



laetus in praesens

Alternative view of segmented documents via Kairos

28 January 2000 | PROVISIONAL

Globalization within a Global Potemkin Society

a strategic challenge to proactive participation in society: extracts from web resources

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Introduction

This paper explores the degree to which strategies and initiatives, whether individual or collective, are effectively designed to reinforce a facade. The facade gives the impression of effective action but in fact functions to separate people from the realities of world society on which action is ineffectual or non-existent.

The phrase 'Global Potemkin Society' is an extension of the notion of 'Potemkin Villages'. These derive their notoriety from a grand tour by Catherine the Great, Empress of Russia, of the newly conquered Crimea in 1787. The tour was organized by Prince Grigori Aleksandrovich Potemkin who is purported to have ensured that Catherine was only exposed to the prosperous villages along the route. Potemkin's critics in the Imperial Court labeled these villages "Potemkin Villages" and claimed that they were actually inhabited by actors. It was further claimed that the building facades along the route were torn down after the tour passed through and then rebuilt ahead of the tour. Not wanting to disappoint the Empress he had assembled a number of mobile villages to be viewed from the imperial barge. As soon as it had passed out of sight Potemkin's men stripped off their jolly peasant costumes, dismantled the villages and rebuilt them overnight further downstream. However, the principal dupes were foreign ambassadors. But this propensity for creating a sham for show, letting observers see what they want for the sake of what they are worth, has had other expressions throughout the centuries when pretentiously showy or imposing façades are designed to mask or divert attention from an embarrassing or shabby fact or condition.

Thereafter "Potemkin's Village" became synonymous with autocratic attempts to create images that were designed both to hide the unpleasant realities of Russian life and to keep foreign eyes from detecting them.

The following paragraphs are extracts from documents on the web that have been roughly clustered by topic area

Environment policy

Now, Mother Jones magazine reports that the U.S. Forest Service is providing an additional, high-tech, cosmetic subsidy for them. It amounts to a corporate PR scam, paid for by you and me. It's a \$3-million, state-of-the-art, computer software program that helps the loggers hide their environment-destroying, clear-cutting practices from the public eye. Basically, it's a computerized game of hide-and-seek. To reduce the public's outrage at coming to a national forest and seeing acres and acres of stumps where majestic, thousand-year-old trees once stood, computer programs with names like "Smart Forest" and "Virtual Forest" allow the corporations to analyze the terrain so their clear-cuts can be done behind ridges, down in ravines, and on the back side of mountains. These out-of-sight-out-of-mind software programs are being put in all 800 Forest Service offices. The Forest Service also helps the companies create "beauty strips" along the tourist roads—a veneer of trees that look great as you drive along, but behind the strip and beyond your view is the distressing sight of our magnificent forests entirely stripped of their trees. All of this is the Forest Service's way of letting us "have" our forests, while letting the timber companies eat them. G. Pascal Zachary Potemkin Capitalism *Mother Jones*, Jan./Feb.1999

http://www.moJones.com/mother_jones/JF99/potemkin.html

Craig Shirley of Citizens for State Power concurs: "If renewable energy sources can be developed and utilized in an efficient and competitive manner, let them compete and prosper in the open market." Yet until the right technologies are in place to make sun power competitive with more traditional resources, the solar industry will continue to be a Potemkin village, propped up by a minuscule niche market and a giant eco-pork check. Waiting for the Sun by D. Dowd Muska *Nevada Journal* <http://nj.npri.org/nj98/10/waitsun.htm>

Lots of political movements have members who shade the truth, but the animal rights movement borders on a full fledged Potemkin Village of deceptions, half truths and illusions clung to for the very same emotional satisfaction that motivates its adherents.

AnimalRights http://www.carnell.com/environment_health/animal_rights/ar003.html

While staff are focused on a few major permits and enforcement actions, hundreds of other issues are neglected. The reality is that enforcement of water quality statutes is like a Potemkin village. Illusion replaces substance. Commonwealth Club of California, Oakland 2 March 1999 <http://www.sonnet.com/usr/pjc/04-99/commonwealth.htm>

Since that time, the term "Potemkin village" has become a metaphor for things that look elaborate and impressive but in actual fact lack substance. Today, the public relations industry has become adept at creating its own Potemkin villages, such as the supposed "green showcase" that Olympics promoters in Australia are building atop a toxic waste site. The effort to create a "green Olympics" arose in response to activist criticisms of environmental damage caused by past Olympics games. Center for Media and Democracy Vol. 6, No. 2 / Second Quarter 1999 <http://www.prwatch.org/99-Q2/>

Economic policy

Virtual economy takes toll in Russia By John Omicinski / Gannett News Service The Detroit News 4 December 1998 WASHINGTON -- Asbestos workers in the Ural Mountains of Russia last week became enraged, and tipsy as well, when bosses at the Asbostroi plant finally paid them back wages. The paychecks were cases of wine. Asbostroi took in the wine to settle a debt with a firm in the Stavropol region, then passed it along as wages in the kind of exchange becoming commonplace in the former Soviet Union. Russia -- inventor of the fictional five-year plan, the fake harvest, and the false-front Potemkin village -- has introduced another novel economic concept. Analysts call it the "virtual economy," largely resulting from Russia's failure to reform the communist economic system <http://www.detnews.com/1998/nation/9812/04/12040053.htm>

By Art Kilner A NewsTrolls.com Opinion Article The Potemkin Economy September 16, 1998. <http://www.newstrolls.com/news/dev/kilner/980917.htm>

A Balakan Encounter: The Elders of Zion by Sam Vaknin *Central Europe Review* Vol 1, No 25 13 December 1999 It is a malignant growth, the outcome of a breakdown of trust so complete that communication is rendered impossible. This is the main characteristic of the East (from Russia to Albania): distrust. Citizens and politicians, businessmen and government, the media and its consumers, manufacturers and service providers, the sick and their doctors - all suspect each other of ulterior motives and foul play. More often than not they are all quite right to do so. It is a Kafkaesque, sealed universe in which nothing is as it appears to be. This acrimonious divorce between appearances and essence, facade and truth, the Potemkin and the real - is a facet of daily life, of the most mundane exchanges, of the most trivial pursuits. Motives are sought with increasing urgency - why did he do it, what did he try to achieve, why had he not chosen a different path, why here, why with us, why now, what can it teach us. Information is frantically pursued, appearances discarded, data juggled, heated debates ensue, versions erupt, only to subside and be replaced by others. It is a feverish ritual, the sound of clashing exegeses, of theories constructed and demolished in vacuo. At the heart of it all, is the unbearable uncertainty of being. Political uncertainty under Communism was replaced by economic uncertainty under the insidious and venal form of capitalism that replaced it. http://www.ce-review.org/99/25/vaknin25_2.html

Peace-keeping

The Potemkin Village Of Multi-ethnic Administration Today the facade of what the international community calls "multi-ethnic administration" is a farce in most BiH municipalities. Ethnic minority officials occupy either meaningless or nominally powerful positions, where they are sidelined and isolated from decision-making. In effect, they are there because the OSCE put them there, and as soon as the international community turns its back, they will certainly be removed. Some of these minority officials - fearing for their safety - live in a different municipality where their majority group holds power, and must travel long distances.⁷² The dangers associated with minority officials working and living in a hostile environment are most clearly seen in the October 7, 1999, assassination attempt of Munib Hasanovic, the assistant secretary of the Srebrenica Municipality, who was brutally beaten and stabbed while in the municipal building restroom.⁷³ Hasanovic and other Bosniaks had been the subject of previous threats from hard line Serbs, and had received no support from the OHR representative in Srebrenica, Bent Jensen. Young, educated minorities are usually disinterested in giving up career opportunities among their own ethnic group in order to take meaningless low paying jobs in a hostile municipality, where they have no guarantee of returning to their pre-war property.⁷⁴ When international community donors visit, the ruling nationalist officials often parade minority officials before the visiting foreigners in order to cultivate an image of a non-existent, co-operative, multi-ethnic municipality. Is Dayton Failing?: Bosnia Four Years After the Peace Agreement <http://www.intl-crisis-group.org/projects/bosnia/reports/bh51mainb.htm>

How many brigade-size forces are we going to have to commit to places such as Bosnia, Kosovo, Somalia and Haiti as Clinton's square-the-circle foreign policy creates one Potemkin village after another? National Review, February 24, 1999, <http://www.nationalreview.com/garbage/garbage022499.html>

When the CSCE - although known as the Helsinki process - was institutionalized by the Paris Charter for a New Europe (1990), no concrete functions for crisis or conflict management were immediately given to it. It had no operational capacities, except those limited to some elements of the Confidence and Security-Building Measures (CSBMs) regime - namely observation and inspection of military activities falling within certain well-defined parameters.¹ Despite its flamboyant name, the Conflict Prevention Centre (CPC) was nothing else than a Potemkin-village institution since its main function consisted of providing logistics for the management of the CSBMs regime. Preventive Diplomacy as Visited from the OSCE by Professor Victor-Yves Ghebali * http://www.isn.ethz.ch/securityforum/Online_Publications/WS5/WS_5B/Ghebali.htm

Security

The 1994 White Paper is a reasonable blueprint for Canadian defence, but there has been insufficient funding in the defence budget to implement its provisions. Recent decisions to acquire new submarines and search and rescue helicopters are welcome, but many shortfalls in equipment and other resources still dominate the scene. One could compare the armed forces to a checker board or a facade (Potemkin village) -- exhibiting strong individual capabilities in some areas, but weakness or nothing at all in others (Chart 1). This begs

the question as to whether or not the money that is allocated to the Department of National Defence (DND) budget is wasted, because it falls short of producing capable forces. CANADIAN DEFENCE AT THE CROSSROADS THE CONFERENCE OF DEFENCE ASSOCIATIONS SUBMISSION TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AUGUST 1998 <http://www.cda-cdai.ca/library/fin98main.htm>

Beijing has not forgotten that it was the failure of central planning to generate the necessary resources that finally caused the Soviet Union to collapse. A collapse, I might add, that was accelerated by the Reagan military build up. The military giant was found to be an economic pygmy in a state of terminal decline. A military equivalent of a gigantic Potemkin village. *The New Australian* China: a stunted giant By Peter Zhang No. 132, 6-12 September 1999 <http://www.newaus.com.au/asia132econ.html>

International policy

Ken Silverstein Gilding the World Bank *The Nation* magazine, New York March 10, 1997, pp. 5-6 The World Bank, ever a stern taskmaster when dealing with its Third World clients, demands cuts in government spending, consumer subsidies, social programs and other "frills" that get in the way of debt payments to international creditors. Countries that fail to meet economic targets set by the bank's "structural adjustment programs" are deemed economic pariahs and swiftly cut off from international financial markets. The bank is not nearly as austere at home. The compensation package for its president is \$305,000 a year, while the top seventy four officers average in excess of \$120,000. Employee perks include a free in-house health club and complimentary travel home for vacations. Michael Irwin, a former personnel manager, describes bank staffers as "living and working comfortably in the Washington area, and venturing forth in luxury...out of touch with both the realities and causes of poverty in the Third World." When investment banker James Wolfensohn took charge of the bank in late 1995, he promised to hack pitilessly at excess spending. It appears, however, that the structural adjustment is lagging. The bank is currently completing a \$314 million renovation of its offices, running more than \$100 million above the original estimate. This boondoggle began before Wolfensohn arrived, but some of the more vulgar excesses, as I have recently learned, have been carried out during his tenure and indeed continue. So far, the bank has been adept at damage-control. Bank flacks recently led a credulous Washington Post reporter, Benjamin Forgey, on what was apparently a Potemkin Village style tour of the new headquarters. In a glowing review on February 8, Forgey wrote, "Money certainly wasn't wasted on materials, for though the building looks sharp, it doesn't look extravagant.... In any case, thank goodness, there's no excessive display of wealth in the form of lavish marbles, rare woods and such." <http://www.igc.apc.org/globalpolicy/soecon/bwi-wto/silverst.htm>

The International Monetary Fund has promised Moscow another \$4.5 billion, supposedly to promote market reforms. That's too bad, since such a promise bolsters the views of those Russians who blame their current financial crisis on their government's allegedly rigid laissez-faire reforms. Despite having the illusion of reform, Russia's financial system today is in a chaotic state that might be called "Potemkin capitalism." Superficially, the financial system looks market based; however, closer inspection reveals that it remains fundamentally socialist. CATO Analysis July 7, 1999 Time to Replace Russia's Potemkin Capitalism by George A. Selgin <http://www.cato.org/dailys/07-07-99.html>

Trade

Is the same distortion at work in Canada's trade policy? On the one hand, you have the Minister of International Trade loudly stating his support both for the ongoing Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) initiative and a possible "Millennium Round" of World Trade Organization (WTO) talks. On the other hand, we see him and his colleagues defending subsidies to Bombardier, 300 percent tariffs on American dairy products, and restrictions on split-run American magazines as if these trade distortions, rightfully criticized in three WTO dispute resolution panels, were completely legitimate. And, who can forget Canada's pusillanimous performance in the failed Multilateral Agreement on Investment talks of last Fall? It is as if Mr. Marchi et al deeply and fully support the principles of free trade, except when it requires Canada to confront one of its politically potent domestic interest groups. Free trade, yes, but only if the Council of Canadian's Maude Barlow approves. International Trade Liberalization: Canada's Potemkin Village of Policy? *Fraser Forum Online* <http://www.fraserinstitute.ca/publications/forum/1999/04/liberalization.html>

Glasnost-Perestroika Part I: A Model Potemkin Village by Steve Montgomery (UTAH) <http://www.usiap.org/viewpoints/glasnost/glasnost1.html>

May/June 1999 Vol. 55, No. 4 Russia's Fragile Union By Matthew Evangelista (see A Potemkin village)

'Potemkin Village' Even if one were inclined to give Derek Shearer the benefit of the doubt on the question of whether he has undergone a real conversion from socialism, his present recantation calls into serious question his original judgment -- so much so as to raise questions about his fitness to hold a position of trust in the U.S. government. For example, in *Economic Democracy* he bought into the communist propaganda line: "Ironically, Marxist economic and social philosophy, which -- as the basis for a political movement -- was and is an attempt to humanize economic and social life, is associated with dehumanization. In part this is a false image: American visitors to China and Cuba, for example, will attest to the austerity of life in those countries; yet they also comment on the spirit of cooperativeness and well-being that pervades Chinese and Cuban life." (p. 20) "The Yugoslav, Chinese and Cuban cases can teach us about the possibilities and problems of worker control, but these problems all exist within the political context of relatively underdeveloped socialist states."(6) (p. 139) In response to Sen. Brown's questions, however, Shearer wrote last week: "We were mistaken to suggest that there are positive lessons to be learned from China. Having learned more about China, I now understand that most of what appeared to be participation to outside visitors (and we relied on secondary sources for our comments, not first-hand experience), was, in fact coercive group participation enforced by the authority and power of the Chinese Communist Party...." "I do not think that there are positive lessons to be learned from Cuba. The few references to Cuba in the book were based on secondary sources, not on first-hand research, and suffered from the Potemkin Village syndrome of Western visitors seeing a rosy but false picture." Publications of the Center for Security Policy No. 94-28, 15 March 1994

<http://www.security-policy.org/papers/1994/94-28.html>

Casinos and Other Potemkin Villages By David Snyder August 11, 1999 <http://www.cbn.org/newsstand/commentary/desk/990811.asp>

Foreign policy

The Clinton Administration has been satisfied with a fourth option, the "Potemkin village" policy. This policy offers the appearance of a rational response to the Balkan conflict that is, in fact, utterly disconnected from the realities on the ground. It is a policy that offers no real hope for peace in Bosnia. It is a policy that not only abandons our principles and interests, but also violates a core principle valued by all Americans and acknowledged by the drafters of the UN Charter: the inherent right to self defense. BosNet REPORT - International Community: Failures And Consequencies 12 Apr 1995

Like the rest of President Clinton's foreign "successes," his Haiti policy is yet another Potemkin village. It is all too reminiscent of the disappearing "triumphs" around the world: House Policy Committee Policy Perspective by Christopher Cox, Chairman October 2, 1996

The reality, as opposed to the wishful thinking of so many, is that Fidel Castro will never change. His "socialism" is simply a cover for his omnipotent "Fidelism," his identifying himself with power within the Cuban state. (Nobody here but us political egomaniacs.) When he wants to confound the rest of the world (and neutralize their opposition to him), he appears and pretends to change. Thus, the whole Potemkin village of "free markets" has appeared with regularity every few years since the 1960s and '70s. Just as regularly and predictably, he has cracked down on them and destroyed them. Georgie Anne Geyer by Georgie Anne Geyer <http://www.uexpress.com/ups/opinion/column/gg/text/1997/05/gg9705065286.html>

Russia's much touted instant market economics and democratic politics were little more than a sham. Prosecutor-General Yuri Skuratov ridiculed President Yeltsin's seven major crackdowns on organized crime and corruption in 1997 as a Potemkin village. "It is a charade," Mr. Skuratov said in an interview, "there is neither the will at the top nor the resources to do much about it."

Potemkin village shopping plazas

We cannot depend on the Soviets to solve these problems for us-- we can and should make sound decisions in defense management; we should join with allies and neutrals to pursue our goals; and we can attempt to persuade the Soviet Union, by promise of reward or punishment, to strengthen our security and to save us money. Formal negotiations in Geneva are a small and inefficient part of this process; in this age of telecommunications and after more than a decade of working-level contact between the Soviet Union and the United States, Geneva negotiations are the Potemkin village of bilateral relations-- a false front covering the reluctance of one or both sides to conclude a formal agreement. STAR WARS AND GENEVA by Richard L. Garwin September 9, 1985 <http://www.fas.org/rlg/850909-sdi.htm>

Adding to this dismal picture is the rising opposition to the use of sanctions as a foreign policy and non-proliferation tool in the United States and elsewhere. If sanctions for proliferators cannot be politically sustained, the international non-proliferation regime risks becoming a Potemkin Village in the eyes of those who do not adhere to its principles. So the debate over sanctions is important." Leonard Weiss - U.S. Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs at the 7th Carnegie International Non-Proliferation Conference, January 11-12, 1999 Topic Wording Paper Rogue States Topic Joshua B. Hoe <http://www.mtsu.edu/~debate/wording1.html>

Political tours

The New Australian Reflecting on Clinton's media outing to China Peter Zhang's Column No. 83, 27 July - 2 August 1998 The leadership views Clinton as a cheap and ignorant backwoods politician with no knowledge of history or any realisation of its importance. Having closely followed the Clinton visit I find myself in complete agreement with Beijing's assessment of the man. Xiahe village was an excellent example of Clinton's stupidity and ignorance. Clinton praised this Potemkin village as an example of the advantages of genuine democratic elections. This statement was so absurd that it even embarrassed American journalists. Xiahe no more enjoys democratic elections than any other Chinese village, town or city. This is not to say that China's political environment has not improved, it has and by a huge amount. Nevertheless, a yoke is still a yoke no matter how much one lightens it. This, of course, brings us to the extent to which Clinton cheerfully accommodated Jiang's demands that (1) he should be able to exercise a veto on journalists travelling with Clinton; (2) Clinton should not meet with dissidents; (3) he would not stop over in Japan while returning to Washington and (4) he was to publicly abandon Taiwan. Like the good mu ou, as the Chinese say, he did as 'requested' -- and even more, perhaps? <http://www.newaus.com.au/asia11.html>

Down with Potemkin Villages! The President is more and more separated from reality. Presidential trips of Nursultan Nazarbayev around the country are in progress. Successfully. There's hardly a place which the leader of the country has not visited after his last calm holiday. The next year will give a start to election battles. Seems like the welcoming arrangements given for space heroes were the most moving, when the Russian colonel Talgat Musabayev with his crew successfully landed in Kazakhstan steppes. Only one thing depresses - as never before flourishing is the toadying decay of organizers of magnificent meetings and Potemkin villages. It seemed that people anxious to please have made up their mind to defame Nursultan Nazarbayev's name, to raise an aversion of contemplating ordinary citizens. <http://www.eurasia.org.ru/english/september/Eng0099.html>

Urban re-development

Many of America's urban revivals are full-blown Potemkin villages--fake façades erected to impress while hiding serious ugliness underneath. In Baltimore, for instance, Orioles baseball and Rouse Corporation developments please suburban Washington day-trippers, but the city's population has dropped by almost 100,000, or six percent, just since 1980. Beyond the gleaming stadia and small restored areas, surrounding neighborhoods are not healthy in cities such as Cleveland and Atlanta. In St. Louis, total employment has dropped by

28,000 in the 1990s--nearly ten percent--even as suburban areas have enjoyed 20 percent employment growth. The average incomes in cities such as Newark, Detroit, Cleveland, Buffalo, and St. Louis are now roughly half those of surrounding suburbs. By 1990, Detroit had a poverty rate of 30 percent, compared to only 6 percent in its affluent, growing suburban ring. Similar patterns can be found in the relatively new sunbelt metropolises such as Los Angeles and Dallas. These are increasingly "donut" cities, with high vacancy rates and pervasive poverty downtown surrounded by thriving suburban commercial clusters. Vacancy rates in downtown Dallas are over 30 percent, three times the suburban average. Amidst a sustained recovery, a still-seedy downtown Los Angeles, awash in public subsidies, suffers vacancy rates around 20 percent, almost twice that of prosperous areas on the west side and the eastern San Fernando Valley. Even much-hyped Atlanta has vacancy rates well above those of the suburbs, while nearly 27 percent of the city's population lives in poverty and endures the nation's highest violent crime rate. Joel Kotkin and David Friedman What Kind of America will Generation Xers Inherit *Wired* <http://www.theamericanenterprise.org/taejf98g.htm>

Real Community or Potemkin Village? by: F.R. Duplantier Efforts to rebuild American communities may be putting the cart before the horse. Behind the Headlines, 30 May 1999 <http://www.americasfuture.net/1999/may99/99-0530b.html>

Portland has become the Potemkin Village of contemporary urban planning. Neal Pierce touts the Portland region as "a model of world-class, citizen-based planning." Urban planners from around the nation flock to Portland like miracle-seekers to Lourdes; Alan Ehrenhalt noted in *Governing* magazine that "it sometimes seems as if the whole country is looking to Portland as a role model for 21st century urban development." It is impossible to attend a conference on urban planning issues without hearing hosannas for Portland's ostensible enlightenment. LEGENDS OF THE SPRAWL By Steven Hayward <http://www.policyreview.com/sept98/sprawl.html> *Policy Review* is published by The Heritage Foundation September-October, 1998 No. 91

November 16, 1998 The Potemkin Primary. the Nation <http://www.thenation.com/issue/981116/1116caddell.shtml>

Lyndon H LaRouche Jr. The globaloney is over. *Executive Intelligence Review*, 12 February 1997. Look at the decay of neighborhoods, or the "Potemkin Village" delusion which cloaks the economic reality of "gentrified" urban or suburban-"development" residential areas. Or, look at the accelerating collapse in quality of education at all levels. http://www.larouchepub.com/globaloney_is_over.html

Wednesday, July 08, 1998 *Las Vegas Review-Journal* Potemkin village Need for dental school not proven. http://www.lvrj.com/lvrj_home/1998/Jul-08-Wed-1998/opinion/7809105.html

Eighty percent of everything ever built in America has been built in the last fifty years, and most of it is depressing, brutal, ugly, unhealthy, and spiritually degrading--the jive plastic commuter tract home wastelands, the Potemkin village shopping plazas with their vast parking lagoons, the Lego-block hotel complexes, the 'gourmet mansardic' junk-food joints, the Orwellian office 'parks' featuring buildings sheathed in the same reflective glass as the sunglasses worn by chain-gang guards, the particle-board garden apartments rising up in every meadow and cornfield, the freeway loops around every big and little city with their clusters of discount merchandise marts, the whole destructive, wasteful, toxic, agoraphobic-inducing spectacle that politicians proudly call "growth." -James Howard Kunstler, *The Geography of Nowhere* <http://home.earthlink.net/~ddeever/john-lisa/massurbation.html>

Cascade Policy Institute Cascade's light rail debate site March 1999 Potemkin Transit: An Analysis of the Airport Light Rail Proposal in Portland, Oregon by Gerard C.S. Mildner Center for Urban Studies Portland State University <http://www.cascadepolicy.org/transit/airport.htm> In Portland, we are building Potemkin transit. It's new, it looks pretty, but it's very costly to build and very costly to operate such a transit system. Designing a system around fixed routes and bus-to-rail transfers guarantees that passenger travel times will increase and net ridership will decline. Whether we face the same fate as Grigori Potemkin remains to be seen.

Potemkin villages by Mark Greif *American Prospect* 01/03/2000 When Disney planners stocked their brand new small town of Celebration, Florida, with all the traditional amenities, they left out a cemetery. Of course no one had died yet. But the lack of a customer base hadn't prevented them from installing a shopping district unsustainable by shoppers, a town hall for a community with no real public government, and an official charity without any problems to solve. There was a water tower that dispensed no water and a 70-foot observation tower that couldn't be climbed. Leaving mortality off the blueprint was just the last step in the defiance of ordinary social facts that had begun with Disney's decision to plant an American small town, whole, in the middle of an Osceola County cypress swamp. [text]

Denis Horgan *The Hartford Courant* Date: 08/16/1998 APPEARANCES DECEIVING IN D.C. Summary: It is the crafty practice in this smoke-and-mirrors town to wring large advantage out of false fronts. For example, if you are putting up what passes here for a skyscraper and can maintain a fragment of the facade of the old building on the site, the historical commissions will make it worth your while. Hence, you will see here and there lovely old brickwork fronts, lintels and carvings seemingly pasted at the base of the usual glass and marble expanses of the modern money-making era. It is the Potemkin Village, D.C.-style. [text]

More than 100 billion yuan have been spent in an attempt to rejuvenate Beijing while its unwelcome peasant population is being brutally driven into the countryside. After all, we don't want unemployed country bumpkins cluttering up the pavements and conveying the wrong message, particularly to sophisticated foreigners. China is a modern state and the regime is not going to let anyone forget it. And if they have to turn Beijing into a Potemkin village to prove it, they will -- and are. *The New Australian* Beijing has problems but she's still a threat By Peter Zhang No. 135, 27 Sept. - 4 Oct. 1999 <http://www.newaus.com.au/asia135castro.html>

Society

"The walls of society," wrote Peter Berger (1963), "are a Potemkin village erected in front of the abyss of being...a defense against terror." We are bound by our fear of mortality into social artifice, diversionary tactics -inauthentic roles, forms of organization in flight from moral responsibility. The grandest artifice, of course, is the Hobbesian State. For Seery (1996) the failure to escape from a

Hobbesian social contract founded upon the fear of death has tainted democracy and made of it "a second-best compromise, a calculated risk". The Hobbesian contract is the secular version of the religious exploitation of mortal fear on which is constructed unimpeachable authority- the outer limits of freedom. He condemns the absence of thought and debate about mortality for this is what prevents the emergence of more sophisticated - e.g. rights-based -versions of democracy. <http://www.ed.uiuc.edu/circe/Symposium/Saville.html>
Berger, P (1963) An Invitation to Sociology. Penguin Books

Institution Building in Potemkin Style: Why Nonprofit Organizations are Both Absent and Successful in Post-socialist Societies By Wolfgang Seibel ISTR Third International Conference Université de Genève, Geneva, Switzerland July 8-11, 1998 Conference Abstracts <http://www.jhu.edu/~istr/conferences/geneva/abstracts/abs07.html>

Again we would repeat in this slightly altered context what we have said before about "bad faith." It is correct that society, in its aspect of Man, is a conspiracy to bring about inauthentic existence. The walls of society are a Potemkin village erected in front of the abyss of being. They function to protect us from terror, to organize for us a cosmos of meaning within which our lives make sense. But it is also true that authentic existence can take place only within society. All meanings are transmitted in social processes. One cannot be human, authentically or inauthentically, except in society. Invitation to Sociology: A Humanist Perspective Peter Berger Chapter 6 SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE SOCIETY AS DRAMA <http://www.people.virginia.edu/~tsawyer/DRBR/berger.txt>

An old African proverb has been the mainstay of liberal social science conferences for years: It takes a village to raise a child. Not surprisingly, even First Lady Hillary Clinton is using it in her recent book. Its message seems clear. We are all in this together. Three fundamental problems arise with the use of this proverb: Children do not belong to the village or to the community or to the government. They belong to parents, and the village exists as a resource for these families. Even if we did believe this to be true, the village no longer exists. Third, what the village liberals seek to build is, in truth, simply big government. The proverb summons up a cozy image of all the different segments of society gathering around the innocent babe, protecting it, teaching it, loving it. And as the child grows, the village grows with it. The village is there to guide the child on life's path. The village is there for the child should the child fall. The village is where all the children will eventually marry and have children of their own, completing a cycle of harmony and knowledge. In trying to name this village, I hope the social scientists considered "Potemkin" because, just as the Soviets used the original Potemkin villages- which were complete shams-to mask the disharmony of their society, this village suffers from incurable dysfunction. It seems that the more our families disintegrate, the more violence explodes in our homes and on our streets, the more our schools fail the grade, the more this old proverb is repeated. Conference after conference, talk after talk, and book after book have discussed the importance of the village in raising children. Transforming America Kay Coles James December 17, 1996 Family Voice* http://www.cwfa.org/library/misc/1996-07_fv_america.shtml

...that most social organizations are like Potemkin villages. They've got impressive-sounding names and meeting halls and notices in the newspaper, but they don't have enough members to fill a minivan. Many people claim to join clubs because they improve society, but this goal is never entrusted to amateurs anymore. Any charity group worth its tax-exempt status gives most of its money to professional telemarketers and direct-mail wizards who help extract more donations from the group's "members." As for political activism, all elections are settled by television advertising, so there's really no need for flesh-and-blood voters to assemble outside \$1000-a-plate dinners. Social distortion A writer tries to make new friends and finds that meeting people isn't what it used to be by Robert David Sullivan The Boston Phoenix August 1999 http://www.bostonphoenix.com/archive/1in10/99/08/SOCIAL_DISTORTION.html

Potemkin Village: Rochester by the Numbers By John Klofas City Newspaper, December 30, 1998 We love our numbers in this community. Our reports are full of them- numbers of crimes, numbers of vacant buildings, numbers of cases of gonorrhea, numbers of uninsured neighbors. We wear our numbers like fine jewelry- sure signs of our sophistication and good taste. But our numeracy is also part of our pattern of doing reports on community problems but never doing much to solve those problems. That's the tradition here- great reports and little action. And part of that problem is that we almost always use numbers in a way that guarantees nothing much will happen....Despite the massive effort to collect and present the facts, however, the report tells us little of the nature of the problems we face or how we might address them. For all of its data there is no mention of race or class, no mention of concentrated problems, and no mention of connections between problems. It is as if all of the conditions it describes, from children in foster care to mortgage foreclosures were all randomly distributed across our community and were not associated with any other factors. These are disembodied statistics- answers to trivia questions-no more useful than knowing how many murders there were last year... Potemkin Village may have been a monument to communism. The monument we build with data in this community is a monument to charity. We use data to provide a sense of assurance that we know our problems and we are responding to them. And we respond by directing our massive industry of charity to provide needed services to individuals. We are very good at that. We mentor, tutor and shelter pretty well in this community. But the way we use data never permits us to do more than serve individuals. It does not allow us to consider how the changing structure of this community is related to our problems or how our institutions are succeeding or failing to respond to those changes. We use data to inform and direct charity but not to inform or direct public policy. <http://www.rit.edu/~jmkgcj/December%2030%201998.html>

Culture

Finally, I conclude by examining appropriationism, which has become, wittingly or unwittingly, the dominant mode of artmaking in postmodernity. Quoting another artist, especially an avant-garde one, and in the process denying his or her therapeutic intention, trivializing his or her creativity and innovations, and supposedly deconstructing his or her art--showing that it means the opposite of what it was thought to say, and turning it into an ironical cliché or shadow of itself--has become de rigeur in many quarters, a supposedly major conceptual achievement. I analyze appropriationism as the ultimate cynicism about art in general and avant-garde art in particular, as well as about creativity, and distinguish appropriation from influence, finally arguing that appropriationism signals a creative deadend-- a feeling of the futility of creativity to effect any change in the lifeworld, and thus a failure. In appropriationism critical consciousness capitulates to the status quo, ironically but also smugly. Appropriationist art is neither transcendently abstract nor spontaneously

expressive, nor is it addressed or of service to anyone, but simply confirms the status quo of media consciousness, there for the asking by everyone. Appropriationist art is a kind of historicist spectacle or show with little or nothing to tell--the ultimately decadent, indifferent art, blending almost seamlessly into the pathological Potemkin Village media facade our culture increasingly depends upon for its "self"-consciousness. I do suggest that certain appropriationists who work in a comic way offer what seems to be a critical consciousness of art's and society's tragicomic situation, but I am not sure I am right, although I believe that comedy is ultimately more therapeutically effective than tragedy. As Freud suggested, humor is a sign of ego strength, and it was the strength of the individual ego in the face of a society that weakened it through its indifference and failure to be an existentially facilitating environment, and that they thought would sooner or later destroy itself, that was of basic concern to the first avant-garde artists. They wanted to save people from society, not society from itself, however much some of them fantasied a social utopia in which reason was triumphant. Thus, the comic appropriationists may be the new avant-gardists, if that idea makes any real sense these days. Author's Comments on The Cult of the Avant-Garde Artist Donald Kuspit <http://www.creview.com/artcrit/ac7kus.htm>

Everything is surfaces here. People assume roles and pass themselves off as something they are not, the New Yorkers have created a Potemkin Village version of Vermont so that they can pretend to be countrified, folks sign letters Love Always as if it meant Sincerely--and it turns out that it means little more than that for most of them. Everyone is so artificial and their lives so transient that they do not really love one another, not husbands and wives, not mothers and daughters, not longtime companions, not adulterous couples. Their lives are summed up in the title of Nicole's soap opera, "Passionate Intensity"--which is taken from William Butler Yeats' Second Coming: The best lack all conviction and the worst are full of passionate intensity. Love has been replaced by passion; relationships have replaced true commitments. *Women Writer Reviews* <http://www.brothersjudd.com/webpage/womenrevtxt.htm>

I think a second discomfort with the biological approach to the human mind is the worry that it somehow makes our ideals a sham or less real. Life would be a Potemkin Village, where there's only a facade of value and worth, but really biology is showing that there's nothing behind the facade. For example, if we love our children because the genes for loving children are in the bodies of those children and so the genes are benefiting themselves, doesn't that undermine the purity or the value of that love? . Richard Dawkins and Steven Pinker: Is Science Killing The Soul - Page 8 http://digerati.edge.org/3rd_culture/dawkins_pinker/debate_p8.html

Media

Hollywood, a Hive stronghold, glamorizes fornication the way Marlboro ads used to glamorize smoking, showing none of the degrading effects uncontrolled sex produces in the real world. When was the last time a movie showed unwanted pregnancy, disease, and the many other complications (natural and foreseeable, as other generations have always realized) of the decline of chastity? The movies are the Potemkin village of the sexual revolution. ("The Moving Picture," SOBRAN'S, July 1999, page 2)

Recalling the Potemkin villages of Russia's more distant past, one cannot help but think of their contemporary, post-Soviet adaptation: a phenomenon known as "presentations" (prezentatsii). This word was assimilated into Russian from English in, approximately, 1990-1991 to denote the ceremony of an official opening of some public institution. In spite of the fact that Russia grows poorer and continues to crumble from day to day, such festive "presentations" are now widely fashionable. A stock-exchange or joint venture, a political party or new magazine formally presents itself (prezentiruetsia) to a select audience. For seventy years all of these institutions of Western civilization were banned from our society, but now it greedily absorbs them into the social vacuum. The necessity for such formal openings indicates the intrinsic limitations of these enterprises: they do not proceed organically from the national cultural soil. The overwhelming majority of these businesses and associations collapses within several weeks or months, leaving no memory of themselves other than their dazzling presentation. None of the cheerful participants at such lavish events, marked by long speeches, caviar, brandy, and oysters, would attest that the object of their presentation will survive even until the following morning, but most are fully satisfied by their inclusion in today's presentation and by the anticipation of more in the days to come. The entire life of society becomes an empty self-presentation. Neither political parties nor enterprises are really created, but rather concepts of parties and enterprises. Incidentally, the most real sphere, economics, is simulated even more than all others. Yet the only area in which this process of simulation might be truly beneficial is culture, since by its nature it is inclined to "present," to create images. Mikhail Epstein *The Origins and Meaning of Russian Postmodernism* In the book: Mikhail Epstein. *After the Future: The Paradoxes of Postmodernism and Contemporary Russian Culture*, Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1995, pp. 188-210.

<http://www.russ.ru/antolog/INTELNET/af.rus.postmodernism.html>

Ars Electronica 1995 catalog, Linz, Austria, 1995. Lev Manovich TO LIE AND TO ACT: POTEMKIN'S VILLAGES, CINEMA AND TELEPRESENCE Notes around Checkpoint '95 project <http://jupiter.ucsd.edu/~manovich/text/Checkpoint.html>

BFI's in-house magazine Potemkin (April 1998).

The failure of the propaganda of the German Democratic Republic Summary: Why did East Germany's outwardly successful propaganda system collapse in 1989? Despite enormous effort, East Germany faced difficulties training propagandists, producing quality propaganda, surmounting inefficiencies within the system, and persuading the citizens to accept its message. Using Jacques Ellul's approach to propaganda, I argue that East Germany's failure was typical of totalitarian propaganda systems, which have inherent weaknesses that guarantee the long-term failure of their propagandas. Randall L Bytwerk *Quarterly Journal of Speech* Date: 11/01/1999

National politics

Whitewater, Fund-raising abuses, Travelgate, Filegate, all sorts of non- sex scandals where the President honed his skills at hiding the truth from its seekers. The Senate, as an institution, if not as individuals, inspected a Potemkin Village of lies, declared it sound because that was the popular thing to do, and moved on to a vote. National Review <http://www.nationalreview.com/goldberg/goldberg021299.html>

Jesse 'The Gov' Ventura BY MICHAEL SIFRY The Nation, On January 4, 1999, Jesse Ventura will be sworn in as the new governor of Minnesota amid a media deluge not seen since the state hosted the Super Bowl. The traditional black-tie inaugural ball has been canceled in favor of a huge "People's Celebration" to be held at the 18,000-seat Target Center in Minneapolis, with likely performances by Bob Dylan and others. Since winning a three-way race against Republican Norm Coleman and Democrat Hubert "Skip" Humphrey 3d by a margin of 37-34-28, Ventura--who wants to be known as "The Mind" after years as "The Body"--has become a nationwide celebrity. He's signed a six-figure book deal for a quickie biography, and a made-for-TV movie deal with NBC is said to be in the works. But so far there's been little attention to the real significance of Ventura's win: A working-class populist has figured out how to drive a monster truck through the Potemkin village known as two-party politics in America. <http://www.thenation.com/issue/990104/0104SIFR.HTM>

Jontz was responding to Greenspan's Capitol Hill testimony about the continuing strength of the U.S. economy, despite the downturn in Asia. The Fed chairman declared that "the recent [U.S.] economic performance, with its combination of strong growth and low inflation, is as impressive as any I have witnessed in my near half-century of daily observation of the American economy." Some liberals were outraged by Greenspan's upbeat view. They consider the current economic statistics a chimera -- a "beautiful Potemkin village" in Jontz's words -- that is likely to vanish. In his letter to Greenspan, dated July 24, Jontz argued that median family income and hourly wages had dipped during the booming Nineties and that the income gap between rich and poor had "worsened steadily." ALAN GREENSPAN: TOO EXUBERANT FOR SOME LIBERALS BUSINESS WEEK ONLINE July 28, 1998
<http://www.businessweek.com/bwdaily/dnflash/july1998/nf80728c.htm>

The Diversity Machine: The Drive to Change the "White Male Workplace." By Frederick R. Lynch. Free Press. 416 pp. \$27.50. Affirmative action has sustained some severe blows recently, but its commercial cousin, the diversity movement, has escaped close scrutiny until now. With this wide-ranging book, sociologist Frederick Lynch crushes the Potemkin Village of slogans, moralisms, and stereotypes that has shielded diversity management

Because institution-building was ignored, Russia today is plagued by the virtual absence of civil society and the rule of law. Political parties are poorly developed. Parliament is a Potemkin village. The president has huge formal powers but government at both federal and regional level is weak and unable to enforce its decisions. Jamestown Foundation on 9-10 June 1999,
<http://www.jamestown.org/htm/conf-report.htm>

To some, perestroika was a restructuring and opening that would ineluctably lead to the rule of law, democracy, and markets at least as free as those of countries in the West that professed freedom. To others, perestroika was but an intelligence provocation, a ruse, a Potemkin village, or another Dzerzhinsky-inspired Trust. The Soviet Union was not changing, but Soviet authorities intended for Western authorities and domestic and international opponents to believe it was. IBPP Online VOL.6 NO.11 Mar 19, 1999
<http://web.pr.erau.edu/~security/archive/no11vol6.html>

The departure of Newt Gingrich from Congress exposes a media-created ideological Potemkin village in the GOP, and that's all for the good. There is no philosophical commitment to small government in either party, and, without it, Washington, D. C. is an unconstrained engine for government growth. Those clear-eyed advocates of the limited government the Founders tried to give us must now step forward to fill this dangerous ideological void. They start with an impressive asset: the Constitution of the United States of America.

Finally, while liberalisation and democratisation continue to be sold as the panacea, the state is being virtually hollowed out and little to nothing is left for democratically elected politicians to decide, because the major state functions have long since been externalised. As a result, African states are in a process of steady conversion into Potemkin facades, behind which international agencies and actors are running the economy, mostly in collusion with local elites turned entrepreneurs. This process has been dubbed "the project of external governance" (Clapham 1998:265). Military functions and security services are only the latest additions to the list of state functions being externalised and often privatised. Military Downsizing and Growth in the Security Industry in Sub-Saharan Africa Peter Lock, EART, Hamburg <http://www.idsa-india.org/an-dec8-10.html>

During the course of an investigation against officials of the US Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), several immigration employees expressed a fear of reprisals for complaints lodged against INS management officials. When the allegations were made public, the Miami District Office was asked to respond. The District did so in the form of two memoranda dated July 13, 1995 (July 13 Memorandum) and July 17, 1995 (July 17 Memorandum), in which it denied that INS managers intended or acted to create a false impression for the Delegation. The July 13 and July 17 Memoranda are attached as Appendix 2 and Appendix 3, respectively. In the July 13 Memorandum, Miami's District Director, Walter D. (Dan) Cadman, wrote: "I can assure you, unambiguously, that the congressional delegation was not shown a 'Potemkin Village' [On July 14, 1995, the Miami Herald printed an article entitled "An INS Potemkin Village?" which reported that "rank-and-file workers allege that their bosses . . . turned INS operations [in Miami] into an impressive 'Potemkin Village.' That Russian invention consisted of buildings' facades, with nothing behind them, rigged to deceive Western visitors about horrid conditions in the Soviet Union." ("An INS Potemkin Village?," Miami Herald dated July 14, 1995, p. 20A).] when they visited any of the sites in this district -- whether at Miami International Airport or at Krome Service Processing Center." The substance of the Miami District's response is described in detail in this report in our discussion of each allegation. Book Con: The Shape of the Potemkin Village by James Higgins Thursday, January 28, 1999 Comments: 12 posts <http://ic.voxcap.com/issues/issue35/item505.asp>

Technology

Nevertheless, permit me to suggest that when folks are complaining that Pentium chips have a problem with long division, or that Windows 95 is a Potemkin village erected around a DOS shack, or that Cisco's future in communications technology is "challenged" -- well, let's just say that someone is buying up all those shares that are being sold. Boring Portfolio Report Friday, February 21, 1997 by Greg Markus (MF Boring) <http://search.fool.com/boringport/1997/boringport970221.htm>

Anyway, having ditched history, Barlow presents a simple solution to problems which might interest governments, like phone sex

companies advertising their services through web-pages featuring nude women and orgasmic audio tracks: "You claim there are problems among us that you need to solve. You use this claim as an excuse to invade our precincts. Many of these problems don't exist. Where there are real conflicts, where there are wrongs, we will identify them and address them by our means. We are forming our own Social Contract." I'm wondering what it means to form a social contract in cyberspace, one with the kind of authenticity and authority of a constitution. Sounds great in theory, but I don't actually "live" in cyberspace -- I live in New York city, in the state of New York, in the United States of America. I guess I'm taking things too literally. Apparently my "mind" lives in cyberspace and that's what counts. It's my vestigial meat-package, also known as my body, which lives in New York. Government, geography, my body -- all are obsolete now thanks to "cyberspace that new home of mind," Barlow explains. That's why, speaking to government, Barlow argues: "Your legal concepts of property, expression, identity, movement, and context do not apply to us. They are based on matter. There is no matter here." This philosophy is a Potemkin village, a sham of language, which serves to create its own self-contained universe of logic where the real world is always wrong and the cyber world is always right. It is not a universe I want to live in. The Myth of Digital Nirvana <http://www.reach.com/matrix/meme2-03.html> MEME 2.03 United Nodes of Internet -- are we forming a digital nation? The Myth of Digital Nirvana David S. Bennahum

The Web is a Potemkin village of media: it gives the illusion of being an information medium where you can actually get things done. It isn't. The average company Web site consists of pages and pages of brochure copy or fluff thrown up in the interest of "information" about the product or service. Bruce Campbell Not the World Wide Web but an incredible lifelike simulation: some hard truths: <http://www.i-strategies.com/notwww.html>

Justice

Chief Justice William Rehnquist calls it that too. Speaking for the four anti-Roe justices, Rehnquist said the Court "retains the outer shell of Roe v. Wade, but beats a wholesale retreat from the substance of that case." He wrote that the Pennsylvania decision leaves Roe standing "as a sort of judicial Potemkin Village, which may be pointed out to passers by as a monument to the importance of adhering to precedent." William Schneider The Battle for Saliency: the abortion issue in this campaign. The Atlantic Monthly, October 1992 <http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/abortion/batt.htm>

However, to the dismay of local and international human rights organizations, American diplomats have demanded that the tribunal be required to obtain approval from the UN Security Council before investigating alleged war crimes--making it virtually impossible for prosecution of Syrian or Israeli human rights abuses in Lebanon to take place. "The ICC will be a judicial facade if it cannot, on its own authority, prosecute war crimes," said Richard Dicker, associate counsel for Human Rights Watch. Jelena Pejic of the Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights called the U.S. position "horrible".¹ So far, about 40 countries have expressed support for a fully independent prosecutor. Canadian Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy has warned that Canada may walk away from the treaty rather than allow the authority of the court to be watered down. Having no court at all, he said, "is better than a Potemkin village." Negotiations for International War Crimes Tribunal Underway in Rome 22 June 1998 <http://www.afnet.com/jac/reports/980622.html>

Herb Greer Potemkin justice The Washington Times 07/08/1999

In fact, many applications brought under Article 10 involve other interests than those of somebody wishing to impart an information or to express an opinion or idea. Those interests may be quite as worthy of protection. There are cases where the exercise of freedom of expression impinges upon the right to respect for private life. The interest moving the media is not always that of bringing to light dark activities of celebrities who hide behind a sanctimonious Potemkin-façade. It is often that of publishing information on private matters for the simple reason that they are regarded as a commodity and in a hope of gaining an advantage in the competition with other media. Freedom of Expression with special regard to Mass Media Regulations in the Jurisprudence of the Constitutional Courts Report on the case-law of the European Commission of Human Rights by Professor Stefan Trechsel, President of the European Commission of Human Rights, <http://www.mkab.hu/conference/okvny/trechsre.htm>

Regulation

Daniel Callahan and Margot White, The Legalization of Physician- Assisted Suicide: Creating a Regulatory Potemkin Village, 30 U. Rich. L. Rev. 1 (1996) ... 13, 14

ACCOUNTABILITY: POTEMKIN VILLAGE ON THE POTOMAC? Until 1970, House members enjoyed virtual anonymity when voting on amendments, often the most important stage of lawmaking. Reformers took heart when the 1970 Act provided for recorded votes in the Committee of the Whole, the procedural device under which the chamber amends legislation.³⁰ But when these recorded votes became campaign ammunition for challengers, the House increasingly turned to restrictive "special rules" that structure debate, curb amendments, and often keep tough issues from ever reaching the chamber. In the 95th Congress (1977-79), 85 percent of the legislation that passed through the Rules Committee was open to germane floor amendments. In the 102nd Congress (1991-93), the Rules Committee permitted open debate just 34 percent of the time. Restrictive rules have been the focus of partisan infighting -- but in fact both sides of the aisle have sought their protection. For example, President Reagan's 1981 budget reconciliation bill passed the House under a restrictive rule that barred separate votes on its various elements. Given the constraints of time, the House cannot always work under completely open rules. The members' ability to amend legislation on the floor, however, is important to the chamber's accountability. When members can offer amendments, they can no longer claim to support one thing, but then say that they were blocked in their gallant efforts to change the law. And with more floor votes on sharply-defined issues, members must take clear stands with their votes. In the 1993 debate over the rule on legislative appropriations, Rep. Tim Penny (D-MN) said: "Mr. Speaker, I do not know why in this Congress we are afraid of more open rules. I do not say they all have to be open, but they do not have to be as limited as this. We seem to be determined to manipulate the outcome by limiting the options. This is not democratic."³¹ Rep. Anthony Beilenson (D-CA), a member of the Rules Committee, has added: "It never hurts to talk about things It also contributes to the civility of the place,

which is important for us and for the country."³² Another trend verging on "bait-and-switch" has involved committee meetings. During the 1970s, the "sunshine movement" prompted Congress to open its formal committee meetings to the public. Over time, however, it started to make key decisions in closed-door markup sessions, party caucuses in committee, or informal groups. Among the major bills crafted outside public view have been the Tax Reform Act of 1986 and the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. Both bills won praise for their content, and one can make a strong case that they benefitted from deliberations that took place in private. At the same time, however, journalist Richard Cohen asks: "If these lawmakers make all of their decisions in closed rooms or defer to a few expert colleagues and their aides, how can voters judge the effectiveness and wisdom of their representatives?"³³ Secrecy endangers accountability. So does the maze of committee jurisdictions. The number of committees and subcommittees increased during the 1960s and 1970s. Since then, an additional source of confusion has come from the practice of referring legislation to more than one committee. On average, nearly one-fourth of the legislative workload of House committees and about one-tenth of that of Senate committees consist of measures shared with one or more panels; and for certain committees, the figure tops fifty percent.³⁴ With multiple jurisdictions, a bill may go through as many as ten committees and subcommittees. What Alexander Hamilton said of tangled executive authority also applies here: "[It] tends to conceal faults and destroy responsibility [which] is shifted from one to another with such dexterity, and under such plausible appearances, that the public opinion is left in suspense about the real author."³⁵ To hold lawmakers accountable for their words, actions, and inactions, citizens should be able to rely on the official printed record. Lawmakers, however, can revise their remarks both in the Congressional Record and in hearing transcripts. According to Mark Bisnow, who has served as staff to members of both parties: In theory, aides are supposed to review the transcripts only for grammatical or factual errors, but the fact that in practice wholesale changes can be made is suggested by the presence of scissors and tape on the table in the middle of the clerk's room where the aides do their work. Indeed, it is not uncommon simply for a senator to say what he wants, hand in a prepared text that he does not actually use, and expect the aide to go in and reconcile everything afterward. The Record is so notoriously inaccurate that, in one macabre instance, a speech by the late House majority leader Hale Boggs appeared as part of a debate that was stated to have taken place two days after he had perished in an airplane accident over Alaska.³⁶ The reference to scissors and tape is becoming obsolete because congressional offices are now acquiring the ability to edit the Record electronically.³⁷ It is possible to cross-check the printed version against C-SPAN tapes, of course, but it can be time-consuming and costly to gain access to video archives. Researchers, journalists, and ordinary citizens must usually rely on a dubious printed text. John J. Pitney, Jr., <http://www.dlcppi.org/texts/politics/reform.txt>

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