

APPENDIX VIII-1: Description of BRCA\Hope LA-USA Project: “Planting Seeds of Hope in Our Inner Cities” By Anna Bond

*When, people are starving,
it is because their governments take too much,
Causing them to starve.
When people are hard to control,
it is because of the contrivances of their governments,
Which makes them hard to control. When people think little of death,
it is because those above think so much of life thus the
people think little of death.*

—Lao-Tzu: Tao Te Ching

The CIA-Contra-Cocaine connection exposed by San Jose Mercury News’ reporter Gary Webb should not have shocked us as it did. Drugs, weapons and money-laundering have always been tools of the trade for U.S. clandestine operations abroad. This most recent “dark alliance,” as Webb termed it, is simply another episode in the long saga of American trade in drugs, guns, dollars, and human life—only this time the life that trafficking victimized was African-American inner city youth.

From all appearances, it was targeted genocide. But what goes around comes around, and a short twenty-two years after crack cocaine made its first documented appearance in California, we have small Vermont towns with nothing that could even be called a street hosting street gangs and crack cocaine.

Somehow the pipeline between Columbia’s cocaine cartels and the black neighborhoods of South Central L.A. opened by CIA-backed Contras and Nicaraguan drug-smugglers recalls the infamous Triangle Trade, which laid the foundations for the fortunes of the future leaders of the United States.

Here the commodities are cocaine, crack and guns. There they were sugar, rum and slaves. Then and now, we see mindless destruction of human life and soils, mere means toward the acquisition of wealth and the control of the people by a powerful elite.

In the late eighteenth century, ships left New England loaded mostly with rum. In Africa the rum was exchanged for as many slaves as it would buy (often at the rate of 200 gallons per slave). Loaded with slaves, the ship set sail for the West Indies where the slaves were sold to the sugar plantations and part of the profit invested in molasses. On the final leg of the voyage, the vessel would carry the molasses back to New England, to be distilled into more rum, to buy more slaves. ¹

How much is a human life worth? Two hundred gallons of rum: absolutely equal for the purposes of trade! The damage to human society in Africa and the Caribbean as well as the soil destruction on the sugar plantations was never taken into account.

¹ Daniel P. Mannix and Malcolm Cowley: Black Cargoes: A History of the Atlantic Slave Trade 1518-1865 New York: Viking Press. 1962. p. 160.

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In addition to the profits from the basic Triangle Trade, the American colonies supplied food staples for feeding the sugar plantation slaves. In 1770, for instance, the colonies exported to the Caribbean one third of their dried fish, almost all of their pickled fish, most of their oats, corn, peas and beans as well as half their flour and all their butter and cheese. **2**

Ultimately, the Triangle Trade like the current Dark Alliance reveals an insidious mind set that treats everything—top soils, sugarcane, coca leaves, human life—as commodities or substances to be trafficked. **3** Using things as substances—rather than respecting their inherent value—invariably leads to addiction. Addiction to gold and silver, addiction to sugar, addiction to alcohol and drugs: these were—Ad continue to be—the driving forces behind the exploitation of resources—be they natural or human—in the New World as well as the modes operandi behind American trade’ relations.

Eventually even money loses relevance as the trafficking takes on a life of its own. During the heyday of the CIA-*contra*-cocaine connection, between the passage and repeal of the Boland Amendment, in 1986, every market indicator of the cocaine glut in America went off-scale. As Wanda Palacio, the Puerto Rican-born airline employee whose two-year cocaine trafficking career spanned her relationship with an upper-class Colombian whose social circle included “people deeply involved in the drug trade,” astutely observed in 1987: “Three years ago [before Boland], the price of cocaine was \$50,000 per kilo. Today it is \$20,000 and sometimes you can get it for \$15,000 to \$18,000. The market for the cocaine isn’t smaller—so the lower price is a result of having supply increase even more than demand has. **4**

“It got to *the point where it was like, man, use don t want to count no more money.*”
— Freeway Rick Ross

Rick Ross, a black teenager, was a talented tennis player with a promising future. Then his tennis coach discovered Rick could neither read nor write. Rick saw his dream of a college scholarship evaporate, which leads to some pointed questions. Would the coach of a white teenager have been unaware until the last lap that his student was illiterate? Having lost his one chance for a better life, Ross hung his future on drugs and became Freeway Rick, a dealer of mythical proportions in the L.A. underground. later sentenced to life with no chance for parole on cocaine conspiracy charges.

2 Eric Williams: Capitalism and Slavery, Food Staples to Feed Slaves, New York: Capricorn Books, 1966, p. 108.

3 Smoking tobacco in a ceremonial pipe **was** for Native Americans life-enhancing as it strengthened human relationships with the powers of the sky and the earth and all their relations. Europeans turned the sacred Native tobacco into another substance to be mono-cropped on plantations and sold to an addicted world. Andean natives living and working at high attitudes have chewed coca leaves for centuries, thus preventing chronic high altitude sickness and possible death, reports anthropologist Andrew Fuchs in *Coca Chewing and Chronic High Altitude Stress: Possible Effects of Coca Alkaloids on Erythropoietin.* Current Anthropology 19 June 1978). Were living the hell Europeans took that one.

4 Dennis Bernstein and Robert Knight: “Wars Go Better With Coke How The Contras Invaded the United States”, as quoted in *Forum*, San Jose Mercury News Web site, November 22, 1996.

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Freeway Rick’s story epitomizes the three-pronged plight of inner city youth. First, there is epidemic subclinical malnutrition stemming from poverty, lack of nutritional awareness, the proliferation of junk foods and drugs. Fast food franchises dot black neighborhoods everywhere—serving up their brand of super-refined, nutritionally empty foods devoid of any real identity no trace minerals, no vitamins, no essential oils, no DNA to connect us to the earth and the soil. These are foods that enslave us and addict us: white sugar, white flour, white bread, white fat, white salt, white crack.

Poor nutrition means your brain doesn’t work well, remember things, make appropriate decisions. After seven generations of eating such food, we have lost our memory of who we are, where we came from and where we are going. No wonder the infant mortality rate in South Central rivals that of some Third World countries. Taoist Sage and social commentator Lao-Tzu, writing over 2500 years ago, says it best: how can you really care about life or death when you’re starving? “Thinking little about death,” many people turn to the euphoria of drugs.

The second handicap impacting inner city youth is the lack of opportunities and options that comes with widespread poverty. There is virtually no chance to find a decent job, let alone meaningful work. Poverty gives you no options to switch schools, get special tutoring. Poverty leads to crime. Rick Ross grew up poor in Troup, Texas, then moved to South Central L.A., where he slipped into a career of drug dealing. When you don’t know where your next meal’s coming from, you think little of death—or life.

And third, we see clearly unequal education or, more accurately, blatant miseducation both in the schools and in the media That miseducation breeds cultural, ethnic and racial discrimination. When you see yourself as lesser, then you have adopted somebody else’s image of who you are. Not knowing who you really are makes it tough to be yourself or control yourself.

While most of the country is talking about accountability, people’s tribunals, justice, restitution and compensation, one visionary African American activist is transforming inner city hood areas into lush market gardens that incorporate pre-dynastic Egyptian intensive deep bed agricultural technology, intercropped ‘floating’ gardens reminiscent of pre-Columbian Mexico, and three-tiered permacultured beds.

He is George Singleton: radical in the sense of going to the roots of the disease that perpetuates slavery. And those roots are the three pronged plight that is crippling our inner city youth: 1) the poverty/crime connection, 2) the subclinical malnutrition/addictions syndrome and 3) the vicious miseducation/discrimination cycle.

In 1974, the year crack cocaine made its first appearance, *underground* in San Francisco and Nicaraguan drug smugglers hooked up with Colombian drug sellers, George *broke new ground* for his first Blackendian (Black and Indian) rural development cooperative in the Washington DC area. Soon afterward, George was recognized by Navajo leaders as the one who had been prophesied to teach them the old ways of gardening. He lived and studied with his the Navajo elders for seven years

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In 1981, just two years before Freeway Rick figured out how to blow up one kilo of cocaine into three or more of crack, the executive members of Louis Farrakan’s (Black Muslim) Temple 27 brought George from the Navajo Reservation to Los Angeles to design nutritional programs and gardens for their congregation of 2500.

From his intensive study of the Annu/Egyptian Mystery School practices, George helped the congregation align their diet to be harmony with the vegetarian ideals of Elijah Mohammed. Synthesizing what had been revealed to him among the Navajo and what he had earned from his Egyptian research, George developed an intensive biological gardening technology.

By 1985, that technology had produced a garden on the temple rooftop that provided food for the entire congregation. *Biological* gardening is distinct from—and more universally practicable than—organic in that it does not depend on animal manures with their questionable microbial contaminants (*E. coil*) and agrochemical pollutants (herbicides, fungicides and pesticides used in animal fodder).

Where organic animal-based composting demands *high-temperature* bacterial breakdown, large quantities of water and frequent labor intensive turning, *biological* gardening relies on *low-temperature* bacterial recycling of green wastes and, above all, that “foundation of all civilization” (ecologist Andre Voisin) **the earthworm**, who since before the time of Christ has been revered and protected as “sacred” (Cleopatra). Earthworm castings create a humus topsoil of the highest fertility, filth and biological vitality more efficiently than any other means. Biological gardening is the gardening method practiced historically in Meso-America by the Mayans and Olmecs and continuing into the present in the Nile Valley, the headwaters of the Amazon in Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru; and in Hunzaland.

Recognizing the intrinsic connection between a people’s culture and agriculture, George developed a powerful urban agri-forestry model—now called **Hope LA\USA—based** on the need to break away from animal-based farming with its inherent limited-resources, scarcity mind set that inevitably breeds struggle and conflict. He also developed this three-pronged model to provide simple, sustainable solutions to each of the three handicaps that paralyze the majority of our youth at risk today.

In 1987 the cocaine-related deaths of two Black athletes prompted national hysteria and tough new crack laws that impacted U. S. Blacks with extreme inequality. The U.S. Congress voted to give the Contras \$100 million in military aid. Danilo Bandon, son of wealthy Nicaraguan slumlord and Ross drug connection, was arrested, then released only a month later when the Iran-Contra scandal broke.

That same year a prominent South Central resident and social psychologist urged George to offer his genius and charisma to address the genocidal explosion of gang violence and crack use among youth at risk. From his years among the Navajo, George knew the extraordinary healing power gardening he’d for youth out of touch with nature and themselves.

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A quarter-acre biological garden at the famous **Children’s Space Educational Center** in Compton was succeeded by pilot biological gardens all over Los Angeles County. George’s striking dreadlocked figure—shouldering forks, shovels, pickaxes, even sacks of peat moss and earthworms to sites sometimes 20 miles apart—became a familiar presence.

The super tree, the tissue-cultured Chinese *Paulownia* hardwood, shoots up 15 feet per year under ideal conditions and is valued at \$1000 per cubic meter of timber! Aside from providing organic produce to the neighborhood, the **Hope LA** garden expanded the greening area in the midst of South Central’s asphalt battleground, It offered the youth involved the time and place to reconnect with nature, with the source of their food and with themselves.

George developed a brilliant sustainable life science curriculum that was at once a nonlinear education program that looked deeply at the political, economic and nutritional aspects of what has been called the “criminalization” of inner city life around the world *and* a hands-on apprenticeship in the high art and science of biological gardening which, at the close of the two-year program, gave the youth solid marketable horticultural skills.

Then in 1993 came perhaps the most potent agent for regenerating these youths’ malnourished bodies and drug-toxic immune systems. George started feeding *Super Blue Green Algae*, a wild super food harvested Klamath Lake, to the youth he was training. The changes were dramatic! Caseworkers observed better over-all health, improved school and work performance, greater clarity of thought and expression, sounder sleep, and a sense of new found joy and cooperation where before there had been apathy and distrust.

George’s **Project** in South Central was so successful he was invited to teach 160 third time offenders aged 14-19 in a youth detention facility in San Fernando Valley. Dispensing the daily *Super Blue Green Algae* to these youth, the Charge Nurse was enthusiastic about the potential of this wild super food. Her observations demonstrated not only the undeniable connection between poor nutrition and criminal behavior but also the incredible ability to restore vibrant health, strong immune response and a sense of bright hope simply eating this wild Algae could offer.

Almost four years later, George’s gardening model has evolved to integrate the deep beds with greenhouse covered algae ponds that provide abundant algae fertilizer and create microclimates outdoors—a novel concept indeed. George travels across the country to inner city neighborhoods, prisons, schools, reservations that ask for his expertise and his wisdom. He has projects at various stages of completion in over twenty states across the country.

Wherever he goes, George offers the gift of his technology of hope freely, without charge. His **Hope LA/USA** garden projects are funded through his *Super Blue Green Algae* network business and the sale of his videos, tapes and book.

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Providing Super *Blue Green Algae* to gang and at risk youth, caseworkers noticed many changes: in patterns of increased sleep, awakening with vitality, clearness of thought, improved school and work performance, and a sense of new found hope. The Project in South Central was so successful that George was contracted to teach his program at the Camp Holton youth detention facility in San Fernando Valley. This facility housed 160 third time offenders aged 14 to 19, sixty percent of whom were Hispanic and African American from South Central.

For a two-month period, youth participating in the Camp Holton ‘Brown Thumb Green Thumb Program’ received *Super Blue Green Algae*, dispensed daily by the Camp’s charge nurse. Her observations clearly demonstrated the connection between poor nutrition and criminal behavior.

Today George’s gardening model has evolved to integrate the deep beds with greenhouse covered algae ponds that provide abundant algae fertilizer and create microclimates outdoors—a novel concept indeed. George travels across the country to inner city neighborhoods, prisons, schools, reservations that ask for his expertise and his wisdom.

The success of this program in Los Angeles led to changes in the funding strategy. The program addressed the needs of inner city people across the country. Thus, in September, 1995 the HOPE L.A. Project became the HOPE LAUSA Project, initiating the development of Sustainable Agri-Forests in 25 states.

The Project’s current Sustainable Agri-Forestry model encompasses ten interrelated aspects:

- 1. Spiritual Economics**
- 2. Sustainable Life Science Curriculum**
- 3. Intensive Vermiculture**
- 4. Deep Intensive Growing Beds**
- 5. Biological Horticulture**
- 6. Three-tier Permaculture**
- 7. Biological Aqua-Culture**
 - a. PiMag Water Irrigation**
 - b. Greenhouse covered Algae Ponds**
- 8. Non-profit Organization Innovative Funding**
- 9. Food Fortification with Nutritional Herbs**
- 10. Volunteer and Trainee Stipends**
- 11. Case Management Counseling and Social Service Referral**
- 12. Project-funded Technical Assistance**

For more information about the **BRCA/Hope LA-USA Project** in or near your area or to purchase Educational and Entertainment CD’s, Cassettes and VCR tapes, books and other products, please call or fax 317-255-1388, e-mail us at Hopelusa@aol.com; or visit the BRCA/Hope Project’s Web Site at <http://www.hopelusa.org/>.

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