

SPRING 2007

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VOLUME 3 ISSUE 2



Four Years and Counting



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BIKES!



CLIMATE CHAOS

FAULT LINES

NEWSMAGAZINE OF THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA INDEPENDENT MEDIA CENTER

indybay.org

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free

FAULT LINES

The San Francisco Bay Area Independent Media Center is a non-commercial, democratic collective of bay area independent media makers and media outlets, and serves as the local organizing unit of the global indymedia network.

FAULT LINES MISSION STATEMENT

Fault Lines, the newsmagazine of the San Francisco Bay Area Independent Media Center, aims to give all communities the opportunity to actively participate in a collective process of media production and distribution. By operating with transparency, this newsmagazine hopes to achieve the goal of allowing the public, not corporate conglomerations, to set the agenda for news coverage. Our mission is to train and empower marginalized voices. This publication was created to be used as a tool for radical change in our communities by exposing the stories and raising the issues that the media plutocracy seeks to suppress. We are the people, we are the media and we are dissenting from the ground up.

GET INVOLVED

The IMC has an open door. You can write for Fault Lines, film events and rallies, self-publish articles to the web, take photos or just help us run the office. As an organization relying entirely on volunteer support, we encourage all forms of participation.

The print working group reserves the right to edit articles for length, content, and clarity. We welcome your participation in the entire editorial process.

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We'd also like to thank everyone who has donated to Fault Lines, those who have subscribed, and the organizations and small businesses that have advertised within these pages. Your support helps make this happen.

Letter from the Editors:

THE ROLE OF RADICAL PRINT?

This is the first issue of *Fault Lines* in almost five months. We took a little break to spend some time thinking and talking about the role of print media in radical social movements, asking ourselves if the time and money we spend making *Fault Lines* is worth it. We certainly don't doubt the value of independent media but we question the medium: print. We could easily post these articles on Indymedia.org or make our own website—it'd be practically free, distribution would be a lot easier, and design could be so much simpler. But would something be lost? That's the question.

It's not easy being a free, all volunteer newsmagazine, especially at a time when radical print projects in general are struggling. In the last few months several important radical publications have gone under, most notably Clamor and Lip, two magazines that embody the energy and enthusiasm that blossomed after the Seattle WTO protests of 1999. Bitch is moving from Oakland to Portland in search of lower rent. Kitchen Sink is working on its final issue. The Independent Press Association folded last December, a distributor that built up thousands of dollars in debt to its members and then went bankrupt. All of this reveals the precariousness of these, and many other, independent publications.

By producing *Fault Lines* we want to be a part of larger local, national, and global movements. Is making a newsmagazine an effective way to do this? We

have a lot of ideas about this that cover the spectrum from an emphatic 'yes' to a conflicted 'maybe not.' But we want to know what other people think. What is the role of print within the Indymedia network, which is largely internet-based? Part of being a useful tool is being

What is the role of print within the Indymedia network, which is largely internet-based?

embedded in a community larger than the group of people who work together on this paper. It makes sense that an independent, democratic media outlet should be fed by the movements that it serves, so we need to know what you think. Does the print medium reach communities with less access to computers? Is it a mere luxury for those of us who prefer staring at a piece of paper to an electronic screen? Would our time be better spent making posters, pamphlets, fliers, or zines?

We want to open up the lines of communication and get feedback on what we're doing here. What do you think? What are our strengths? What are our weaknesses? How could we be more effective? Would you rather read a piece of paper than a computer screen? Why? What is the role of print media in radical social movements? Who are 'you' anyway? Write or email us and let us know.

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Option 1: Get a full year of Fault Lines for \$20.

Option 2: Get a Fault Lines bandana with your one-year subscription for \$40.

Option 3: Get a Fault Lines tee shirt with your one-year subscription for \$60.

Option 4: Get a DVD of your choice with your one-year subscription for \$80.

Option 5: Get all three DVDs plus a Fault Lines tee shirt and bandana with your one-year subscription for \$200.

We Interrupt This Empire: In the days following the US invasion of Iraq protesters shut down the streets of San Francisco.

The Miami Model: explores implications of the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas with on the ground footage from the protests outside the trade negotiations in Miami.

Gigante Despierta: is a compilation of compelling short films from all around the country, due to hit the streets in the weeks before Mayday 2007.

JOIN THE ACTION



WE NEED:

- WRITERS
- EDITORS
- DESIGNERS
- PHOTOGRAPHERS
- RABBLE-ROUSERS

FOR DETAILS GO TO
WWW.FAULTLINES.ORG

Police Riot in Tacoma

peaceful anti-war activists brutalized in port blockade

BY LIAM O'DONOGHUE

Peace activists in Tacoma, Washington have faced growing police brutality and repression over their campaign to prevent the military from using the Port of Tacoma to ship Stryker armored vehicles to Iraq. On March 11, the police responded to non-violent civil disobedience in the form of passively sitting in a road to the port with huge amounts of tear gas, pepper gas, pepper spray, bean bags, rubber bullets, and pellets.

"The fact that they had to choose a different, less accessible port and then sneak the equipment in under cover of darkness shows just how little public support there is for the ongoing quagmire in Iraq," said Wes Hamilton, a Vietnam veteran and member of the Olympia chapter of Veterans for Peace.

He added, "The best way to support the troops is to prevent them from being placed into the midst of a civil war where they have a high risk of killing or being killed. We have a moral and humanitarian obligation to resist the use of our port."

Last year dozens of people were arrested at the Port of Olympia in similar actions. Following those protests, the military decided to stop using the Port of Olympia.

Olympia Port Militarization Resistance (OlyPMR) and Tacoma Port Militarization Resistance (Tacoma PMR) are continuing daily vigils and other actions for as long as the military equipment continues to arrive at the port. On Sunday, March 11, 23 more protestors were arrested as they demonstrated at the port.



Photo: Seattle IMC

"We have a democratic, economic, and moral obligation to resist the use of our publicly funded ports to support an occupation that is opposed by the American people. This quagmire in Iraq is robbing our communities of desperately needed resources and putting our young people in grave danger."

– Molly Gibbs, OlyPMR member.

WEEPING WEDNESDAY:

STUDENTS STILL FACE CHARGES FROM UC REGENTS PROTEST

BY DAVID ZLUTNICK

On October 18, 2006, the UC Regents visited Santa Cruz. Facing an angry and organized student body, the Santa Cruz administration spent thousands of dollars bussing in extra riot police.

Hundreds of students gathered to express their disgust at a variety of issues ranging from the UC's management of nuclear weapons labs, to the poverty-level wages paid to service workers, to the lack of funding for programs that recruit and retain students of color, as well as the general undemocratic structure of the UC.

As the Regents are notorious for sneaking out the backdoors of meeting halls when confronted by students,

the protesters joined hands and circled the building, attempting to pressure the Regents into addressing the demands of the students. As the protest continued, police became increasingly aggressive, repeatedly pushing and dragging students out of the way.

Finally the police targeted Alette Kendrick, a well-known student activist who has a history of being harassed by UC police. As she was being arrested one officer yelled, "That's the one we want! Get her!" even though she was not on the front lines of the scuffle. In the ensuing commotion police grabbed two others, using batons and pepper spray on protesters without warning. Kendrick continues to suffer from back pains over five months later, having been repeatedly kicked by police even



Photo Courtesy of Bradley Stuart

after being cuffed.

Hours after the arrests, the remaining protesters collectively negotiated with UCSC administration and police for the release of the students without charges. However, almost five months later, Kendrick is still facing five misdemeanors—three counts of assaulting an officer, and two for resisting arrest and disturbing the peace. The other two,

Tani Thole and Steve Stormoen, are each facing smaller misdemeanors. If convicted on all counts, Kendrick could receive up to three years in jail, while Thole could get up to a year.

If you would like more information on the continuing cases, or would like to get involved in their legal support, please visit: UCActivistDefense.org.

GI Resistance Heats Up: Watada Mistrial, Sentences for Resisters, Upcoming Cases

BY DAVID ZLUTNICK

Lt. Ehren Watada—the first commissioned officer to speak out against the war in Iraq—was facing a court-martial in early February, but it seems the government thoroughly botched its case and basically asked for a "do over." As thousands of supporters rallied outside Ft. Lewis in Washington State, Watada's lawyers proclaimed victory after the judge declared a mistrial.

"The mistrial is very likely to have the consequence of ending this case," said Watada's civilian lawyer Eric Seitz. "A retrial would be a case of double jeopardy based on the military rules for courts martial and applicable case law." If the army proceeds with a second trial the defense will move for dismissal, but Seitz does "not expect a retrial to ever

occur." Army Captain Mark Kim, Watada's appointed military defense lawyer, said he agrees with Seitz's conclusions, as have other legal experts consulted by the media.

In other war resister news, Ivan Brobeck was released from a Marine brig on February 5 after serving two months. He turned himself in in Washington, DC on election day, November 2006, after returning from Canada and was sentenced to eight months. The remaining time on his sentence has been suspended.

Mark Wilkerson was sentenced to seven months in a military brig on February 22 in Ft. Hood Texas. After serving one tour in Iraq, Wilkerson applied for Conscientious Objector (CO) status but was denied. He decided to go



Photo: www.indybay.org

AWOL instead of returning to Iraq. He turned himself in last August.

As *Fault Lines* goes to print, Army medic Augustín Aguayo has been convicted of desertion and is awaiting a sentence of up to seven years in a military prison at a court-martial in Manheim, Germany. After serving for a year in Iraq while his CO application

was being reviewed, Aguayo refused to be redeployed. During his time there he refused to load his weapon. His wife, mother, and two eleven-year-old daughters are leading his support campaign and need your help.

To support these war resisters and many others please visit CourageToResist.org.

**WAVE OF WILDCAT
STRIKES GETTING THE
GOODS, WINNING CON-
CESSIONS FROM INDUS-
TRY IN EGYPT**

Since December, a wave of wildcat strikes has spread across Egypt, mostly among workers in the textile industry that has provided cotton cloth to the West for over a century. Although strikes are illegal in Egypt, often leading to violent police repression, the *BBC* reports that in recent months “thousands of workers in Egypt have gone on strike, causing chaos in some of the country’s largest textile factories.” In late February a thousand workers shut down their textile mill in Kafr al-Dawwar, barricaded themselves inside the factory, and held a shipment of cotton destined for export. The workers demanded better pay and benefits, calling their factory chairman “a shoe” and “useless.” Spurred to action by falling wages and threats of privatization, 35,000 workers at state-owned textile, cement, and poultry factories have joined the wave of unsanctioned strikes, reports the *SF Chronicle*. Miners, train engineers, and even riot police have joined the strikes.

“The union doesn’t care about us, they have their own concerns,” says Kafr al Dawwar worker Khaled Ali, in front of his barricaded factory. He earned the equivalent of about 88 US dollars this month. Recently, the government seems to have capitulated, offering workers a cost of living allowance, increased promotions, and better health care facilities.

**ITALY TO TRY
AMERICAN FBI
AGENTS IN ABSENTIA
FOR SECRET TORTURE
MISSIONS**

A Milan judge held a preliminary hearing into the case against 26 CIA agents accused of kidnapping an Egyptian Muslim cleric, Hassan Mustafa Osama Nasr, also known as Abu Omar, in Italy in 2003. The cleric was sent to Egypt for interrogation, reported the *BBC* in January. Untold numbers of “suspected terrorists,” many of Middle Eastern ethnicity, have been secretly taken from their homes and tortured in a practice that US officials call “extraordinary rendition.” After years of muckraking, notably by geeks known as “planespotter” who hang out at airports writing down airplanes’ wing numbers, the cover has been blown on this CIA practice. George W. Bush has recently admitted that the practice exists. Eerie parallels can be drawn to Nazi Germany, which chose to torture gypsies, communists, subversives, and others in concentration camps built in Poland because such despicable practices would have been illegal. The CIA has been ferrying people to places like Egypt for torture, sometimes through Europe, falsifying airplane wing registration numbers and other aviation info in order to hide their trail. The Italian government has announced that it will be trying suspected CIA agents in absentia for breaking Italian law.

Beyond Petroleum

UC BERKELEY SELLS OUT TO ENERGY GIANT

BY PROF. MIGUEL A. ALTIERI, UC BERKELEY AND ERIC HOLT-GIMENEZ, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, FOOD FIRST, OAKLAND.

With royal fanfare, British Petroleum just donated big money in research funds for UC Berkeley, Lawrence Livermore Laboratories, and the University of Illinois to develop new sources of energy—primarily biotechnology to produce biofuel crops. This comes on the anniversary of Berkeley’s hapless research deal with seed giant Novartis ten years ago. However, at 500 million dollars, the BP grant dwarfs Novartis’ investment by a factor of ten. The graphics of the announcement were unmistakable: BP’s corporate logo is perfectly aligned with the flags of the Nation, the State, and the University.

CEO/Chairman Robert A. Malone proclaimed BP was “[J]oining some of the world’s best science and engineering talent to meet the demand for low carbon energy... We will be working to improve and expand the production of clean, renewable energy through the development of better crops.” This partnership reflects the rapid, unchecked, and unprecedented global corporate alignment of the world’s largest agribusiness (ADM, Cargill, Bunge), biotech (Monsanto, Syngenta, Bayer, Dupont), petroleum (BP, TOTAL, Shell), and automotive industries (Volkswagen, Peugeot, Citroen, Renault, SAAB). With what for them is a relatively small investment, these industries will appropriate academic expertise built over decades of public support, translating into billions in revenues for these global partners.

Could this be a “win-win” agenda for the University, the public, the environment, and industry? Hardly. In addition to overwhelming the University’s research agenda, what scientists behind this blatantly private business venture fail to mention is that the apparent free lunch of crop-based fuel can’t satisfy our energy appetite and it will not be free, or environmentally sound.

Dedicating all present US corn and soybean production to biofuels would meet only 12 percent of our gasoline demand and 6 percent of diesel demand. Total US cropland reaches 625,000 square miles. To replace US oil consumption with biofuels we would need 1.4 million square miles of corn for ethanol and 8.8 million square miles of soybean for biodiesel. Biofuels are expected to turn Iowa and South Dakota into corn-importers by 2008.

The biofuel energy balance—the amount of fossil energy put in to producing crop biomass compared to that

coming out—is anything but promising. Researchers Patzek and Pimentel see serious negative energy balances with biofuels. Other researchers see only 1.2 to 1.8 returns, for ethanol at best, with the jury still lukewarm on cellulosic biofuels.

Industrial methods of corn and soybean production depend on large scale monocultures. Industrial corn requires high levels of chemical nitrogen fertilizer (largely responsible for the dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico) and the herbicide atrazine, an endocrine disruptor. Soybeans require massive amounts of nonselective, Roundup herbicide that upset soil ecology and produce “superweeds.” Both monocultures produce

**This partnership reflects
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and unprecedented
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largest agribusiness,
biotech, petroleum, and
automotive industries.**

massive topsoil erosion and surface and groundwater pollution from pesticides and fertilizer runoff. Each gallon of ethanol sucks up 3-4 gallons of water in the production of biomass. The expansion of irrigated “fuel on the cob” into drier areas in the Midwest will draw down the already suffering Ogallala aquifer.

One of the more surreptitious industrial motives of the biofuels agenda—and the reason Monsanto and company are key players—is the opportunity to irreversibly convert agriculture to genetically engineered crops (GMOs). Presently, 52 percent of corn, 89 percent of soy, and 50 percent of canola in the US is GMO. The expansion of biofuels with “designer corn” genetically tailored for special ethanol processing plants will remove all practical barriers to the permanent contamination of all non-GMO crops.

Obviously the US can’t satisfy its energy appetite with biofuels. Instead, fuel crops will be grown in the developing world on large-scale plantations of sugarcane, oil palm, and soybean already replacing primary and secondary tropical forests and grasslands in

Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, and Malaysia. Soybeans have already caused the destruction of over 91 million acres of forests and grasslands in Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, and Bolivia. To satisfy world market demands, Brazil alone will need to clear 148 million additional acres of forest. Reduction of greenhouse gases is lost when carbon-capturing forests are felled to make way for biofuel crops.

Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of small-scale peasant farmers are being displaced by soybean expansion. Many more stand to lose their land under the biofuels stampede. Already the expanding cropland planted to yellow corn for ethanol has reduced the supply of white corn for tortillas in Mexico, sending prices up 400 percent. This led peasant leaders at the recent World Social Forum in Nairobi to demand, “No full tanks when there are still empty bellies!”

By promoting large scale mechanized monocultures that require agrochemical inputs and machinery, and as carbon-capturing forests are felled to make way for biofuel crops, CO₂ emissions will increase, not decrease. The only way to stop global warming is to promote small scale organic agriculture and decrease the use of all fuels,

which requires major reductions in consumption patterns and development of massive public transportation systems, areas that the University of California should be actively researching and that BP and the other biofuel partners will never invest one penny towards.

The potential consequences for the environment and society of BP’s funding are deeply disturbing. In the wake of the report of the external review of the UCB-Novartis agreement that recommended that the University not enter into such agreements in the future, how could such a major deal be announced without wide consultation of the UC faculty? The University has been recruited into a corporate partnership that may irreversibly transform the planet’s food and fuel systems and concentrating tremendous power in the hands of a few corporate partners.

It is up to the citizens of California to hold the University accountable to research that supports truly sustainable alternatives to the energy crisis. A serious public debate on this new program is long overdue.

RURAL WORKERS IN
URUGUAY OCCUPY
LAND AND CALL
FOR SOLIDARITY

On January 14, Mandiyú – a group of small dairy farmers – occupied a 388 hectare section of the Eduardo Acevedo Estate in the area of Bella Unión, in the north of Uruguay. The area of Bella Unión, situated in the state of Artigas, is one of the poorest zones in Uruguay. Bordering Brazil, the region is known for its extensive cattle farming and agriculture. Employment is scarce and what work one can find is generally poorly paid. At the same time, in the past the region used to attract many people who came to make a living working as a “peludo,” as the sugar cane workers are called.

Uruguay has not escaped the Latin American reality of terribly unequal land distribution, and the eternal promise of land reform has not been fulfilled. 75% of the land is part of properties pertaining to less than 8,000 people and companies. The National Colonization Institute (the land management wing of the national government with the Spanish acronym “INC”) manages some 500,000 hectares, which is only 3% of the country’s land.

For over a year the INC has allowed the Mandiyú group to use their property for cow pasture, and while they were paying rent the situation was unstable, with no legal security. In December of 2006 the last contract expired, leaving the small dairy farmers abandoned and waiting for, at any moment, an order to evict them and their cows off the land. They also found out about a deal in the same state where 600 hectares had been given over to a wealthy person who did not need the help of the INC.

ICE RAIDS IN MARIN
PART OF BROADER
NATIONAL ROUNDUPS

Following a week of demonstrations for immigrant rights in San Francisco, Federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) conducted raids March 6 and 7 in Marin County, arresting an unspecified number of undocumented immigrants. Homes in Novato and the San Rafael Canal District were raided in what observers called a belligerent manner, allegedly detaining entire households, including some children.

The raids were part of the Department of Homeland Security’s Operation Return to Sender, which has resulted in at least 18,000 detentions nationwide since its inception in June 2006. Another raid took place March 6 in New Bedford, Massachusetts that resulted in 361 arrests.

In response, local community and interfaith organizations have held protests and vigils in San Rafael. Together they are calling for ICE to immediately cease all enforcement activities until proper protocols and adequate constitutional safeguards can be put into place to protect the innocent and those not directly targeted with arrest warrants.



BEHIND THE GREEN INK OF THIS NOR CAL UTILITIES COMPANY

BY SAKURA SAUNDERS

Walking around San Francisco, you might have noticed bright green ads featuring cutesy witticisms about what “green is,” sponsored by the local utility monopoly PG&E. My favorite ad prominently displays a piece of cow dung with the quote “Green isn’t always pretty.” Here, PG&E isn’t too far off; for them, green is... a lie.

Although recently heralded by environmental advocates for their support of the state-wide clean energy bill, PG&E itself will admit that this bill does little to disrupt their energy buying habits, which rely heavily on natural gas, big hydro, and nuclear power. Together, these three sources account for 84 percent of PG&E’s energy consumption and each carries with it a large environmental toll. But taking credit where none is due is par for the course in this energy giant’s game.

PG&E praises itself for “inter-connecting more than 12,000 solar customers—more than any other utility in the country,” but here they are taking credit for individuals who install solar panels. To make this self-congratulatory statement even more aggravating, PG&E

aid ‘solution’ to global warming, PG&E’s stated goal for the program is a mere 4 to 5 percent of their customers. Meanwhile, they are spending 17 million dollars to promote “ClimateSmart,” a fee that will be passed onto customers whether they like it or not.

SO WHAT’S BEHIND ALL OF
THIS GREEN INK?

PG&E is certainly spending a lot of money to promote a green image, and what’s behind it is anyone’s guess. Some venture that they are trying to make up for dragging their feet in closing down

that the expansion could hurt their rates. In this dirty campaign, PG&E spent over 10 million dollars (around \$50 per vote) to promote misinformation about the annexation, saying that it would cost 500 million dollars for SMUD to buy the power infrastructure from PG&E, about five times more than SMUD’s estimates. A PG&E employee also sued SMUD over the wording of the Sacramento ballot measure, forcing them to take out the wording that guaranteed that Yolo County would pay for the annexation.

WHAT’S AT STAKE?

Beyond pushing public power further from possibility, PG&E’s campaign is detrimental to the already-voted-on Community Choice Energy plan. CCE is a well-researched policy to run San Francisco on 50 percent local, renewable energy within the decade—without raising the rates.

It’s based on city-sponsored reports confirming that the Bay Area has enough wind and solar capacity to meet half of its energy needs. It’s designed to break PG&E’s monopoly on our energy supply and support market competition for green energy providers that can meet or beat PG&E’s rates. This would make San Francisco the largest renewable network in the country.

However, three years after the San Francisco Board of Supervisors voted for energy independence, CCE is still wading through red tape. It seems that PG&E is gearing up for a fight that could undermine this fledgling green policy, with an arsenal of PR and a battle-tested stock of dirty tricks. While mainstream environmental groups suck up to PG&E’s political prowess and economic might, an all-volunteer group of concerned San Francisco residents has emerged out of disgust for PG&E’s “Greening the City” campaign. Their website publishes the clear facts unspoken in PG&E’s ad campaign and urges a push for Community Choice as a concrete alternative, while the group itself organizes actions designed to shame and expose PG&E. Hopefully, once presented with the facts, San Francisco residents will figure out that a company that owns a mere two percent wind and zero percent solar facilities is not vested in our green energy future. PG&E might pay to paint the city, but that doesn’t mean that people will buy it.

learn more, take action:

www.letsGREENWASHthiscity.org

COVER GRAPHIC: POONAM WHABI

Recent actions by the company suggest that this PR campaign is part of a larger offensive against public power and other green legislation in San Francisco.

the Bayview Hunter’s Point power plant, which polluted San Francisco for 77 years and was linked to abnormally high rates of cancer and juvenile asthma. However, recent actions by the company suggest that this PR campaign is part of a larger offensive against public power and other green legislation in San Francisco.

According to the *San Francisco Bay Guardian*, PG&E has recently been polling SF residents to see if they would support voter-approved measures limiting the SF Public Utilities Commission’s ability to supply public power. Meanwhile, President Bush has recently pushed for the restoration of Hetch Hetchy Valley, a process that involves destroying a dam that is a source of fresh water for 3 million Bay Area residents. It is also a huge source of cheap electricity that is earmarked for public power in San Francisco. Without the dam, San Francisco’s dreams of a municipally-owned utility don’t have a chance.

While the dam closure seems unlikely given Congress’ response to Bush’s scheme, a PG&E-sponsored ballot measure is probable.

Last November, PG&E won an electoral battle that determined whether Davis, Woodland, and West Sacramento could drop PG&E and join Sacramento’s Municipal Utilities District (SMUD), a celebrated publicly-owned utility whose rates are 30 percent lower than PG&E’s. The ballot measure in Sacramento was sponsored by PG&E, who attempted to scare current SMUD customers by saying



actually lobbied against incentives for individuals to install solar panels.

Another great example of this company’s duplicity is the “ClimateSmart” program. This program gives customers the option to offset their CO₂ emissions by paying PG&E to plant trees. Besides the fact that planting trees is a highly consumptive and disputed band-

K-TOWN RIOTS

THE EVICTION OF COPENHAGEN'S FINEST SQUAT

By HANNAH E. DOBBZ

In the frigid Copenhagen morning of December 14, hundreds of squatters stand unflinchingly beneath visible wisps of breath. Europe's "The Final Countdown" resonates within the historic walls of the brick building at 69 Jagtvej. Masked activists shoot fireworks from the roof as the Danish media ogle from the street below. Twenty-four years after its inception, *Ungdomshuset* has officially become an illegal squat.

"If less than 25 people die, it will be a good eviction."

- Copenhagen Chief of Police

In 1982, the city gave 69 Jagtvej to the youth of Copenhagen who, in turn, named it *Ungdomshuset*, or "The Youth House." Since, the building has provided an extensive list of community services including a cinema, a soup kitchen, a bar, various workshops, rehearsal spaces, and the famous annual K-Town Festival, which draws an international crowd.

But despite its charitable contributions to the punk, squatter, and broader community of Denmark and beyond, in 2000 the City Council reconsidered its decision from 18 years prior and *resold* the property. If that weren't enough, the buyers of 69 Jagtvej were, incidentally enough, a right-wing fundamentalist Christian organization called *Faderhuset* or, ironically, "The Father's House." And, almost as if mocking the anarchists of *Ungdomshuset*, the Christians

intend to make the old squat their new headquarters.

After being embroiled in a legal battle for nearly six years, on August 28, 2006, the National Court ruled that *Faderhuset* does indeed own the building, making an eviction order perfectly legitimate. The official date was announced as December 14, although it was stated that no police force would be used until the new year.

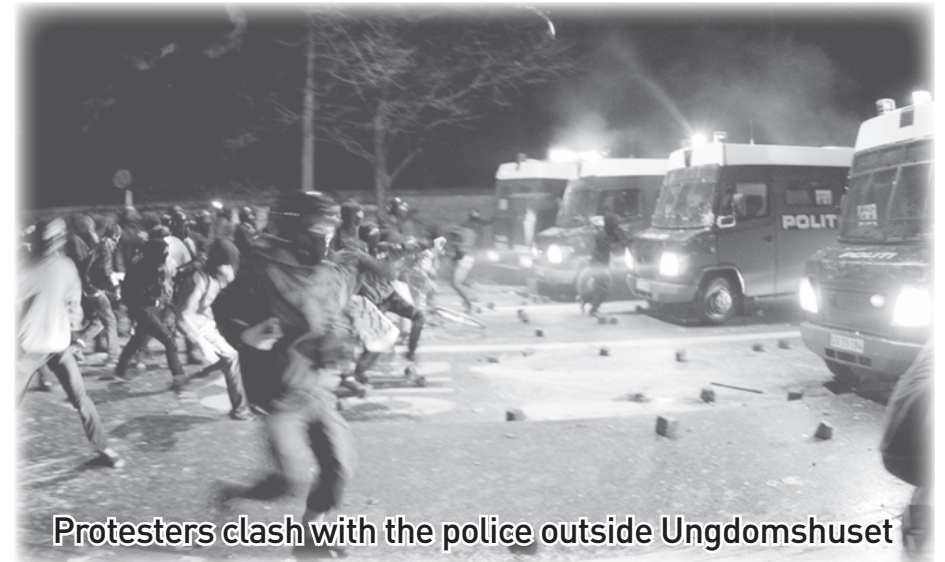
On December 14, *Ungdomshuset* looks less friendly than it once did. The colorful murals have been obscured by revolutionary banners, the tall windows have been securely boarded, and every entrance or exit has been stiffly barricaded. The house is quiet and spooky, as most of the supporters have gone to the demonstration—that is, three marches all converging (not unlike that final scene from the politically diluted *V for Vendetta* film) and concluding with a punk gig. Those who remain are groggy and on edge, having endured a myriad of sleepless nights full of emergency drills and the continuing reality that their home could be violently evicted at any moment. Thus, their thoughts are riddled with happy visions of *Ungdomshuset* Past and unclear projections of *Ungdomshuset* Future: Will *Faderhuset* transform the beloved community center into overpriced apartments? A metro stop? A parking lot?

The tale of *Ungdomshuset* distinctly dispels any American myth that the battle for European squats is over. The idea that Europe is merely some spoiled, radical fantasyland brimming with magically free living situations is a commonly accepted fallacy among US squatters. Because the laws around occupation and the establishment of residency are often more lenient (that is to

say, that they *exist*) in most EU countries, there is an underlying assumption that the legal system is actually *happy* to have these rent-evading crusties dirtying up the neighborhood with their ideals of mutual aid and anarchy. But if the tale of *Ungdomshuset* can serve as evi-

with the sound system truck blaring NWA and Twisted Sister's "We're Not Gonna Take It," and it wasn't long before riot vans blocked off the street and lines of cops began to beat people back.

Eoin Fullum, an anarchist from Ireland, spent ten days in Danish prison in



Protesters clash with the police outside Ungdomshuset

dence of anything, it is the fact that the battle continues: whether we are fighting for houses in Kazakhstan, a school in Oaxaca, a farm in Los Angeles, or a 24-year-old community center in Copenhagen, we can be sure that the war for a space in which to exist is universal and ongoing.

This war presented itself yet again on December 16, 2006, when patience for bureaucracy ran out and the streets of Copenhagen felt the heat of another kind of negotiation: one of history's most and least effective tactics, both wonderfully satisfying *and* horribly traumatic, the thing that black-clad anarchists are known for doing best: RIOT.

A thousand punks, anarchists, activists, socialists, and even hippies marched

defense of *Ungdomshuset*.

"We threw everything we had at [the cops]," he said. "Paint bombs, cobblestones, rockets, big frikkin' sticks of dynamite, we bashed them with big fuck-off iron bars and crow bars. It was beautiful, I tell you."

The police reacted with concussion grenades and CS gas. Although CS is classified as "non-lethal," it is worth noting that when the chemical is metabolized, *cyanide* can be detected in human tissue.

"Picture that scene in *Total Recall* when Quaid and Melina get sucked out onto the surface of Mars and they're choking and their eyes are popping out and shit—that's what it felt like," said Fullum.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 21



Squatters gather on their roof preparing to defend their home



Ungdomshuset from the front



RUST BELT RUCKUS: INHABITING INDUSTRIAL COLLAPSE

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY CHIMNEY SWIFT OF THE BIRDHOUSE PROPAGANDA MINISTRY

STARING OFF OF MY PORCH TOWARD THE RIVER I SEE DOZENS OF BUILDINGS: DILAPIDATED, SINKING INTO THE RIVER, BEING DEMOLISHED, AND WASTING AWAY. I SCAN THE HORIZON, AND THROUGH THE BLIZZARD I SEE A HUGE CITY, A ONCE BUSTLING METROPOLIS, NOW EERILY SILENT. I LOOK DOWN MY STREET, AND ON EITHER SIDE ARE VACANCIES; SOME IN BAD SHAPE BUT THE MAJORITY ARE INHABITABLE. I STAND ON THE PORCH OF THE BIGGEST ONE I COULD FIND AND SMILE, AND THEN I GO BACK INSIDE AND STOKE THE FIRE. LIFE IS GOOD TO ME, AND I FEEL INVINCIBLE. THERE IS AN OLD EARTH FIRST! SLOGAN THAT COMES TO MIND: "VISUALIZE INDUSTRIAL COLLAPSE." NOT ONLY CAN I VISUALIZE IT BY LOOKING OUT THE WINDOW, BUT I AM LIVING HERE—RIGHT SMACK DAB IN THE MIDST OF IT—LIKE A KING.

The Great Lakes region is an economic phenomenon. In its heyday, the Rust Belt's economic activity formed a significant sector of the American economy including manufacturing and the automobile industry. In 1900, Buffalo rivaled New York City as one of the country's most populous cities. By the 1920s, with the steel industry at its peak and the Erie Canal opening up the Great Lakes to trade, Buffalo was bursting at the seams.

But when the Great Depression set in, the steel industry took a dive, setting the stage for the economic growth of other Great Lakes cities such as Cleveland, Chicago, and Milwaukee. Buffalo's economy slowed and slowed as the bulk of industrial jobs disappeared to South America and Canada.

The population has been in steady decline since the 1950s. The infrastructure is in place for the functioning of a major city but it is so spread out and under-funded that this once 'all American city' is now the ideal breeding ground for squatters. Everything is abandoned evereverything is falling apart—and we are dancing in the ruins and making out like bandits.

There is a serious housing crisis here in Buffalo. PUSH (People United for Sustainable Housing) has estimated that there are 100,000 abandoned houses and 20,000 awaiting demolition. According to the *Buffalo News*, there is an overwhelming 40 percent vacancy stretching out to the suburbs where a 'plague of vacancies' is sickening an already hurting economy. Many of them are in limbo due to utilities lines and mortgages, and tens of thousands of houses are held as assets by private creditors such as our very own ex-governor George Pataki. In parts of our neighborhood, there are two or three un-maintained houses on every block. In fact, in 2003 the city issued a state of financial emergency and created the Buffalo Fiscal Stability Authority to handle the collapsing economy.

*Taking What's Ours,
and the City Conceding*

A group of anarcho-punks had been

looking at the mansion for some time. In early summer, a local punk house was evicted while we had access to a moving truck for free, so we piled couches, furniture, personal possessions, and tools into it and parked in front of the house at noon on a weekend. After prying all the boards off the windows, attaching a shut off valve to the water main in the basement, and beginning initial cleaning and sanitizing, we began living in the house full time.

A few months later, we received a letter from the city addressed to the former owners about housing code violations. We had just met the assessor and told him about our situation; he seemed supportive and even assessed the house at the lowest possible level to "give us a tax break"—or because it was a dilapidated heap of shambles. An inspector came by and listed many of our exterior violations including gutters, lead paints, siding and roof corrosion, and broken windows. We had already repaired a few of these by then and decided to go to court in lieu of the previous owners. There we were: four rag-tag kids wearing thrift store sports coats standing in front of the judge.

We explained that we had begun living in the house and fixing the violations. The judge was interested in this because the courts were having trouble demolishing the house as it was in limbo, and since it was an eyesore and community problem, he wanted us to fix it up. In fact, we cut a lot of red tape by bringing ourselves to court and assuming the role of owner-occupant, which gave the judge and prosecutor a few ideas. Being that there are so many vacancies in limbo and the city can't keep up, they were considering using our house, among others, as a model for rewriting housing court law. This blew our minds. He said that he would not prosecute us for the major violations and would work on getting us the deed through a process called receivership. They needed us!

We have been here for almost two years, and if we can make the minimum of ten then we can claim Adverse Pos-

session. We've been to court four times. We pay our taxes and handle our violations and are close with all of our neighbors, so I am not worried. I would say we have more security than most other families, and none of us have jobs! Our situation is amazing, but it is not case specific. These conditions exist all over the Rust Belt.

Squatting in the 21st century is tricky. Here in the United States, without liberal occupancy laws like most places in Europe, squatting creates a dilemma. The security and stability that we as Americans are so used to vanishes once you sidestep the law. In other words, what is the point of squatting if only to work toward the inevitability of eviction? Why go out of your way to live in shambles, to rebuild everything only to lose it? This leaves a bad taste in many mouths.

However, the way one traditionally achieves security is by relinquishing all power to authority and living by its rules, enduring its tribulations. This is not a safe or secure way to live at all.

The safety in having a home is rooted in the idea of permanence, but many of my friends go from lease agreement to lease agreement every 6 months; rent a room here or there out of financial necessity; endure the inconvenience

of sharing space with strangers. The modern living situation is actually very temporary.

Meanwhile, we have been in our squatted mansion longer than many of our rent-paying neighbors. We have lived here longer than many people usually live in an apartment. We put a lot of time into this place and we could lose it, but we are fundamentally less vulnerable than tenants. We deal with the courts directly only regarding housing violations and—best of all—we *don't pay rent to a landlord*.

Squatting makes the personal political by resisting the privatization of space. If loitering is a threat to property then trespassing is a war on it. And squatting is our victory over it, however temporary this autonomous zone will be in the end. In fact, squatting has existed much longer than the idea of property itself.

The world unfurled itself to us like the petals of a rose. This is not to say that it can't happen elsewhere, but from personal experience, we have had little to no problems squatting here and have even been encouraged by neighbors and the state to turn a ransacked hovel into the house of our dreams.



The Birdhouse sits in a forgotten neighborhood in Buffalo, New York

COSTA RICA'S LAST STAND



WIDESPREAD RESISTANCE HALTS IMPLEMENTATION OF CAFTA

By RUBBLE



While the passage of the Central American Free Trade Area (CAFTA in English, TLC in Spanish) is a distant memory in the public political debate, implementation of the treaty continues to meet organized, spirited opposition in Costa Rica. In the US, activists are standing in solidarity with continued opposition and resistance.

In January 2002, President Bush announced that CAFTA was a priority, giving his administration "Fast Track" authority to negotiate the agreement, which is a treaty under international law between the United States, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic. To be implemented, the treaty has to be ratified into domestic law in each of the seven countries. While relatively small in its economic scope, the agreement is basically NAFTA for this region, and part of a US strategy to implement "free trade" agreements for the entire Western Hemisphere through the eventual passage of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA).

The US was the first to pass it. Bush signed it into law on August 2, 2005 after a middle of the night 217-215 vote in the House, reportedly including late hour deal making to get the two-vote majority. By mid-2006, six of the seven countries had also passed it, with no public input and against volatile street protests met by heavy-handed government repression in El Salvador and Guatemala.

The Costa Rican government continues to announce its intention to pass the law. While the agreement was passed in a close vote in the International Affairs Committee of the Costa Rican Congress in late 2006, it still has not been debated or voted on in the full Congress. The reason for delay is that the Costa Rican people have made it clear they are ready to actively oppose its passage.



Anti-CAFTA mural in Guatemala portraying the TLC as a harbinger of hunger and poverty. "We don't want and don't care to be a North American colony," it says.

Costa Rica has a markedly different political history and structure than the other countries in that region. An internal struggle after WWII resulted in a government strongly guided by Social Democratic members and policy making. This has resulted in a relatively extensive public sector. A generous retirement package includes a larger set of subsidies than what exists here in the US, and labor is well organized with relatively extensive political clout. The general standard of living is higher than the other regional countries involved. Citizens enjoy free nationalized health care, free and adequately funded public education, and relatively liberal union policies. Costa Ricans – having much to lose with the passage of CAFTA – are not giving in an inch at this point.

A two-day general strike was held in the country's capital, San José, during the last week of October. Photographs in the US media show thousands of people in the streets, led by organized labor, university students, and other activists. The message was clear: the people are ready to destabilize the economy to stop this law from passing.

Various protests were held in cities across the country through the end of the year to keep the pressure up. Coordinadora Nacional (National Coordinating Committee), a national organization including various trade union confederations and organizations representing mostly public sector workers, had a strong hand in organizing the protests. Within the committee, the General Confederation of Workers (CGT) is more militant and includes radical trade unionists from the health care, public water utility, and the banana workers' unions. The Costa Rican Revolutionary Workers Party (PRT) is one of numerous non-labor leftist groups actively organizing.

Numerous student and youth organizations have mobilized through the University of Costa Rica, the National University of Heredia, and secondary schools throughout the country, with youth especially concerned with privatization

of education. They fear a fate similar to El Salvador, where privatization of the educational system has led to substantial fees all the way down to secondary education.

While there is no consensus in Costa Rica on the overall effects of passage, all agree that the rice industry will not survive competition from US-subsidized rice. Rice is the staple food, especially for the rural poor. Activists point to Mexico after the passage of NAFTA, where raw corn prices plummeted, driving millions of rural farmers from their

A TWO-DAY GENERAL STRIKE WAS HELD IN THE COUNTRY'S CAPITAL, SAN JOSÉ, DURING THE LAST WEEK OF OCTOBER. THE MESSAGE WAS CLEAR: THE PEOPLE ARE READY TO DESTABILIZE THE ECONOMY TO STOP THIS LAW FROM PASSING.

land. Already in El Salvador, economists argue that rice production is going to disappear by the time the treaty is one year

old. According to Miguel Alemán, a leader of the Confederation of Agrarian Reform Federations in El Salvador, "CAFTA, as we predicted, means death for several sectors, for example some 400,000 producers of basic cereals who are being hit hard."

"Our cooperatives have cut back 20 percent of their employees," equivalent to more than 2,000 workers this year, Alemán said in an interview with *IPS* late last year.

Universal health care cannot survive CAFTA either, due to intellectual property rights provisions prohibiting the purchase of generic medications at lower prices. Services requirements would limit the government's ability to guarantee health access to all. El Salvador labor held volatile but ultimately unsuccessful strikes against the imposition of health-care fees in 2005 in anticipation of CAFTA.

The election of a CAFTA supporter, Óscar Arias – former president (1986-1990) and Nobel Peace Prize winner for negotiating the Salvadoran peace accords – is a blow to the resistance in Costa Rica. The Arias administration is in a very difficult position, with heavy Bush administration pressure for passage at any cost, and domestic pressure to back off and serve its citizens.

This continues an interesting dy-

namic in Central America, where formerly leftist governments are supporting CAFTA. In El Salvador, the FMLN, a people's revolutionary opposition in the 1980's, has become a governing party and provided enough votes for passage. Nicaragua's Daniel Ortega, recently reelected after the Sandinistas' 17-year hiatus from the presidency, presides over a sweatshop economy with one of the lowest economic standards of living in the world, and has said nothing about changing the course of CAFTA.

In December, the Costa Rican government announced its intention to pass CAFTA, planning to debate and vote in the full Congress sometime between January and March of this year. However, a short article in *Prensa Latina* recently announced an abrupt about-face. Approval any time in the near future "is now extremely unlikely...with the two major congressional parties adamantly opposed." Government Minister Rodrigo Arias admitted increasing rejection in Congress due to "opposition of a majority of citizens, as witnessed in huge demonstrations in several cities in the latter part of 2006". He said there



By prioritizing export-oriented rather than domestic agriculture, Costa Rica under CAFTA would favor chemical-intensive monoculture like bananas over rice and other food staples.

was no clarity reached in a meeting with 25 legislators from the National Liberation Party (PLN). PLN leader Mayi Antillon said the party will stay firm in rejecting the project, and that the Legislature has more pressing national matters than dealing with this legislation for the United States.

A major rally was held in San José on February 28, with tens of thousands of union members, farmers, and other activists marching through the capital city. Smaller demonstrations were held in other provincial cities. Employees of the state-run telecommunications company were a major contingent in San José, protesting privatization of the

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE...



WELCOME TO ROSSPORT, IRELAND

Population: Pipeline

BY HANNAH E. DOBBZ

In June of 2005, in a village called Rosspport in Northwest Ireland, residents began to notice an unusual number of trucks carrying pipeline on their roads. There were so many trucks, in fact, that it was sometimes impossible to travel anywhere as these giant lorries could fully eclipse the narrow country lanes.

The meaning of this convoy was a plan by the infamous Shell Corporation to construct a massive, \$1.1 billion, high-pressure pipeline and gas refinery, cutting through farms and villages, and ruining the obligatory protected natural areas.

divarity Camp, five men—including a 65-year-old former schoolteacher—were imprisoned for denying Shell access to their land. They were incarcerated for over three months. Today, activists continue to be beaten and arrested. But with a highly functional 24-hour camp, with all the necessary structures for daily living including a kitchen, composting toilet, and grey-water system, evicting the protesters has proven exceedingly difficult. And as long as picketers remain present,



Photo: William Hederman, Indymedia Ireland

A gathering at the Rosspport Solidarity Camp in June 2006.

Thus, the “Shell to Sea” campaign was conceived by locals and drew activists from around Ireland and the UK in support, because, in the words of spokesperson Mark Garavan, “of the certainty that if this pipeline as currently proposed ruptures we—our families and neighbors—will die.”

The idea is that if Shell simply builds its precious pipeline in the ocean, then the chances of accidental explosions and negative health effects are reduced, and everyone is happy. More militant protesters, however, have adopted the less merciful slogan of “Shell to Hell,” suggesting that instead of assembling the pipeline in the sea, the corporation should just ‘feck’ off entirely. The Irish Sea (albeit on the east side of the island) is already one of the most radioactive bodies of water in the world, thanks to nuclear power plants in Great Britain. The added toxins from the Shell pipeline might soon guarantee all of Ireland will no longer be afloat in a pool of water, but rather, one of profitable pollution.

In the early days of the Rosspport Soli-

Shell cannot move forward with its aforementioned plan to tear up County Mayo, Ireland.

The Rosspport story is a familiar one. It is especially familiar in the Dutch Antilles, South Africa, Brazil, the Philippines, Nigeria, and other unfortunate targets for Shell activity. We all remember the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and his eight Ogoni colleagues in 1995 for campaigning against oil companies in the Niger Delta. And history is threatening to repeat itself as the metaphorical gas flares of protest are heating up in the Irish countryside.

The Irish are in a unique position: for all of modern history they have existed

in poverty and oppression, most memorably noted for the Potato Famine and British colonialism. Only in the past 20 years has the island begun to experience significant wealth. In one generation, Ireland has gone from dirt-poor to boasting the second-highest GDP in the European Union. But among the rich, there is still a large cache of poor—that’s the big secret.

Foreign investors argue that the Corrib gas field project is a highly efficacious tool for swelling the gross national product. Yet it is obvious that the plan is only profitable to some (particularly the Netherlands-based Shell and Statoil, their Norwegian minority partner), making it unpopular among most locals, especially after the arrest of the Rosspport Five.

“We’re not dispassionate corporate people who don’t give a damn about five poor people in prison—that’s not the case,” Andy Pyle, the head of Shell’s Irish operations said. “But we can’t satisfy everybody. If this has to be designed in a way that everybody accepts it, it will never be built.”

This past November, the Rosspport Solidarity Camp was “infiltrated” by a reporter from *Mail on Sunday* who, in his article “Guerilla War Threat by Shell Protesters,” drew parallels between the Shell to Sea campaign, the SHAC actions at Huntingdon Life Sciences, and the IRA, effectively branding these picketers as “terrorists.”

Apparently Warren Swords, the undercover journalist, did some good per-

suasive writing, as it was around this time that the *Gardai* (police) violence jumped from unnecessary and annoying, to downright life-threatening—with tactics such as baton-charging, throwing a protestor over a fence into a deep ditch, and even savagely beating one man in front of a dozen witnesses. Some began mysteriously blaming the violence on Sinn Fein, the Irish Republican party.

Swords’ article is not the only example of intimidation being applied in a distorted media. Clearly someone is trying to up the ante because frankly, those pesky protesters aren’t really going anywhere.

On February 16, 2007, 120 protesters occupied Shell’s Gas Terminal construction site in Bellanaboy, Ireland, until they were forcibly removed by roughly 150 police. On the same day, activists in Edinburgh, Scotland shut down eight Shell petrol stations around the city center by pulling the emergency shut-off levers. In addition, thousands marched on O’Connell Street in Dublin, all in solidarity with the Shell to Sea campaign in Rosspport.

In time for Christmas last year, Willie Corduff, Vincent and Philip McGrath, Micheál Ó Seighin, and Brendan Philbin released a book of their experiences in prison called *Our Story—the Rosspport Five*. Vincent McGrath said the book was an “opportunity to talk directly to the Irish people, bypassing the mainstream media [because] there has been hysterical coverage in some of the mainstream media...[our story] could be about lots of communities in Ireland who feel betrayed by the political parties; who’ve had projects imposed on them.”

Whether he knows it or not, those sentiments could be extended far beyond Irish borders. We find here a disturbing revisiting of colonialism; only this time the colonizer comes wearing a different hat.



Supporters march in Dublin on February 24th. Photo: Paula Geraghty, Indymedia Ireland

...CAFTA CONTINUED

telecom industry. Violent police repression was reported at a protest led by banana workers in the Atlantic coast city of Limon, outside the scrutiny of the international news media. According to a press release sent to international solidarity organizations from the General Worker’s Confederation (CGT), non-violent protesters were brutally beaten and leaders were arrested and detained without provocation. The release re-

ports and denounces the police actions while demanding that Arias order the immediate release of those detained. A long history of violent repression of banana union activities exists in that city, a major shipping port. A broad-based coalition of groups representing different economic sectors forming under the name of Coalition In Struggle Against CAFTA is planning future actions to keep the pressure up.

This impasse is certainly not the end

for DR-CAFTA in Costa Rica, and cross border organizing is needed. Costa Ricans have observed continuing problems in neighboring El Salvador, where CAFTA-inspired privatization has led to strikes over unaffordable fees for health services and schooling, and the banking sector has been bought up entirely by foreign captial. U.S. dissent included public opposition from the AFL-CIO, the first time big labor has opposed a major trade agreement abroad, mostly based on the

devastating effects of NAFTA. However, nothing has been heard publicly about solidarity actions to assist Costa Rican organized labor. This year may be just the right time for renewed solidarity activism at home.

This article was written with assistance from Moises Montoya of the San Francisco branch of the Freedom Socialist Party. Moises is involved with Central American solidarity organizing and was in Costa Rica during the October 2006 General Strike.

LEAVING THIS STAGE OF HISTORY...

1. The Quiet Apocalypse of Rising Tides

Climate change is everywhere, and the somewhat momentous report released February 3 by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) confirms that climate change is man-made, and unstoppable. The 21-page report, described as conservative by the IPCC itself, says man-made emissions of greenhouse gases are to blame for heat waves, floods and heavy rains, droughts and stronger storms (particularly in the Atlantic Ocean), melting ice-caps and raising sea-levels.

Climate change is even penetrating the fears of the righteously paranoid psyches of the scientists and nuclear physicists of the preeminent Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists. Their "Doomsday Clock" has been ticking away to midnight – the figurative end of civilization – for 61 years of nuclear holocaust watching. They have moved the clock two minutes closer to midnight – now standing at a perilous five minutes to midnight – not only because of the increase in likelihood of nuclear war with the recent events around North Korea and Iran, but also citing "the potential for catastrophic damage from human-made technologies." In what represents a decisive paradigm shift for the Atomic

Scientists, Kennette Benedict, director of the bulletin said, "The dangers posed by climate change are nearly as dire as those posed by nuclear weapons".

Climate change was a top priority at the recent conference of world business leaders at the World Economic Forum in Davos, as well as the conference of NGO operatives at the World Social Forum in Nairobi. Meanwhile, the European Commission urged its members to adopt an unprecedented common energy policy, aimed at cutting greenhouse gases by 20 percent by 2020. It calls for a "post-industrial revolution" based on a dramatic shift to an internally produced low-carbon energy economy.

Climate change has finally arrived at the White House. President Bush's State of the Union address, January 27, marked a milestone for his administration in terms of actually recognizing that we may indeed have a man-made problem after all. He acknowledged climate change as "a serious challenge" and the need for reduction in fossil fuel consumption. Rather than announcing a mandatory cap on emissions along the lines of the globally accepted Kyoto Protocol, Bush instead meekly recommended an added emphasis on renewable or non-carbon energy sources — ethanol, wind, solar and nuclear power. As the

worlds leading producer of greenhouse gases, these are hardly the momentous steps needed by the US to put a break on runaway global warming.

What is to be done in the face of the looming catastrophe? The predominant global platform to deal with fundamental issues that affect all of humanity is the United Nations. The new UN boss Ban Ki-Moon has been asked to convene an emergency international summit. "Climate change," responded Moon, "is one of the most important and urgent agendas that the international community has to address before 2012." An emergency global conference organized by the UN seems imminently urgent, and Nairobi has been suggested as a host.

But wasn't there an emergency climate change conference in Nairobi just a couple of months ago? Wasn't the much heralded 12th UN Conference on Climate Change and 2nd Meeting of the Parties of the Kyoto Protocol held there in November 2006? Of course it was; and its abysmal failure to produce agreements between nations and to begin building capacity for dealing with climate-induced problems has been brushed under the carpet.

To understand how limited the UN structure is in dealing with the urgency of the matter and how these grand

global meetings are manipulated and side-tracked by powerful business and economic interests, it's worth returning to Nairobi in November to have a closer look at the workings of the UN.

2. Journey into the Heart of UN Darkness Nairobi, Kenya, November 15, 2006.

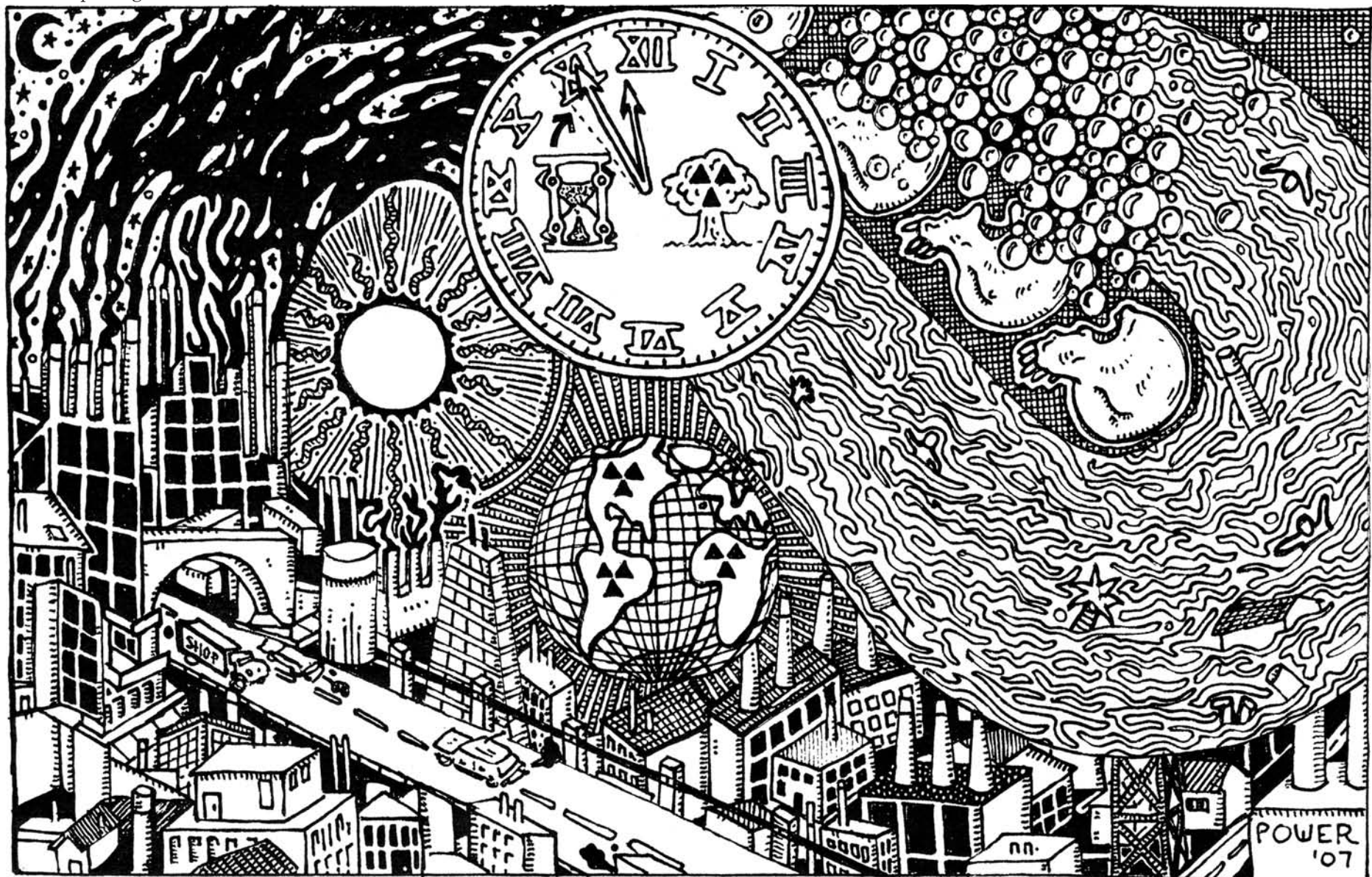
Climate change is everywhere, especially in 3rd world metropolises like Nairobi. Stuck in a massive traffic jam from the airport to the city center, I ask the taxi driver if people here know much about climate change and global warming. The driver nearly ploughs into a passing family of four on a bicycle as he was laughing so mirthfully.

"Droughts, floods, famines, the rain comes heavy or don't come at all," he says. "Yes, of course we know all about global warning!"

He goes on to explain how the British colonizers had chosen the site of Nairobi as the capital because it was cool and mosquito free.

"This is no longer the fact," explains the taxi man. "Now Nairobi is warm and we are plagued by mosquitoes."

This bustling city is like a blueprint for all major population centers in the not too distant future – a place over-



burdened by massive migration from the countryside, chronic insecurity, and an infrastructure woefully inadequate to deal with basic matters of water, drainage, transport, and communication. Nairobi hosts one of the world's largest slums – Kuresoi, population over one million living in dire poverty. The living conditions contrasts obscenely with the lush, UN enclosure occupying most of the posh district of Gigiri. The wealthy enclave hosts numerous embassies, government minister residencies, NGO headquarters and a massive shopping mall, all heavily patrolled by armed guards and state of the art security features. The walled oasis of the privileged elites exists uneasily amidst a desert of the multitudes depravity, like a global Baghdad Green Zone.

This 12th session of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) conference also serves as the second meeting of the parties to the Kyoto Protocol. The 1997 Protocol is a legally binding set of targets for cutting carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions for developed nations to an average of 95 percent of individual countries' 1990 levels. Baby steps perhaps, but still too great a leap for the USA. 186 countries have signed the Kyoto Protocol but still the US baulks. The US produces a quarter of global greenhouse gases but has only 4 percent of the world's population. The whole of Africa, in contrast, emits just 3.5 percent.

The keystone document for this particular conference is the Stern Report. Where once global warming was seen as an ecological and environmental issue, the report focuses on the economics of climate change. The study led by World Bank Economist Sir Nicholas Stern, with its dizzying array of figures and calculations, leads inexorably to the conclusion that the battle against climate change makes good economic sense. The financial cost of action, it warns sternly, will be much less than the cost of inaction.

With all the verve of Michael Moore, I door-stepped one of the official US delegates rushing along the corridor. He is an immaculately presented young man with the appearance of a Navy Seal and the arrogant attitude of a cantankerous frat boy. As the largest single contributor to the greenhouse effect and global warming, I asked him, was there any sign of change in the US position on restricting carbon emissions or signing up to the Kyoto Protocol, with the other 186 nations?

"There are no signs of change in that policy soon," the delegate answered somewhat mechanically and definitely disinterested. "The US won't sign the Kyoto Protocol."

"Even in light of the Stern Report which suggests the world economy will shrink by 20 percent, isn't there a clear economic imperative to tackle the problem," I insisted somewhat earnestly, "and..."

He stopped me in my tracks, looked me up and down for my credentials to ascertain who I was or to what organization I belonged. Unaccredited, a gate-

crasher of sorts, I lack my badge.

"Who the heck are you?" he quipped somewhat amusingly, "some kind of Irish Borat?"

Over at Plenary Room 2, the conference was in full swing before a great assembly of dignitaries and functionaries fanned out in a great swathe of seated rows. The speaker's voice boomed over the PA and their image was projected on two huge video screens on the flanking walls like a U2 concert. The delegates glanced at their lap-tops, whispered on their cell-phones, sipped bottled water, and occasionally listened in on the simultaneous translation earphones. Sure enough, the gripping words of His Eminence Nurlan A. Iskakov, Minister of Environment Protection of Kazakhstan went unappreciated. When the senior US representative, Paula Dobriansky, Undersecretary of Democracy and Global Affairs took the stage, a hush finally descended, cell-phones were downed and the whole auditorium paid rapt attention.

"The most effective strategies on climate change," said Under Secretary Dobriansky, a hardcore Bush-ite and neocon, "are those that are integrated with economic growth, with energy security, and reducing air pollution."

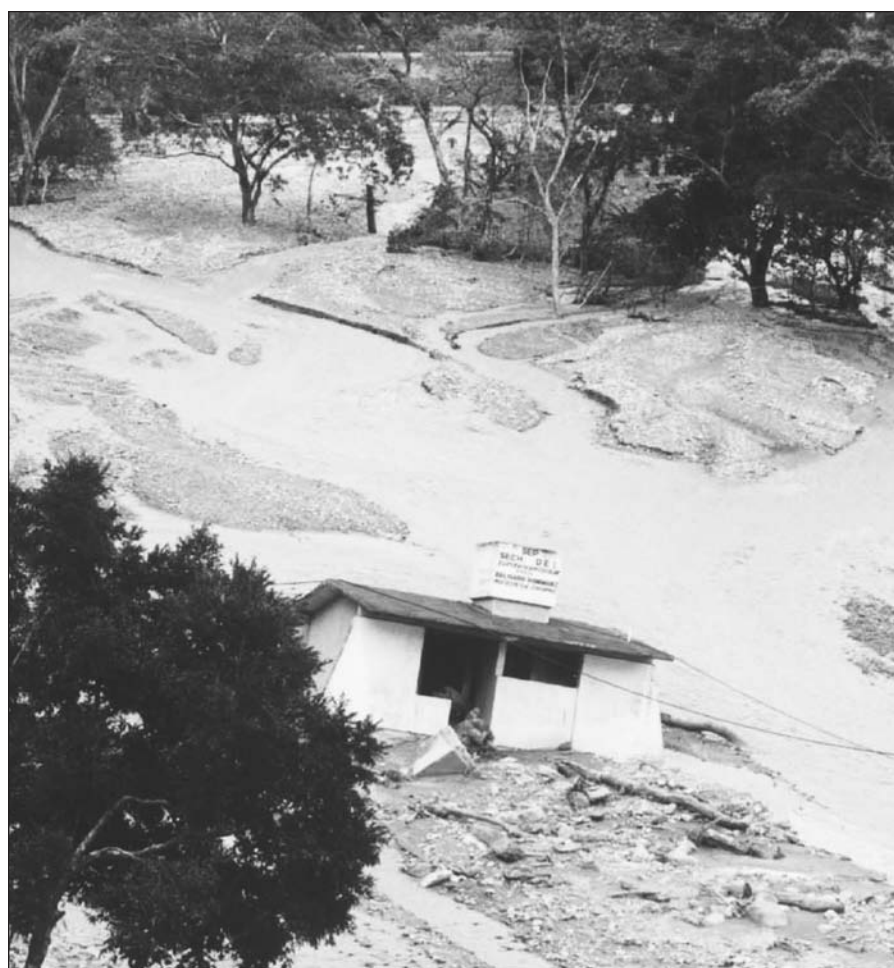
In her oblique obfuscation, she is spelling out US refusal to agree on mandatory emissions limits, thereby wrecking any concerted global attempt to move forward at this conference. Dubriansky's supercilious presentation talks up US aid to Africa and, by omission, reiterates the Bush administrations mantra that unfettered US led capitalist globalization hand-in-hand with war in the Middle East to secure oil supplies are the priorities.

Global warming, or "air pollution" as the unctuous Under Secretary refers to it, is a sideshow attraction to the main event – capitalist expansion. Business as usual then on the United Nations world stage: US economic interests come first and the UN is held hostage to the world's sole superpower. Taking lead from US intransigence, other heavyweight capitalist globalizers (and emerging major contributors to the greenhouse effect) China and India steadfastly refuse to cap their emissions citing their own economic interests. Joining the refusenik fest, Russia also begins to drag its feet.

"The conference has let Africa and the rest of the developing world down," said Oxfam. Maybe the conference has let down Oxfam and the other NGOs speaking on behalf of Africans, but meanwhile some with a more critical understanding of what the conference can actually achieve were getting on with some practical direct action.

"We should not wait until Mombassa is under water," said Kenyan Nobel Peace Prize winner Wangari Maathai, at a conference side event. "We know the problems. The problem that we have is what to do. What will make the difference is not the negotiations, but what we

...CONTINUED ON PAGE 20



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THE HOME FRONT:

Resistance Spreads as Iraq Veterans Return

INTERVIEW BY HUNTER JACKSON

When **Jeff Englehart**, **Thomas Cassidy**, and **Joe Hatcher** joined the Army in early 2001 they were looking for a change of pace and some college money. A few months later, however, the Twin Towers were smoldering, the 'war on terror' was growing from their ashes, and what it meant to be a US soldier was changed dramatically. The three strangers met in the Army and soon found themselves stationed in Iraq, where they served in and around the violent Sunni Triangle from February 2004 until February 2005.

In addition to the ways of war, the Army taught them a lot about power, militarism, capitalism, and resistance. This rapid politicization left the three fighting on behalf of a government they didn't believe in with little choice but to just wait for their three-year enlistments to be over. While still in Iraq, Englehart and Hatcher joined Iraq Veterans Against the War (IVAW); Cassidy followed suit soon after returning. Now they are tireless anti-war activists, dedicated to sharing their stories and ending all US aggression abroad. *Fault Lines* talked with them about their time in Iraq and their work since when they stopped in Berkeley as part of a recent West Coast mini-tour.

ILLUSTRATION BY REZ

FL: I know that you're very politically engaged right now. But what kind of political awareness did you have when you joined the Army?

JE: Absolutely none. If I'd had any political awareness I wouldn't have even considered putting on the uniform of a United States soldier. My political education didn't come until I got to my unit. Basically what I realized real quick was I didn't like the Army for its authority and its authoritative structure and I learned real quick what can happen when you're placed in a situation when authority is rampant and it's in the hands of irresponsible people. I started reading books that were in opposition to what the military was doing across the globe—books like Chomsky and Howard Zinn, Emma Goldman, Kropotkin, things of that nature. Before I even got to Iraq I was aware of what was happening in the world just from reading these great books. But when you're tied to a system that governs you and rules you by fear, and the punishment for speaking out or acting against the grain can be jail, that fear over your head kept me in line enough to go to Iraq.

FL: How did this politicization affect your relationship to other soldiers?

TC: The ones that were pro-military, obviously, it created a negative response in our relationships with them. The ones that were on the fence we tried to convince to come to our side. The thing about the military is that anyone who is very negative about the military, who is anti-military, it's hard to figure out who these people are. You might be sitting across the table from a guy who hates the military just as much as you, basically for the same reasons as you, and never know it. You kind of have to hide that, you know, almost keep your hatred of the military in the closet because if you let it out you're just going to be subject to more stupid shit. When we did find the more 'anti' people we'd try to bring them into our circle of trust.

JE: We were always trying to resist the Army any way we could without getting in trouble.

FL: What can you do to resist when you're there?

JE: In Iraq that's a really tough question.

TC: There's a very fine line between resisting and being...

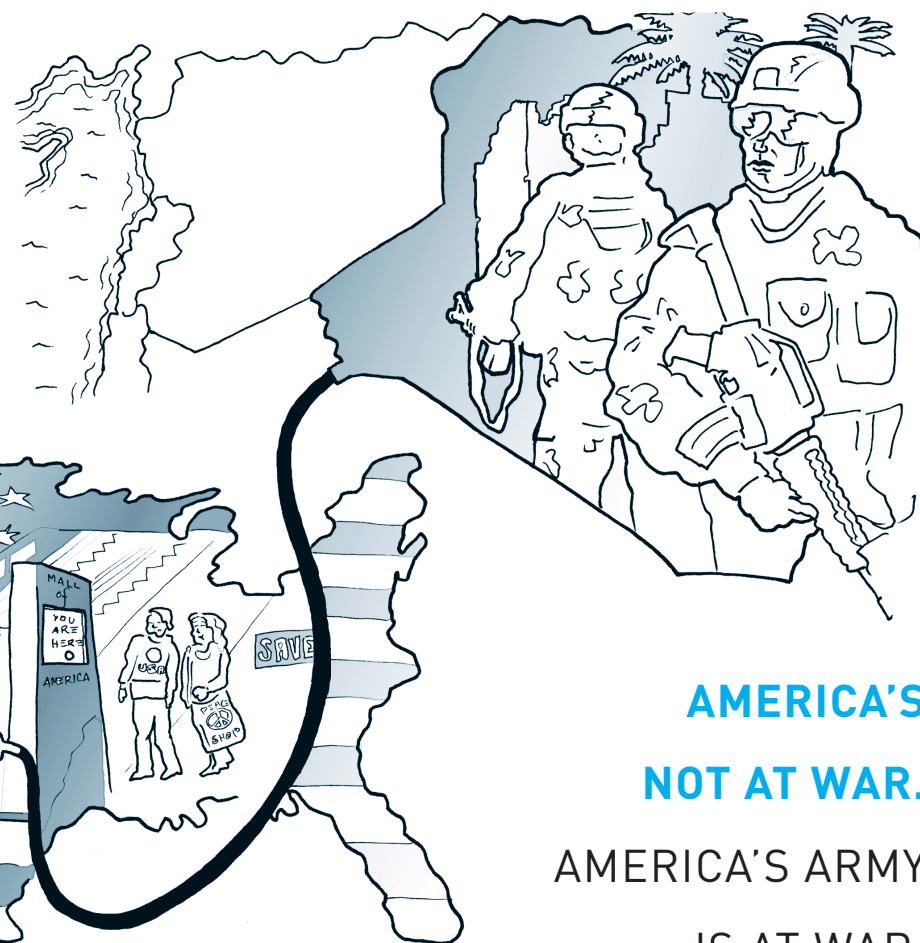
JH: ...in jail.

TC: ...punished.

JE: ...held up on treason charges or sedition. We ran a website while we were in Iraq, it was an anti-war blog, at times very anti-government [www.ftssoldier.blogspot.com]. We never once compromised any kind of operational security, never once broke any kind of Army law. Still, they were talking about court-martialing us because we had said some bad things about the president and because we questioned the intentions of the mission.

FL: So then it was just waiting out your time?

JE: That's pretty much what we had to do. My sergeant could tell that I was angry about it. He told me, 'Look, I know



**AMERICA'S
NOT AT WAR.**

**AMERICA'S ARMY
IS AT WAR.**

**AMERICA'S AT
THE MALL.**

you probably don't want to be involved in this war and there's a lot of people who feel the way you do. But they just put their head down and they get through it. Really there's only two ways for you to get out of this mess: one, in a body bag, or two, in handcuffs.' And he was totally right.

FL: How have civilians interacted with you since you've been back?

JE: Well, until you express that you're against the war and you hate the president for what he's done to you and your friends and the whole entire planet, they typically treat you like a hero. But then again there's been a shift in the almost two years since I've been out of the Army and got back home. We've been very vocal between us three in our opposition to the war since we've been out. Whereas two years ago it was like, 'I think you guys are traitors, I respect your freedom of speech, but I think you're

wrong.' Compare that to today where people are like, 'You're totally right, we need to get those troops home.'

FL: How do you feel that you are different from other anti-war activists?

JE: I think that maybe veterans have a little more clout, in a sense. Any movement in American history has been greatly influenced by veterans of any war. Look at Vietnam for instance and the Vietnam era. Had it not been for veterans, had it not been for soldiers in ranks actually shutting down the war machine—soldiers in revolt, basically—had it not been for them, that war might have continued for another ten years.

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Blackwater & the Private Military Surge in Iraq

By DAVID ZLUTNICK

On January 20th the Iraqi resistance shot down a Blackhawk helicopter killing thirteen American soldiers. Three days later, just hours before Bush would give his State of the Union address, a Little Bird helicopter was shot down, killing five more Americans—but this incident didn't make nearly the amount of news as the former. While the five men died in combat, they were not members of the US military. They were employees of Blackwater USA, the shining star in a new breed of corporation specializing in private soldiers—also known as mercenaries.

These private companies are part of a huge surge in the outsourcing of war, which is extremely evident in Iraq, as well as Afghanistan, Colombia, Haiti, and numerous other countries. Private contractors are the second-largest contingent of the “Coalition of the Willing” with a ratio of about one armed contractor for every two American soldiers. This is up from a ratio of one to sixty during the first Gulf War. The Pentagon estimates the number of contractors at around 100,000—but this is only an estimate because after four years in Iraq the military is only now beginning a survey to find the size of its contractor force.

According to the Government Accountability Office, approximately 48,000 of these contractors are working in Iraq as private soldiers, about six times the number of British troops

**2004:**

Blackwater operates a heavily armed security detail guarding America's viceroy in Iraq, L. Paul Bremer.

in the country. Their roles include everything from operators of US military aircraft to security guards to bodyguards for high-level officials to interrogators (such as the CACI employees involved in the Abu Ghraib torture scandal).

For political purposes it is in the interests of the US government to build a large army of private soldiers. Even though 770 contractors have been killed in Iraq and 7,761 have been injured, they are not included in the official US death toll. Perhaps even more have been killed but the Pentagon doesn't track contractor deaths, citing military regulations as the reason for this lack of oversight. Figures have to be deduced from insurance claims filed through the Department of Labor. Plus, if contractors are used for missions that are not quite legal or want to be distanced from official policy, their actions are completely deniable as they are not employees of the US government. This is the case along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, where American forces are not allowed to venture into Pakistani territory.

With the job being so risky, what would attract so many to private companies? Well, Blackwater has been known to pay its employees \$365,000 per year, compared to the \$36,000 an average US soldier makes. No wonder so many former military personnel are signing up with a private employer instead of re-enlisting.

Blackwater is able to pay its soldiers so much because they have received \$505 million in contracts from the US government since 2000. Three hundred twenty million of this has been since June 2004 alone, when they received a no-bid contract to guard diplomats and staff in Iraq. With this amount of money the company has been able to build the largest base for a private military in the world, acquire a fleet of 20 aircrafts (including helicopter gunships, a Boeing 767, and even a zeppelin), develop its own armored vehicle called the Grizzly, and build up a force of 20,000 soldiers.

The scariest thing about Blackwater and other such companies is that they currently lie in a legal no-man's land, under no authoritative jurisdiction from any US or international law, nor the Geneva Conventions. In fact, when L. Paul Bremer—whose personal bodyguards were a specialized Blackwater team—was placed in charge of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), one of his first mandates was to make contractors immune from Iraqi law.

In October, Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham inserted a clause into the 2007 Defense Bill attempting to place contractors under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, the code of laws for the US military. Proponents of expanded controls on contractors initially saw this as a small victory. In response Peter Singer, an expert on private military companies at the Brookings Institution, said “contractors’ ‘get-out-of-jail-free’ cards may have been torn to shreds.”

However, Doug Brooks, president of the International Peace Operations Association, a lobbying group representing military contractors, disagrees and insists that the clause would not cover all military firms. “It might be doable for Defense Department contractors, but it's not a panacea,” Brooks says.

“It's a square peg in a round hole.” And he's most likely right. As many of the contracts are not through the Defense Department—especially those of most companies in a “security” role, the ones most likely to engage in combat and

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THE LACK OF A LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR BATTLEFIELD CONTRACTING

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**2007:**

A Blackwater helicopter gunship is shot down over Baghdad killing five private soldiers

MAKING A KILLING:**Blackwater & the Private Military Surge in Iraq** CONTINUED

therefore needing a means of accountability the most—military law would not apply. Blackwater's operations, for instance, are conducted under a variety of agencies, including the Department of State and the CIA, among others.

"The lack of a legal framework for battlefield contracting has allowed certain rogue contractor employees to perpetrate heinous criminal acts without the threat of prosecution," said Democratic Congressman David Price. One such incident occurred this past Christmas Eve when an off-duty Blackwater

**GARY JACKSON,
BLACKWATER'S CEO,
SEEMS PRETTY
CONFIDENT ABOUT THEIR
FUTURE IN DARFUR.**

**"WE ARE GOING TO FIELD
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ME ON THAT."**

contractor shot and killed an Iraqi contractor. The Blackwater employee was quickly sent back to the US and fired, although there is no indication he will be extradited to Iraq to face trial. The history of armed contractors in Iraq is filled with similar stories.

Price has recently introduced legislation that he hopes will apply more generally anyone "employed under a contract (or subcontract at any tier) awarded by any department or agency of the United States Government, where the

work under such contract is carried out in a region outside the United States in which the Armed Forces are conducting a contingency operation." However, it is not clear that such legislation will pass a vote on the House floor.

Many Americans first heard of Blackwater back in March of 2004. Four Blackwater guards were ambushed as they were driving through Fallujah. After being shot and burned, two of their mutilated bodies were hung from a nearby bridge. This episode—captured on video and broadcast around the world—became the excuse for a three-week attack on Fallujah that April, and subsequently another operation that completely destroyed the city in November, killing around 5,000 Iraqi fighters, hundreds of civilians, and 95 US Marines.

The families of the four men killed in Fallujah have sued Blackwater for wrongful death by cutting corners on the mission, saying the company violated contract by sending out the private soldiers without the weapons and manpower they were promised. In response, Blackwater has countersued for \$10 million, targeting the family's lawyer, Richard Nordan. They argue that by suing for wrongful death, the family is in turn breaching the dead soldiers' contracts.

The most interesting fact about the families' lawsuit, however, is that Blackwater has been unable to get the lawsuit dismissed or stayed. They have been arguing that their work is an extension of the military and therefore is not subject to the jurisdiction of civilian courts. As their strategy seems to be failing, Blackwater has asked a federal court to move the case to arbitration. It is necessary "in order to safeguard both [Blackwater's] own confidential information," their attorneys say, "as well as sensitive information implicating the interest of the United States at war."

This is very dangerous for Blackwater and other companies providing similar services, as this case could be-

come a precedent, making every death of an employee a potential lawsuit. As of fall 2006, Blackwater had nine pending lawsuits from dead employees' families. But it seems that the most damaging part of the case to Blackwater—and what they are most afraid of—might not be the bad PR or the price of losing the lawsuit, but instead the fact that sensitive information that they have so far been able to keep private might be made public.

Private companies, unlike government agencies, are not subject to the Freedom of Information Act, and for the past two years this has prevented members of Congress from getting the government to explain the details of Blackwater's contracts in regards to billing and payment. But this case might be a chance for a rare peak into the secretive company.

One part of the contract under scrutiny in the lawsuit, for instance, has revealed that Blackwater was paying its soldiers \$600 per day but charged its client, Regency Hotel and Hospital Co., whom the deceased men were escorting, \$945 per day. Regency was in turn a subcontractor of ESS, a division of Compass, who was subcontracted by Halliburton's subsidiary KBR. There have been no documents showing how much each of the other companies added on to these charges by the time it reached the top contractor, Halliburton, who then billed the US government. Under Halliburton's \$16 billion contract they are only allowed to rely on the US military for armed protection and not private firms. If too many documents of this nature are released, there's a possibility it could ultimately threaten Blackwater's ability to win contracts.

This shouldn't be too big of a problem, however, as Blackwater has so far won only no-bid contracts. And with a global market opening as quickly as it is now, plenty of new opportunities have arisen. For example, the head of the mission in Washington for Southern Sudan's regional government, Ezekiel Lol Gatkuoth, recently announced that he expects Blackwater to start working with security forces in the next few weeks, although this has not officially been confirmed by Blackwater.

Sudan was placed under sanctions in 1997 after the US accused the government of supporting terrorism. Bush lifted the embargo this past October, giving Blackwater the ability to operate in the country legally. The company was apparently hired because no state was willing to send troops to aid the southern Christian militias, which have allied themselves with the Muslim government following a peace accord in order to fight off the other rebel groups. The

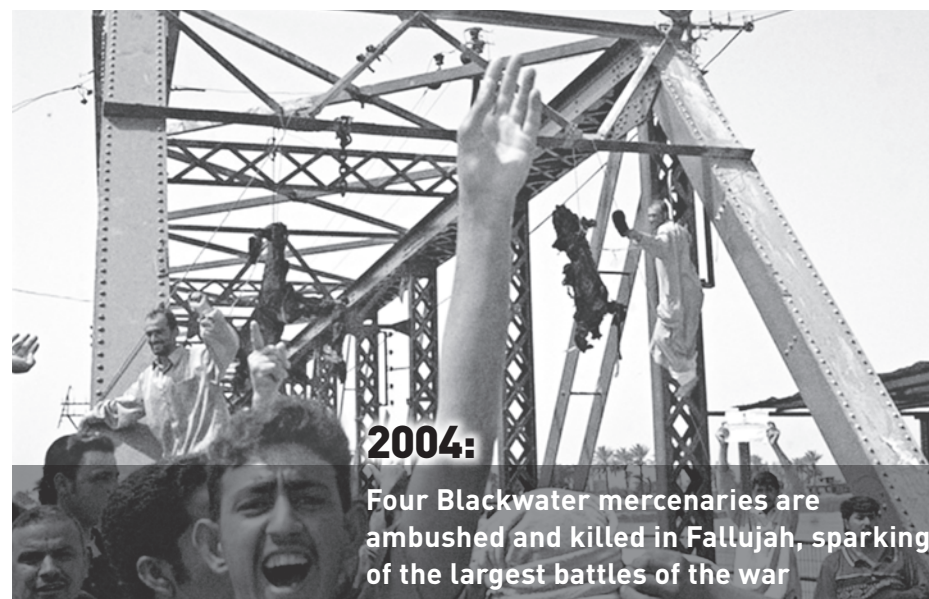
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conflict in Southern Sudan was separate from that of Darfur, in the west, but the government whose support has aided the Janjaweed in its extermination of as many as 450,000 non-Arabs in that region is the same.

Blackwater has big plans for Sudan, and wants to use the situation in Darfur to prove its ability to operate in a "peace-keeping" capacity. It has been pushing the idea for sometime to members of Congress and high-ups in the military, saying it can send in a large ground force aided by gunships for air support in a moment's notice. Gary Jackson, Blackwater's CEO, seems pretty confident about their future in Darfur. "We are going to field a brigade-sized peace-keeping force," he says. "You can quote me on that."

While Blackwater soldiers begin to operate in Sudan, their deployment will likely increase in the Middle East as well. Their 2004 "diplomatic security" contract with the State Department was part of much larger plan called the Worldwide Personal Protective Service (WPPS) program, characterized as designed to protect US officials as well as "certain foreign government high level officials whenever the need arises," according to official documents. Other than Blackwater, several other high profile private military firms are included in the WPPS, such as DynCorp and Triple Canopy.

Blackwater's contract under the WPPS is for five years and the payment is supposed to be a total of \$229.5 million. However, after only two years in the program it had received a total of \$321,715,794. The State Department has not been able to provide an answer as to why the firm has received almost \$100 million more than required for only half the work that is due. And the contract still has two and a half years left.



2004: Four Blackwater mercenaries are ambushed and killed in Fallujah, sparking one of the largest battles of the war

Resistance Spreads as Iraq Veterans Return CONTINUED

FL: What has been IVAW's approach to ending the war? What do you think is necessary?

JE: There is a huge disconnect in this country in the fact that 1.5 percent of this country has fought in the 'war on terror.' Roughly one and a half million soldiers. I'd say apathy is still a huge part of what's going on, what's the problem with the movement. Not the people in the movement itself, but where's the support for this kind of sentiment going to come from? I don't know, maybe until it reaches more everyday-Americans' lives that this war is going to be devastating for us all. I've heard some advice from some guys I know who were in the civil rights movement and they were involved in anti-war activism in the 60s. They've been harping on me to get it out there, to let it be known that we need to reach out to the soldiers themselves. If you know a National Guard base near your house, you need to go out and actually meet these people and tell them, 'Hey, we support you. We understand there's a difference between supporting the war and supporting the troops and we're telling you right now we oppose the war and support the troops.' We need to reach these soldiers and help them in any way we can. I think right now there's probably a lot of soldiers who feel they're on the margins, they're the only ones who are dealing with this. What was that story about the PFC?

WE AS CITIZENS OF THIS COUNTRY, AND AS A WORLD MOVEMENT EVEN, HAVE TO COME TO TERMS THAT THE CURRENT SYSTEM OF CAPITALISM IS PROBABLY THE CAUSE, AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE THE CAUSE, OF THESE WARS AND POVERTY WORLDWIDE.

JH: There was a private first class and he was set to deploy for what I believe was his third time and the colonel was giving this speech. He made a comment about America being at war. And a younger soldier, a PFC or private, stood up in the audience and said, 'Sir, America's not at war. America's army is at war. America's at the mall.'

JE: That says it all right there.

JH: It's not like World War II. There's not any strains on the economy. There's not any rations here at home.

JE: It seems to me that there's a lot of people who oppose the war but not the reasons these wars are fought. Once we can end the reasons these wars are fought, which is basically for corporate profit, will we ever stop this war, will we ever stop the next war. We as citizens of this country, and as a world movement even, have to come to terms that the current system of capitalism is probably the cause, and will continue to be the cause, of these wars and poverty worldwide.

TC: We stopped the Vietnam War but we didn't stop the reasons it was created.

JE: Exactly.

TC: We keep just treating the symptoms, as a doctor would say, and not treating the actual disease.

JE: War in the 20th and 21st centuries is like a malignant cancer that just keep coming back. I think most people feel uncomfortable when we say, 'Perhaps your very lifestyle is the reason why these wars are being fought,' but maybe it's true. The reason these wars are fought is for corporate profit and for the exploitation of natural resources in another country.

TC: You might no longer be able to buy Nikes if we actually end the reason the wars are created. And that's the problem: people like their fucking Nikes too much.

FL: What does your activism look like?

TC: A little bit of everything. Protests, rallies, marches, speaking out. Our tour bus, going around the country, getting the word out. One of the biggest challenges for the new anti-war movement and the new generation of leftist activists is to get the yuppie population, the middle class, middle-aged people who used to be the hippies in the 60s and early 70s...to get them to go back and start believing in the things they believed in 30, 40 years ago. Things they gave up on and went and bought their white picket fence and got their wife and their 2.5 kids and their dog named

Flipper. Cash out the Roth-IRA, get your money out of the stocks, and fight for what you believe in. Stop funding this. Stop making money off of corruption and slavery and all these other causes.

FL: What if these people you're talking about don't believe in anything?

TC: Then they're a lucky bunch. I think that nihilism is a thing that only exists in the privileged. People that don't have anything—they believe in something.

JH: Sick, starving people don't start wars.

JE: The Group of 8 starts wars.

FL: Where do you see the war going?

TC: It's obvious it's going downhill.



JEFF ENGLEHART WORKS ON HIS LAPTOP IN A CAFE IN COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO

Sixty percent of Americans are opposed to war in Iraq, the occupation of Iraq. It's obvious that the anti-war movement and the resistance movement is gaining steam. Now the thing is, without a doubt this war's going to be ended very soon. I'm not saying in the next few months, but in the next few years. The thing is after it's ended to not give up and say, 'oh, we won', cause we haven't won—we still

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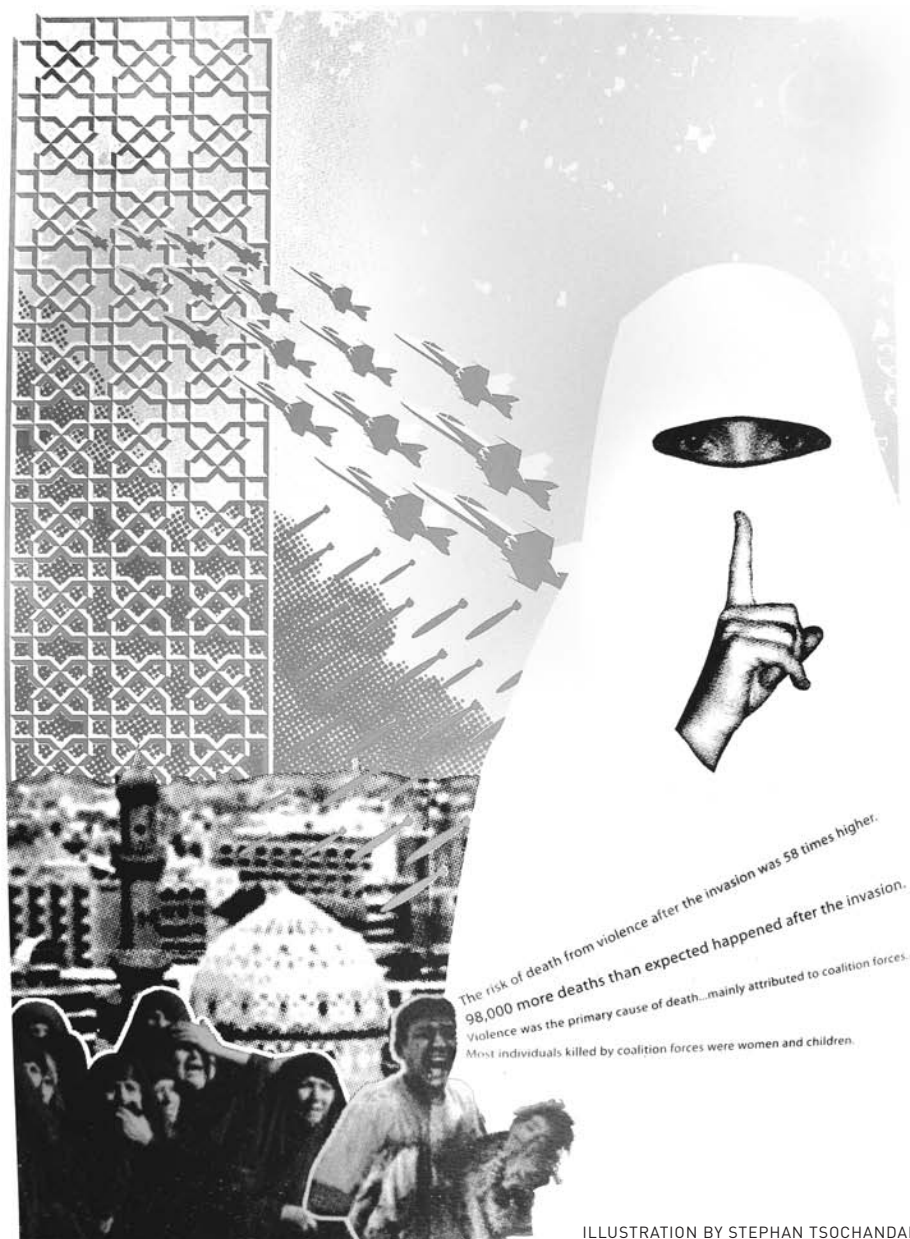


ILLUSTRATION BY STEPHAN TSOCHANDARIS



Reclaiming the streets

ARTICLES AND PHOTOS BY REZ

BIKE DESIGN BY JAY BROEMMEL, CYCLECIDE

SF BIKE COALITION AND YOUR RIGHT TO RIDE

You may have seen the members of the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition hosting “free valet bike parking” at events around town. Maybe you’ve seen them quoted in the media about cycling as a civic issue. “The mission of the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition,” reads their website, “is to transform San Francisco’s streets and neighborhoods into more livable and safe places by promoting the bicycle for everyday transportation.”

“Lots of folks in the community think that we are about recreation and athletics,” says SFBC Program Director Andy Thornley. “Actually, I [bike] so I can smoke cigars. You can diminish and dismiss bicycling as a child’s toy, as a fitness regime, as an athletic pursuit for racers. Politically, that takes it away from where we see it as routine. The city charter says that bicycling should be as important or more important than automobiles. But sadly, federal, state and even local policy has never really faced up to that.”

The coalition’s efforts deal mainly

with lobbying city government and transportation authorities to include provisions for safe and convenient bike travel. These activities are outlined in *Tube Times*, a free bimonthly newsletter distributed around town at bike shops. Dues and gifts from about 6,100 members amount to about half of the SFBC’s budget, according to Thornley.

The limitations of an organization like the SFBC, oriented towards influencing government on its own terms are not lost on Thornley, who regrets the limited contact between the SFBC and marginalized communities in San Francisco. The bicycle is no less used in the potholed streets of Hunters Point than the smooth wide bike lanes of the Marina District. This disconnect is not unique to the SFBC of course, but typical for organizations focusing on sustainable technology.

“Day laborers on Cesar Chavez Street who are riding a long distance ... if their bike gets a flat, they don’t eat and they’re not getting a job that day,

those communities are the ones that we most desperately need to engage,” says Thornley. “But it’s a challenge with this kind of an organization that’s had success with the affluent, professional class, to come to those communities and make a sincere statement that we’re interested in helping, when we can be viewed with suspicion.”

On the other hand, SFBC members have worked to advocate for better bike lanes in the low rent corners of the city. “If you look at the San Francisco Bike Map, most of 17th Street is a purple dotted line, indicating that it is a designated, but yet unimproved bike route,” reads an article in the Feb-March issue of *Tube Times*. “For the past year, I have been part of... the new 17th Street Committee that meets regularly to plan and gather support for our project to get bike lanes striped on 17th street.” Other articles describe the SFBC joining with groups like C.C. Puede, a Cesar Chavez street community group, in trying to win grants to transform that street from a mid-city

freeway into a more communal area.

Reformist honkeys on a mission or an organization on the cusp of greater relevance in the community? That seems to me to be a matter of perspective. Certainly a few of their practices alienate elements of renegade bike culture: practices like giving Valentine’s Day cards to parking police (as a way to encourage them to keep Market St. bike lanes clear) and telling city officials that new bike lanes are a concession that cyclists appreciate from generous motorists. On the other hand, by playing ball with the system and obliging with the role of the grateful (rather than outraged) minority group, the SFBC is getting results.. And results like these mean less deaths, less broken bones, faster commutes and even a few more places where dedicated bike lanes remove the cyclist from the ever present threat of being mangled.

www.sfbike.org
East Bay: www.ebbc.org

A Practical Biker’s Guide to the Bay Area

Mass Transit and Biking: 415-585-BIKE

Flat tire? Going a long way? Want to get a boost uphill? Check out these bike-accessible transport options for the Yay Area:

BART: Of course this is the original bike-able public transport option (save for rush hour) all over the bay, though its been getting a bit harder to cheat the fares. *Fault Lines* does not officially condone fare dodging.)

Busses: Most bay area busses now take two bikes, and outside rush hours, these are rarely filled. This includes SAMTrans to the south bay, the Highway 17 bus to Santra Cruz, AC Transit, etc. Exceptions are SF Muni Metro, “historic” streetcars and cable cars. But what kind of bay area dinezen would ride a cable car, anyway? <http://www.sfmta.com/cms/mrider/bikes.htm>

Ferries: Boats go out to Angel Island, (great biking, great views, paved lower road fine for road bikes, no cars!) Tiburon, Larkspur and Sausalito in Marin, Alameda, Oakland and Vallejo, in the East Bay. All ferries take bikes. Schedules can be found where the ferries dock, Jack London Square in Oakland, the ferry Building at the end of Market Street in SF, (the one with the big clock on it) etc. or online at http://www.baycrossings.com/ferry_schedules.asp. Boycott Hornblower cruises out to Alcatraz, who dropped their union much to the dismay of their employees!

Trains: Contact Amtrak...some trains take bikes, like the capital corridors out to Sacramento, some don’t. CALtrain has special cars reserved for bikes, and you can ride over the car, so your bike doesn’t get lonely! *Lots of commute info at <http://bicycling.511.org/transit.htm>*

IT’S THE LAW

(as if anyone paid attention)

By law, bikes do not have to stop or give way to cars any more than another car would in the same situation.

California Vehicle Code, section 21200

(a) Every person riding a bicycle upon a roadway has all the rights and is subject to all the provisions applicable to the driver of a vehicle...

Read it and weep, road hogs and SUV drivers...

THE SAN FRANCISCO BIKE MAP (& walking guide) is the shiznit. This indispensable guide comes complete with a topographical map to help negotiate that thin pass between hills along Mission and Geneva. Find all the car-free dedicated bike trails in the Presidio and Lake Merced, plus bike parking facilities, and the streets with bike lanes are marked. Streets are toned according to gradient. Grocery stores like Rainbow sell it for about two dollars.

Similarly the “Walk Oakland” map covers a fair swath of the east bay, and the “East Bay Bicycle

Coalition” makes a great map covering some of the backwoods of the east bay, accessible by BART and out in the sticks! Contact them at www.ebbc.org

For mountain biking, the more specific and detail oriented guides to the outdoors are the Krebs maps, oriented to offroad bikes. <http://www.krebs-cycleproducts.com/>

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority doles out maps for the San Jose/SC Valley areas, for free.

DRUNK PUNKS WELD DUMP JUNK

Cyclecide is a touring freak show that showcases muscle-powered contraptions welded together from bits of bikes salvaged from junk heaps, scaffolding, and car parts. At their shows, attendees get to ride pedal-powered ferris wheels, merry-go-rounds, and strange machines that spin and spank, made mostly from scrap bike parts. A house band plays and intermittent shows are staged that have to be seen to be believed. Imagine a mosh pit of fanciful art bikes, one sculpted to resemble the Golden Gate Bridge under a rainbow, an ill-fated jet-assisted attempt at a bicycle space launch, and “tall boy jousting.” That is, people on mutant bikes made from two frames, one welded on top of the other, trying to impale each other with gigantic Q-tips. Last July’s Pedal Monster featured a giant treadwheel that does nothing more than cause a gigantic bust to pick his nose. Women in bikinis and mouse whiskers announced events as a velonaut rode a bike built of an incredible five frames welded on top of one another.

Their website describes the “Heavy Pedal Cyclecide Bike Rodeo,” well into its 11th year in existence, as “a club of alter-bike mechanics, mariachi-punk musicians and psychotic [sic] clowns who love bikes, beer and pyrotechnics.”

August Laird, one of about 20 core Cyclecide members, whose duties include “[doing bike] rodeo stunts, maintaining bikes, designing costumes, playing in the band, writing music, [and] making pancakes,” told me that Cyclecide was an expressly apolitical entertainment group. Asked why they use bicycles, rather than, say, motorcycles for their stunts, Laird explains, “[The bike is] such a revolutionary vehicle, it was a strong part of the women’s liberation movement, and they’re such a democratic form of



trans-
portation. Most people can fix it or learn how to fix it. [A lot of people in the community] really want people to learn to [master] their [vehicles], and we’re definitely there. We like people to be able to make their own crazy, monstrous bike and come ride our bikes and see all the fun, creative stuff they can do.” In an age where hybrid SUVs are sold as environmental status symbols, one wonders at the irony of someone creating entertainment from recycling salvaged non-polluting vehicles while recognizing their role in the history of the women’s movement viewing their work as “apolitical.” August, a librarian by day, is also part of the cyclecide crew. She also describes her crew with humility. “It’s mainly kind of a social thing, its like, drink beer, fuck with bikes.”

For more info on upcoming events, check out www.cyclecide.com

COOK YOUR BIKE ON THE CHEAP!



BIKE DESIGN: IRISH, BLACK LABEL BIKE CLUB RENO CHAPTER

“We provide all the tools and parts you need to fix or build a bicycle. Our staff of volunteer mechanics is available to give advice and answer questions,” reads the Bike Kitchen’s website. An affordable, cooperatively run DIY bike repair shop, the bike kitchen lets you work on your bike with their tools. For a 30-dollar yearly or 5-dollar daily fee, you get access to oodles of parts, mostly scavenged from junked bikes. For an extra 30, they throw in a frame that you can sauce up with components of your choice. A very friendly environment even for people with no technical bike repair experience. The shop is run entirely by volunteers and one can also volunteer in lieu of the fees.

“We’re basically a community workspace for people to come and learn how to fix their bikes,” says co-founder Jesse Bassbaum. “So if someone wants to patch a tire or fix their brakes, and they don’t feel like taking it to a shop and paying a bunch of money and having no idea what just happened, they can come here and we’ll walk them through the process.”

The shop has a few bike mechanics and a lot of part-time volunteers, but often enough, people who come to repair bikes end up helping each other out. Look for this oasis of bike culture in an unassuming little alley on traffic-clogged Mission Street at Ninth.

<http://www.bikekitchen.org/>
1256 Mission St. @ 9th,
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 6-9PM,
Saturday 12-5 PM.

SUSAN B SEZ: GIT YER RIDE ON!

“I think [bicycling] has done more to emancipate women than anything else in the world. It gives women a feeling of freedom and self-reliance. I stand and rejoice every time I see a woman ride by on a wheel...the picture of free, untrammelled womanhood.”

—Susan B Anthony, *New York World*
Interview, 1896

According to a site by the San Francisco Exploratorium, the bicycle was largely responsible for changing women’s clothing in the late 1800s. Restrictive corsets and long dresses made way for bloomers and later trousers. The bicycle was recognized by nineteenth-century feminists and suffragists as a “freedom machine” for women.



CAR-FREE, I mean Healthy, Saturdays

Healthy Saturdays is an initiative brought to you by, among others, the folks who roller blade step routines to electro funk on “Healthy Sundays.” The plan is to extend to Saturday what has been happening on Sunday for the last 39 years. A mile and a half of JFK in Golden Gate Park gets filled with kids on training wheels, disco-addled rollerbladers, bunny-hopping BMX kids.

Mayor Newsom vetoed the bill last May, claiming it lacked objective analysis. An objective analysis was recently published, saying a car-free park would encourage no loss in business, while the park would get more use, and the De Young museum more visits.

One of the major voices of opposition to the plan is the museum, which the new report says actually gets more visits on the car free Sundays than Saturdays. What they stand to lose, however, is Saturday business on the lucrative parking facilities that they run as a private business on a park built and maintained, supposedly, as a public resource.

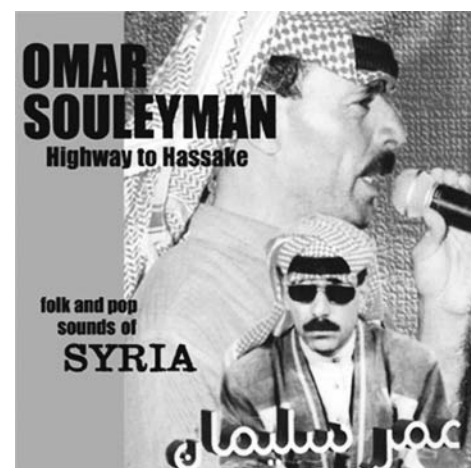
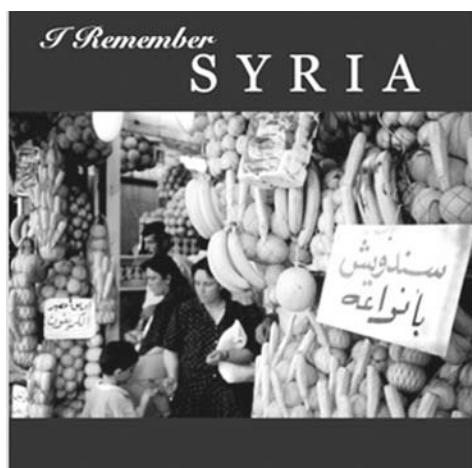
More info at www.goldengatepark.org



Sublime Frequencies

SUBLIMINAL MESSAGES

INTERNATIONAL MUSIC LABEL RECORDS SOUNDS OF THE MIDDLE EAST



After growing tired of the alternative music of the 90's, Bay Area experimental musician Mark Gergis (of Mono Pause) turned to foreign sounds for musical inspiration. The obsession later turned into a pathway to cultures, as Mark joined the Sublime Frequencies collective, a record and film project dedicated to exploring street-level music and culture from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. Joined by fellow experimental music legends, Alan and Richard Bishop (of Sun City Girls fame) and film-maker Hisham Mayet, Sublime Frequencies has released over 30 albums and films, compiling street performances, tapes, radio recordings, and vinyl gems.

Mark Gergis, who himself is half Iraqi, sat down with *Fault Lines* to discuss his most current Sublime Frequencies projects in Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon. *interview and photos by Sakura Saunders*

Could you describe your latest album, of Iraqi music?

It's called "Choubi Choubi: Folk and Pop Sounds from Iraq". Choubi is a folkloric dance and party music in Iraq. I heard a lot of it growing up at the weddings and parties of my family in the Iraqi community around Detroit, Michigan. I think every ethnic group in Iraq knows the Choubi. It can almost be called the national music of Iraq if there is/was one. Surprisingly, there hadn't been anything widely issued on Choubi in this country. The music on the collection was found in shops anywhere between Detroit and Damascus over the past several years.

Do you view this album and your work in general as political?

The label isn't a soapbox for tired proselytization, but I think the politics of the releases are evident through the discs from the way the discs are packaged and distributed to the locations that are focused on, to the way the

label is operated. The relevance of making an Iraqi album in the last couple of years is clear. The Arab world needs a human face. Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Iraq...It's important to humanize these locations for the many people who might not know better. To me, these discs are a stab in the face of anyone who tries to demonize the Arab world. If people end up diggin' on the music then maybe that helps. Hopefully, it piques the interest of the right people.

Have you learned any political insights from traveling to other countries that you didn't know before or that were reinforced?

Oh yeah, there's always more to learn. Getting the hell out of here and dropping oneself out "there" is one of the most important things one can do. The US is an extremely insular culture. Not many Americans travel because they either have no interest or they are engineered to be scared of the outside world. But if you can get out, leave your so-called "rugged American individualism" template at home and actually put yourself in another place, you start to realize what you've been missing. 15 years of US academic studies can't begin to compare with 6 months of independent travel in a place outside of the Western world. Seeing your home through the lens

of people elsewhere helps you understand the many ways America is perceived.

People here might be surprised to know that Arabs generally tend to make the intelligent distinction between people and government. That's something that can't be said for many Americans. It's common to hear on the streets of Cairo or Damascus, "We love the American people, but we don't like the government." And as much as I want to applaud them for this humane approach, I've started to ask myself why Arabs should continue to make that distinction while so many "common American folk" either dig on Bush and the Necon agenda or remain ignorant and/or complacent in the face of it. Should I tell folks out there that they're wrong? I've started to argue that it's harder for me to make that distinction with Americans these days, which has opened the doors for complex dialogues. Ha...I'm the worst ambassador for this country... or the best.

Actually, when Westerners start coming down on a place like Syria, I love pointing out that there's nothing you can accuse Syria of that the US isn't also doing on some level. In fact, I prefer the Syrian approach because at least they aren't so blindly hypocritical to proclaim that they're the "freest country in the world" or other such bullshit.

I met one moron in Syria. He was an American from Texas who was in the middle of a long tour of the Arab world. He was proud to be going around telling all the locals he met that he loves

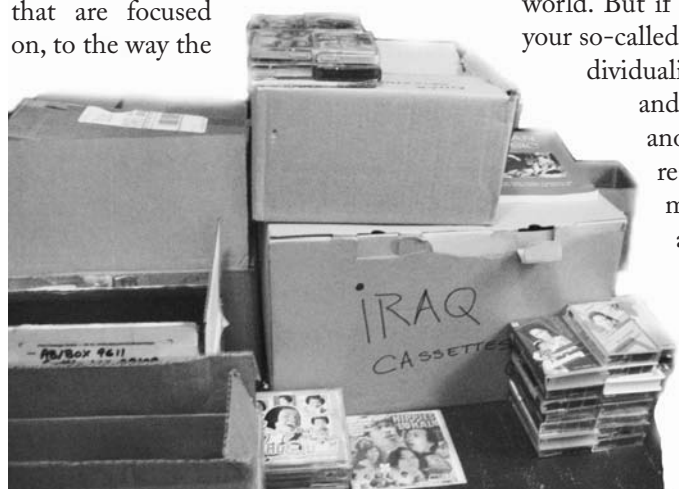
Bush and supports the war on terror and the war in Iraq, etc. He was on some sort of nationalistic ego tour. He told me, "You know what, man? Despite all that, they still give me free coffee and tea and food!" He continued to tell me I was doing a disservice to my country and confusing the people (Arabs) by telling them I disapprove of my government. He said "They're used to loving their government and they understand me when I say that I love my government." This guy is probably really frustrated that nobody's killed him yet. I am.

And how do Syrians feel about their own government?

You may want to talk about that with a Syrian. At this point, I believe that Syrians would rather trust their government than accept some bogus US/Israel-imposed democracy. They only have to look at their fallen neighbor, Iraq, as an example of what modern imperialist democracy is. In Syria, people use a lot of metaphors when they talk about their government. Some are more direct and some will be very frank with you, but very few are willing to criticize their government publicly for the obvious reasons.

Unfortunately, Syrians are safer talking against the US government than they are talking against their own, but at least most people there can recognize the hypocritical nature of Americans thinking they are the freest folk on the planet. What a joke. And what a joke American-style "democracy" must be to them.

...CONT on next page



ART AGAINST AUTHORITY

realizing the impossible

BY BURP-A-SAURUS REX

Don't get me wrong. I'll stare at any schmoe's "artwork" for a sec if it entitles me to free wine, juicy grapes, and baba ganoush on pita chips. But amidst the culture-dissecting circles in which I find myself these days, art can be a four-letter word if it's not blatantly extending an arm to slap economic, racial, gender, or sexuality based systemic repression right dab in the face. Or at least demonstrating ways that the rest of us might do so. Accordingly, in the 22 essays edited by Josh MacPhee and Erik Reuland that make up *Realizing the Impossible: Art Against Authority*, capital 'A' art is only as worthwhile as its ability to creatively taint and taunt the many faces of institutionalized repression: military forces, state

bureaucracy, corporate media, police lines, stock traders, corrupt politicians, church institutions, and in recent years, architects of free trade agreements.

What you'll find as you flip the pages of this image-packed compilation is a century-

plus chronicle of creative dissenters; from print-makers and propagandists, to puppet protestors and commons reclaimers, to guerilla TV producers and grassroots media-makers. It is not chronological, and probably not a start to finish read. Its content spans from pre-WWI era France, when the anarchist worldview thought to be inherent in modernist and avant-garde art by some of its pioneers was stifled by the agenda a burgeoning apolitical social elite, all the way to the modern-day shortcomings of adusting and culture jamming in taking a stand against global capitalism. These essays ambitiously examine an important sector of resistance to the social order. In over 300 pages, there are of course a few instances of academia-type over analysis. But the weaving together of iconoclastic artists over such a span of time—with the intention of extracting the meaning of art and the role of aesthetics when related to anti-authoritarian movements—is in this case an admirable feat.

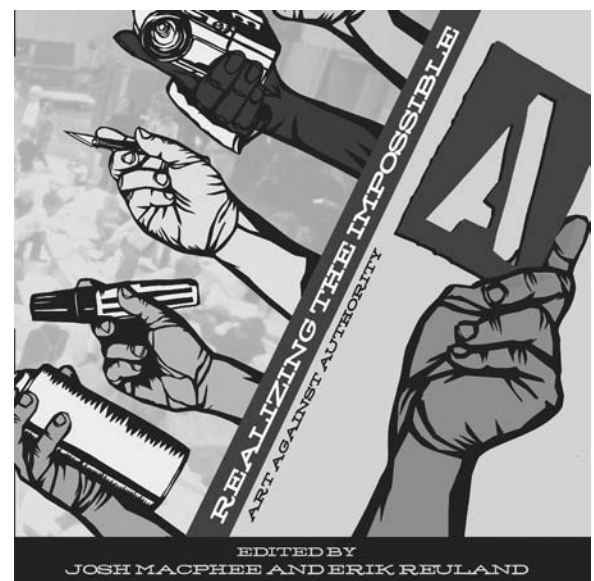
The essays focus primarily on outlooks of North American and European artists whose works were inspired by visions of resistance, whether personal, collective, or observed. There are also accounts of various groups in third world countries whose passion is armed in the form of inspired images and carefully chosen phrases. The Taring Padi of Indonesia are "a loose collective of cultural fulminators" whose normal (by first world standards) lot of creative anti-authoritarian efforts—as printmakers, squatters, sticker campaigners, farmers rights' and biodiversity educators—induce both aggressive state repression and midnight attacks by fundamental-

ists with "big fucking swords" in a non-secularized, highly militaristic third world setting. The essay about BsAs Stencil and other individuals responsible for the political street art eruption of Buenos Aires since Argentina's state of economic turmoil in 2001 gives a revealing glimpse into a working peoples' responses to a temporarily failed capitalist state.

Rich in clandestine histories and critical self-analysis, the book is bound by no singular movement. Nor does there exist any unified political platform between the artists discussed and interviewed. The commonality that can be extracted is an earnest desire to blueprint and construct windows from the world we exist in to the one we dream about—ignoring the paradox in the phrase "realizing the impossible."



CLIFFORD HARPER: "SABATE: GUERRILLA EXTRAORDINARY"



The current project you worked on for Sublime Frequencies is with a Syrian musician, could you talk about that?

His name is Omar Souleyman. He's a Syrian singer who works with a few trusty collaborators, a poet and a few musicians. They do something that's similar to the Iraqi Choubi in Syria. They're a folk-pop ensemble who play incredible, high-energy Debka party music that teeters on raging psychedelia at times. They also do some unbelievably mournful and gorgeous dirges. They're from the Northeastern Syrian city of Ras Al Ain, near the Turkish and Iraqi border. All of the rich musical characteristics of the region can be heard in the music they play. It's a form of music that hasn't been focused on in the West, so it was a pleasure to hook up with Omar and try to get the music out here. I first heard Omar Souleyman on my virgin trip to Syria in 1997. I bought several cassettes then and on a return trip in 2000. In 2006, as I prepared to go back a third time, I talked to Sublime Frequencies and said "We should just really try to meet this guy and see if he wants to put out a record." Lucky for us, he did! He's a great guy, and he



MARK AT WORK IN HIS APARTMENT IN W. OAKLAND

was excited about the idea of people hearing the music outside of Syria.

Have you run into any complications with this US/Syrian business partnership?

No, and we shouldn't. Syria knows. We know that because we were followed by secret police everywhere we went when trying to meet Omar. The government there surely knows we're doing business with him. Once you start going up into that Northeastern territory where few tourists venture, they

start keeping serious checks on you.

Eventually, we went directly to them and declared our intentions. It wasn't an issue once they found out what we wanted. It was obviously benign to them or they would have stopped it from happening.

As for here, there really shouldn't be a problem unless someone on this end wants to create one.

Are we supporting terrorism by doing this? Sure we are, as long as that's how some idiot wants to spin it! It's that easy. Their criterion for a terror organization is meaningless. Fuck 'em! If I release an album of Hezbollah folk and pop music, is that doing business with terrorists? I'll argue (along with others) that Hezbollah isn't terrorist. They're a valid resistance organization created as the criminal Israeli invasion in 1982 was in progress. There are forces at play right now, who are trying to further divide

the Lebanese people through very manipulative means, just as they are in Iraq and Palestine. These forces are the real terrorists. The gods of perception like to have you think there's only one way to perceive these events—through their filters of "good and evil" which they create and then enforce. I continue to operate on my own terms, as should anyone. If music is terrorism, lets hope it does some serious damage at least. I'd love to see the casualties a tune can produce.

What's this project that you are working on in Lebanon?

I was in Lebanon in January, 2006 with Bay Area musician Liz Allbee. We had the pleasure of befriending the incredible artists and musicians, Mazan Kerbaj and Raed Yassin, who have become quite famous now as a result of the July 2006 war. We kept in touch and were in constant contact with them during the war through phone calls, emails and text messages. Raed made an 11 disc set of war radio that he recorded during the entire month, including what he calls "Israeli parasite radio," also known as "The Voice of Peace." I'm really excited about collaborating with him on this.

Climate Capitalism

do when we go home.”

Known locally as “the tree lady” due to her propensity to encourage Africans to plant trees, she is part of a movement whose aim is to plant our way out of the crisis. Trees perform as carbon sinks, inhaling CO2 and hence offsetting CO2 emissions: to re-forest Africa with a billion trees appropriate to regional diversity is the target of the Green Belt Movement.

3. Towards a Globalized New Orleans, or the End of Capitalism.

One could despair, and indeed many in the global north speculate upon the wisdom of having (more) kids considering the nefarious world they may well inherit. Meanwhile, people in the south – in places like drought-ridden northern Kenya – have the more pressing issue of wondering how they will feed their living kids.

It seems a hopeless situation. Two thousand of the world’s eminent scientists and experts confirm that climate variability is a product of human activity, and that nevertheless we might have a short window of opportunity – say 15 years – to do something about it, but there isn’t the political will to act amongst the powers that be. Not just the United States, China, and Russia, but even European “champions” of the cause refuse to set an example. While

his government will say in the strongest terms it is “an imperative” to take action to prevent further climate damage, Prime Minister Tony Blair will still balk at personal sacrifices. “I think these things are a bit impractical actually to expect people to do that,” said Blair in response to the suggestion that cutting back on flights might be a positive step. For him, science will save the planet. “All the evidence is that if you use the science and the technology constructively, your economy can grow, people can have a good time, but do so more responsibly.”

A conclusion shared by President Bush. “Leaving behind the debate whether global warming is caused by natural or man-made causes,” said Bush chillingly to the *New York Times* in an article that ran May 25 of last year, “we are going to focus solely in the technologies which can resolve the problem”.

The front-runner is ethanol. But replacing fossil fuels – an intensely compact source of fuel – with crop derived bio-ethanol requires felling vast tracks of forest to make way for plantations, thereby creating even more ecological damage.

Meanwhile, entering into the twilight zone of capitalist solutions to capitalist problems, we find the resurrection

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

of the old technological boogeyman: nuclear energy, or the new bio-technical Frankenstein: genetically modified bio-fuel crops. Both these solutions may be low-carbon, but the potential ecological cost of the energy succeeds in merely pushing the climate change problem upriver a while.

THE DOOMSDAY CLOCK TICKS AWAY AT A PERILOUS 5 MINUTES TO TWELVE. MEANWHILE, IT'S STILL EARLY MORNING ON THE REVOLUTIONARY CLOCK. DESPITE THE ALARM RINGING, THE REVOLUTIONARY PROTAGONIST, ALTHOUGH STIRRING, HAS YET TO AWAKE.

Another solution involves juggling carbon around. With capitalism’s love of the market we now have complicated emissions trading schemes for “cost-effective” reductions in carbon emissions (selling them on) and, more bizarrely, carbon drops – including the notions of storing emissions under the sea bed or down disused mine shafts.

Capitalism’s last technological card and one that is proving a current growth business is geo-engineering – the in-

tentional manipulation of the climate. Taking inspiration from the CIA’s (unsuccessful) attempts to provoke intense rains over Vietnam to wash out the rebels’ crops, to the Chinese Olympic committee’s promise to secure sunny days for the 2008 Olympics via technical measures, the geo-engineering industry is having a field day in the era of climate variability. From attempts to fertilize the ocean in order to lower the water temperature, to filling the sky with sulphate nano-particles to intercept sun-rays, geo-engineer scientists are busy interfering with and intervening upon the climate, undeterred by potential disequilibrium disasters or mass contamination.

Beyond technological meddling, dealing with the problem of climate change – ecologically, politically, economically, and socially – needs a lot more than the Kyoto Protocol, developing alternative energies, or holding another emergency Climate Change Conference. It is necessary to consider the root of the problem. A global economy based on the colossal demand for highly concentrated and rapidly depleting fossil fuel deposits is ecologically unsustainable. Do we need to change fuel or change the structure of consumption? But under the present model – global capitalism – is

...CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



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SQUAT RIOTS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

In the chaos (that has also been likened to a battle scene from *Lord of the Rings*), Fullum lost his affinity group and found himself and others surrounded by upwards of 300 cops with dogs. He spent the following ten days (including a memorable Christmas) in Danish prison waiting to be deported. Danes were released first and foreigners last. Most were bussed to the border of their own country such as Sweden or Germany, but in the case of Ireland, "no plane tickets were available" before the holiday. The majority of the 300 arrestees were released without charges before the legal 14-day mark, but three Danes still remain in custody. The Danish Anarchist Black Cross has been sending prisoners money, socks, and underwear, and forwarding letters from supporters.

At one point during the riots, in an attempt to circumvent the police, a group of rioters knocked on a neighbor's apartment door. She eyed them up and down and then said, "Just wipe your

feet." A hundred rioters in masks carrying large sticks proceeded to wipe their feet, articulate a "thank you," and then file through the apartment and out the other side.

By early February there was still no word of a complete eviction at Ungdomshuset. So the squatters waited with an armory inside their house. They waited with iron bars and dynamite.

The police printed their plan for eviction in a Copenhagen newspaper in December. Because the house is barricaded in a way that assumes the enemy will enter from the bottom, authorities intend to lower a crate full of cops onto the roof using a helicopter, at which point they could gas the whole building from above.

Everyone knows that when the cops come to take away their home, there is no longer a choice to go in or out; everyone must stay and fight. There are stockpiles of rocks and bottles on the

roof and beside all partially barricaded windows. There are gasmasks and headlamps next to each bed.

The chief of police has said that if "less than 25 people die, it will be a good eviction."

In the early morning hours of March 1st, 2007, Ungdomshuset was violently cleared of its occupants with the use of a

military helicopter and two cranes. Roughly 3000 people rioted over the next four days, peaking on March 3rd. Reports say that 643 protesters were arrested (including 140 foreigners), and at least 25 were hospitalized. Protests in solidarity with the squatters were held all over Europe. At 8AM on March 5th, Ungdomshuset was demolished.



PHOTO: WWW.INDYMEDIA.ORG.UK

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

change possible, or even desirable?

"Capitalism has always relied on infinite expansionism in a finite planet," explains Alex Troochi of the Anarchist Green Apple Collective. "Something has to give and at the moment, it's the planet that's giving as capitalism plunders ahead."

Capitalism relies on ever-expanding markets and inputs to continue to make

profits based on the extraction of natural resources and transforming them into dead capital. This ceaseless addiction to growth-for-growth sake leads inexorably to ecotastrophe. Capitalism is now being forced to consider other strategies. But the magic technological or scientific bullet to save the day remains illusive.

Hope lies beyond the pale; it requires a fundamental shift in thinking, a revolu-

tionary paradigm shift away from the cloistered confines of the imagination of the United States government, the European Union or the United Nations assembly. In the long term, the human world will have to evolve some kind of post-capitalist society to survive.

The doomsday clock ticks away at a perilous five minutes to twelve. Meanwhile, it's still early morning on the revolutionary clock. Despite the alarm

ringing, the revolutionary protagonist, although stirring, has yet to awake. Once again the prophetic words of Buenaventura Durruti, the famous anarchist of the 1936 Spanish Revolution, come around to both haunt and inspire us:

"We are not in the least afraid of ruins... The bourgeoisie might blast and ruin its own world before it leaves the stage of history. We carry a new world here, in our hearts. That world is growing this minute."

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By their accusations against SHAC and the ALF, some are trying to disguise where the real violence exists.

Jerry Vlasak

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Animal Liberation Front (ALF):
www.animalliberationpressoffice.org

Earth Liberation Front (ELF):
www.earthliberationfront.com

Grand Juries and Government Harassment:
www.fbiwitchhunt.com

Direct Action News:
www.nocompromise.org • www.directaction.info

News, upcoming events, and resources of the Bay Area and beyond:
indybay.org/animalliberation

The FBI is now publicly claiming that ELF, ALF, SHAC, and other direct action activists are the #1 terrorist threat in America today. The Pentagon, FBI and CA Nat'l Guard have recently been found to be spying on Greenpeace, PETA, anti-war groups, and others. The SHAC7 have been convicted for maintaining a website supportive of direct action. There are currently Grand Juries set up to attack and intimidate activists all over the country, including in San Francisco. All the while, the US gov't continues to protect and refuses to extradite for trial Cuban mass murderer Luis Posada Carriles; and Michael Fortier, who had foreknowledge of the OK City bombing, which killed over 150 people, was set free the very same day eleven environmental and animal activists were arrested by the FBI for supposed acts of property destruction. Many activists are currently facing decades of jailtime. The time to stand up for them is now!

Resistance Spreads as Iraq Veterans Return CONTINUED

have troops in Afghanistan, and troops in Germany still from World War II.

JE: Victory would be the withdrawal of America from the Middle East, and that includes Afghanistan, that includes Iraq, that includes even North Korea.

TC: The Department of Defense, if it should even exist, should only exist as a department of *defense*. Mother Nature attacked New Orleans and we had no

sort of defense against that. Your guns aren't going to help fight the hurricanes that are killing poor people.

JE: I think we're passed the arguing point as to whether or not to withdraw troops. I think the idea of troop withdrawal is an inevitability at this point.

TC: It's just how. And when.

JE: How much longer are we going to allow our soldiers to die, Iraqis to

die? How much longer are we going to pollute Iraq with depleted uranium? How much longer are we going to keep sweeping our veterans under the rug? We'll never defeat this popular insurrection because most empires don't. It wasn't that long ago that the Iraqis kicked out the British. Some of their great-grandparents over there in Iraq, if they're still alive, they still remember British occupation. They successfully ousted the British in the 20s.

TC: Why should we be any different?

JE: They'll do it to us in 2007.

FL: How has all of this changed the way you think about war, and government, and politics?

JH: I think it hasn't really changed much as much as fucking enforced *everything*.

JE: I think the one thing that this war has proven to me is that we're fucked. We have a one-party system that's making all of our decisions. And they're subservient to corporations. That's a hell of a barrier to break through. It doesn't make sense to vote for either candidate anymore, but what's to do? People will say vote for the lesser of two evils.

JH: Voting for the lesser of two evils isn't voting.

JE: It seems to me that the politicians in Washington, DC, are history's best puppet government. They're totally in tow to the capitalist regime, the corporations, the corporatocracy—they're all in bed with each other.

FL: Do you think the big anti-war marches are worth putting energy

into?

JE: Oh absolutely. People power is always worth putting something into.

TC: I think that it doesn't really create much when it comes to lawmakers, but it gets more people to notice, like, 'Wow, this is gaining steam, and this is something I agree with. Maybe I should get up off my ass and help out.'

JE: Look at what last May Day did for immigration—it didn't essentially solve a problem overnight, but...

TC: And it's all those rights marches that happened prior to that, in the past few years before that, that created such a fervor for that. Eventually our D-Day will come and anti-war marches will be like May Day was last year.

JE: People power is a very real thing. The more people that are interested in it, the better. I can tell you that since I've been out of the Army, I've definitely seen a rising undercurrent of people who are getting interested and getting involved. Maybe it's time to come out of the woodwork again and get back in the game.


JH: And the high school kids coming up are pissed too. We just spoke at a high school a couple of days ago and we had a 17-year-old senior ask us if he was going to be the first one drafted for Iran. We need to get the burned out hippies and the rich white men and the kids and the minorities, we need to quit playing into our differences and we need to work together to overcome this.

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Blackwater CONTINUED

During Bush's State of the Union address he asked Congress to approve two immense military buildups. First, he requested "an increase in the size of our active Army and Marine Corps by 92,000 in the next five years. A second task we can take on together is to design and establish a volunteer civilian reserve corps. Such a corps would function much like our military reserve." Bush, however, was not the first to mention this idea. Blackwater CEO and co-founder Erik Prince, a huge campaign contributor to Bush and the GOP, presented his plan for a "contractor brigade" of private military firms at a military conference two years ago.

KBR's CEO Bill Utt said they plan on increasing the size of their force in Iraq in response to Bush's announcement of sending more troops. The company now has over 500,000 resumes on file for people seeking employment in Iraq, Kuwait, or Afghanistan. With every troop "surge" the private military

business gets an extra boost as well.

Former Secretary of Defense Philip Coyle sees this privatization of war as directly related to the occupation of Iraq, where contractors now perform jobs previously done by US soldiers. "Obviously the military could do it," Coyle says, "but indeed the Administration is looking for places to get more troops for Iraq."

The 21,500 combat troops Bush is sending into Iraq will have to be supported by 28,000 additional US military men and women, a government assessment recently concluded. This makes the actual number of US soldiers being deployed around 50,000 at a cost of \$27 billion according to the Congressional Budget Office. Exactly how many more contractors will arrive in Iraq as a result has yet to be determined, but with the current ratio of nearly one contractor for every soldier, we can expect it to be a significant number.

10 Humble Suggestions

FOR RADICALS LIVING IN A POLICE STATE

BY BEN ROSENFELD, ATTORNEY

Disclaimer: Though I've drawn on what I think I know as a lawyer, this is not legal advice.

1 YOU'RE LIVING IN A POLICE STATE; ACT LIKE IT

Calling the US a police state is not just radical rhetoric to impress your friends or provoke your parents. It's true, so make the necessary adjustments. What you know can still hurt you. Don't expect a state, whose basic structures you advocate subverting, to protect you just because it intones about its Bill of Rights. No state is that enlightened.

The police state, US style, takes its own form. It does not mean the government will disappear dissidents *en masse*. It means we are increasingly trading basic civil rights, designed to check government power, for the illusion of security and the paternalistic promise that the police will only go after the bad guys.

2 KNOW YOUR RIGHTS / PRACTICE YOUR RIGHTS

You do not have to answer your door to police, talk to police at all (except in some states to give your name), or consent to a search of your person, vehicle, or home, whether or not the police have a warrant. (You should not resist, but you do not have to consent, and you waive your rights if you do.) If you are stopped, you should ask if you're being detained. If you're not being detained, you may leave. If you are being detained, you may remain silent. If you are questioned, you can invoke your *Miranda* rights (whether or not they have been read to you) *only* by saying, in effect, that you will remain silent, and that you want to speak to a lawyer, and then shutting up, or repeating those words, and only those words. The police are authorized and trained to lie to you and to trick you to make you talk.

I know you've heard it all before. Yet it is amazing how many activists forget their basic training when the pressure is on. Yes, it can be intense. Yes, there are exceptions. (You can't complain to the police yourself without talking to the police. And protest liaisons and legal observers are tasked with talking to the police.) Yes, you might arouse suspicion or anger by refusing to talk. But their mere suspicion is not admissible against you at trial, and neither is your refusal to talk. They might make your life miserable for a day, a night, or a year if you don't talk, but that pales compared to the misery of spending many years behind bars, or putting someone else there.

3 DO AN EGO AND BRAVADO CHECK

Work for social change, not for street cred, or to get laid. Ego begets gossip, and gossip causes casualties. Also, consider ways in which you are a product of your generation and culture. Are you looking for a quick-fix solution, or are you dedicating the research, patience, and vision needed to build a lasting movement for social change? Lastly, make sure you are being good to the people around you before you take your utopian vision on the road.

4 TALK BUT DON'T GOSSIP

First, *talk*. FBI surveillance and grand jury harassment are processes which thrive on secrecy. Drag them into the light and expose them. Be loud, loquacious, and assertive. But don't spread gossip, innuendo, and speculation, which police and prosecutors pick up and use to justify their next moves. A favorite law enforcement tactic is to disturb a hive then listen for the buzz. Don't just buzz. Gossip has a way of passing for fact. Only pass on information which is public, or which you know the government already knows.

5 KNOW THE LAW, AND WHY IT WILL FAIL YOU/ SEEK LEGAL SUPPORT

Learn the law, especially the "inchoate," accomplice, and booby-trap crimes which are favorites for harassing activists, such as conspiracy, aiding and abetting, obstructing justice, concealing or harboring a fugitive, and perjury. Seek

legal support, especially if you are arrested or subpoenaed to testify before a grand jury or other tribunal. Educate your lawyer that representing you means representing you as a *political person*, which in turn means working collectively with community supporters, co-defendants, and their attorneys.

6 KNOW YOUR HISTORY

Knowledgeable activists have resisted and weathered other periods of repression in the US, and for some communities, of course, it has never ended. Consult your elders. They have a wealth of wisdom to impart concerning political repression. Read *The War at Home* by Brian Glick, *A People's History...* by Howard Zinn, *Agents of Repression* by Ward Churchill, *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse* by Peter Mathiessen, and *FBI Secrets: An Agent's Exposé*, by former FBI Special Agent Leslie Swearingen, and other works on COINTELPRO.

7 CREATE AND MAINTAIN INSTITUTIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND SUPPORT

Create groups, email lists, trainings, literature, media lists and attorney lists, and raise support funds, so your community is ready to respond quickly to arrests and grand jury subpoenas. Understand that people who elect not to talk to the grand jury, or cooperate with the FBI, face intense pressure, not just from the government, but in their own lives, emotionally and economically. Support work does not consist just of lionizing resisters as heroes and branding people who cooperate as traitors. It means sensitizing yourself to what the target is going through, trying to understand his/her particular pressures and needs, raising a public outcry, showing solidarity on the courthouse steps, helping to hire lawyers, supporting children, partners, and pets, and sustaining that person's work and projects while s/he is in custody. Everyone has a breaking point; help people raise their breaking points through real support.

8 REACH ACROSS CULTURAL DIVIDES

Yours is not the only afflicted community. Share resources and support with other victims of government repression. You have a lot to teach one another, and you are stronger together. A great example is the community forged between San Francisco Bay Area Animal Rights Activists and Black Panthers, who both faced grand jury harassment in 2006. See www.fbi-witchhunt.com.

9 DON'T GET TACTICAL PARALYSIS

The police, after all, are adapting to and anticipating your moves. Direct action and civil disobedience may be noble forms of protest, but they are also, typically, a compensation for lack of widespread public participation. Dream up ideas for energizing and involving more people. Aim beyond the six o'clock news. And don't automatically discount electoral politics. Implementing instant runoff voting, for example, like San Francisco has done, could radically remake government over time.

10 "DON'T MOURN, ORGANIZE" -JOE HILL

The government can't round up all dissidents. Its aim, rather, is to make symbolic examples out of a few. Reject the chill. There is strength in numbers. Number one, show up. Don't rely on other people to show up for you. Two, be the media. Write, speak, film, clamor. Three, bear witness. Document and report police brutality. File complaints. Testify in court. Four: Set an example worth emulating. Most activists weren't born to lefty parents. What sparked you? Find that and ignite it in someone else.

Disrupt the War Machine

El Gran Paro

Another World Is Possible

No One Is Illegal

Shut Down the Port!

April 7
Port of Oakland

On the fourth anniversary of the brutal repression of anti-war demonstrators at the port of Oakland by members of the Oakland Police Department, activists and community members will return to the port to disrupt the shipment of weapons and materials used to fight the war. Meet at the West Oakland BART station and march to the port to join a community picket to shut down the operations of the shipping corporations working with the US military.

indybay.org



May Day

May 1
Across the USA

Demanding recognition for their many contributions to American society, and taking a stand against racism, detentions, workplace discrimination, and the militarization of the border, immigrants and their supporters will be repeating last year's massive street protests. Join thousands and take the day off from work or school, refuse to buy anything, and march united for workers' and immigrants' rights.

indymedia.org

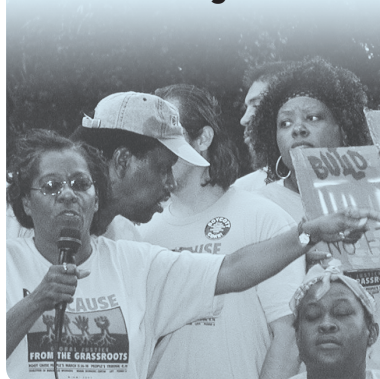


US Social Forum

June 27- July 1
Atlanta, Georgia

Growing out of the World Social Forum process, the US Social Forum is intended to bring together activists, organizers, people of color, working people, poor people, and indigenous people from across the United States. The goal of the gathering is to build unity around common goals of social justice, to build ties between organizations present at the event, and to help build a broader social justice movement.

ussf2007.org



No Borders Camp

2nd Week of November
Calixico/Mexicali

In response to the growing militarization of the US-Mexico border and the use of borders across the world to cage people while allowing the free flow of capital, radicals from both Mexico and the United States will meet for one week along this artificial boundary to liberate a space on the border and demonstrate against militarism, racism and neoliberalism. Bring water!

deletetheborder.org



INTERNATIONAL

Smash Global Capital

G8 Summit

June 2 - 7
Heiligendamm, Germany

Once again, the leaders of the richest nations in the world are meeting in a remote location to plan global capitalism's next moves. They will be met with massive popular resistance.

dissentnetwork.org

¡Ya Basta!

Intergalactica

July 21 - Aug 1
Chiapas, Mexico

The autonomous Zapatista communities have invited the world to join them to see how they operate and to share strategies and stories in our common fight for another world.

enlacezapatista.ezln.org.mx

announcing a new book from Inkworks Press:

VISIONS of PEACE & JUSTICE

THIRTY YEARS OF POLITICAL POSTERS
FROM THE ARCHIVES OF INKWORKS PRESS
SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA: 1974-2007

INKWORKS PRESS
WORKER COOPERATIVE • UNION SHOP • GREEN BUSINESS

AVAILABLE MAY DAY 2007

En 2006, una manifestación histórica por los derechos de los inmigrantes surgió en los EEUU, cuando millones de personas salieron a las calles. Los medios de comunicación masivos cubrieron este gran evento con un tono racista e ignorante. Pero activistas, cineastas independientes, organizadores de grupos de inmigrantes y muchas personas que participaron documentaron este momento histórico.

In 2006, a historic mobilization for immigrant rights swept the USA as millions took the streets. Mainstream news media predictably covered the marches with a mix of surprise, ignorance, and racism, yet grassroots media activists were there to document the voices and the stories behind this mass movement.

¡Gigante Despierta! es una compilación en DVD de videos de las manifestaciones por los derechos de inmigrantes del año 2006. Tiene cortometrajes desde muchos lugares en todo el país.

Giant Awake! is a DVD compilation of compelling short films from all around the country, due to hit the streets in the weeks before Mayday 2007.

Es una memoria colectiva y una herramienta para inspirar la acción para el primero de Mayo de 2007, cuando el Gigante va a levantar la voz de nuevo para decir: ¡Somos un pueblo, sin fronteras! ¡Aquí estamos, y no nos vamos!

It is a collective memory and a tool to inspire action this MayDay 2007, when the Giant will raise its voice again to say: we are one people, without borders. We are here, and we are here to stay!

MAYDAY '06 '07

¡GIGANTE! GIANT! DESPIERTA! AWAKE!

para pedir copias del DVD: www.gigantedespierta.org
DVD pre-orders available: (607)-351-5559

www.indybay.org