

**2006 CLEARWATER FESTIVAL Saturday, June
17. 2006**

Clearwater Festival

What is it like, do you suppose to be a fireman rushing through a burning building, coming across a wealthy gentleman in his grand apartment who insists that, well this is nothing, this smoke in the corridor. It is likely Mrs. O'Reilly burning her biscuits again. Besides he insists, the fire department is filled with alarmists and he will ~~be~~ ^{not} leaving his apartment just now, thank you.

~~who insists that, well this is nothing — this smoke in the corridor is likely Mrs. O'Reilly burning her biscuits again. Besides he insists, the fire department is filled with alarmists and he will not be leaving his apartment just now, thank you very much.~~

General

**The question for environmental activists is this:
Can the planet be saved even if many of the people**

do not understand the problem or, despite the ready facts, are insistent upon staying the course of self destruction because it profits them in the short term. Will the rising, stormy seas, the spreading deserts and droughts, only prompt them to dig their heels deeper into the mud of the melting levees? And as a species, are we not waddling toward the cliff? Why has no great leader stood upon a rock with sufficient persuasion to halt the march and save the day? Is it evolution itself we are watching, with our species automatically pre-wired for extinction when, say, there are, by God's count, more Washington lobbyists than tree frogs—and with stickier fingers?

It seems dark. Great electrical shovels, like invading space monsters, take apart our mountains. The monstrous machines called international corporations ^{that are buying up} take apart the small ^{take apart} farms and family businesses on our Main Streets as well as democracy here and around the world, pushing people into cities and into powerless poverty, our global ecosystem and survival be damned. The great middle-class employers like General Motors are purposely bankrupted by a behind-the-scenes elite so that manufacturing might move to more profitable lands without

unions and legal protections for human beings. The air is filled with warming poisons. Any attempt by the people to organize or even fairly vote is opposed and dismantled. Dark times. The government is now tracking our calls and putting barbed wire around us when we gather together as free men and women. A slave society? Prison industries? Yellows and black skies, great manipulations to kill off whole problem populations. A monstrous earth is the vision we cannot imagine because, in fact, the great war between humans and corporate monsters we let loose is raging. You will see in your lifetimes the outcome.

If we can learn something useful from nature in this battle, it is this: lemmings do not get to vote. Lemmings, these days, only get to watch Fox News, or listen to Rush Limbough or his Copy Cats. ^{we} ~~They~~ don't have a chance, in other words. We cannot win this battle inside the pack. Must we find caves in the woods and set our booby traps against the storm troopers of the Empire who might come for us, or shall we get some responsible communities moving forward?

The problems of the carbon age are not based on innate self-destructiveness, they are based on

addiction, and all the enabling supports ^{of that} ~~of that~~ are unsustainable and are now teetering. We who lose more environmental battles than we win are now about to win the war. We must become ready to keep that victory from turning into a new kind of hell.

The carbon addiction is a nasty sort, worse than heroin. The heroin addict has surrounding him or her, the larger society of people who are productive and loving. As compelling as the heroin addiction may be, the better world is always there, always visible, always pulling and ready for a welcoming return

Here are a few things I hope we can do to prepare the ground for a peaceful, happy revolution.

We need to make the better world visible, so that the carbon addict may be drawn to it, and may see it as a place to go as nature begins to vote more often in her harsh way—and there is no way to rig Nature's vote.

We must encourage and advance the positive, human-scaled and community-based systems, already in place, such as community supported agriculture, edible schoolyard programs, local

economy support projects and the like. We must go far beyond these ideas. We must create political support organizations in every housing project to assist people with their immediate needs and build a new base for progressive politics. If some local communities in the country would partner with communities in, for example Mexico, non-exploitive agricultural cooperatives can be established that enable people to stay in the community they love, rather than suffer the abuses of illegal immigration. Let us create the leadership for an even better world, and let us make it visible and attractive and real

If the politicians in an area are too beholden to the money of Big Coal or big Oil for example, let us partner with the voters of districts far away, who just breathe the same poisoned air but whose Members of Congress are not so beholden to Coal or Oil. I think my community in southern New Hampshire where there is sometimes pollution from industrial areas in Pennsylvania, present in our air, would be delighted to partner with a community here, if we can find ways to organize this idea. We have been divided and conquered, but we can undevid at will for we all have a stake in the air and water and the earth's health and our human and democratic rights.

are sometimes

Part of the problem of the progressive left is that we have fragmented into dozens of organizations, each of which must struggle for funds and email addresses. We need to fold ourselves back into the Democratic party and thoroughly invigorate it. If the Party can base its actions on good science, effective governance, and by that I mean public funding of the elections, and develop programs the people need, then they will prosper across all the left and all the middle of the American political system. But by splitting ourselves off into all these good government organizations we have left the party to the selfish elites, and they don't know how to serve the people or the truth and that means they do not know how to win.

~~The~~
How to win is to develop public^{LC} funding of elections at the Federal level and the States Level. John Rauh, who works federally, with his organization Just \$6 and the Grannyd PACE organization which we are calling We are 4 Public Funding, are based in the Democratic Party, though as a system they are non-partisan.

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We have three states Maine, Arizona and Connecticut now using public funding for elections at the state level and the state of N. H. is

challenging the 30 plus other states that are also working on Clean Elections^A to become state #4. We aim to convince the N. H. Legislature that this is the way to go.

Here is how public ~~Campaign~~ Funding works: Candidates collect a certain number of qualifying signatures and small contributions—usually in the five dollar range—from people who live in the candidate's district. This demonstrates community support. Someone who has long been active in their community will have an easy time of it, and they don't need to kneel down to wealthy donors in order to run for office. You, too, can run for office, if that is your thing. Once the candidate receives the required level of community support, the state provides the candidate with sufficient funds to run his or her campaign. The participating candidate (it is a voluntary system) must agree to neither raise nor spend any other money, including his own. This neatly gets special interest contributors right out of the picture.

Is it a perfect system? Democracy never is. But it is a large step forward and can get America back on track toward realizing its dreams, including the dream of being a government of, by and for its people.

It has an advantage in that its costs are just one tenth those of our present system, with the need to give our candidates' donors; subsidies, tax breaks and the like. It frees up our officials from having to raise large sums of money and saves them time to work for their constituents rather than the big donors.

New voices have great power in politics. I am an old voice I keep saying the same things and it is no longer newsworthy, no matter how correct it is. Let's spend our energy helping new voices speak up for themselves. It is time to do new things to advance new voices and new visions of the better world we want for our children. *the world for which so many fought and died for and lost their lives so doing in Iraq.*

We need to draw living democracy programs, *both* existing and new, into a committed lifestyle that will increasingly be seen as the attractive alternative to the carbon-addicted world.

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If you are not already involved, get involved.

It may not make sense to you for an old woman to stand here and tell you that you may be the answer to the problems of a troubled world, but that may indeed be the case. Learn what it means to be an American. It means involvement. Find out where ~~New York~~ stands on Clean Elections

Carroll County

and make a commitment to help. Democracy is
not a thing we have, it is a thing we do. Do it.

Thank you.

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