systems. The centralized system of production and with that centralizing, the centralized system of distribution by its very necessity means waste. There is no waste in living systems. There is no waste in ecological farming systems. There is no waste in local food systems. I grow many crops all of them are used, some for the soil, some for the cow. In India nothing gets wasted because the cow is always waiting. Or the earthworms are waiting. It only becomes waste when food is sent long distances and stored in centralized systems as in the large store houses/silos in the Punjab. Or if it is taken by Walmart. Because Walmart will throw away half because the apples aren't exactly the right size. A South African told me that overnight they had to change the trees, variety of their apples because Walmart changed the size of their trucks. And as you know that "*flavor savor*" was designed for transport not for eating as so much food is now. Breeding today is for trucks not for human beings. How long can it sit on a truck? Then it has to be the identical size. That is why they didn't like the round tomatoes and Berkeley had a whole study on tomatoes for packaging and transport.

Farmers should grow as much diverse crops possible and people should eat as much diverse foods as they can. And when told that organic is too costly Dr. Vandana Shiva says "*not for the farmer who grew it as they have the first right to organic food.*" And when you measure, not the mono culture which is yield, the yield per acre, which is repeatedly talked about because the yield is a single commodity that leaves the farm. So the grain of wheat is measured as yield but not the straw that should stay on the farm. The corn is measured as yield, but not the straw of corn. So what should be recycled to the farm is treated as waste and isn't allowed to return to the soil. As a result the mono culture is harvested by combine harvesters, which leave a huge stalk which they farmers have to burn. As a result a bio-diverse farm produces more across the board. Also when you have diverse farming at least one of the crops will thrive/survive nature's challenges. Whereas, when you have only one crop with external input and the perfect requirement of water, two little rain, too much means disaster for everything.

Also in the end what matters is now how much we eat but the nutritional content in the food that we eat. And our food has been systemically de-nutritionaified because of the application of nitrogen phosphate potassium and no other micro-nutrients and trace elements are going into the soil, our plants are deprived, our food is deprived and therefore we are deprived of potassium, magnesium, phosphorus, iron and zinc. We forget that our plants need zinc, soils need zinc and humans need zinc. Our current system is wiping out nutrition. First by wiping out biodiversity. Then by depleting the soil, plants and foods of their nutrients. And the focus of yield, yield, yield of single commodities, is creating huge deficiencies. If there are no greens in the fields, and pesticides like *Round-Up* kills everything green, our kids will have vitamin deficiencies. So the obvious solution is grow the greens again. We know the different foods that will provide the needed nutrients.

We have to change our current farming system. We have to work for greater biodiversity to produce more food and nutrition using up less of the earth's resources – a smaller foot print and a higher

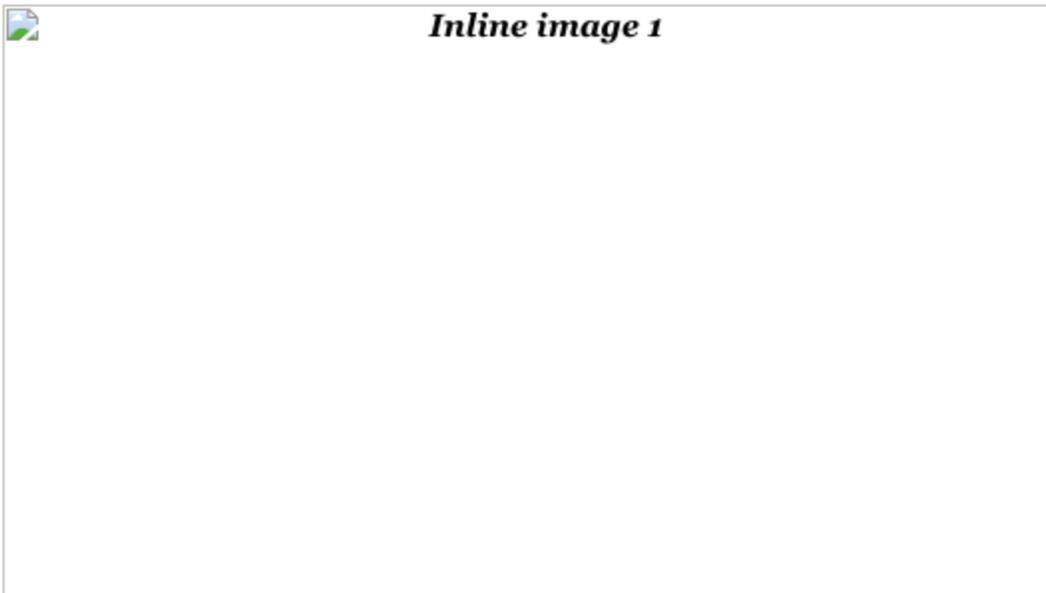
output. The current system has a huge footprint with a negative output. There is another reason why we have to move to a new food system. Industrial fertilization is the science of ignorance. It has no idea of the actual content of the soil. It science is really how to create a chemical, initial for war purposes and now for farming. A healthy eco farming system has no pest. Yes, it has insects but none will dominate. Whereas when pesticides are used, they not only destroy the targeted pests, they also destroy other insects, nutrients and organisms that keep the soil alive. It is the ignorance of the relationship between pests and predators. As well as these same pesticides and industrialize fertilization is harmful to humans in ways yet to be understood. Today's science is the chemistry of producing pesticides and not the science of pest control. So we got very violent tools from another science being applied to the wrong domain ignorant to how the food system works. The biotech industry gets angry with this assessment. But the truth is that today's biotech is centered on a stupid way to do things. It is a stupid to get iron in your food to do it through GMO bananas. It is a stupid way to get Vitamin A from golden rice. It is a stupid way to try and control food pests by putting toxic genes into plants through BT (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) toxins. Even more stupid is trying to control weeds through herbicide resistance. As a result during the last fifteen years half the farms in the United States are overtaken by super resistant weeds. And today they are engineering genes into corn with resistance to an ingredient in *Agent Orange*. And DOW is a big player again.

Today's genetic engineering is about patents. The big players are not really interested in genetic engineering other than generating patents because by adding a new gene the patent owner can say that they have invented a "novel crop" and then claim that they were the creators and owners and therefore they should be able to collect royalties. And Monsanto is on record that they wrote the Intellectual Property Rights Agreement in the Free Trade Treaty under WTO. Monsanto bragged that they were the patient, diagnostician, physician all in one. They defined the problem farmer safe seeds. The solution they offered is that it should now be a crime. As a result five companies control our food systems through patents. Life should not be controlled by any single company, individual or group. Life is created by life. And the evolution of biodiversity is the gift that we have received from nature and our ancestors. It wasn't invented the moment a toxic gene was put into it because that should be counted as pollution in terms of the biological integrity of that plant or species. We should not accept patents and GMOs and their dream of collecting tens of billions if not hundreds of dollars in royalties annually from seed sales. Please realize that seed is good only if it is diverse. Seed is only good if it evolves and has resilience. Seed is only good if it has quality, taste and nutrition. Uniformity is a wrong measure for biodiversity. Centralization is a wrong management system for seeds which can only grow to accordingly to the same soil, the climate, and therefore how can Norway and an island in Greece be imposed with the same standard by one agency in Brussels. Monopolies, centralization and mono-cultures go hand and hand and they are the instruments of power. Therefore we have to create instruments of democracy, diversity and resilience. And the final reason why we have to replace the old system is because it can only survive by establishing a totalitarian rule. A totalitarianism on our farms, where farmers cannot grow what they want, in the way they want it and locked into a type of slavery.

When Dr. Vandana Shiva started to fight for seed freedom she says it is because she saw a parallel. At that time it was Blacks that were captured in Africa and taken to work on the cotton fields of America and the sugarcane fields. And she says that it is all of life being enslaved. All species. And that we have never had an imperialism across the planet. And as a result more than 250,000 farmers in India have committed suicide. Dr. Vandana Shiva believes that the standardization of our fruits and vegetables, a tomato of that size, an apple of that size destroy local food systems. Which she calls sudo-hygiene. Over the past decades lobbyist are trying to get compulsory registration laws of seeds enacted in the EU, India and elsewhere, which like when you have a car you have to register it which makes sense. But if a farmer has a seed from their grandfather or someone else, under compulsory registration technically they might be forced to go to Brussels to receive permission to grow it. That compulsory registration is a totalitarianism instrument. This has already happened in the EU where family owned oak barrels in some wineries are no longer allowed because they can't use oak anymore

and have to use stainless steel. These are industrial mechanisms to impose industrial production. Whether it is at the farm in terms of food production or in processing. And what we are seeing is a very deep vertical integration of the food system. Five companies controlling seed. Five companies controlling grain trade. Five processors. And five retailers. Twenty companies all integrated with the other. And in California when there was an effort to enact labeling laws it wasn't just Monsanto that resisted Coke Cola and Pepsi Cola poured money into the resistance too because they use the high fructose corn syrup from the GM corn. Their combined efforts won. And they won in terms of force-feeding bad food to the people.

We know the harms that junk food is creating and the whole obesity issue. This vertical integration system with the combination of Pepsi and a Walmart and a Carrigan and Monsanto brings 1% to the farmer. 1% of the consumer Euro, Dollar or Rupee. And because it only brings 1% it throws people off the land. It makes small agriculture unviable because of injustice. If small farmers are only receiving 1% we should ask where is the other 99% going in terms of corporate agribusiness profits. No wonder why Wall Street is backing large food businesses. Dr. Vandana Shiva believes that the world needs is a 50% model. 50% should go back to the farmer and local economy. And if 50% goes back to farmers, many more people will be farming, reversing the mass migration from rural into urban. And yes it could be said that almost 50% are currently in the food system today, but they are in the necro-economy. The necro-economy is the economy of death. They are making the pesticides, they are spraying the pesticides, they are driving the trucks, and they are making the carbon dioxide, all of the jobs that are killing the planet. We need to change the current food system. We need to get people as excited about growing food as young people are about creating apps, ringtones and making their first million. Agro-ecology and organic food systems should not just been seen as eccentric, when they can and should be pathways to many solutions (rural flight, smaller carbon foot-print, jobs, obesity, etc.) to challenges facing our world today. And food is the place, seed is the place where we have to reclaim our democracy and stop the totalitarianism being put in place bit by bit because before we know it we won't be able to make changes. Dr. Vandana Shiva believes that we have only a short period of time to reclaim our freedom otherwise, ***"we will have neither have bread or freedom."***



Chances are you don't recognize her face but like Muhammad Ali, Babe Ruth, Billy Jean King, Pele, Steve Jobs, Nelson Mandela, Pablo Picasso, Vogue Magazine, the Ford Mustang and during his early years Tiger Woods, she was in that class by herself, an iconoclast who changed the world around them. The world of modern fashion has always had its stars, Coco Chanel, Yves Saint Laurent and Twiggy but it was Eileen Ford who really changed the world for its models but more importantly, their look. It was Eileen Ford whose taste and vision of young clean, fresh face Anglo-Nordic thin long neck blond women with straight noses, Christy Turlington, Lauren Hutton, Cheryl Tiegs, Elle Macpherson Christie Brinkley and Candice Bergen, the look articulated in America by designer Ralph Lauren and the look that advertisers beckon to from the 1960s through the 1980s, until the anti-establishment more edgy look of Iman, Kate Moss and Naomi Campbell made that Wonder bread look passé. It was Eileen Ford who fiercely protected "*her girls*" and moved the model agency business from being hucksters, bookers and pimps to sophisticated brand managers working together with advertising agencies, photographers and their clients, always pushing the edge of the envelope of compensation for her models. It was Eileen Ford who tried in vain to broaden her models' world by hosting dinners with established and up in coming Wall Streeters, doctors, entrepreneurs, athletes and scions/sons of the rich.

I remember joking in the late 1980s with a friend that he had made it because he was being invited to one of Eileen Ford's famous dinners. I first met Eileen and her husband Jerry in the mid-1970s when somehow I came on their radar and was invited to several dinners in the 1970s as she had now expanded her look/roster to include Beverly Johnson and other African American women. We reconnected when a friend of mine opened her Paris office. But like my dear friend, the legendary restaurateur Elaine Kaufman, Eileen Ford could be a nasty piece of work if you got on her bad side. So sooner or later either you or she became bored with each other's company and as her models matured, came economically independent and times changed, suitors no longer needed Eileen's approval to date one of her girls. And although the agency is no longer what it once was and Eileen stopped trolling for the "*new look*" decades ago, still to this day I run into women whose crowning achievement is that they were represented by the Ford Model Agency. Eileen Ford created the 20th Century's most successful modeling agency and in the process changed her industry as well as the taste that we all take for granted today. For more information on Eileen Ford I invite you to download and read her obituary as she died last Wednesday at the age of 92.

On Wall Street, the Corleone family fits right
in



Inline image 1

In **The Godfather**, writer Mario Puzo wrote – *“The lawyer with the briefcase can steal more money than the man with the gun.”* This week Richard Cohen wrote a satirical piece in **The Washington Post** – ***On Wall Street, the Corleone family fits right in*** – After reading the article, substitute the word “*lawyer*” with “*banker*,” “*corporate executive*” or “*Top 1%*” and much like Oscar winning Paddy Chayefsky’s brilliant prophetic 1976 film *Network* starring Faye Dunaway, William Holden, Peter Finch, and Robert Duvall and features Wesley Addy, Ned Beatty, and Beatrice Straight, directed by the legendary Sidney Lumet.

The film, when released in 1976, was a scathing satire of American media, showing a world just to the left of reality where ratings trumped news, where the most powerful communication tool of the time was used to placate the masses and where TV networks were willing to commit murder in order to get more eyeballs. It’s a world where a ranting lunatic captures the heart of America and a terrorist cell gets its own reality show. In 1976 this was broad and crazy; in 2014 it feels like the world in which we live. Richard Cohen’s parody has also proven prophetic as big banks and businesses who have no allegiance have been caught doing every type of malfeasance without anyone going to jail. I invite you to compare.

FADE IN: Michael Corleone’s den.

He is at his desk. Facing him are members of his organization. Michael rises and dims the lights. He starts a PowerPoint display showing the various Mafia families. The chieftains and button men are puzzled but they say nothing. Michael turns the lights back on. It is clear he is about to say something important.

Michael: “*We’re gonna incorporate.*”

The capos are shocked. They all start talking at once. "Michael, Michael, what would your old man say?"

Michael: "The Godfather is dead. So is his way of doing business. Hyman Roth showed me what we should do. We turn the Corleone family into Corleone Enterprises Ltd. We list it on the stock exchange along with the other criminals. We do what we have always done, but if we get caught, nobody goes to jail. We pay a fine and say we're sorry."

"Michael, Michael," Luca Brasi says. "It is not possible. You do the crime, you do the time."

Michael is patient. *"The French bank BNP Paribas admitted it broke the law. It copped a plea. It said it helped Iran avoid sanctions. Iran is our mortal enemy and a country the Corleone family has no sympathy for. The bank helped our enemy and he who helps our enemy is also our enemy. So what happened? Tell 'em, Hyman."*

Hyman says, *"They paid a fine, nearly \$9 billion. A piffle for them. But it was treated like the corporation acted on its own. Nobody was in charge. Nobody benefited. A corporation is the perfect crime family."*

Michael says, *"Tell 'em about Credit Suisse."*

"It pleaded guilty to tax evasion," Hyman says. "Tax evasion! But no one went to jail. It paid Uncle Sam almost \$2.6 billion and went on its way. Al Capone of blessed memory got 11 years for tax evasion. Why? Because even though he controlled all the rackets in Chicago and had politicians and judges in his pocket, he was not incorporated."

Michael says, *"Corporations don't go to jail. And neither do the people who run the corporations. Banks have paid a fortune in penalties for cheating and lying and selling junk and ruining people's lives, and nobody goes to jail."*

Fredo says, *"Being a corporation is never having to say you're sorry."*

Michael looks disgusted: *"Fredo, you're in the wrong movie."*

Luca Brasi says, *"I don't know, Michael. It don't seem right. I don't know about these things. You need someone whacked, I do it. Garroted, that's me. Shot, again that's me. But this, I don't understand. It just don't seem right."*

Michael ignores him. *“Hyman, tell ‘em the rest.”*

“We’re going to buy a business in Switzerland. When we have control of it, we become a Swiss corporation and pay taxes there, where they are lower. This is called an inversion and is something Walgreens says it is now considering. It got tax breaks in Illinois and tax credits and training money, and it don’t matter. It still might go to Switzerland, where the weather, if you ask me, is lousy.”

Fredo interjects. *“But we’re an Italian family.”*

Luca Brasi: *“Sicilian!”*

Michael signals for quiet. *“Globalization means you don’t belong to any country. You have allegiances to no one except your own family or, as it happens, the corporation.”* Pfizer tried to buy AstraZeneca so it could move to England. But they stupidly made an offer that AstraZeneca could refuse — and it did.

“Many companies are doing this and no one says nothing about loyalty to the country or anything like that. Corporations can do anything they want. We will do the same. We will move where the taxes are lowest, and we will never speak of this matter outside of the company. We will use our people in the media who are on our payroll to say that we are studying many options to maximize stockholder value. You, Fredo, will go on CNBC and not wear a tie so you look cool. All of you, remember that phrase and use it often: Maximize stockholder value.”

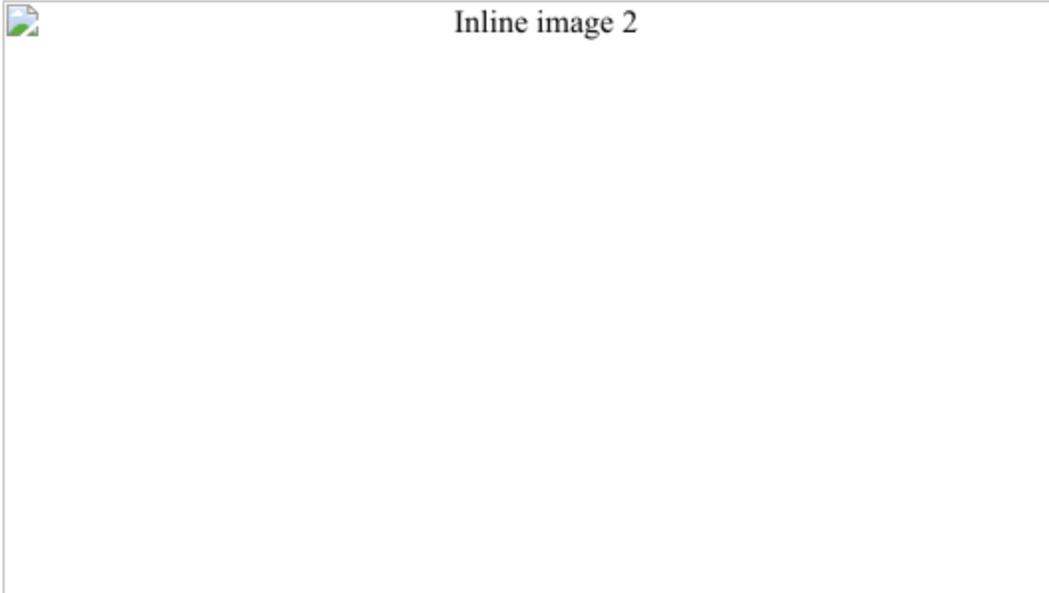
“Michael, Michael,” Luca Brasi says. *“What does it mean?”*

“Nothing, everything, anything you want,” Michael says. He pauses. *“I am no longer Capo di tutti capi. I am the CEO. Tom Hagen is no longer consigliere. He’s the general counsel. All we do is change the titles but not who we are. We’re still criminals.”*

“Like others on Wall Street, this is the business we’ve chosen,” Hyman Roth says.

How prophetic? Today a number of our biggest banks and international conglomerates have been caught doing all types of skullduggery and although they have paid hundreds of billions in fines and restitution little has changed because that is just the cost of doing business. And until the people running these companies are incarcerated like the common criminals that they are, this criminality is destined to continue **and this is my rant of the week....**

WEEK'S READINGS



Every family, every community and every business needs infrastructure to thrive. Infrastructure encompasses your local water main and the Hoover Dam; the power lines connected to your house and the electrical grid spanning the U.S.; and the street in front of your home and the national highway system.

Once every four years, America's civil engineers provide a comprehensive assessment of the nation's major infrastructure categories in **ASCE's Report Card for America's Infrastructure (Report Card)**. Using a simple A to F school report card format, the Report Card provides a comprehensive assessment of current infrastructure conditions and needs, both assigning grades and making recommendations for how to raise the grades. An Advisory Council of ASCE members assigns the grades according to the following eight criteria: capacity, condition, funding, future need, operation and maintenance, public safety, resilience, and innovation. Since 1998, the grades have been near failing, averaging only Ds, due to delayed maintenance and underinvestment across most categories.

Now the 2013 Report Card grades are in, and America's cumulative GPA for infrastructure rose slightly to a D+. The grades in 2013 ranged from a high of B- for solid waste to a low of D- for inland waterways and levees. Solid waste, drinking water, wastewater, roads, and bridges all saw incremental improvements, and rail jumped from a C- to a C+. No categories saw a decline in grade this year.

The 2013 Report Card demonstrates that we can improve the current condition of our nation's infrastructure — when investments are made and projects move forward, the grades rise. For example, greater private investment for efficiency and connectivity brought improvements in the rail category; renewed efforts in cities and states helped address some of the nation's most vulnerable bridges; and, several categories benefited from short-term boosts in federal funding.

We know that investing in infrastructure is essential to support healthy, vibrant communities. Infrastructure is also critical for long-term economic growth, increasing GDP, employment, household income, and exports. The reverse is also true – without prioritizing our nation’s infrastructure needs, deteriorating conditions can become a drag on the economy.

While the modest progress is encouraging, it is clear that we have a significant backlog of overdue maintenance across our infrastructure systems, a pressing need for modernization, and an immense opportunity to create reliable, long-term funding sources to avoid wiping out our recent gains. Overall, most grades fell below a C, and our cumulative GPA inched up just slightly to a D+ from a D four years ago.

We invite you to take a deeper look at the nation’s infrastructure conditions in the 2013 Report Card – from the state infrastructure facts, to the interactive charts, to our three key solutions. A brief summary of the findings for each category is below. Click on any heading to get more detailed information on the category and explore the interactive content. Web Link:

<http://www.infrastructurereportcard.org/a/#p/home>

Water and Environment

Dams: Dams again earned a grade of D. The average age of the 84,000 dams in the country is 52 years old. The nation’s dams are aging and the number of high-hazard dams is on the rise. Many of these dams were built as low-hazard dams protecting undeveloped agricultural land. However, with an increasing population and greater development below dams, the overall number of high-hazard dams continues to increase, to nearly 14,000 in 2012. The number of deficient dams is currently more than 4,000. The Association of State Dam Safety Officials estimates that it will require an investment of \$21 billion to repair these aging, yet critical, high-hazard dams.

Drinking Water: The grade for drinking water improved slightly to a D. At the dawn of the 21st century, much of our drinking water infrastructure is nearing the end of its useful life. There are an estimated 240,000 water main breaks per year in the United States. Assuming every pipe would need to be replaced, the cost over the coming decades could reach more than \$1 trillion, according to the American Water Works Association (AWWA). The quality of drinking water in the United States remains universally high, however. Even though pipes and mains are frequently more than 100 years old and in need of replacement, outbreaks of disease attributable to drinking water are rare.

Hazardous Waste: There has been undeniable success in the cleanup of the nation’s hazardous waste and brownfields sites. However, annual funding for Superfund site cleanup is estimated to be as much as \$500 million short of what is needed, and 1,280 sites remain on the National Priorities List with an unknown number of potential sites yet to be identified. More than 400,000 brownfields sites await cleanup and redevelopment. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that one in four Americans lives within three miles of a hazardous waste site. The grade for hazardous waste remained unchanged at a D.

Levees: Levees again earned a near failing grade of D- in 2013. The nation's estimated 100,000 miles of levees can be found in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Many of these levees were originally used to protect farmland, and now are increasingly protecting developed communities. The reliability of these levees is unknown in many cases, and the country has yet to establish a National Levee Safety Program. Public safety remains at risk from these aging structures, and the cost to repair or rehabilitate these levees is roughly estimated to be \$100 billion by the National Committee on Levee Safety. However, the return on investment is clear – as levees helped in the prevention of more than \$141 billion in flood damages in 2011.

Solid Waste: In 2010, Americans generated 250 million tons of trash. Of that, 85 million tons were recycled or composted. This represents a 34% recycling rate, more than double the 14.5% in 1980. Per capita generation rates of waste have been steady over the past 20 years and have even begun to show signs of decline in the past several years. The grade for solid waste improved in 2013, and it earned the highest grade of B-.

Wastewater: The grade for wastewater improved slightly to a D. Capital investment needs for the nation's wastewater and stormwater systems are estimated to total \$298 billion over the next 20 years. Pipes represent the largest capital need, comprising three quarters of total needs. Fixing and expanding the pipes will address sanitary sewer overflows, combined sewer overflows, and other pipe-related issues. In recent years, capital needs for the treatment plants comprise about 15%-20% of total needs, but will likely increase due to new regulatory requirements. Stormwater needs, while growing, are still small compared with sanitary pipes and treatment plants. Since 2007, the federal government has required cities to invest more than \$15 billion in new pipes, plants, and equipment to eliminate combined sewer overflows.

Transportation

Aviation: Despite the effects of the recent recession, commercial flights were about 33 million higher in number in 2011 than in 2000, stretching the system's ability to meet the needs of the nation's economy. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) estimates that the national cost of airport congestion and delays was almost \$22 billion in 2012. If current federal funding levels are maintained, the FAA anticipates that the cost of congestion and delays to the economy will rise from \$34 billion in 2020 to \$63 billion by 2040. Aviation again earned a D.

Bridges: Over two hundred million trips are taken daily across deficient bridges in the nation's 102 largest metropolitan regions. In total, one in nine of the nation's bridges are rated as structurally deficient, while the average age of the nation's 607,380 bridges is currently 42 years. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) estimates that to eliminate the nation's bridge backlog by 2028, we would need to invest \$20.5 billion annually, while only \$12.8 billion is being spent currently. The challenge for federal, state, and local governments is to increase bridge investments by \$8 billion annually to address the identified \$76 billion in needs for deficient bridges across the United States. However, with the overall number of structurally deficient bridges continuing to trend downward, the grade improved to C+.

Inland Waterways: Our nation's inland waterways and rivers are the hidden backbone of our freight network – they carry the equivalent of about 51 million truck trips each year. In many cases, the inland waterways system has not been updated since the 1950s, and more than half of the locks are over 50 years old. Barges are stopped for hours each day with unscheduled delays, preventing goods from getting to market and driving up costs. There is an average of 52 service interruptions a day throughout the system. Projects to repair and replace aging locks and dredge channels take decades to approve and complete, exacerbating the problem further. Inland waterways received a D- grade once again as conditions remain poor and investment levels remain stagnant.

Ports: This new category for 2013 debuted with a grade of C. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers estimates that more than 95% (by volume) of overseas trade produced or consumed by the United States moves through our ports. To sustain and serve a growing economy and compete internationally, our nation's ports need to be maintained, modernized, and expanded. While port authorities and their private sector partners have planned over \$46 billion in capital improvements from now until 2016, federal funding has declined for navigable waterways and landside freight connections needed to move goods to and from the ports.

Rail: Railroads are experiencing a competitive resurgence as both an energy-efficient freight transportation option and a viable city-to-city passenger service. In 2012, Amtrak recorded its highest year of ridership with 31.2 million passengers, almost doubling ridership since 2000, with growth anticipated to continue. Both freight and passenger rail have been investing heavily in their tracks, bridges, and tunnels as well as adding new capacity for freight and passengers. In 2010 alone, freight railroads renewed the rails on more than 3,100 miles of railroad track, equivalent to going coast to coast. Since 2009, capital investment from both freight and passenger railroads has exceeded \$75 billion, actually increasing investment during the recession when materials prices were lower and trains ran less frequently. With high ridership and greater investment in the system, the grade for rail saw the largest improvement, moving up to a C+ in 2013.

Roads: Targeted efforts to improve conditions and significant reductions in highway fatalities resulted in a slight improvement in the roads grade to a D this year. However, forty-two percent of America's major urban highways remain congested, costing the economy an estimated \$101 billion in wasted time and fuel annually. While the conditions have improved in the near term, and federal, state, and local capital investments increased to \$91 billion annually, that level of investment is insufficient and still projected to result in a decline in conditions and performance in the long term. Currently, the Federal Highway Administration estimates that \$170 billion in capital investment would be needed on an annual basis to significantly improve conditions and performance.

Transit: The grade for transit remained at a D as transit agencies struggled to balance increasing ridership with declining funding. America's public transit infrastructure plays a vital role in our economy, connecting millions of people with jobs, medical facilities, schools, shopping, and recreation, and it is critical to the one-third of Americans who do not drive cars. Unlike many U.S. infrastructure systems, the transit system is not comprehensive, as 45% of American households lack any access to transit, and millions more have inadequate service levels. Americans who do have access have increased their ridership 9.1% in the past decade, and that trend is expected to continue. Although investment in transit has also increased, deficient and deteriorating transit systems cost the U.S. economy \$90 billion in 2010, as many transit agencies are struggling to maintain aging and obsolete fleets and facilities amid an economic downturn that has reduced their funding, forcing service cuts and fare increases.

Public Facilities

Public Parks and Recreation: The popularity of parks and outdoor recreation areas in the United States continues to grow, with over 140 million Americans making use of these facilities a part of their daily lives. These activities contribute \$646 billion to the nation's economy, supporting 6.1 million jobs. Yet states and localities struggle to provide these benefits for parks amid flat and declining budgets, reporting an estimated \$18.5 billion in unmet needs in 2011. The federal government is also facing a serious challenge as well since the National Park Service estimates its maintenance backlog at approximately \$11 billion. The grade for parks remained unchanged at a C-.

Schools: Almost half of America's public school buildings were built to educate the baby boomers – a generation that is now retiring from the workforce. Public school enrollment is projected to gradually increase through 2019, yet state and local school construction funding continues to decline. National spending on school construction has diminished to approximately \$10 billion in 2012, about half the level spent prior to the recession, while the condition of school facilities continues to be a significant concern for communities. Experts now estimate the investment needed to modernize and maintain our nation's school facilities is at least \$270 billion or more. However, due to the absence of national data on school facilities for more than a decade, a complete picture of the condition of our nation's schools remains mostly unknown. Schools received a D again this year.

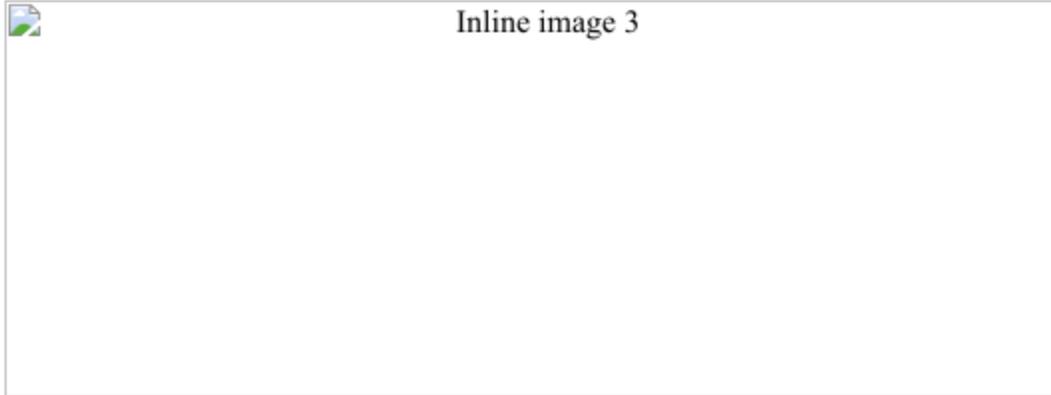
Energy

Energy: America relies on an aging electrical grid and pipeline distribution systems, some of which originated in the 1880s. Investment in power transmission has increased since 2005, but ongoing permitting issues, weather events, and limited maintenance have contributed to an increasing number of failures and power interruptions. While demand for electricity has remained level, the availability of energy in the form of electricity, natural gas, and oil will become a greater challenge after 2020 as the population increases. Although about 17,000 miles of additional high-voltage transmission lines and significant oil and gas pipelines are planned over the next five years, permitting and siting issues threaten their completion. Thus, the grade for energy remained a **D+**.

Conclusion

Infrastructure is the foundation that connects the nation's businesses, communities, and people, driving our economy and improving our quality of life. For the U.S. economy to be the most competitive in the world, we need a first class infrastructure system – transport systems that move people and goods efficiently and at reasonable cost by land, water, and air; transmission systems that deliver reliable, low-cost power from a wide range of energy sources; and water systems that drive industrial processes as well as the daily functions in our homes. Yet today, our infrastructure systems are failing to keep pace with the current and expanding needs, and investment in infrastructure is faltering. We must commit today to make our vision of the future a reality – an American infrastructure system that is the source of our prosperity.

Americans Think We Have the World's Best Colleges. We Don't.



Americans have a split vision of education. Conventional wisdom has long held that our K-12 schools are mediocre or worse, while our colleges and universities are world class. While policy wonks hotly debate K-12 reform ideas like vouchers and the Common Core state standards, higher education is largely left to its own devices. Many families are worried about how to get into and pay for increasingly expensive colleges. But the stellar quality of those institutions is assumed. Yet a recent multinational study of adult literacy and numeracy skills suggests that this view is wrong. America's schools and colleges are actually far more alike than people believe — and not in a good way. The nation's deep education problems, the data suggest, don't magically disappear once students disappear behind ivy-covered walls.

The standard negative view of American K-12 schools has been highly influenced by international comparisons. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, for example, periodically administers an exam called PISA to 15-year-olds in 69 countries. While results vary somewhat depending on the subject and grade level, America never looks very good. The same is true of other international tests. In PISA's math test, the United States battles it out for last place among developed countries, along with Hungary and Lithuania.

America's perceived international dominance of higher education, by contrast, rests largely on global rankings of top universities. According to a recent ranking by the London-based Times Higher Education, 18 of the world's top 25 universities are American. Similarly, the Academic Ranking of World Universities, published annually by Shanghai Jiao Tong University, gives us 19 of 25. But there is a problem with this way of thinking. When President Obama has said, "We have the best universities," he has not meant: "Our universities are, on average, the best" — even though that's what many people hear. He means, "Of the best universities, most are ours." The distinction is important.

PISA samples the whole population of students. When Mr. Obama said, "In eighth-grade math, we've fallen to ninth place," he was referring to the average score of eighth graders. He didn't say anything about how many of the world's 13-year-old math geniuses were American. International university rankings, moreover, have little to do with education. Instead, they focus on universities as research institutions, using metrics such as the number

of Nobel Prize winners on staff and journal articles published. A university could stop enrolling undergraduates with no effect on its score. We see K-12 schools and colleges differently because we're looking at two different yardsticks: the academic performance of the whole population of students in one case, the research performance of a small number of institutions in the other.

In the past, workers with an average education and average skills, doing an average job, could earn an average lifestyle. But, today, average is officially over. Being average just won't earn you what it used to. It can't when so many more employers have so much more access to so much more above average cheap foreign labor, cheap robotics, cheap software, cheap automation and cheap genius. Therefore, everyone needs to find their extra — their unique value contribution that makes them stand out in whatever is their field of employment. Average is over as a result of the hyper-internationalization/globalization of business. Yes, new technology has been eating jobs forever, and always will. As they say, if horses could have voted, there never would have been cars. But there's been an acceleration. In the 10 years ending in 2009, [U.S.] factories shed workers so fast that they erased almost all the gains of the previous 70 years; roughly one out of every three manufacturing jobs — about 6 million in total — disappeared.

We are a country not living up to its full potential. And although China, India and Brazil are currently doing well but because of their inherent fundamental differences we can't copy their practices to enjoy similar success. As noted economist Thomas Friedman says, the history that we need to reread is our own and the country that we need to rediscover is America because we didn't become the richest and most successful country in the world by accident — we had a formula for success. It was the greatest public-private partnership in the history of the world. People will claim that their success was solely do their own efforts, but would they have been as successful if they had been born during a civil war in rural areas of Africa because the Public Side of this was built on five pillars.

1. Educate our people up and beyond whatever the technology is whether it was the cotton gin or the laptop computer.
2. Have the world's best infrastructure to enhance commerce and communications
3. Have the world's most open immigration policy as more than one quarter of the new companies open each year in Silicon Valley is started by immigrants
4. Have the best rules for investing to attract capital and to prevent recklessness
5. Have the world's most government funded research to push out the boundaries in science and technology so entrepreneurs could benefit from the best opportunities and build them into new companies....

This was how we created the richest country on earth. We actually had a formula had a success and the reason we are where we are today if you look at all five pillars the arrow is pointing down for all five. And today we have not been able to arise to the challenges we face today and address with the collective action required because all of our problems today are so big that they require collective action. And those challenges are:

1. The merging of globalization and the IT revolution
2. Our debt and deficit and the whole entitlements question, the burden that we don't want to pass on to our future generations to make them debt slaves
3. How do we power our future, grow our Middle Class with enough clean energy so that we don't tip the planet into climate change.

These are the three great challenges that we face today. There is a huge inflection point that the country and the rest of the entire world went through during the last decade. And that is we basically went from a connected world to a hyper-connected world and it is changing everything. As Friedman says.... think about it.... a decade ago for most people didn't know that Facebook exist, Twitter was a sound, the cloud was in the sky, 4G was a parking place, Linked In was a prison, an applications was what you sent to colleges and for most people Skype was a typo. And all of this just happened in the last decade if not less. And it has taken the world from connected to hyper-connected. And this has fundamentally changed the labor market. Because more and more bosses today have access from not only hyper-connected automation, software and robots, and not just cheap labor anymore but also cheap genius. If ten years ago globalization was affecting blue collar workers, today it is really hitting white collar workers because of this hyper-connectivity and if graded on a curve, the curve has essentially risen. And as a result, average is over.... Because if you just do average work now, you won't receive average returns. Not in a hyper-connected world. Thomas Friedman uses Grinnell College which is a liberal arts college in Iowa with 1600 students and last year 8.3% of the applications at Grinnell came from China and of those 43% had perfect 800 on their math SAT's scores as an example. This isn't MIT or Stanford, Grinnell is a little liberal arts college in the middle of Iowa. The entire curve has risen and applicants in the Midwest are literally competing with their counterparts in Shanghai, Mumbai, Kiev, Johannesburg and Tokyo. This is not a metaphor. This is the reality if you want to go to Grinnell College in Iowa.



The Kurdish people, or **Kurds** are an ethnic group in Middle East, mostly inhabiting a region known as Kurdistan, which includes adjacent parts of Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey. The number of Kurds living in Southwest Asia is estimated around 30 million, with another one or two million living in diaspora. Kurds are the fourth largest ethnicity in Western Asia after the Arabs, Persians, and Turks. Kurds comprise anywhere from 18% to 25% of the population in Turkey, 15-20% in Iraq, 9% in Syria, 7% in Iran and 1.3% in Armenia. In all of these countries except Iran, Kurds form the second largest ethnic group. Roughly 55% of the world's Kurds live in Turkey, about 18% each in Iran and Iraq, and a bit over 5% in Syria. The Kurds have had partial autonomy in Iraqi Kurdistan since 1991. Nationalist movements in the other Kurdish-populated countries (Turkey, Syria, Iran) push for Kurdish regional autonomy or the creation of a sovereign state.

The Kurds as an ethnic group first appeared in the medieval period. The Kurdish people are believed to be of heterogenous origins combining a number of earlier tribal or ethnic groups including Median, Lullubi, Guti, Cyrtians, Carduchi. In the early Middle Ages, the Kurds sporadically appear in Arabic sources, though the term was still not being used for a specific people; instead it referred to an amalgam of nomadic western Iranian tribes, who were distinct from Persians. However, in the High Middle Ages, the Kurdish ethnic identity gradually materialized, as one can find clear evidence of the Kurdish ethnic identity and solidarity in texts of the 12th and 13th century, though, the term was also still being used in the social sense.

As Iraq veers further toward a breakup, one group is maneuvering the crisis with far more leverage than the others: Iraqi Kurds. And in the contested oil-rich region of Kirkuk, Iraq's Kurdish minority has been steadily consolidating control for weeks. On the southern edge of the province, in an area once secured by central government forces, Kurdish soldiers are reinforcing a shaky border separating them from their new southern neighbors, the Sunni militants of the Islamic State. Massoud Barzani, president of the largely autonomous Kurdistan Regional Government, has repeatedly suggested he will soon initiate a referendum on the region's independence, which would likely pass, local officials and analysts say.

The Kurds have already governed their territory, a land of wheat fields and rugged mountains that extends from Iraq's northern and western border with Turkey to the Iranian border in the east, for more than two decades. They have overseen a construction boom, built an oil industry and maintained security, even as fresh turmoil has wracked much of the rest of the country. Yet for many Kurds, the Iraqi region of Kurdistan could never be complete without Kirkuk. Under Saddam Hussein's brutal Arabization campaigns, many Kurds were forced to leave. The ethnically mixed area has been the flash point of a bitter territorial dispute.

A week ago, Barzani told a closed-door meeting of the Kurdish parliament that he would only pursue independence after formalizing Kurdish control of Kirkuk and other disputed areas, according to two legislators who spoke on the condition of anonymity because of political sensitivities. And a move to annex Kirkuk could ignite fighting with Baghdad, which is intent on holding on to the territory — particularly Kirkuk's resources — and could alienate Western allies, who fear that Iraq's fracturing could further threaten regional security.

Washington has urged the country's factions to work together toward forging a new government that would see the country's Shiite Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki step aside. *"A united Iraq is a stronger Iraq,"* State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki told reporters last week. But Iraq's parliament failed to reach an agreement this week on the government's top posts.

Also in a statement last week, Maliki reminded Iraqis that his party holds the largest majority in parliament and that it would not accept *"conditions"* set by opposition members, despite escalating pressure to step aside. *"I will never give up my candidacy for the post of prime minister,"* he said. The country's top Shiite cleric, Ayatollah Ali Sistani, who has appeared to endorse Maliki's removal, issued a statement Friday calling the political deadlock *"a regrettable failure."* Meanwhile, scattered fighting and airstrikes continued across the country as Iraq's Shiite-dominated armed forces, with the help of Shiite militias, struggled to recapture territory seized by the Islamic State.

Last week on Friday, the army reclaimed control of Saddam Hussein's birthplace of Awja, a Sunni Arab stronghold north of Baghdad, the Iraqi armed forces and residents told Reuters. But several days of attacks have so far failed to dislodge the militants from the larger city of Tikrit, just north of Awja, and other areas they control. In the Kurdish regions in particular, Iraqis of all ethnicities and religions talk increasingly of the emergence of three states. *"The United States really has to be realistic,"* said Najmiddin Karim, the Kurdish governor of Kirkuk. *"This thing about 'sovereignty,' this thing about the borders of Iraq, Iraq 'unity'— I mean this is just an old story."*

But to effectively manage their own country, the Kurds need a reliable cash flow. Baghdad still controls the region's budget, which has gone unfunded for the past six months amid disputes over oil and turf. Kurdish leaders say they have had to borrow billions to pay salaries. The Kurds have begun to establish an independent revenue stream by building their own oil sector. In May, they began exporting through a new pipeline to Turkey, bypassing Baghdad's control — sales that have so far garnered \$93 million, according to Turkish Energy Minister Taner Yildiz. But to replace the money the Kurds have customarily received from Baghdad — about \$1 billion per month — they need to raise their oil sales dramatically. The enormous oil fields of Kirkuk, newly secured by the Kurds, can currently produce more oil than all the other fields in the Kurdistan region combined.

In the past, the federal government has exported Kirkuk's oil through a pipeline to Turkey, which is now inoperable because it runs through territory controlled by the Islamic State. The Kurds are now building a new pipeline that will link Kirkuk with the Kurdistan region's independent pipeline to Turkey, according to both Kurdish leaders and technical officials from Iraq's federal North Oil Co., which has historically managed Kirkuk's oil. The project is at least three months from completion, North Oil Co. officials said.

But getting the pipeline up and running is more about political will than technical capabilities.

Kurdish leaders have negotiated with the federal oil ministry over how they might help export Kirkuk oil, but they have not agreed on terms. *"Nobody wants a war with Baghdad, so this will have to be done carefully,"* a senior Kurdish official said, speaking on the condition of anonymity because of political sensitivities. Ramzy Mardini, an Iraq expert and nonresident fellow at the Atlantic Council, said he believes the Kurds are pushing for economic gains and greater control, without having to shoulder the responsibilities of full statehood. *"They're looking to extract the economic benefit from Kirkuk and consolidate their hold on the city, without running for the exit,"* Mardini said.

An independent Kurdistan would have to effectively manage Kirkuk's ethnically and religiously diverse population—a microcosm of Iraq's larger divisions. The province's Kurdish governor is widely popular, and Sunni Arabs and Turkmen residents of Kirkuk said in interviews that they were pleased with the new Kurdish hold on the city, citing better security than they had under Maliki. But some Arabs expressed concern that Kurdish political leaders could monopolize power should Kirkuk become part of a fully independent Kurdish state. *"People are safe but afraid,"* said Sami Najim, a Sunni Arab grocery store owner. *"The only people who have benefitted in the past are the Shiites and the Kurds."*

Meantime Israel warily watching the advance of Islamist terrorists across Iraq, appears to be inching toward supporting independence for Kurdistan, a position that would put it at odds with the United States over the partition of Iraq. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called for it a week ago Sunday. And while Israel's foreign minister, Avigdor Lieberman, back-pedaled from the comment on Monday, analysts here say Netanyahu is just recognizing what is already taking place. Mr. Netanyahu's call last Sunday for Kurdish independence came just days after Israel bought a delivery of oil directly from Iraq's autonomous Kurdish region. This is possible because of another rapid shift: Kurds have expanded into oil-rich territory in Iraq, and Turkey has mended ties with the Iraqi Kurdish government, even allowing the Kurds to export oil via Turkey, bypassing the Iraqi government.

Israel was Kurdistan's first customer. By accepting the oil in the southern port of Ashkelon, Israel gave financial backing to the Kurdish region. The United States has disapproved of direct Kurdish oil sales, fearing that bypassing the central government in Baghdad will only accelerate the crumbling of a united Iraq. *"It is upon us to support the international efforts to strengthen Jordan and support the Kurds' aspiration for independence,"* Mr. Netanyahu said Sunday. Israel and the Kurds have a long history, based on mutual suspicion of the region's Arab nations. However, the sale of oil and Netanyahu's comments on Sunday broke the tradition of keeping the cooperation covert and hinted at a more assertive Israeli position on the issue of Kurdish independence.

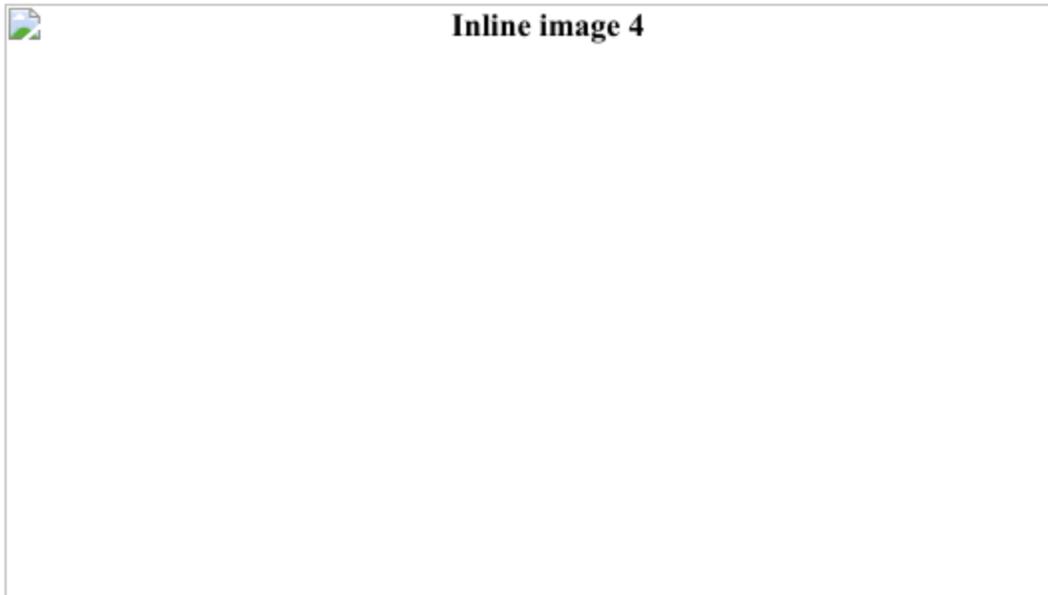
Finally, the breakup of Iraq and an independent Kurdistan in Iraq with or without territories elsewhere neither hurts nor helps us other than possibly helps stabilize Iraq and the surrounding region. Yes, the U.S. needs to draw a line around its allies — the Gulf States and the kingdom of Jordan — and help

ensure that the ISIS problem is contained at their borders. But what happens inside Iraq is not our concern, although we might want to quietly tweak this or that aspect of the facts on the ground. As a result, it is pointless for another American to die in that miserable place. The Balkans, said Bismarck, *wasn't worth the bones of a single Pomeranian grenadier. All the less so Mesopotamia.*

The New Map of the Middle East

Why we should not fight the inevitable break-up of Iraq.





Oil pumps stand at the Chevron Corp. Kern River oil field in Bakersfield, California.

Starting with calls in the 2008 presidential election to **“drill, baby, drill!”** politicians and industry leaders alike now hail *“one hundred years of gas”* and anticipate the U.S. regaining its crown as the world's foremost oil producer. Much of this optimism is based on the application of technologies like hydraulic fracturing (*“fracking”*) and horizontal drilling to previously inaccessible shale reservoirs, and the development of unconventional sources such as tar sands and oil shale. **“Drill, baby, drill!”** was first used at the 2008 Republican National Convention by former Maryland Lieutenant Governor Michael Steele, who was later elected Chairman of the Republican National Committee. The slogan expressed support for increased drilling for petroleum as a source of additional energy.

As a result the U.S. is again the world's biggest oil producer this year after overtaking Saudi Arabia and Russia as extraction of energy from shale rock spurs the nation's economic recovery. U.S. production of crude oil, along with liquids separated from natural gas, surpassed all other countries this year with daily output exceeding 11 million barrels in the first quarter, the bank said in a report today. The country became the world's largest natural gas producer in 2010. The International Energy Agency said in June that the U.S. was the biggest producer of oil and natural gas liquids. *“The U.S. increase in supply is a very meaningful chunk of oil,”* Francisco Blanch, the bank's head of commodities research, said by phone from New York. *“The shale boom is playing a key role in the U.S. recovery. If the U.S. didn't have this energy supply, prices at the pump would be completely unaffordable.”*

Oil extraction is soaring at shale formations in Texas and North Dakota as companies split rocks using high-pressure liquid, a process known as hydraulic fracturing, or fracking. The surge in supply combined with restrictions on exporting crude is curbing the price of West Texas Intermediate, America's oil benchmark. The U.S., the world's largest oil consumer, still imported an average of 7.5 million barrels a day of crude in April, according to the Department of Energy's statistical arm.

Having surpassed Saudi the U.S. oil output will continue to surge to 13.1 million barrels a day in 2019 and plateau thereafter, according to the IEA, a Paris-based adviser to 29 nations. The country will lose its top-producer ranking at the start of the 2030s, the agency said in its World Energy Outlook in November. *"It's very likely the U.S. stays as No. 1 producer for the rest of the year"* as output is set to increase in the second half, Blanch said. Production growth outside the U.S. has been lower than the bank anticipated, keeping global oil prices high, he said. Partly as a result of the shale boom, WTI futures on the New York Mercantile Exchange remain at a discount of about \$7 a barrel to their European counterpart, the Brent contract on ICE Futures Europe's London-based exchange. WTI was at \$103.74 a barrel as of 4:13 p.m. London time.

Islamist Insurgency. *"The shale production story is bigger than Iraqi production, but it hasn't made the impact on prices you would expect,"* said Blanch. *"Typically such a large energy supply growth should bring prices lower, but in fact we're not seeing that because the whole geopolitical situation outside the U.S. is dreadful."* Territorial gains in northern Iraq by a group calling itself the Islamic State has spurred concerns that oil flows could be disrupted in the second-largest producer in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries after Saudi Arabia. Exports from Libya have been reduced by protests, while Nigeria's production is crimped by oil theft and sabotage. Libya will resume exports as soon as possible from two oil ports in the country's east after taking back control from rebels who blocked crude shipments for the past year, Mohamed Elharari, spokesman for the state-run National Oil Corp., said by phone yesterday from Tripoli.

Record Investment. *"There's a very strong linkage between oil production growth, economic growth and wage growth across a range of U.S. states,"* Blanch said. Annual investment in oil and gas in the country is at a record \$200 billion, reaching 20 percent of the country's total private fixed-structure spending for the first time, he said. A U.S. Commerce Department decision to allow the overseas shipment of processed ultra-light oil called condensate has fanned speculation the nation may ease its four-decade ban on most crude exports. Pioneer Natural Resources Co. and Enterprise Products Partners LP will be allowed to export condensate, provided it is first subject to preliminary distillation, the companies said June 25. The decision was *"a positive first step"* to dispersing the build-up of crude supply in North America, Bank of America said in a report on June 27. The U.S. could potentially have daily exports of 1 million barrels of crude, including 300,000 of condensate, by the end of the year, according to a June 25 report from Citigroup Inc.

Even Michael Steele has to be surprised.

THIS WEEK'S QUOTE

When I was growing up, my parents told me, 'Finish your dinner. People in China and India are starving.' I tell my

daughters, 'Finish your homework. People in India and China are starving for your job.'

Thomas Friedman

BEST VIDEO OF THE WEEK

Elephant Painting an Elephant – *UNBELIEVABLE*

I really couldn't believe this video. Only four species are self-sentient.

Humans, dolphins, parrots, and elephants. Meaning they know it is themselves in a mirror and they can recognize others as well. But still this shows they can think!!

Web Link: <https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?v=566075863484336>

GREAT MAGIC TRICK

THIS WEEK'S MUSIC



Inline image 5

In the pantheon of jazz trumpeters, **Freddie Hubbard** stands as one of the boldest and most inventive artists of the bop, hard-bop and post-bop eras. Although influenced by titans like Miles Davis and Clifford Brown, Hubbard ultimately forged his own unique sound – a careful balance of bravado and subtlety that fueled more than fifty solo recordings and countless collaborations with some of the most prominent jazz artists of his era. Shortly after his death at the end of 2008, *Down Beat* called him “*the most powerful and prolific trumpeter in jazz.*” Embedded in his massive body of recorded work is a legacy that will continue to influence trumpeters and other jazz artists for generations to come.

Hubbard was born on April 7, 1938, in Indianapolis, Indiana. As a student and band member at Arsenal Technical High School, he demonstrated early talents on the tuba, French horn, and mellophone before eventually settling on the trumpet and flugelhorn. He was first introduced to jazz by his brother, Earmon, Jr., a piano player and a devotee of Bud Powell. Hubbard’s budding musical talents caught the attention of Lee Katzman, a former sideman of Stan Kenton. Katzman convinced the young trumpeter to study at the Arthur Jordan Conservatory of Music with Max Woodbury, the principal trumpeter of the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra.

As a teenager, Hubbard worked and recorded with the Montgomery Brothers – Wes, Monk and Buddy. His first recording session was for an album called *The Montgomery Brothers and Five Others*. Around that same time, he also assembled his first band, the *Jazz Contemporaries*, with bassist (and manager) Larry Ridley, saxophonist/flutist James Spaulding, pianist Walt Miller and drummer Paul Parker. The quintet became recurring players at George’s Bar, the well-known club on Indiana Avenue. In 1958, Hubbard moved to New York at age 20 and quickly established himself as one of the bright young trumpeters on the scene, astonishing critics and fans alike with the depth and maturity of his playing. Within the first two years of his arrival in the Big Apple, he landed gigs with veteran jazz artists Philly Joe Jones, Sonny Rollins, Slide Hampton and Eric Dolphy. He joined Quincy Jones in a tour of Europe that stretched from 1960 to 1961.

Per a recommendation from Miles Davis, Hubbard was signed to Blue Note, where he recorded *Open Sesame*, his solo debut, in 1960 at the age of 22. The album, which also featured Tina Brooks and

McCoy Tyner, marked the launch of one of the most meteoric careers in jazz. Within a year's time, Hubbard followed up with his second and third recordings – *Goin' Up* (1960), with Tyner and Hank Mobley, and *Hub Cap* (1961), with Julian Priester and Jimmy Heath.

In 1961, Hubbard released what many consider to be his masterpiece, *Ready For Freddie*, which marked his first Blue Note collaboration with Wayne Shorter. Later that same year, he joined Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers. In the span of a few short years, this hard-blowing young lion had quickly established himself as an important new voice in jazz.

Hubbard left the Jazz Messengers in 1964 to form his own small group, whose ranks included Kenny Barron and Louis Hayes. Throughout the remainder of the decade, he also played in bands led by a variety of other high-profile jazz artists. He was a significant presence on Herbie Hancock's Blue Note recordings, beginning with *Takin' Off* (1962) – Hancock's debut as a leader – and continuing on *Empyrean Isles* (1964) and *Maiden Voyage* (1965). Hubbard's other noteworthy session work in the 1960s included Ornette Coleman's *Free Jazz* (1960), Oliver Nelson's *The Blues* and the *Abstract Truth* (1961), Eric Dolphy's *Out To Lunch* (1964), and John Coltrane's *Ascension* (1965).

He achieved his greatest popular success in the 1970s with a series of crossover albums on Atlantic and CTI Records. His early '70s jazz albums for CTI – *Red Clay* (1970), *Straight Life* (1970) and *First Light* (1971) – were particularly well received (*First Light* won a Grammy for Best Instrumental Jazz Performance). Later in the decade, he returned to the acoustic, hard-bop idiom with the **V.S.O.P.** quintet, which teamed him with members of the 1960s Miles Davis Quintet: Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter, Tony Williams and Ron Carter. Hubbard also stepped briefly into the pop arena when he played a solo on "Zanzibar," a track from Billy Joel's Grammy-winning 1978 album, **52nd Street**.

As the '80s got under way, Hubbard was once again leading his own group, playing at concerts and festivals in the U.S. and Europe. He frequently collaborated with Joe Henderson, playing a repertory of hard-bop and modal-jazz pieces. Other associations throughout the decade included Monterey Jazz Festival dates with Bobby Hutcherson; studio projects with Woody Shaw and Benny Golson; and a live recording in Holland (*Feel the Wind*) with Blakey in 1988.

In 1990, he appeared in Japan in an American-Japanese concert package that also featured Elvin Jones, Sonny Fortune, George Duke, Benny Green, Ron Carter and Rufus Reid. He also performed at the Warsaw Jazz Festival – a date that was recorded and released in 1992.' Other pursuits in the early '90s included the formation of a new band of emerging young artists: Christian McBride, Javon Jackson, Carl Allen and Benny Green. He continued to seek out fresh young talent as the decade unfolded by collaborating with the New Jazz Composers Octet. Hubbard performed and recorded with the Octet – a collective led by fellow trumpeter David Weiss – for the last decade of his career, culminating with his final recording, *On The Real Side*, released in 2008.

Despite failing health as the new century got under way, Hubbard continued to carry the jazz torch by participating in clinics and residencies at various colleges around the country to share the wealth of his knowledge with up-and-coming artists. In 2006, the National Endowment for the Arts granted Hubbard its highest honor in jazz, the NEA Jazz Masters Award. He suffered a heart attack in late November 2008 in Sherman Oaks, California, and died a few weeks later, on December 29, at the age of 70.

At his peak, Freddie Hubbard was a brilliant virtuoso performer with a rich, full tone that remained consistent in slow passages as well as fast ones. As one of the greatest hard-bop trumpeters of his era, he created impassioned blues lines without sacrificing the context of the music he was playing. He was perhaps one of the greatest technical trumpeters ever to play in the jazz idiom, and arguably the most influential.

I first met Freddie Hubbard when as a young wantabe teenage musician I started hanging out with Sam Rivers, Don Cherry, Ornette Coleman, Jeremy Steig, Archie Shepp and others in Greenwich Village, New York and after studying his play I realized that there was another level of *chops* which I didn't have and never would. With this realization I focused my efforts in film and television leaving music for the Masters like Freddie Hubbard. With this I invite you to enjoy the music of Mr. Freddie Hubbard and as a bonus included is a wonderful 24 minute live version of **Maiden Voyage** with Herbie Hancock – Piano, Greg Osby - Soprano & Alto Sax and Buster Williams – Bass. **Enjoy.....**

Freddie Hubbard – **Red clay** -- http://youtu.be/_w-3lY-9c9o

Freddie Hubbard & The Allyn Ferguson Big Band – **Birdland** -- <http://youtu.be/l2m59RWYR2I>

Freddie Hubbard & The Allyn Ferguson Big Band – **Ride Like The Wind** -- <http://youtu.be/WWwzs0AuiTA>

Freddie Hubbard – **First Light** -- <http://youtu.be/cz09vMNHARM>

Freddie Hubbard 5tet – **Thermo** -- <http://youtu.be/B0R8FhWZrXs>

Freddie Hubbard – **A night in Tunisia** -- <http://youtu.be/a3HZIW7fyWY>

Freddie Hubbard – **Misty** -- <http://youtu.be/LXqQ1UAA0LA>

Freddie Hubbard – **Born to be Blue** -- http://youtu.be/n_5MGQKWcY0

Freddie Hubbard – **Uncle Albert/Admiral Halsey** -- <http://youtu.be/rA-yPEEknd4>

Freddie Hubbard – **People Make the World Go Round** -- <http://youtu.be/SZUaY0rhWfk>

Freddie Hubbard 5tet – **Skydive** -- <http://youtu.be/evCvMVovWUc>

Freddie Hubbard – **Little sunflower** -- <http://youtu.be/lAfGMW0vbPk>

Freddie Hubbard with the Oscar Peterson Quartet – **Portrait Of Jenny** -- <http://youtu.be/afYdNyaeZf8>

Herbie Hancock Freddie Hubbard Joe Henderson – **Maiden Voyage** -- <http://youtu.be/FSj4oLRbQhg>

Herbie Hancock 4tet – **Maiden Voyage [1988]** -- <http://youtu.be/meSZVpMmQqk>

I hope that you have enjoyed this week's offering and wish you and yours a wonderful week....

Sincerely,

Greg Brown

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Gregory Brown
Chairman & CEO
GlobalCast Partners, LLC

US:
Tel:
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Skype:

