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VOLUME 3 ISSUE 3



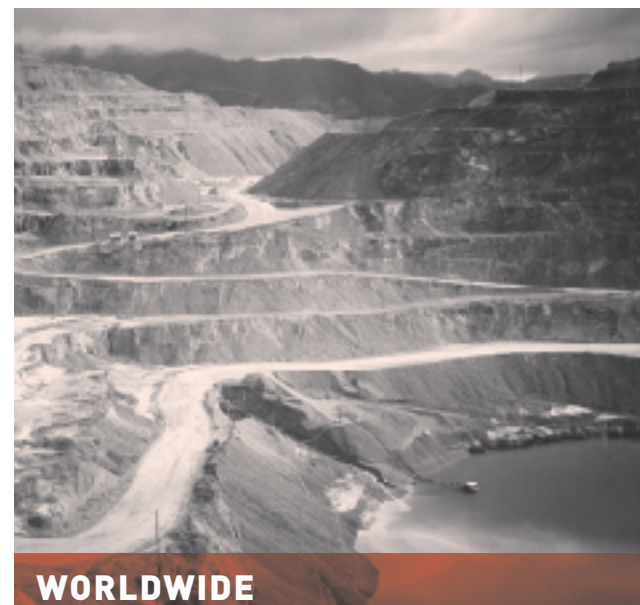
**GUATEMALA**

FROM UPRISING TO RESISTANCE



**GERMANY & SF**

THE G8 & THE POLICE STATE



**WORLDWIDE**

GOLD'S GLOBAL DESTRUCTION

# FAULT LINES

NEWSMAGAZINE OF THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA INDEPENDENT MEDIA CENTER

[indybay.org](http://indybay.org)

free



BAY AREA & BEYOND

# FOOD SHELTER COMMUNICATION

MICRORADIO, HOUSING JUSTICE, & GUERRILLA GARDENS

# 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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## FAULT LINES THANKS

Dave id, Katrina Malachowski, Media Alliance, the Independent (nyc imc), Street Sheet, Station 40, Howard Quinn Press, CorpWatch, Elizabeth Sy and lushorchid, janky hellface, Lorna and AK Press, Alternative Tentacles, Sonoma Valley Publishing, Inkworks, Khalil Bendib, Dan Raccuglia, Santa Cruz IMC. respect.

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.

# HEY FAULT LINES!



Last issue we did a call out for responses to our letter from the editors about the role of radical print. Here are some of the responses. Thanks, and keep 'em coming.

Dear Editors,

I read your editorial in the spring issue recently and felt compelled to write in. I wish to stress that it is imperative that alternative newspapers such as yours remain in print. I myself run a small zine which depends largely on donations. I have been publishing it since 2000. Since then I have never abandoned my readership to go online. I will tell you why. A large percentage of my readers are incarcerated. They regularly have their mail and reading material censored. When they do receive my zine, they can read the writings of other prisoners, political writings, and contribute their own art. Prisoners have no access to the web. Neither do the majority of homeless or otherwise marginalized folks. It is for this reason that I keep my zine accessible. I would implore you to do the same. If I had not found your paper in a local restaurant, I probably would not have gone to the web to find the same information. Instead I read your mag and found a lot of interesting relevant information. Here is something I recently published from a prisoner in Pennsylvania:

"Zines on paper are disappearing, as online publishing is easier and more cost effective... This is a two-pronged problem. First: as the number of available outlets shrink, those still trying to help are faced with the often heartbreaking task of trying to help all who ask, with fewer and fewer resources, when the need is ballooning out of proportion. This leads to burn-out, as well as simple collapse, where the help sources insist on trying to help

everybody, no matter what. The second prong of the problem is that with fewer and fewer places still using paper, the Department of Corrections will have an easier time of controlling, banning and forbidding them. With fewer of these voices, there will also be fewer to join together to fight these bans and restrictions; again making the censorship easier for the DOC's. Add that to the continual refusal to even limited internet access to prisoners, and the censorship picture looks bleak indeed. A new "dark age" of information is coming, we prisoners need to be ready and self-reliant when it comes, and that's our only hope. Vernon Maulsby, Pennsylvania Dept of Corrections."

Thank you for your time and do keep up the good work.

Sincerely,  
Christopher Robin



Making Indymedia: The Fault Lines crew at work

Hi,

Since you asked for feedback I feel compelled to let you know my thoughts. I have been reading your paper on and off as I find it on my forays into SF over the past few years. Since I live in Marin I have found your paper originally very focused on SF issues and yet informative. However, with this issue, it's definitely improved with unique coverage of the squatting movements, CAFTA, and the Sublime Frequencies label. It may be your best issue yet and it would be a shame if you stopped publishing.

However, I appreciate the difficulties you face. When I first began reading *Faultlines* I was struck that Indymedia would venture into "old style" print journalism but I understand why. There are still many

people who appreciate the multiplicity of news sources and still prefer to read their news on paper. I have a broad mix of preferences in this regard although I am increasingly in the minority. Having helped publish two cooperatively-run investigative newspapers in Austin the the '80-'90s myself I know the extent of the effort required to do so and to carry on. I want to congratulate you for carrying on as long as you have.

At the same time, I want to also offer some suggestions as to ways to possibly expand your appeal. *Faultlines* is too clearly a newspaper for activists. The way it looks, reads and feels appeals only to a limited audience. While the jargon has clearly been toned down over the past few issues in favor of well-articulated analyses and well researched journalistic styles, your limited appeal is bound to be causing you problems. The question you may have already asked yourselves is: How do we widen our appeal without compromising our message and objective?

Suggestions:

1. Write with fewer pejorative words. Say what you mean instead of using activist words as a shortcut. For example, instead of "struggle" or "movement" say "the conflict over" or "people concerned about". Non-activists will know what you mean and more likely to find the paper useful and worth reading and supporting.
2. Cover broader issues that may be less overtly political. Your review of MacPhee's book is great but what about all the underground, experiential events and dance shows around town I have heard about and get very little advance info on? When you cover them you will get a new expanded audience of readers and possible advertisers.
3. Cover so-called green and alt businesses such as veggie restaurants, fair trade coffee shops, local fashion, etc. Review their stuff and they will be likely to hang the review in their place, let you distribute there and eventually pay for an ad.
4. Have theme issues with strong local tie-ins. If there's a music festival, invite well-knowns to write about the record contract scams, crackdowns on downloads, etc.

I hope these suggestions are helpful. I look forward to seeing the next issue.

In jubilee,  
Robert Ovetz, PhD

JOIN THE ACTION

HELP WANTED  
DESIGNERS  
WRITERS  
EDITORS  
ARTISTS  
PHOTOGRAPHERS  
CO-CONSPIRATORS

CONTACT US AT  
INFO@FAULT-LINES.ORG

# Stamping Out Independent Media

## Media giant pushes for undemocratic postal rate hikes

In an unprecedented move, the agency that oversees postal rates in the United States has approved a plan that would drive many independent print publications out of business. Earlier this year, the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) rejected a postal rate increase plan offered by the US Postal Service. Instead they opted to implement a modified version of an extraordinarily complicated plan submitted by media giant Time Warner.

Although there was a formal review and comment process, the matter was so complicated and unreported that the general public played no role whatsoever, and publications that could not afford significant lobbying and lawyer fees faced high barriers to effective par-

ticipation.

We all lose if the media system loses numerous small publications due to massive postal rate hikes and if it becomes cost-prohibitive for new magazines to be launched in the future. This is not an issue that should be determined exclusively by the owners of magazines, with the biggest owners having the loudest voice.

Although this year's rate increase was somewhat inevitable, as the postal service struggles to meet its costs, the Time Warner plan will mean higher costs for small publishers and discounts for big publishers.

The Time Warner plan represents another step (albeit a giant step) in the

gradual reversal of the Founder Fathers' public service principles of supporting democracy through the postal service. It is the latest, largest move towards abandoning these public service priorities and permitting a system that no longer favors low-advertising, political speech—like *In These Times* and *Left Turn*—over ad-heavy magazines like *People* and *Cosmo*. The practical result of this move is not only the decline of a democratic mission, but a rate shock for small and medium-size magazines even as big publishers are getting a break.

*Demand a formal and open accounting of why more than 200 years of pro-democracy postal policy was abandoned.*

More info: [www.freepress.net](http://www.freepress.net)



**“Here's your government-subsidized corporate media!”**



Photo by Granny Ruth

## ACLU Sues Jeppesen for being CIA's Travel Agent

tries known to employ harsh interrogation techniques and often torture. In conjunction with the ACLU press conference, The Raging Grannies Action League, South Bay Mobilization and Amnesty International held protests against the extraordinary rendition services provided by Jeppesen in front of the company's offices in San Jose.

Although President Bush admitted last year that the US has maintained a global network of secret prisons since 9/11, he has refused to divulge details, because “Doing so would provide our enemies with information they could use to take retribution against our allies and harm our country.”

*Fault Lines* asked A.C. Thompson, co-author of “Torture Taxi: On the Trail of the CIA's Rendition Flights” a few questions about the lawsuit:

*FL:* How solid is the basis for this

lawsuit?

*AT:* There's a lot of evidence and more coming out. Jeppesen does flight planning and travel arrangements for all kinds of companies and also what looks to be an array of CIA front companies. The link first came out when the Spanish authorities were looking at rendition flights going through their country. It looks like Jeppesen actually booked the hotels and ancillary travel arrangements for some of these rendition operations. I spoke to a source at the company, and he said it was brought up at and discussed directly at company meetings. When answering questions from the media, Jeppesen says they can't talk about their clients because of confidentiality rules.

*FL:* What have you heard about the lawsuit's chances for success? What is the vibe from the legal community?

*AT:* The lawsuit will be successful no

matter what, because its drawing attention to the rendition program and making accountable those involved. A major ACLU legal victory is doubtful, but the PR value is huge. It's already a victory for human rights by shedding light on the US involvement in a torture operation.

*FL:* What are the implications for this lawsuit? Is this the beginning of a trend?

*AT:* The trend started several months back when a citizen in Oregon complained to the state bar about a lawyer who set up a phony front company called Bayard Foreign Marketing. Assisting the rendition program and doing the CIA's dirty work is a breach of legal ethics, according to the complaint. You'll definitely see more of these cases against accomplices of torture.

## EAST PALO ALTO YOUTH SMACK DOWN POLLUTER

### DTSC issues enforcement order against Romic Environmental Technologies

On May 30, members of Youth United for Community Action (YUCA), celebrated a California state order that will shut down large portions of a major hazardous waste handler located in East Palo Alto, ironically named Romic Environmental Technologies.

For 43 years, Romic Environmental Technologies has operated a hazardous waste recycling facility in East Palo Alto. Since 1991, community residents have waged a campaign to shut it down. This year, the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC)



Annie Loya began organizing against Romic ten years ago, when she was 13. (Pic: R. Robertson)

finally began to listen to the East Palo Alto community. On May 31, the DTSC announced it had issued an enforcement order to Romic, charging it with such state violations such as unsafe operations (that resulted in a June 2006 toxic release) and reckless disregard (for the risk of serious injury to an employee in March 2006). The order prohibits Romic from handling, treating and storing hazardous bulk liquid waste in containers greater than 85 gallons.

More info: [www.youthunited.net](http://www.youthunited.net)



## Starbucks Pays for Anti-Union Tactics

### Victory for fired barista, organizers

Starbucks has agreed to reinstate Chicago barista Gloria Sykes and pay her a confidential amount to settle charges filed with the National Labor Relations Board earlier this year. Starbucks fired Sykes after she told her store manager that employees would reach out to the IWW Starbucks Workers Union (SWU) if management did not address age discrimination and work schedule issues. The Starbucks manager responded in clear violation of federal law that any talk of the Union was prohibited and would result in termination. Ms. Sykes, 55, was undeterred and subsequently did join the SWU [StarbucksUnion.org].

Starbucks, with its battered share

price, still faces significant legal scrutiny. On July 9, the coffee giant is set to go on trial for extensive anti-union violations in New York City.

Joe Tessone, an SWU member and barista at a Chicago Starbucks said, “Given the overwhelming evidence of its illegal anti-union campaign, Starbucks should stop insulting the American people by claiming it respects the right to organize.”

Starbucks workers can earn a starting wage as low as \$6 or \$7 an hour and are prohibited from obtaining full-time status. While the company boasts of its health care offering, Starbucks actually insures a lower percentage of its workforce than Wal-Mart, a company notorious for its unaffordable health care package.

More info: [www.iww.org](http://www.iww.org)

FILIPINO NEWSPAPERS  
DENOUNCE POLITICAL  
KILLINGS, SUPPORT  
POLITICAL PRISONERS

The Philippines News Today, a local newspaper in the cities of San Francisco, Seattle, and Vancouver, Canada will release a full page ad of American and Filipino progressive organizations and individuals calling for, among other things, an end to political killings in the Philippines and the immediate release of detained Congressman and labor leader Crispin Beltran and all political prisoners.

The Supreme Court of the Philippines recently dismissed a trumped up case against six Congress leaders including Beltran.

Another local newspaper, Diaryo Pilipino, based in Southern California issued the same statement a month ago. Both newspapers have a combined circulation of 60,000 that targets to reach the majority of Filipinos living on the west coast of North America.

[manila.indymedia.org](http://manila.indymedia.org)

TWO ANARCHISTS AND  
A FRIEND IN PRE-TRIAL  
DETENTION

On Tuesday, June 5, two anarchists and a friend of theirs (all 20-22 years old) were arrested after trying to attack a car of the municipal police in the neighborhood of Paleo Faliro in Athens, Greece. During their arrest, all three were severely beaten by the police to the point of collapse.

After being beaten further and tortured (psychologically and physically) at the Police Headquarters in Athens, the Attorney General ordered the pre-trial detention of all three (up to 18 months imprisonment before the actual trial).

[athens.indymedia.org](http://athens.indymedia.org)

SHRAMORE FIVE  
LOCK OUT SHELL

On the morning of June 5, a team of five protesters and their support crew successfully halted Shell's operation in Erris, Ireland for five hours through the use of "lock-on" arm tubes.

The blockade ended with the five being cut loose from each other by the fire brigade and arrested while a crowd

# Microradio Blues

SF LIBERATION RADIO'S COURT DEFEAT EXEMPLIFIES  
federal/corporate control of airwaves

By RUBBLE

On February 15, 2007, three years after its demise, San Francisco Liberation Radio's (SFLR) case against the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) finally reached the Ninth Circuit Court. This was the station's third appearance in court, and it unfortunately reached the same conclusion as the previous two: a decision overwhelmingly in favor of the FCC. A victory would have done nothing in regard to the station's ability to broadcast, but would have made it more difficult for the FCC to raid and shut down unlicensed microradio stations.

With so few options for the public to make its voice heard through the media, many see unlicensed broadcasting as an act of civil disobedience. A look at the FCC's role in radio raises many questions and contradictions.

SFLR lawyer Mark Vermeulen argued that the station had operated responsibly as a community-based radio resource, interfering with no other broadcasters. He also asserted that the public has a right to the diversity in content and that SFLR's legitimate efforts to apply for a license were twice rebuffed.

Although Circuit Judge Clifton interrupted the defense to ask why a station openly "breaking the law" has any right to be in court, Senior Circuit Judge Betty Fletcher feigned sympathy for the station's plight. Fletcher noted, "Congress made it difficult for people who were the pioneers" by inserting a provision in the Low Power FM (LPFM) law banning access to licensing to any station that has ever engaged in unlicensed broadcasting. He also suggested station operators "ought to be lobbying Congress to change the statute." Good advice or bureaucratic shuffle?

The crackdown on microbroadcasting raises many questions: Where is the due process when the FCC hands down an ultimatum to either cease broadcasting or pay tens of thousands of dollars in fines? Who oversees the FCC? Should the FCC be allowed to operate like an FBI?

Unlicensed broadcasters have reported agents questioning neighbors, staking out stations, watching and copying license plate numbers, transcribing shows word-for-word, infiltrating meetings and public events, pressuring

landlords to evict, and sending notices threatening broadcasters and landlords with major fines before heavily-armed raids.

A look at the present state of radio—basically a public-private political oligopoly—finds the FCC presiding over a mass of contradictions. In 2000, the FCC voted to issue FM licenses to Low Power stations after being unable to eliminate them. While hailed as a victory for the movement, the celebration was brief. An outraged National Association of Broadcasters (NAB)—an aggressive industry lobby arm—quickly got Congress to pass a "three band space" rule requiring several dial spaces

ing stations peaked in 1995 and has declined dramatically since, as have jobs in radio. Between 1995 and 2005, holdings of the ten largest companies increased by over 15 times! Local ownership declined from 97 percent to 70 percent, with most of the new licenses going to the big ten, including "repeater" stations, a transmitter that repeats the signal of another radio station; most are used to fill out or extend the broadcasting of an existing radio station.

In addition to the problematic situation of a few conglomerates controlling the bulk of information on the airwaves, music fans are also losing out. The original 2002 study highlighted a "twin bottleneck" in which the ten radio companies interact with the five largest record companies for 80 to 100 percent of songs played, with local artists completely shut out. The dial has become a nationalized corporate jukebox with virtually no news, repetitive Top 40 music, and more commercials and computerized announcer voices. The "non-commercial" FM spectrum space is dominated by NPR, funded and tightly content-controlled through grants from the federal government's Corporation for Public Broadcasting. NPR continues to build an empire, buying up college and other independent stations that can cash in for millions of dollars for the band space.

What about the FCC's last attempt at deregulation? The entire campaign was based on the premise that more consolidation brings more local programming. It has since come to light that the FCC's own study, suppressed and ignored, shows just the opposite. Millions of people contacted the FCC with over 98 percent opposed to the deregulation that was passed and later overturned in court. Payola continues as a standard industry practice, reportedly far beyond the scope uncovered by a recent New York State Attorney General's investigation. Radio listenership has declined 22 percent from its peak in 1989. Is this the

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**The crackdown on micro-broadcasting raises many questions: Where is the due process when the FCC hands down an ultimatum to either cease broadcasting or pay tens of thousands of dollars in fines? Who oversees the FCC? Should the FCC be allowed to operate like an FBI?**

left empty between each FM station to avoid interference. Based on phony science, it was overturned after a required study showed no interference. This rule eliminated about 75 percent of the potential LPFM dial spaces and the "bad pirate" rule eliminated all existing unlicensed broadcasters forever.

In late 2006, the Future of Music Coalition updated a study first commissioned in 2002 supporting the need to fight further media consolidation. Before the Clinton Administration's 1996 deregulation bill, a radio station could own a maximum of 24 stations nationwide. Clear Channel Communications owned over 1200 stations by 2002 as a result of the legislation. The study indicates the number of companies own-

# CLEAN BURN

By CHRIS AVILLA

## SF CITY COLLEGE ADMINISTRATORS DECEIVE STUDENTS IN PURSUIT OF A \$200G BIODIESEL GRANT FROM THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

On April 19, City College of San Francisco celebrated Earth Day by showcasing alternative fuel and electrically powered vehicles on the school's Ram Plaza. Among the line-up of vehicles was a biodiesel hot rod that some fellow CCSF students and I built in the school's Automotive Department. The hotrod is a 1974 El Camino Super Sport that was originally gas powered with a 350 Chevy engine. We pulled the engine and replaced it with 6.2 liter GMC diesel engine and filled the tank with biodiesel.



The biodiesel hot rod project was initiated in the fall of 2005 by a few of us from the CCSF Anarchist Library—a group that has maintained a lending library in the school's Student Union for the last five years. The group's motivation for the project was to expose ourselves and other working class students to a fuel that can be made cheap or for free with the use of the proper filtration unit, as well as to see how fast we could get a car going on the fuel. Another one

of our goals was to activate our biodiesel filling station at City College and learn how to provide an accessible and affordable fuel source, which we would use to power a collectively-run moving service fleet. This would allow us the ability to provide a living wage for struggling students as well as hooking up a working class community with super cheap fuel. Converting hot rods in particular is important to the club members, who see fit to give the current image of eco-friendly driving some appeal outside the realm of upper-middle class liberal environmentalists.

**In the end the grant money was put in the pockets of the administrators. Anarchist club members were not surprised by this swindle.**

After much hard work, we had successfully produced a mean machine that runs on free fuel, is better for the environment, and better for human health.

Three days after the auto show, MTV aired their Pimp My Green Ride episode, in which they took a beater '65 Chevy Impala and did a similar engine swap to the one we did. Even the Governor himself appeared to give a thumbs-up for biodiesel. Then they took the Impala to the racetrack where

they raced a Lamborghini at the quarter mile, leaving the flashy Italian racecar in the dust. Needless to say, pimped out alt-fuel automobiles, like all things "green," are ripe for the mainstream.

Despite all of this popularity, our Biodiesel Club has been met with serious resistance from the Evans' campus administration. Vice-Chancellor Phyllis McGuire, the Dean of the Evans Campus, has refused to allow the club access to funding for our project and denied us a permanent space to keep the El Camino, prioritizing the project of the Motorsports Club instead. It is a front club started by staff member Ron Young, who posed as a student by

signing up for one class so he could start a club and work his way into Student Government. Over time, Young somehow got his paws on \$19,000 of student activity money to buy a Kit Cobra race car. With full support from Dean McGuire and limited student involvement, Young managed to finally get the car running five years later, only to total it on Evans Campus. After teachers told him not to drive it, he invited our school counselor Dennis to sit passenger as he

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CCSF ADMINISTRATORS ACCEPT HUGE CHECK FROM THE EPA

# INDYMEDIA NEWSWIRE

of around thirty people cheered them on. Shramore is the final stop on the peat haulage route from the site of the proposed gas refinery at Bellanaboy.

[ireland.indymedia.org](http://ireland.indymedia.org)

## THOUSANDS STRIP OFF FOR LONDON'S NAKED BIKE RIDE

In 2004 there were 58 riders, in 2005 a creditable 250 riders, rising to a massive 800 in 2006. But in a scale that surprised even the organizers, more than five thousand naked people took to London's streets on June 9 to protest against oil dependency, celebrate body freedom, and curb car culture.

[uk.indymedia.org](http://uk.indymedia.org)

## PROTESTERS BLOCK HOUSTON I.C.E. PROCESSING CENTER

At dawn on the morning of June 4, immigrant rights activists locked themselves to the entrance gates of the Houston Processing Center, a private immigration detention facility in North Houston.

[houston.indymedia.org](http://houston.indymedia.org)

## FIGHT FOR NATIVE RIGHTS AND SACRED SITES CONTINUES

On Wednesday, May 30 the United States Department of Justice, on behalf of the Forest Service, filed for a rehearing and appeal in the case to protect the San Francisco Peaks in Northern Arizona. The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals previously ruled in favor of Native American tribes and environmental groups on the grounds that a proposed ski area development and expansion would violate the Religious Freedom Restoration Act and the National Environmental Policy Act.

On June 4, 2007 a protest was held outside the Coconino National Forest Service office to show outrage at the government's decision to continue to pursue the desecration of the San Francisco Peaks. Activists vow to continue to fight for the defense of native rights and sacred sites. [www.savethepeaks.org](http://www.savethepeaks.org)

[arizona.indymedia.org](http://arizona.indymedia.org)

# BIOJUSTICE DIARY

By SEAN McMAHON

organized in opposition  
TO THE BIOTECHNOLOGY'S  
annual meeting in BOSTON  
BIO-ACTIVISTS REFUSED TO  
STAND DOWN.



CAUTION  
BIOHAZARD



Photo: Sophie Yon-Gharbi

## Chinatown - 5.03.07

Up a dusty flight of stairs in the heart of Boston's Chinatown lies the arterial lining of the Boston anti-biotech movement. Banners for the US Social Forum line the walls, stacks of the Biojustice 2007 underground newspaper sit prepared for distribution, and various flyers await eager hands. Amidst these tools of resistance, there is a murmur of activity as a motley crew of committed individuals plot and laugh heartily. These are not your typical anti-authoritarians.

Although over the course of the next six days they will be met by armed oppressors, today the afternoon sun shines through the 5th floor windows into a space ripe with expectation. This is the BioJustice Convergence Center.

BioJustice 2007 is a direct challenge to the annual B.I.O. (Biotechnology Industry Organization) International Convention. BioJustice participants celebrate sustainable food and healthcare alternatives, and resist the tools of corporate domination: genetically engineered foods, drug monopolies, and biological weapons.

## Downtown - 5.04.07

Across town at the Boston Convention and Exhibition Center, corporate scientists conspire to engineer Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), produce medical drugs using means other than direct extraction from native biological sources (biopharmaceuticals), and build 'biodefense' weapons, pushing what Brian Tokar of the Institute for Social Ecology calls a "corporate agenda of control over our food and health." This is not a new development. Since the 1980s, food and drug corpora-

tions have experimented with genetic engineering, the process of transferring genetic material between living organisms. In 1982, Genentech developed recombinant human insulin (rHI), the first biopharm product. In 1987, the first Genetically Modified (GM) crop of 2000 testers was planted outdoors in Brentwood, California and subsequently destroyed the next night by Earth First'ers. In 1990, the first transgenic pig produced human milk proteins via implanted DNA. Corporate domination abounds in the world of biotechnology.

Further, the profit-driven attempt to use biological agents as weapons is key to the BioJustice movement. Central to the current struggle in Boston is the fight against the "Biosafety Level 4" laboratory being constructed in the South End by Boston University. Twenty-five thousand people live within one mile of this highly volatile location, where research would be conducted on the most deadly pathogens in the world. Carmen Nazario of SafetyNet, a Roxbury neighborhood action group, understands that the powers that be want to study these pathogens in case of emergency. Today at the BioJustice Press Conference she objects, clearly stating "a case of emergency will be that they are causing one."

## Blackstone Park - 5.06.07

Upon arriving at Blackstone Park, located in Boston's South End, I find a core group of activists gathered around and inside the park's fountain, dramatically reworking the "myths" of corporate biotechnological dominance through puppetry and theater. Food Not Bombs is serving food and coffee, a DJ emits blasts of funk and soul, and the ever present Boston Police force circles nearby.

Though internet chatter will later criticize the BioJustice event as a "bio-bust," I find a wonderful harmony present in the park. The relatively small gathering of neighbors and community members is peaceful, positive, and inclusive. As a young white male, I find that a humble and respectful approach is best suited to productivity. Instead of attempting to take over a neighborhood and temporarily reclaim the streets, these activists networked with the local community and the international BioJustice struggle, and recognized the importance of permanently restoring community power.

## The Common - 5.08.07

Boston Common is just that: a common space for community to come together. Originally owned by William Blaxton (often pronounced "Blackstone," as in Blackstone Park), the Common was sold to the city and over the years has evolved from a lynching ground to battlefield to concert space to platform for such notables as Martin Luther King, Jr. and Pope John Paul II. Today, the Common is transformed from a static space to a neoliberal market in reverse, an antidote to the mediocre and insincere. By offering mutual exchange and providing an outlet of sorts for self-sufficiency, the Really Really Free Market acts as a medium of creativity and a substitute for the mundane.

On the surface, sun shining and cool breeze greeting us as we exit the Park subway stop, the Common appears to be any ordinary city park. Young people gather and play games, small groups chatter idly, and couples stroll complacent along concrete paths. Yet there is an atmosphere of expectation, of something waiting to happen.

As the cops patrol atop supersized

horses and V8 engines, we read poetry aloud under a shade tree, collapse, and gather ourselves again. The Market really was free here, and the community was one.

It was only later that we learned that innocent people had been detained for exiting the park in a group. So what happened? Why was the RRFM such a small, isolated event? The Market happened later than we expected, on a different day, so only those who were "in" on the currents were able to be there. Those from out of town or who were not part of the organizing collective would be ill-informed as to specifics, and only those who took the time and energy to see what this group of free-marketeers was all about would be able to experience just how community-based, self-sufficient exchange really works.

In my experience, I found that only those who unsettled their comfort zone, asked questions, and acknowledged one another as fellow human beings were able to fully participate in this idea so radical that its physical presence had to be violated by agents of the state.

## 5.09.07

As an "outsider" to the Boston anti-biotech movement, I was surprised and relieved to find a strong die-hard presence of committed folks. Although from the margins Boston seemed to be inundated with cops and appeared to have little to no strong mass movement, there were a number of instances in which I found comrades in arms in the struggle against corporate biotechnological dominance.

## MISADVENTURES IN BIOTECH: TRANSGENIC PIGS TO FISH TOMATOES!

[OR: A BRIEFING ON HOW BIOTECHNOLOGY HAS FUCKED UP THE EARTH SO FAR]

**1990:** Transgenic pigs produces human milk proteins for infant formula

**1991:** DNA Plant Technology develops tomato crossed with Arctic flounder gene

**1994:** FlavrSavr tomato created, first genetically modified food sold in stores

**1997:** Biotech crops grown commercially on nearly 5 million acres worldwide

**1998:** Hemoglobin producing pigs patented

**1999:** Science journal *Nature* study suggests toxins in Bt corn pollen harmful to monarch butterfly larvae, confirmed in 2001

**2000:** Monsanto begins patenting GM seeds

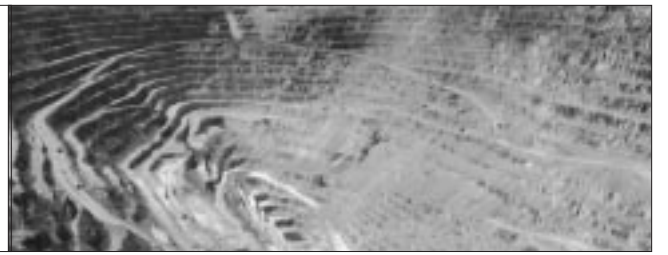
**2002:** Biotech crops grown on 145 million acres in 16 countries

**2003:** Worldwide biotech crop acreage hits 167.2 million acres in 18 countries

**2006:** American GM rice exports confirmed to be contaminated, and returned

*From the BioJustice 2007 Newspaper, published by The Boston Underground.*

# NO LOVE FOR GOLDDIGGERS



By SAKURA SAUNDERS

From the uselessness of the final product to the dramatic environmental and social impacts of its excavation, modern-day gold mining serves as an absurd illustration of the dangers and complexity of our global economy.

Hovering at around \$630 an ounce, the price of gold is based both on its demand from the world market (80 percent of which is used for jewelry) and its supply. The supply is both naturally and artificially limited; naturally limited by the 79 tons of waste that is extracted for every ounce of gold, and artificially limited by the amount of gold that is kept in storage vaults by investors and nations who back their economies by holding gold reserves. It is estimated that enough gold is stored in these reserves to meet the current gold demand for 20 years.

The only thing more astonishing than the 79 ton per ounce ratio is the fact that this waste is largely toxic. A portion of this waste is drenched with cyanide to extract the microscopic flecks of gold from the ore. The toxic waste, or tailings, then sits in tailing ponds to await its reuse. There have been over 30 recorded spills of this toxic substance (in either its transport or storage) in the last five years, resulting in massive fish kills and drinking water contamination. In some countries, they dump this cyanide-laced waste directly into the rivers and oceans.

And the untreated ground up ore? Well, this is likely toxic as well. Wherever you find gold, you also typically find sulfides, such as pyrite (also known

as fool's gold), and heavy metals. These ground up sulfides need only to mix with air and water to create sulfuric acid, which creates acid mine drainage. Not only is this acid water destructive to local plant life and water systems, but this acid also leaches out heavy metals – such as mercury, cadmium, and arsenic, which in turn pollute the air and the water. It has been estimated that metals mining accounts for 96 percent of the world's arsenic emissions.

Mining companies often claim that only a few environmentalists oppose mining operations at the expense of the economic development of the communities they purport to represent. Meanwhile, the companies themselves promise to bring jobs, build schools and hospitals, and encourage investment that will ultimately outweigh the damage to the environment.

The reality of mining, however, conflicts with this false dichotomy. Mining often relies heavily on government subsidies for water and energy, the royalties that mining companies pay are often significantly less than other industries, and the average life of a gold mine is a mere 14 years. Additionally, countries rich in gold reserves suffer from the “resource curse” that ails most other extraction industries.

The “resource curse” is a term coined to describe how resource rich countries have statistically lower economic growth rates than resource deprived ones. It turns out that countries with great material wealth also have a high propensity for high level government corruption (hence the “investment incentives” and light taxation). These large scale opera-

tions often negotiate the displacement of peoples and destruction of livelihoods directly with the national governments, despite resistance from local governments, such as is the case in the Philippines, Peru, Indonesia, and Tanzania. Hence, you get situations like in Peru, where a provincial mayor was pegged with rubber bullets at an anti-mining demonstration, or in Indonesia and Papua New Guinea where mine security has played a role in suppressing independence movements. In Tanzania, Village Chairmen served 30 month prison sentences for allegedly “inciting villagers to reoccupy their farmlands and mine pits,” after a Canadian corporation took over an area that was at the time being mined and farmed by some 30,000 to 250,000 people.

The infringement of local autonomy is most pronounced when looking at the numbers. According to estimates by Oxfam, 50 percent of newly mined gold will be from native lands. For many indigenous people, who often rely on their environment for food and necessities, mining threatens not only their livelihood, but also their traditional way of life. Their lands tend to be vulnerable to encroachment because of their lack of power within their country's political system; their land and water rights are often ignored while their resources are exploited and their environments destroyed.

This global exploitation is backed by both private security and military might. Many of the same mercenaries who are now finding work in Iraq got their start guarding mines and oil fields. These private militaries operate with impu-

nity in dealing with local conflicts that often end in injuries and even deaths. In some countries, mining corporations will make direct payment to the police or the country's military to guard their gold mine, leading to conflicts of interest when those same police repress protestors at anti-mining demonstrations, as has happened in the Ancash region of Peru.

In spite of the threat of repression, people are wising up to the toxic legacy of gold mining and these global operations are increasingly met with resistance. All throughout Latin America, communities with experience in mining are traveling to those considering it, sharing their stories of environmental devastation, economic depression, and struggle so that others can avoid a similar path. Meanwhile, more attention is being focused from within the countries of the mining corporations, such as Canada, the US, the UK and South Africa, to bring attention to the human rights abuses for which they are responsible. Through the strength of the local organizing, coupled with the support of international solidarity campaigns, some communities have succeeded in chasing away the threat of open-pit mining. However, many more communities continue to feel the pressure of global capital encroaching on their lands, alongside the promises of economic development, the rhetoric of “environmental stewardship,” and, that failing, force and intimidation.

*Sakura Saunders is the North American editor of [www.protestbarrick.net](http://www.protestbarrick.net).*

Less than one third of Indonesia's military budget comes from the national government. The rest of the money is raised independently from the military itself, through means such as prostitution, human trafficking, and of course... providing security for the extraction industry. It is estimated that in 2002 alone, New Orleans-based



Freeport McMoran paid \$5 million directly to the Indonesian military for securing their West Papuan mine, where they have been operating since 1967. Since before that time, there has been an indigenous struggle or independence for Indonesia, and Amnesty International has estimated that 100,000 Papuans have died as a result of government-sponsored violence against West Papuans.

When Barrick Gold SUVs began to ply the dusty roads of La Rioja, a group of four women met in the town of Famatina in March 2006 and formed the “Self-Organized (Autoconvocados) Neighbors of Famatina for Life.” Soon a series of smaller, inclusive groups sprang up in towns and villages around Mt. Famatina to educate their neighbors on the



dangers of gold mining – gathering enough political clout that the local government introduced an anti-open pit mining referendum and brought the pro-mining governor to trial for corruption. Mistrustful of the political process to save the community from the threat of mining, the autoconvocados decided to blockade the mining road at Peñas Negras, some 9,300 feet up Famatina, forcing Barrick to suspend activities on March 14, 2007.



# INDIGENOUS RESURGENCE

## in Abya Yala

“The only good Indian is a bad one.”

*A report-back from the Continental Summit of Indigenous Nations and Pueblos, by Ramor Ryan. Photos by Marc Becker.*

As the historic march flooded into the old colonial central plaza, there was a moment of great jubilation. From the side streets flowed legions of people from the feeder marchers, swelling the ranks of the main body. As the rivers of indigenous marchers merged, a tremendous roar filled the air as hundreds of smiling faces greeted each other like long lost brothers and sisters re-uniting—which of course in many respects, they were.

Guatemala City had never seen anything like it: thousands of Indigenous people from almost every country of the Americas coming together, celebrating their culture, and organizing resistance. This is the grand finale march on Guatemala City to top off the successful weeklong summit at nearby Iximché. The grey, suffocating streets are filled for once not with smog and gridlock, but with a blaze of color from the forest of rainbow colored flags and banners, and the sound of drums and pipes and maracas and the multitude of voices each with their own distinct language uniting to chant and sing together. Like the march of an army of the dispossessed—the invisibles—reclaiming the city of fear where once, not so long ago, they were hunted down, disappeared, and murdered with impunity by the state security forces.

“After more than 500 years of oppression and domination,” proclaimed the Bolivian speaker from the stage before

the cheering crowd, “they have not been able to eliminate us. Here we are alive and united with nature. Today we recuperate together our sovereignty...Our task is to begin to govern ourselves.”

### THE INTRIGUING ANNALS OF IXIMCHÉ

This Third Continental Summit of Indigenous Peoples and Nationalities of Abya Yala (referring to the North and South American continents in the Kuna language) is being convened amidst the ebullient upsurge in the fortunes of indigenous peoples across the Americas. The flagship on the rising tide is Evo Morales presidential victory in Bolivia. He is not the first indigenous president elect in Latin America, but he is the first indigenous and staunchly left representative in office—as much part of the indigenous revival as the Latin American left turn captained by Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez. And this is the starting point of this summit—indigenous, left, and premised on the theme “from resistance to power.”

“The indigenous people have decided to recuperate our identity, citizenship, natural resources, and culture,” explained one representative from Ecuador, “and now we are setting our sights on taking political power.”

This latest indigenous’ summit (the first was held in Mexico 2000, followed by Ecuador, 2004) is being convened in

a suitably prestigious location. The sacred Mayan site of Iximché, 60 miles outside of Guatemala City is a place with a both lauded and turbulent past. The great city was once the capital seat of the Kaqchikel people. Typical of the rambunctious nature of indigenous history in general, Iximché—founded in 1470—has a complicated past. The Kaqchikel first collaborated with the invading Spanish conquistadores led by Pedro De Alvarado in 1524, against their old rivals, the neighboring K’iche states. Such a duplicitous collaboration soon came undone as they learned the true nature of the avaricious Spaniards. The Kaqchikel rebelled, overrunning the Spanish garrison in 1527. The Spaniards in turn came back in greater numbers and with new local allies, eventually vanquishing the Katchikel.

This week Iximché is transformed from a museum of the past and a case study for academics to being a vibrant theater for political discourse and cultural dynamism. Foremost on the minds of the organizers is to cleanse the space of the bad vibes left by President Bush, who visited here two weeks earlier while on his monumentally doomed Latin American tour, despite widespread protest. In an elaborate cleansing ceremony—signifying ignominy for the US President—the Mayan priests purify the space to replace “the politics of war with a politics of life, dignity, equality, transparency, inclusive democracy, and

indigenous people’s unity founded on a sustainable co-existence with Mother Nature.”

In the shadow of the old ruins, huge tents have been set up and a flurry of activities is going on as workshops and plenums take place in multiple locations. It is an autonomous space, controlled for the duration of the summit by the people themselves, without the presence of cops or authorities from the state.

Among the hordes of colorfully dressed delegates, the most prominent are the enthusiastic 70-strong Bolivian delegation, wearing distinctively beautiful textiles and the women in their signature bowler hats. The press is all over them, snapping away photos, knowing that this exotic indigenous eye-candy sells.

But as Ecuadorian Blanca Chancosa points out in her opening address—“We are not just for folklore or adornment, we want to be authors and constructors (of our own destiny).”

So each day, after the pre-dawn spiritual ceremony, such cosmological immaterialism is overshadowed by hardcore anti-neoliberal political discourse. The themes highlighted by the summit and its numerous workshops and panels include: land and territory, the depletion of natural resources, the environment, climate change, autonomy, migration, and privatization. Concrete campaigns and struggle against neo-liberalism,





militarization, the US war and the US border wall were consolidated, as well as specific campaigns such as promoting economic alternatives, legalization of coca leaves and opening up Bolivia's access to the sea.

Bolivia's foreign relations minister David Choquehuanca sets the tone of the discussions, quoting a Chotewanka by saying, "Our minds are colonized, but not our hearts. It is time to listen to our hearts, because this is what builds resistance." Indigenous people, he said, should look how to "live well," to seek a "culture of life" rather than the one-dimensional development.

"Our world is not for sale," continued Blanca Chancosa. "Bush is not welcome here. We want instead people who support life. Yes to life! Imperialism and capitalism have left us with a historical debt and they owe us for this debt."

Bush is not welcome, but the US contingents are warmly received. Making the link between struggles north and south—across the despised Rio Brava wall—a representative from the Western Shoshone people said, "The indigenous here are facing the same kind of issues we are facing in the North, and face the same threat by the multi-national corporations such as mining and environmental contamination. These affect the traditional foundation of our nations which is the land, the air, the water, and spirituality."

Linking the environmental and the political is a constant underlying theme here in this construction of a "culture of life." Capitalist neo-liberalism is fueling environmental destruction, as Miguel Palacin from Peruvian peasant organization CONACAMI emphasizes: "They are trying to create economic blocs to impose treaties based on the exploitation of nature. But now we are becoming visible, because they are messing with Mother Earth, and we are organizing in order to respond."

From the panels discussing Territory, Natural Resources, and the Indigenous People, Magali Rey Rosa, of the Guatemalan Madre Tierra organization has the final word: "Mother Earth is not

bearing up any more with the kind of use that the dominant civilization is imposing on its ecosystem. Development is smothering life. If we continue with this boss," she said wittily, "our Earth will not survive."

## THE ZAPATISTA NO-SHOW

The set up of the indigenous summit is modeled on the World Social Forum, both in method and style. There is the usual elaborate registration process, accompanied by the ubiquitous paraphernalia—t-shirts, shoulder bags, glossy brochures, and posters. Oxfam and other NGOs are footing the bill. Considering that the political formation of many groups and organizations is old-school Left, the methodology of the summit is centralized and hierarchical.

There is little of the new methodology of the more anti-authoritarian elements of the movement—no horizontalidad or Zapatista-style assemblies. Indeed the absence of a Zapatista delegation is telling, being so close to Chiapas. Chavez and Fidel are the non-indigenous inspirations here, not Marcos or Flores Magon. Said one Guatemalan delegate hailing from a group linked to the ex-guerrilla URNG, "We think the Zapatistas have ceased to have any significance."

So the dominant political overture is about constituting a new democratic Left. The new Continental-wide radical indigenous resurgence is marked by a division between the Zapatista model—anti-Capitalist, anti-electoral, and focused on building grassroots autonomy—and the Bolivian model—anti-neo-liberal, constitutional, and seeking power by uniting social movements in a common electoral platform. While many people in the attending the summit would probably position them in varying degrees between the two poles, the final documents and declarations clearly assume the latter line.

And going down the constitutional road in an effort to take political power necessitates a strong central leadership. As Bladimir Painecura, Mapuche, points out, "The maturity of the leaders

participating today and the solidity they bring to the discussions [is the strong-point of this movement]. As a result of this maturity, the movements have been consolidated and bring social transformation to the nation-state, as witnessed in Bolivia. Indigenous peoples have advanced and have continued resisting, so much so that they have arrived at power, and are administering well."

## TECPAN : BUILDING A CULTURE OF LIFE FROM THE RUINS OF WAR

In a vast old rustic town hall, thousands of delegates join with the local townspeople to celebrate the finale. Although Tecpan is a racially evenly mixed town, it's noticeable that very few of the mestizo population have come out to celebrate with the indigenous. The wounds of Guatemala's 30-year long brutal civil war linger in rural towns like these despite the peace accords signed over ten years ago. The rebels were supported predominantly by the indigenous poor and the state by the Mestizo middle class. Tecpan was witness to guerrilla combat, army massacres, disappearances, and all the horrors of counter-insurgency repression.

Like all encuentros of this kind, much of the important work is done beyond the official panels and workshops. At social events like this, personal and political networking takes precedent. And the unofficial stories emerge. For example, why did Nobel Peace Prize winner and prominent indigenous rights spokeswoman Rigoberta Menchu not appear at the summit? She is currently running as a presidential candidate in the upcoming Guatemalan election. Although she has little chance of winning, one would expect support from this very summit considering she is indigenous, of the Left, and running for political power.

"She is a thought to be a pawn of the Right Wing and the ruling class," a community leader from the Coban region tells me. "She doesn't represent the indigenous; she is interested in power

and has cut a deal with the Mestizos and the rich. They tolerate her so as to show the world that Guatemala has changed and has stopped oppressing the indigenous. But it's a lie..."

The time for speeches and presentations has arrived. I discover to my horror that they are awarding all the different delegations with plaques to commemorate their participation in the event. When the moment arrives to call the Irish delegates to receive theirs, it seems I am the only Irish person present to accept the award. The other two Irish are nowhere to be seen. The truth is that I am here somewhat accidentally—a gatecrasher of sorts—and certainly don't merit any sort of accolade. I had been traveling across Guatemala on my way to cover a story in Nicaragua when my Irish magazine, *Island*, sent an email to say they had folded, and there was no more *Island* to write for. Fortunately the photographer I was traveling with noticed in the morning newspaper that there was an indigenous summit taking place nearby. So we came here on a whim. Now I am approaching the organizing committee who are all smiling broadly to collect the plaque, and I'm wondering what I can possibly say. What have the Irish ever done to help the indigenous of the Americas throughout the ages? Should I quote the infamous US General of Irish descent, Philip Sheridan—the racist mass murderer who led the "Indian Wars" in the 1860s—accredited with the charming ditty "The only good Indian is a dead one"?

I am spared the ordeal as someone snatches away the microphone to make an important announcement. I scurry away with the impressive ornament feeling like a bit of a shyster. Later on, over strong local hooch given out for free for those delegates still going strong by midnight, a garrulous Canadian delegate is telling me about the militant Six Nations struggle in Ontario where the indigenous resurgence is gaining ground, and he re-quotes Sheridan. "You see, buddy, the only good Indian is a bad Indian!" Yo, high five—slap!

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# NO G8: Heiligendamm Report Back

BY DAVID ZLUTNICK

This year's meeting of the Group of 8 (G8, the 7 richest nations in the world: Great Britain, United States, Germany, France, Japan, Italy, and Canada, plus Russia) was held in the resort of Heiligendamm, Germany from June 6-8. At the meeting, the 13 percent of the world's population was "represented" to decide policies that will have tremendous effects on the other 87 percent of the world.

In response, tens of thousands of demonstrators arrived in the area in an effort to shut down the summit. The reasons for such a confrontation include the G8's policies on aid to Africa, the propagation of neoliberal economic globalization, the neglect of the fight against AIDS, the inherent and rabidly undemocratic nature of the G8 itself, among many others.

## Repression

On May 9, state repression of anti-G8 organizing exploded with the raid of 40 sites including private homes, social centers, and the alternative web provider SO36.net. Police searched the sites of what were to be convergence centers in Hamburg and Berlin to stop leftist groups from allegedly forming "terrorist groups." However, after the police admitted they had made no arrests and found absolutely no evidence of a terrorist plot or any illicit materials, it became quite obvious that the real reason behind the raids was simply to smash the infrastructure that had formed to counter the G8 summit. But the plans of the German police failed as, following the raids, thousands spontaneously took to the streets in cities across Germany to denounce the raids and public support for the G8 opposition grew tremendously.

Around the actual site of the summit in Heiligendamm, a 12 km security fence was built at a cost of \$17 million in order to protect the grounds from protests, and a no-go zone was created to keep people from getting anywhere near the fence. In May, the Kavala (special police) banned most of the planned permitted demonstrations. After lawsuits were filed for reasons of unconstitutionality, many were then re-permitted, only to be banned once again days

before the G8 began.

Another measure the German state took to repress the anti-G8 movement was the use of travel bans and the closure of relatively open borders within the European Union. This same tactic was used to defend the G8 in Genoa in 2001, where activists were turned away at the French border and prevented from entering Italy.

This power that was granted under a supposed "State of Emergency" was, in actuality, used less than many people thought it would be. But there is one case worth mentioning in which a group of Polish anarchists were stopped on a train while attempting to enter Germany. The group was told that if they entered the country they would be immediately arrested, and in response they occupied their train car, hanging banners out the windows, and were soon joined by five Germans. After hours of threats, the group left the train when the German border patrol said that an anti-terror unit would board the car if they remained.

## Hamburg and the ASEM Conference

The international demonstrations began on May 28 in Hamburg, the first day of the 7th Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). ASEM is an inter-regional forum consisting of the European Commission and the 27 members of the EU and the 14 members of the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) Plus Three regional grouping. The "Three Pillars" of the ASEM conference are political dialogue, security and economy, and education and culture.

At least 5,000 people—several thousand in the black bloc alone—marched

from the St. Pauli neighborhood of Hamburg. The original route of the march was changed last minute by the police, despite the demonstration organizers having secured proper permits. Thousands of riot police (almost outnumbering protesters) lined the march, completely surrounding it, and numerous police vans, water cannons, and armored tank-like vehicles used for clearing barricades, followed closely behind.

**During the 1999 anti-WTO protests in Seattle, the small black bloc was generally thought of as a success by the more confrontational wing of the radical movement, and that was possible because the massive nonviolent blockades detracted most of the police attention. Here the situation was exactly the opposite.**

The spirit was lively as the black bloc led the march through the city streets, followed by a diverse crowd of marching bands, dancers, and various leftist groups and parties. As the march neared its destination—the Hamburg city hall where the conference was taking place—riot police cut off the demonstration. Some of the black bloc ended up on the other side of the police line and watched quietly while riot cops kept back the rest of the march.

Soon scuffles broke out between demonstrators and riot police, as the latter began to forcibly end the march. From that the situation escalated until a small riot broke out. Bottles were thrown at police vans and riot units, and snatch squads chased after small groups of black-clad protesters. A molotov cocktail streaked through the sky but missed its target of a police van below. Fireworks were popping off from all directions. And water cannons soon raced through the streets, blasting away as the crowd dispersed.

Close by, other groups from the black bloc had successfully made their way to the city hall, and small street battles began with the police at the security fence. At one point a riot cop—who had taken off his helmet and armor—was caught alone outside his van as the riots drew close. And in a moment reminiscent of Genoa and the death of Carlo Giuliani,

the officer drew his gun. But just as he raised his gun in the air, the back window of his van exploded from behind him by some flying object, and he retreated to cover.

The police eventually withdrew, after taking 86 prisoners throughout the day.

Back at Rote Flora—the huge squatted theater serving as a social center and convergence point for the G8 demonstrations—there was an excited atmosphere as the militant march had largely been able to hold its ground against the repressive police measures, and people anxiously discussed their journeys to Rostock, where the anti-G8 movement would be based.

## Rostock Convergence Center

Many months before anybody came to Rostock for the G8, German activists moved there in order to prepare the necessary infrastructure needed to oppose such a summit. Rostock lies roughly 30 km from Heiligendamm and served as the main point from which the protests were to be centered. Amazingly, the city (slightly disgruntled at the enormous costs of having such a summit nearby) donated a school building for use as a convergence center.

The Elm-Welk School was a four-story building with three wings, covered ground to roof in revolutionary murals, banners, and graffiti. It housed a large Indymedia Center, equipped with computers and video editing stations, as well as a radio broadcasting over three continents. There were also two press groups operating, sending press releases to thousands of media outlets in over 35 countries. There were numerous rooms were set aside for sleeping, a large kitchen, a bar, a cafe, art room, and outdoor bike workshop, among other facilities. Despite threats of Nazi attacks and police raids, the convergence center functioned throughout the summit and was a valuable asset for the demonstrations.

Many times a tense atmosphere hung over the school during periods where police or Nazi raids seemed a serious risk. Only on June 7 was there any serious confrontation, however. A large group of local Nazis, numbering from 50-70, gathered at the Convergence Center. Soon, organized anti-fascist groups from the surrounding camps ar-

rived at the school to form a counter-presence. Police then arrived, surrounded the Nazi group, and acted as a buffer. Despite pledging not to raid the school, the police did set up a checkpoint for anyone entering or leaving the building and conducted mandatory searches, allegedly looking for “weapons.”

### June 2nd- Make Capitalism History The Riots in Rostock-

June 2 marked the first day of action against the G8 with the Make Capitalism History march bringing together a very diverse crowd of tens of thousands from NGOs, trade unions, Communist groups, various leftist organizations, a 5,000-person black bloc, and 13,000 German police.

The riot police attempting to control the demonstrations were pelted with bottles and rocks as cobble stones were torn up from the street for additional ammo. Cars were flipped and one set alight for use as barricades, as well as dumpsters and other objects. One police van was destroyed after being caught on the wrong side of the street fighting.

Police used pepper spray to keep back anyone who got too close, including nonviolent activists and even the large numbers of press present with video and still cameras. As things progressed, they used water canons and tear gas. By the end of the day, over 125 protesters had been arrested in Rostock, and according mainstream press accounts over 500 injured—433 of them police officers.

This last figure is widely believed to be extremely exaggerated by police and media. But it is certain that many more injuries than reported were sustained by demonstrators, as they were typically treated by the medical collectives who do not cooperate with the authorities, or simply not treated at all. It is also fairly safe to assume that the protesters’ injuries were far more serious than those of the police for lack of protective armor and helmets, and weapons to inflict damage.



**Protestors are completely enclosed by riot police as they march through the St. Pauli neighborhood of Hamburg.**

### June 6th

On the morning of June 6, people began to leave the camps to head toward different blockade points as part of the coordinated Block G8 effort. Police attempted to stop the different convergences, but it proved impossible as protesters dispersed throughout the fields. By the time the first main group reached the no-go zone they numbered 5,000. Police helicopters hovered overhead but generally did not engage the

demonstrators below.

Surprisingly, police harassment was not as severe as was expected. They searched some buses and detained others, but the massive repression that had been expected never came to fruition.

Later, however, as about 2,000 people trekked through fields towards the security fences, police chased them with water cannons and tear gas. Helicopters occasionally landed teams of riot units to control the demonstrations, but overall, direct confrontations were

rare. By afternoon, the blockades were deemed to generally be a success as over 10,000 people participated. Five thousand blocked Gate 2 alone after skirting police lines, and most of the roads into Heiligendamm were blocked either by protesters or police. Around 2:30pm about 500 participated in dismantling part of a NATO-constructed security fence.

Riot police crushed several of the smaller autonomous blockades later in the afternoon, brutally arresting dozens. Police officially cleared the West Gate at 5pm after a snatch squad had encircled a group of clowns.

The large blockade at Gate 2, however, was still present by nightfall at around 9pm. The group numbered around 1,000 decided to stay overnight. By this time around 200 people had been arrested during the day, about 60 of which happened in a parking lot near the Rostock-Laage airport.

### June 7th

At 9:30am, a group of 2,000 began their walk north towards the fence.

Meanwhile the blockade at Gate 2 was still active. Supporters arrived with food and supplies early in the morning. The police presence was strong but at around 11am twenty police vans and a tank left the gate—presumably to head towards the abandoned Gate 1 where the march from Reddelich was expected to arrive.

Around noon water cannons arrived at Gate 1 just in time to meet the Reddelich march as they emerged from the woods and scattered into the fields. About 200 protesters were at the gate and surrounded by police as they gave the first order to disperse. By 1pm almost 3,000 people were present at Gate 1. The police attempted to push two groups together in order to clear the road. Scuffles broke out as police used water cannons, tear gas, and batons to push the crowd and the demonstrators pushed back using banners to try re-

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**Roadblocks were a daily presence, from protesters blocking foreign dignitaries to police blocking protesters.**



**Police meet demonstrators as they exit the train leading into Rostock.**

# Anti-G8 Fallout: Learning from Past Actions

Fault Lines interviewed Josh Wolf and Gabe Meyers, the two people targeted by the federal and local authorities after the July 8, 2005 Anarchist Action Anti-G8 demonstration. Anti-capitalist protests and demonstrations against the G8, WTO, and other institutions that represent neo-colonial domination and corporate globalization, have always been met with more aggression and hostility than normal marches for peace. Granted, these demonstrators are often much more militant. With a police officer injured and a police car damaged, the authorities felt a need to subpoena and prosecute. Here are their stories...

BY NICO RAHIM

**Fault Lines:** The consensus is you were committing an act of journalism, and were protected under the California Shield Law. In some interviews you said that the Feds were on a witch-hunt. What kind of witches do you think they were after?

**Josh Wolf:** It seems they were after anarchists and anarchism in general. But it also seems like a multi-level attack on civil dissent, and on anyone who demonstrates against this administration going all the way up to the US Attorneys who were fired. Which couldn't be that much farther from anarchism.

**FL:** Were you surprised at the support you received from the mainstream media?

**JW:** Yeah, I guess pleasantly surprised would be a good way to sum it up. It didn't seem shocking; it seemed sensible. It sort of mitigated some of my distrust around the mainstream media, and its entirely being fucked to the core.

**FL:** You have described your video blog as transparent journalism, transparent in that your biases are open and transparent to all. What is the significance of radical media, independent media, and other media that is not afraid about taking stands in social justice movements?

**JW:** When it comes to civil dissidence, the mainstream media only covers from the cops' perspective – to reinforce the status quo. Half of the dialogue is missing, so independent media and the alternative press fills in the other half of the conversation...

The mainstream news sources do serve a purpose, but if you look at it like there is a pie of information, that's just one-eighth—one slice—out of the giant pie of things that we, as educated and informed people, should really stay abreast of.

**FL:** Going back to the Anarchist Action demonstration in San Francisco against the 2005 G8 Summit in Gleneagles, it seemed like two police officers in one cop car were the catalyst of the violence, by breaking ranks and going after the protesters instead of letting it die down on its own.

**JW:** That's partially right. It's not that the two police officers broke ranks with the tactical police force covering the demonstration; they were actually on duty patrolling the Mission. They were responding to a 911 call about vandalism by people in black, which was not at that time known by the dispatch to be a part of the demonstration.

**FL:** Not to justify violence against the police, but was the fallout caused by the police being overly aggressive in trying to disburse the remaining demonstrators?

**JW:** When you look at the policemen, you have to look at Shields and Wolf, who were the police officers involved in that thing, arriving on the scene. Prior to that [the police] were almost respectfully...it was weird, when they called over the loudspeakers to disperse, they were like, "The officers from the San Francisco Police Department order you to disperse. Failure to do so will result in you being arrested." That sounded like something they don't say, it was far different from their normal

shouts. Then Shields and Wolf showed up and I guess got freaked out and decided that the best approach was to accelerate the car in the hopes it would force the protestors to disperse. Which is obviously a highly dangerous tactic. And their response to that was to chase after the two people they almost hit...was just obscene.

To give some context: The year prior there was a Reclaim the Streets demonstration on June 8, 2004, to correspond with the G8 Summit in on Sea Island. The police mass arrested 120 people. They surrounded everyone at 5th and Market and then arrested everyone who was there--there was no disperse order or anything. A number of those people did not want to give their names to the police so in a jail solidarity action about 40 people identified themselves as Jane and John Doe. The government refused to release the protestors until they gave their names.

They eventually worked out a deal that they would drop the charges, prior to them giving their names, which would be retroactively reversed if they didn't give their names. So here we have a situation where some government entity was probably seeking the names of protestors on June 8, 2004. So this just reinforces the thought that this was again just some sort of witch-hunt to identify those who were protesting.

**FL:** So the reason you stayed in jail for so long was not because you didn't want to release your unpublished video, but because you did not wish to testify in front of the grand jury about your video?

**JW:** They wanted the footage because they wanted all of the intelligence they could gather, but what they really wanted,

which never really came out in court, was for me to testify and give the identities of those on the footage. After we had lost the fight in the 9th circuit level to protect the footage, we actually offered to show the US Attorney that there was nothing on the tape. We submitted a declaration saying there's nothing on the tape. [My lawyers said] how about we just turn over the tape and you let Josh go. [And the US Attorney responded] "No, we need his testimony."

**FL:** What do you say to those who say that your case was a waste of time because you weren't protecting anything?

**JW:** There are some things that are worth fighting for, but when you lose the fight seeing that you are only protecting the *right* to fight it, you might as well just show them that you have nothing in your hand. It's kind of like when you're playing a poker game, you might want to bluff a hand, but when it comes to all in and you really have nothing, then there's no reason to stay all in.

**FL:** It seems the federal government will continue to crack down on civil dissent, especially on those who should be protected and aren't professional journalists. Do you see anyone else being put through the ordeal that you were put through in the near future?

**JW:** It will probably be someone related to the something like the Wen Ho Lee case, and I imagine it will be highly unlikely that it will be an independent journalist.



San Francisco police officer Peter Shields on the ground with a fractured skull after receiving a blow to the head while clubbing protestors.



Josh Wolf served 226 days in prison, longer than any other journalist in US history. He is pictured above with videocamera in hand.

# THE SCAPEGOAT'S TALE

## AN INTERVIEW WITH GABE MEYERS

BY MATT GEREGHTY

**Fault Lines:** What happened after the squad car started toward the crowd?

**Gabe Meyers:** That guy was just driving through there like it's the Indy 500 or something. And I don't really see any reason he would drive into this crowd other than to run people over...I ran out of the way and dropped my sign. It went under the wheels and that's when he hit the brakes.

His partner got out, chased me, tackled me, strangled me, and put me in a chokehold in front of all these people, and people took a picture and it was on video-- Josh Wolf's video. Then the driver [who] had barreled into a crowd, he gets out of his car—and this is even confirmed in the police report—and he starts using his baton on some people...So somebody hit him over the head.

He's gotten a lot of sympathy because he got his skull cracked, which has kind of made him out to be the good guy. I mean, just because that happened to him shouldn't get him off the hook for trying to run people over with a car...I don't really condone hitting him in the head, it could have killed him...But you know, if you try to run people over with your car, and then you beat them with your nightstick, well, duh, what do you think's going to happen? Nobody's going to put up with that shit...I'm sorry the guy got beaten up but you know, he initiated the whole incident.

When they talk about it in public, with the media and so forth, the real story is not being told...All that you saw on TV was 'whatever, it was a violent anarchist protest and this police officer had his head cracked in and his police car was set on fire' and, you know, that's not the whole story there—this guy started the whole thing by trying to run people over.

**FL:** So what exactly were the charges they tried you for?

**GM:** This is really weird; getting charged with lynching is pretty rare and most of the time when people get charged with it they're trying to do it to somebody else. Meaning they're trying to take someone out of [police] custody...This police officer who was photographed and videotaped trying to strangle me 'til my face was bright red—this guy decided to charge me with a felony of lynching myself—in other words saying that I tried to take myself out of his custody by trying to incite a crowd. By saying the words "help me" while he had me in this chokehold.

**FL:** How long were you detained?

**GM:** I was only in custody for less than a week.

**FL:** What was it like after that?

**GM:** It was a major pain in the ass. Having to show up for court. Other than that it was just kind of psychological, even though I knew it was bullshit...

The police were mad because they didn't catch who they were looking for, and they wanted a scapegoat and they wanted it to be me. I was the only person they charged with a felony.

**FL:** Did you feel like you had a lot of

support during all of this?

**GM:** I got some supporters who came out. There were a lot of hearings. There were always a few people, and I think that's where you really see who your friends are.

I think a criticism of some of the organizers is that they didn't show me that much support. I didn't really see a lot of them show up. But I had some good people show up, some of the grand jury resisters. It's important. I think it's really cool when people show their support. You really can build a bond through a thing like this.

I was just some guy who got arrested and got caught in the wrong place at the wrong time. I think they just want to be mean and harass you for 18 months and shit like that. I just had to put up with this shit and watch everything else go down, like Josh Wolf.

I kind of feel like Josh Wolf wouldn't have been in prison if people would have spoken up more. In hindsight I think I should have made more noise about it as well. But my lawyers had advised me just to keep quiet. There were a lot of witnesses who saw the cops beating on people. I saw a lot of stuff posted on Indybay. I saw one legal observer, who was also a lawyer, had made a statement at one of Josh Wolf's first appearances in federal court and in a press conference, and basically he said what happened—that they just drove into the crowd and started beating people

with batons and choking people—well, me. But I guess that's the whole thing with the media control issue—that those sorts of things were able to get hushed up or played down even though people were saying them publicly. There just wasn't enough people saying them.

Maybe I should have started getting the story out earlier, it's just hard when there's charges coming against you.

**FL:** Having been the one person blamed for the actions of an entire group of people, what did you think about the behavior of the rest of the crowd?

**GM:** To me, going into a working-class neighborhood like the Mission and causing chaos and smashing windows, even though those are corporate structures and so forth, we're still in a neighborhood—I think the energy could have been directed better...I think a lot of people in the Mission, just because they might not want these big corporations, they don't necessarily want all this chaos going on.

I don't necessarily have a problem with people being militant but you've got to be smart about it. I want those corporations out of the Mission. I don't like their domination here in trying to take everything over. That's one of the effects of the G8, and it makes me want to protest. It's good to go to the Mission and say, "Get out of our neighborhood, we don't want you taking everything over and exploiting people."

But I think that just to go in there and kinda go nuts and throw things through windows and shit like that, I mean there's people inside there too...It could be a person that lives here in the Mission that's working this shitty job because they need the money. I guess it's just one of those things that you've got to be smart about.



Pictures above (clockwise) : Anarchist Action sign that led the march. Newspaper boxes litter the street of the Mission. Officer Wolf with Gabe Meyers in a choke-hold. Masked activists holding anti-G8 sign. PG&E office with paint splattered windows. Activist with Anarchist Action pamphlet in hand.



# RENT IS THEFT, HOUSING IS A HUMAN RIGHT

BY TOMMI AVICOLLI MECCA

The housing situation in San Francisco is a prime example of the greatest evil of capitalism. Only those who can afford it get to be housed. Everyone else lives on the streets. They get trash talked by neighbors and politicians alike for the sin of being homeless. They are arrested or cited with “quality of life” citations.

The situation couldn't be worse—unless you throw into the mix the fact that landlords in San Francisco have the ultimate weapon against tenants they want to get rid of: The Ellis Act. Even with all of the tenant protections, renters have in a “progressive” enclave such as San Francisco, one can be tossed out into a housing market where rents are astronomical, just because some speculator wants to turn a building into overpriced tenancies-in-common (TICs, pronounced like the bloodsucking critter).

Various solutions have been proposed for the housing crisis in San Francisco. Most of these options involve band-aiding a system that is problematic to begin with. Real change will only come by changing how we do housing in America. That means housing can no longer be a commodity. As long as it is, there will be a basic inequity: those who

can afford to rent or buy versus those who can't. Housing is a basic human need and should be guaranteed, just as healthcare is in many countries.

In the meantime before we get to that point, however, there are things that affordable housing advocates in San Francisco can fight for. They're still band-aids on a sick system, but they will give working-class and poor people more of a chance at affording to live here. They include:

- 1) A moratorium on market-rate housing. The last thing San Francisco needs is more housing for the rich.
- 2) A moratorium on condo conversions. Every condo that is converted from the rent-controlled stock is the loss of a unit that's price is controlled while the tenant lives there—not to mention displaces a person paying low rent.
- 3) Vacancy control, which puts price restrictions on a unit after the tenant moves out. Under vacancy control, a landlord can only jack up the rent a small percentage for the next tenant. Right now, it's prohibited by state law (Costa-Hawkins).
- 4) Community land trusts. The land is purchased by a nonprofit entity and taken off the market forever. The ten-

ants who live there either rent or purchase at 30 percent of their income. It is similar to a co-op, only there is no equity in a land trust.

5) Squatter's rights. If a building is vacant, why can't people make use of it?

*A radical, southern Italian, working-class queer, Tommi Avicelli Mecca works by day for the Housing Rights Committee of SF, a tenant's rights organization.*



SQUATTED HOUSE LEFT EMPTY AFTER ELLIS EVICTION @ 23RD AND TREAT

PHOTO BY MILES "OTIS" MCBREEN

## IN SAN FRANCISCO, TENANTS HAVE RIGHTS!

BY THE SAN FRANCISCO TENANTS UNION

**MOST HOUSING UNITS IN SF ARE RENT CONTROLLED. IF YOURS IS, YOUR LANDLORD CAN ONLY EVICT YOU FOR A "JUST CAUSE." YOUR LANDLORD CANNOT EVICT YOU JUST BECAUSE THEY FEEL LIKE IT. IF YOUR LANDLORD IS TRYING TO EVICT YOU, GET HELP!**

- Your landlord can never force you to sign a new lease that is different from your original lease. (Your landlord can evict you for refusing to sign an identical lease.)
- Your landlord must provide you with a habitable residence. “Habitable” means, among other things, that your unit is in good, safe condition with a sturdy front door and heat. Leaks, infestations, electrical problems, and mold—if not caused directly by your actions—are the landlord's responsibility to repair.
- If your building is sold, you do not need to sign a new lease. Your old lease is still valid, and (if your building is covered under rent control) your landlord still cannot evict you without a just cause.
- You do not need to let your landlord into your apartment, unless he/she is completing a necessary repair or showing the building to prospective buyers. Your landlord needs to give you 24 hours written notice under those circumstances, and you can negotiate for a reasonable time.
- If you are a rent-controlled tenant, your landlord can only raise your rent by a small amount every year. (It's usually around two percent.)
- Master tenants are considered landlords when there is a conflict with subtenants. Certain “just cause” regulations apply to them. It is illegal for master tenants to charge subtenants more than a fair pro-

- portional share of the rent. Master tenants must disclose the full rent of the apartment, if asked by a subtenant.
- If an original tenant (lease-holder) moves out, and additional roommates stay on, the landlord cannot evict the roommates.
- Your landlord cannot retaliate against you for asserting your rights! Keep a record of landlord (and building manager) activity. Keep a record of everything you do, too. Put requests for repairs and other communication in writing so that you have a good record, just in case. (Email is fine.)
- If you request it, your landlord must inspect the apartment during your last two weeks there and provide a list of all the damages that he/she plans to charge for. This gives you a chance to do any needed cleaning or repairs before moving out and avoid deductions from the deposit.
- Rent Control applies to all units in San Francisco that were constructed before 1979. However, if you live in a single-family home, your landlord can raise your rent to any amount for any reason. If you live in a condo (recently renovated) unit, or live with your landlord, you are not covered under rent control. Illegal units (units that are not up to housing code standards) and residential hotels are covered under rent control.

# What Do More Condos Mean for the Mission?

BY EMMA GEROULD

At a time when affordable family housing is on the political agenda, Seven Hills Properties is pushing a condo development through the planning process for 60 new condos and another Walgreen's Drug Store. The site in question is 3400 Cesar Chavez Street (at Mission), now a empty parking lot where day laborers wait for work daily.

Mission Anti-Displacement Coalition (MAC) and others from the Mission and Bernal Heights are opposing the condos because the project does not reflect the community's needs – affordable family housing and mitigating rising land costs.

The proposal is not an isolated development. Condos are being built throughout the Mission. Recently, condos went up on Mission and 29th Street and many more, like 700 Valencia Street, are in the pipeline.

Based on the projected cost of the proposed condos, less than 10 percent of the neighborhood earns enough to move into one. What does it mean when over 90 percent of residents cannot afford to buy these new condos? It means that residents of this traditionally low-income neighborhood will be priced out of their own community by sky-rocketing land values. The Mission, along with the Castro and the Haight, has one of the highest levels of Ellis Act\* and owner-move in evictions in San Francisco.

Seven Hills Properties claim that the 3400 Cesar Chavez condos will be available for local families. Nothing could be further from the truth. To be able to afford such a condo, a family or individual must make a median annual income of \$203,000. The median income in the area stands at \$44,000. The majority of the condos would be one bedroom apartments. The few affordable housing units proposed in the development are not a gesture of goodwill, but the 15 percent minimum required by law. Only four units would be for family housing. Despite the developer's claims, these units are not affordable. In fact, they cost too much to qualify for assistance through the city's Downpayment Assistance Loan Program.

Mission residents and community groups have simultaneously been creating an alternative plan for the site that would prioritize the community's needs and includes affordable housing and community services.

More condos for the Mission mean higher eviction rates and pricing families out of their homes. Testify at the Board of Supervisors to stop the Cesar Chavez Condos: affordable family housing not market rate condos. To stay informed email [jmartin@bhnc.org](mailto:jmartin@bhnc.org)

For more info, call (415) 206 2140 ext. 155.

proposed CONDO DEVELOPMENT SITE AT 3400 CESAR CHAVEZ ST.



PHOTO BY REZ

## THE ELLIS ACT DEFINED

The Ellis Act is a state law that says landlords have the unconditional right to evict tenants to “go out of business.” For an Ellis eviction, the landlord must remove all of the units in the building from the rental market. The apartments cannot be re-rented, except at the same rent the evicted tenant was paying, for five years following the evictions. There are no such restrictions on converting them to ownership units (e.g., tenancies in common or condos).

Ellis Act evictions generally are used to “change the use” of the building. Most Ellis evictions are used to convert rental units to condominiums using loopholes in the condo law.

### BEWARE OF ELLIS THREATS:

Filing an Ellis Act with the Rent Board means that the re-rental restrictions will be recorded on the deed of the property. Thus landlords are mo-

tivated to issue Ellis “warnings” and “advisories” to the tenants. These are not legal eviction notices but nonetheless are perceived as eviction notices by tenants—don't move based on a bluff!

**FIGHT THE ELLIS:** Defenses may be limited, but tenants who fight the Ellis eviction win surprisingly often. Tenants who don't win often drag out the eviction for well over a year and get into a position where they can settle on their terms.

From the SFTU website—[www.sftu.org](http://www.sftu.org)

SB 464 is a bill before the California State Senate that would limit use of the Ellis Act. The bill would require three years of ownership before Ellis Act evictions, limiting the ability for speculative realtors to buy up rent controlled housing and evict people for a profit—sadly a huge business in the Bay Area.

# Former Tenant Pickets as Realtors Try to Sell House

BY SUSAN



Currently, I am picketing the building I was Ellised\* from in 2001 by speculators Michael Gallin and Elba Borgen. The apartments were sold as TICs\*. In 2003 and 2004 after the building sat empty for almost two years. Three of the four apartments are for sale again as TICs. The purpose of the picket is to

make sure prospective buyers know the building's history. While an Ellis Act eviction must be recorded on the deed, many realtors try to hide this information or omit it in their initial advertising.

At the first open house I attended I discovered this was indeed the case. People I spoke to told me the realtor was being vague. While I was standing in front of the building, the realtor told me herself “well, these people [the current owners] didn't do an Ellis.” I pointed out that it made no difference who did it. The effect was the same—tenants were evicted.

By the second week, she had totally changed her tune. She was revealing it before being asked, although still trying to minimize the fact by saying that her clients didn't do it. A few people have asked me why I bothered to picket the house. I have observed people change. On one Sunday, at least ten different people thanked me, said they wouldn't buy it, wouldn't go in, etc. One person I spoke to was another real estate broker, and even he thanked me because he said his client didn't want to buy where ten-

ants had been evicted. I have seen the change in media coverage of Ellis evictions. I have taken part in other pickets and have seen the looks on peoples faces when you tell them who used to live in the building they are looking at. Many of them express disgust and walk away.

According to the Rent Board, there has been a 20 percent drop in Ellis evictions since Proposition B—the proposition which mandated disclosure of senior and disabled evictions—passed in June 2006. Disclosure works.

What is unusual about 1879 Oak is the timing of this picket. The former tenants are still around, six years later. I would encourage people to continue to attend pickets, ask questions, and generally raise doubt about the solidness of TICs as investments. In real estate terms, buildings that take longer to sell result in lower prices. Taking the profit out of evictions is the only thing greedy real estate speculators understand.

\*Ellised: Evicted by a landowner evoking the “Ellis Act” (see text box).

\*TIC: “Tenancy In Common” housing unit. Can be used to technically ap-

ply an Ellis Act eviction in order to evict tenants of a rent controlled unit.

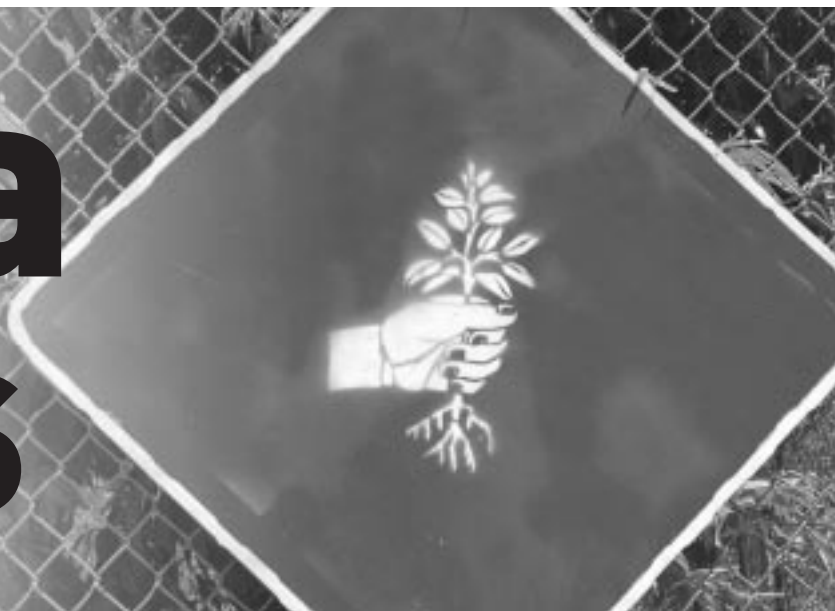


ILLUSTRATIONS BY REZ

# Guerrilla Gardens

ARTICLE BY JUSTIN VALONE

PHOTOS BY REZ



Who owns the land that you live on? Who controls the space around us, between the street and the walls of another rented building? Who gets to decide what happens on a long neglected street corner? These questions cut to the root of a battle our neighborhood fought to save a street-side garden and claim a little bit of land as a commons for all to enjoy.

In the middle of our neighborhood sits a vacant lot. For decades this land grew nothing but weeds and trash and neighbors grew more disgusted by the sight of the overgrown land. Actually it's remarkable that this plot was never developed, sitting catty corner to Golden Gate Park, in the inner Richmond, the land is just a shade too small to be buried under another apartment building.

In January 2007, in the midst of our driest winter on record, some friends got together and planted fava beans. We took some old shovels and turned the encrusted Earth that sat inches from the well traveled sidewalk of Fulton Street. With no fence to separate it from passersby this land represents a bit of an anomaly. The sight of folks digging and planting seeds drew more than a little attention. People on the street stopped to stare, many smiling and a few talking with us about the land.

Fava beans are a good way to start a garden. They are easy to grow and after a good night of soaking they need almost no water. Favas help fix nitrogen from the air into the soil. They can be eaten at almost any stage, fresh greens for salad, green beans in a stir-fry or big soup

beans when fully mature. But mostly our favas were growing the idea of a garden. With little effort these plants changed the appearance of the lot just enough that people knew something was happening. Our experiment was a success and soon every time we stepped foot on the land to check on our growing bean crop neighbors came out of their houses to see what was going on. People were happy to see something finally happening with the lot. Everyone knew something about the place. We heard stories about when it had been a lovely yard 30 years ago and about all the things that had happened to bring it to its current state of neglect.

We tilled more ground and soon rows of lettuce and potatoes grew amongst garlic and peas. The lot started to look more like a small farm and we attracted more attention than ever. The more time I spent in the garden the more I realized that what we were really growing was community. I eventually came to know dozens of people on our block; people that I had lived next to for more than a year and never had the opportunity to meet.

Along with the gratitude expressed we heard ominous tales of the land owner. Several long time residents

knew the landlady, Aileen O'Driscoll. They warned us not to go above her radar. We heard stories about spiteful evictions and it seemed that contacting her was out of the question. Our hope was that by the time she found out about the garden it would be amazing and beautiful and there would be no way she could deny that it was an improvement to the land. Fortunately for us she spends most of her time at her house in Hawaii, so it was fairly easy to dig in undetected.

We had several big community work days where dozens of people showed up to pull weeds, sow seeds, hang out and play music. Our little street

corner became a community commons. We brought out picnic tables and chairs, made big salads to share with neighbors and declared our plot of land a free state. Never before had I seen such an amazing response to a garden project. People were coming out of their houses to see what was happening in this place that we all walked by everyday but no one ever seemed to notice. Interestingly enough no one seemed too concerned that we had no permission to use the land. As far as everyone on our street cared we had their permission and that's what really mattered. One of the residents of O'Driscoll's adjacent building

even gave us a key so that we could water the garden.

At this point the garden became much more obvious. Previously, people may have been able to pass by and not differentiate between the rows of garlic and the tall grass. The untrained eye might have missed to garden all together. But after several big cleanup days it was hard to ignore the transformation happening inches from the sidewalk. We hung signs declaring the land a community garden; it seemed that now was the right time for our work to become really obvious.

It wasn't long before our bold move attracted the attention of the Citywide Property Management, the company hired to collect rent and supposedly maintain the lot. Several neighbors received a letter from Citywide regarding the garden and a few of them were passed along to me. The letter was from Matt King and basically said that the garden had not been approved and that if it became a problem they would be forced to remove all the plants. I immediately called Matt King on the phone and was relieved to find out that the letter was simply a formality, it not meant to be threatening and as long as the landlady didn't find out or care everything would be fine. He warned me about O'Driscoll but reassured me that from her house in Hawaii she was unlikely to notice our little garden. It seemed time to celebrate we had the unofficial blessing of the very people who might have ripped out our plants. But celebrations were cut short as I received another call from Citywide the next day saying that the landlady was in

**Revolution is based on land.  
Land is the basis of all  
independence. Land is the basis  
of freedom, justice and equality.  
—Malcolm X, November 10, 1963**

## BUILD YOUR OWN URBAN GARDEN

Before you dig into that piece of abandoned soil you've had your eye on, here are some important things to remember.

Plant in the early winter. In our mild climate, many plants will spend winter growing deep roots that will sustain them through the long dry season.

Soak your seeds. Many crops such as beans, peas, corn, squash, and most other large-seeded plants will benefit from overnight soaking before planting. This should give them all the water they need to sprout and is much more efficient than watering the soil around them.

Choose the right plants! Don't plant watermelon in the middle of a dry spell. There are many food plants that will "naturalize" in our region and require little care. Here are some suggestions.

Kale (*Brassica oleracea*) is as tough as it is nutritious. Sow the mustard-like seeds in moist soil in winter or early spring. Once they are established these plants can live for years and spread their own seed around the garden.

Fava beans (*Vicia faba*) are a large bean that can be grown in the winter. Soak a handful of beans (available at most health food stores) overnight. Plant them about one inch deep. They take about two weeks to come up so be patient. Favas are great because you can eat them at every stage of growth and nitrogen-fixing bacteria on their roots provide free fertilizer.

Jerusalem artichokes (*Helianthus tuberosus*), a close relative of the sunflower, are perhaps the world's toughest vegetable. Once established, these plants will never go away. Plant a piece of their knobby root anytime between January and May and within a few weeks thick green leaves will push their way up. Be selective when choosing where to plant these aggressive tubers—they'll destroy native habitat or an established garden, as well as pavement.



town. She had seen the garden and was outraged. To this day I question Matt King's honesty and wonder why she would have made an unexpected visit to check on her neglected property. Mostly she was offended by our pea trellis, decorative logs (that also served to keep cars from driving across the vegetables) and our use of water from her building. We removed the logs, wrenched the trellis out of the firm grasp of the pea tendrils and stopped watering. But this was not enough. Soon O'Driscoll was calling for the removal of the garden. We told citywide that we would be happy to negotiate with the landowner, but she continually refused any contact with us. Obviously we were dealing with someone who wanted to distance herself from any conflict. With Citywide doing her bidding there was no reason she had to deal with us.

Now it was time to organize. We went door to door all over the whole neighborhood, talking to people about the garden and circulating a petition. Soon many neighbors and friends were doing the same thing. All and all we gathered more than 300 signatures in support of the garden. Most of all this was a very good excuse for us to go to every house on the block and meet our neighbors. People usually approached with caution, when they saw us standing on their stoop with a clipboard and flyers. But as soon as we introduced ourselves and explained what we were doing, everything changed. People lit up at the mention of the garden and were concerned to hear about its threatened destruction. No one could figure out why O'Driscoll would want to destroy something so good for our community that essentially was keeping her lot from becoming urban blight. Our negotiations with Citywide became more frustrating. They had no idea how to deal with us. They couldn't understand why we just wouldn't leave, or rip out the garden ourselves. Eventually our talks broke down and I realized I couldn't buy anymore time, the garden was slated to be destroyed. We got together with neighbors and friends, garden organizations and community groups and organized a protest.

On the morning of the slated destruction about 20 people came out waving banners, playing music and carrying garden tools. When Citywide showed up to rip out our plants we were going to be there to stop them. That whole day we waited. More neighbors came out, some brought us food and water. We called the media and did TV, radio and newspaper interviews. We passed out Citywide's phone number and soon their office was flooded with calls to save the garden. Our occupation went on for five days. From morning to night we stood guard over the garden. We had minimal contact with Citywide during this time, they knew we were there, but were trying not to deal with us. After five days it seemed that O'Driscoll had

bent to the public will. The calls from community groups and garden organizations as well as hundreds of neighbors and friends had overwhelmed the property managers who thought it easier to just not deal with us. We had sent a clear message: if you destroy our garden we are going to make things very hard for you.

So the garden remained. After two weeks we continued planting veggies and cleaning up the lot. We celebrated quietly. At this point it seemed more strategic let the clamor die down and let O'Driscoll forget all about this little piece of land. But everything changed on April 30. I received a call from my elderly neighbor Kathleen, one of the many people watching over the garden night and day. She told me some men were at the garden ripping out all the vegetables and when she tried to stop them they yelled at her, saying they had their orders. When I returned home that evening the garden was gone. Our plants had been cut to the ground and the rows of tomatoes and mustard greens had been ripped out by the roots. The land looked as if a plague of locusts had descended from the heavens to destroy our crops. The Earth looked barren and lifeless. As I walked where the mulch-laden paths once had been, I recalled all the amazing times digging in with friends and neighbors and I cried. All that work and effort, all those hundreds of people who care about this place and this one person, who's only relationship to this place is the money she makes off it, has the power to destroy something we all love. The calls from neighbors started pouring in. Some people called for the replanting of the land, others suggested new spaces to garden, all of us were angry. By morning, the dissent of the neighborhood had appeared on the sidewalk. Erie messages scrawled in spray paint read "Where did the garden go?" and "Fucking Bastards!"

Now the lot sits vacant. Only the shadow of our garden remains as Jerusalem artichokes resurface along with our rows of potatoes. It is obvious that Citywide has no other plans for the land as it once again returns to its blighted status. Now we get to see two distinct possibilities for this land. One of bare dirt, awaiting the arrival of trash and weeds, the other a place where neighbors gather to take care of a piece of land, growing healthy food and beautifying their home. This brings up some important things for us to consider, mainly who gets to control space in our neighborhood? Is it an absentee landlord who may never step foot on this piece of land or the people who live here and want to create a safer and more beautiful neighborhood for all of us to enjoy? We need to come together to show O'Driscoll, Citywide and people across San Francisco that we are the ones who get to decide what happens in our neighborhood, and this garden is only the beginning.



**Top to Bottom: Farmers present a cornucopia of fresh produce at the South Central Farm (RIP). Neighbors and gardeners gathered in support of the now defunct garden at Stanyon and Fulton. Fava beans grow with little water and add nitrogen to the soil.**

# Indigenous Resurgence in Abya Yala

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 09

## The Declaration of Iximché: From Resistance to Power

Back on the central streets of Guatemala City, the thousands of marching delegates are joined by thousands of local indigenous peasant farmers from the CNOC, CUC, and CONIC organizations. These are groups formed by war victims, refugees and support base of the 80s resistance, and the remnants of the near genocidal state onslaught that claimed more than 100,000 lives, mostly rural indigenous. I remember being here

in this same city in the early 90s staying at a human rights house, feeling petrified as police agents tailed us and death threats were left on the phone. To be a “bad Indian” in those days meant death. Now, here they are—the rebel indigenous, re-emerging from the shadows and re-claiming public space one more.

Amidst spiritual ceremony and music and dance spectaculars, the celebrated “Declaration of Iximché” is read out, to “announce the continental resurgence of the Pachacutic (the return) along with the closure of Oxlajuj Baq’tun (long count of 5,200 year), and as we approach the door of the new Baq’tun, we journey

together to make Abya Yala a “land full of life.” Then the declaration gets down to the hard political specifics: against the FTAA (Free Trade Agreement for the Americas), against transgenics, against multinational mining and resource extraction, against Bush’s war and the US border wall and condemning the practices of the Inter American Development Bank, the World Bank, and similar global institutions who manipulate the indigenous. The document stands firmly for indigenous peoples’ sovereignty, autonomy, and self-determination, ratifying historical rights to stolen territories, and consolidating

unity between the different indigenous groups.

To the somewhat mysterious and haunting epitaph, We Have Dreamt Our Past and We Remember Our Future, the demonstration and the summit concludes, and the multitude disperses into the ominous dusk of the dangerous and insecure city. The departing mood is not triumphant but resilient and quietly optimistic. Despite everything—500 years of colonization, dispossession, poverty and migration—the resurgent indigenous of the continent have survived and are looking to the future.

# PACIFISM SUMMER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE BACK COVER

edition of Pacifism points out that in “colonized/neo-colonized” Third World countries, there has never been a successful campaign against the oppressive state without resorting to violence, which often begins for defensive purposes. The use of violence is empirically indispensable when dealing directly with state oppression. But here in the First World we are dealing less with direct oppression and more with forces of alienation and the remorse of ineffectuality. “Pacifism” makes the case that no matter what logic you use to condemn it, violent resistance has historically been the threat that forces First and Third World states alike to cave to the demands of nonviolent resistors. In this way, both groups are necessary for change to occur. Churchill cites the case of the Black Panthers, who polar-



ized the left and allowed those in the nonviolent movement to feel like they had made a bigger difference than they could have alone. In the process, Panther members faced heavy and in some

cases fatal persecution.

In a post-Seattle, globalized atmosphere of resistance, the nonviolent tactics of decentralized mass mobilizations have had some success where

they’ve been able to catch police off guard. However, ample funding and the sophisticated militarization of municipal police have picked up the slack against the current movements, and we have seen that when successful, even the tactics of relative nonviolent resistance are not tolerated. Throwing rocks at multi-million dollar armies or symbolic destruction of property is branded as inexcusable violence and “justified” persecution ensues. This persecution tells us that tactically, someone is doing something right. But historically we know that successful resistance can bear grave consequences. *Revolution Summer*, if anything, reinforces the need posed by Churchill to consider creative violent resistance to achieve social change. It’s just too bad that the hopeless shallow dimwits considering it never make light of the scope or history of such resistance.

# Clean Burn

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 05

stepped on a stuck gas pedal and then, stepping on a brake line that snapped, he crashed into a pole and they were both hospitalized. Dennis suffered severe head and knee injuries and hasn’t returned to work since the accident, which was in November.

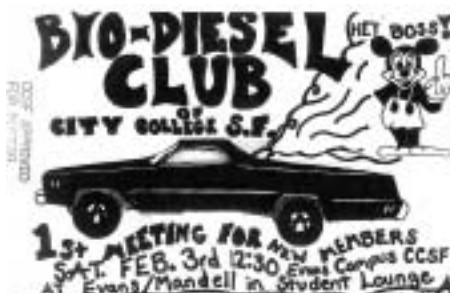
The accident was quickly swept under the rug and all negative focus has remained on the Biodiesel Club. In fact, City College Police harassment got so bad that we had to get automotive teachers who were fed up with the cops’ harassment to convince the Board of Trustees and the Chancellor to step in on our behalf. That got the police off our backs, but administration found something new to hassle us about when we decided to move club outreach out from faculty advisor David Dias’

hands and into our own. Club members wanted to post fliers that reflected our concerns and interests. The first flier we posted focused on class issues rather than environmental, picturing Mickey Mouse flipping off the bosses of oil companies. The flier was up for a day before Dias found it and instructed all fliers to be torn down, as it reflected poorly the message that he wanted to portray about biodiesel being better for the environment. In one day our flier brought in more people to a meeting for new members than all of David’s fliers put together in the previous year. It was a diverse crew of working class folks ages 20-60, even one GI and a city college landscape worker. Dean McGuire then instructed Dias to formally censor the club, denying us all rights to advertise or be our own media contact. We then decided to get rid of David and

go with Transmissions Instructor Barry Lynch as the club’s new advisor.

Weeks later, David approached us saying that the EPA was planning to give the garage a biodiesel grant of \$200,000. Apparently the EPA had seen what we did with the El Camino and considered it cutting edge, while the administration acted as though they were supporting our project. The Biodiesel Club was lead to believe that the grant money would benefit the students, and we were asked to get the car ready for a press conference. Spending money out of pocket and backtracking on the project, both club members and faculty made the car picture-worthy. In the end the grant money was put in the pockets of the administrators, with a small portion to go toward a biodiesel workshop that CCSF students are not allowed to attend. Anarchist club

members were not surprised by this swindle. Unfortunately it left other students and faculty upset for being lied to. If anything, this latest scandal validates the anarchist standpoint that we, the working class, must take production of bio-fuel into our own hands and not concern ourselves with going mainstream in hopes of getting the approval of big oil, and automotive and transportation industries.



# REPORT FROM ROSTOCK

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

pushed back using banners to try regaining the road.

Thousands of protesters spread themselves out along the fence throughout the afternoon in an effort to disperse police. The cops were unable to control the entire crowd due to the area covered and so were unable to forcibly disperse the demonstrators.

Meanwhile, at Gate 2, water cannons stood by as the blockade continued. Cars with G8 delegates were delayed extensively and some eventually had to turn back. At around 5:30pm, water cannons dispersed the crowd. The same began at Gate 1 where police violently attacked the blockade with water cannons and batons. Several injuries were reported, one of which was extremely serious and the street medics asked for help from the police medics to transport the victim to the hospital.

Throughout the night, police attacked protesters with water cannons as they tried to hold the blockades. By midnight five people were injured badly enough to be hospitalized, mostly as a result of the water cannons. As the night became morning, the blockades



Photo: Oxfam

were completely cleared by police.

## Conclusion

The blockades seemed to have been the most effective aspect of the week, which was surprising for many who had opted out of participating in favor of conducting more militant actions that never really manifested. It will no doubt be used by strict pacifists as an example of successful nonviolent direct action.

But it is important to look at the diversity of tactics and how they compliment each other.

During the 1999 anti-WTO protests in Seattle, the small black bloc was generally thought of as a success by the more confrontational wing of the radical movement, and that was possible because the massive nonviolent blockades detracted most of the police attention. Here the situation was exactly the opposite. The massive nonviolent blockades were largely successful because of

autonomous blockades and the employment of more confrontational tactics that took police presence away from the main gates. But time will tell how these events are analyzed and lessons are learned.

All in all, over 700 people were arrested during the protests against the G8 summit. Many had already faced their “fast-track” trials by the time the conference ended and had been sentenced to long prison terms—up to ten months without probation in a number of cases—for crimes such as throwing rocks at the police. The repression against the anti-G8 movement was extreme to say the least, and will most likely continue for a long while following the conference.

As this summit has drawn to a close we must remember to take the fight back home and keep up the militancy generally exhibited in the streets and camps surrounding Heiligendamm. What we saw in Germany was a week of intense action, but what we didn’t see was the massive organizing effort and sustained resistance to repression that made the counter actions possible. We must always be working against the G8 and the system they represent.

# THE STRUGGLE FOR MICRORADIO

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 04

result of more media choices or just bad radio?

Then there’s the media democracy movement lobbying against further attempts to deregulate media. Eliminating the “three band space” rule and filling the dial spaces with “legal” LPFM stations will only make the current unlicensed broadcasters extinct by eliminating unused frequencies. The entire LPFM licensing bill is targeted at non-profit organizations, with most of the licenses going to churches in small, rural markets. The few broadcasters who do get on have to follow the same self-censorship process as others to avoid arbitrary, excessive FCC fines intended to drive them off the airwaves. Meanwhile, Clear Channel shock jocks continue to inflame problems such as racism, sexism, and homophobia, and some have even sponsored pro-war rallies. Do these corporate lackeys have the sole right to define public discourse?

Unlicensed “pirates” have little interest in limiting themselves to corporate-sponsored models of polite speech or to stay within liberal/progressive political discourse. “Advocacy journalism,” in

which broadcasters choose content as an activist tool, is under attack as we read insulting corporate newspaper debates about whether or not local journalists such as Sarah Olsen and Josh Wolf have any legal rights because they are not employed by a big media company. Activists want to go beyond the liberal/progressive limits on issues and program radical politics. Music programmers want to play all kinds of music, as they and listeners want less repetitive formats and more local music played. Independent programmers do not want play lists, station managers, fund-raising bureaucrats, or government officials telling them what and they can and cannot broadcast.

The corporate-government powers are naturally afraid of losing advertising revenues, but political motivations are obvious despite continued FCC denials. SFLR started broadcasting in the early 90s, along with Free Radio Berkeley in the East Bay, to report on the criminalization of the homeless in San Francisco—a population that had absolutely no voice in the media.

In 2002, SFLR moved to a location high in the hills above the Castro, expanding its signal and broadcast-

ing hours to provide clear listening for the central and south parts of the city. When the bombing and occupation of Iraq started in 2003, SFLR provided numerous independent anti-war voices while a licensed radio broadcaster was fired for uttering a word against it. Indymedia activists assisted with a nightly news show otherwise relegated to the web. As activists shut down San Francisco for a day with street protests, web-based Enemy Combatant Radio initiated internet broadcasts in real time with cell phone call-ins describing the street actions. SFLR broadcast this for several days, and other micro stations outside the area were able to stream it, allowing activists with Indymedia stations around the world able to tune in live via the web.

Another example of the organizing potential for radio is community members in Oaxaca, Mexico using radio to rally solidarity among US activists. Freak Radio Santa Cruz has done phone interviews with activists directly from Oaxaca, as well as direct reports from immigrant actions around California. Berkeley Liberation Radio provides a platform for homeless activists. Imagine the possibilities if every town and every

Independent Media Center had a right to dial space? What if activists had access to airwaves for event-specific coverage—such as when Houston-based activists set up a public service broadcast in the Astrodome after the New Orleans tragedy? Can people-to-people communications happen outside of the Internet without the filter of corporations and government agencies?

SFLR chose to engage the authorities and got nothing. They have not broadcast on the airwaves for over three years. Since then, Pirate Cat Radio (87.9FM) and West Add Radio (93.7FM) have left the SF airwaves after receiving written FCC threats, leaving the city without a microradio station. Berkeley Liberation Radio and Freak Santa Cruz continue broadcasting in their respective towns despite threatening notices and armed raids. The FCC has announced another deregulation process with a bad LPFM component. Several bills have been debated in Congress for LPFM access not under control of the FCC, but none have made it to a full Congressional vote, and the FCC continues dragging its heels on licensing stations. Meanwhile, real microradio continues as an act of civil disobedience.

# Revolution Summer through the lens of Churchill's "Pacifism as Pathology"

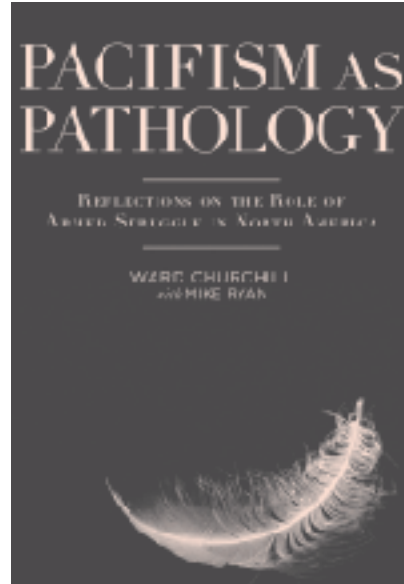
REVIEW BY B. REX

State police, often serving as the order-preserving arms of global capitalism, have a simple formula for dissolving groups that pose a threat to that order. This formula has been documented for decades in the US and has even been applied against completely nonviolent groups. According to Ward Churchill in "Pacifism as Pathology," reissued this year by AK press, the existence of such a formula brings up an inherent flaw in the logic of American Liberals and other totally ineffectual leftist groups that remain stridently critical of the use of violence in resisting the state. Churchill makes light of the absurdity of assuming that as long as dissent remains nonviolent, the state will be forced to follow suit. He then unveils the harsh truth that within nation-states that can mobilize violent use of force to protect ruling-class interests, the stance of absolute nonviolence has become a placebo for the progressive class, quelling their woes but changing nothing.

In the police state we live in, understanding this reality does not lead to any particular solution. Pinned between a rock and a hard blow to the head for even nonviolent assembly, we continue to choose from the ever-increasing list



of state-sanctioned ways to rebel against the system—marching in permitted protests, signing petitions, calling your local legislator, wearing buttons espousing your political views, and making an annual trip to Burning Man. Sometimes we'll even end up in jail for some symbolic action that hopefully gets decent press and allows us to cope with our relative helplessness. But the fact



remains that our tax dollars pay for the very batons that come cracking down when we stick our necks out to ask if this is really necessary.

Concerned citizens, and even a Fox News reporter, were asking this question at MacArthur Park on Mayday in LA after what seemed to be a real-life episode of Cops Gone Wild (Youtube it if you haven't seen it yet). That day, police were apparently given orders to do their stomp and smash robot march during a peaceful immigrant rights rally,

clearing the park, battering kids, taunting old ladies, and trampling news media. Yes, they are trained to do that. Yes, they would do it to you.

That same week at this year's San Francisco International Film Festival, a packed Kabuki Theater watched the premier of *Revolution Summer*, a dark indie feature examining the lives of young hipsters coping with life in a dimly repressive world. The film, produced and shot here in SF and Oakland, portrays a couple impassioned morons fetishizing vague revolution in a vague plot to use armed violence against the vague state. Through the lens of "Pacifism," the film is thematically germane, glorifying an earnest desire to react, and considering armed plots as a means to do so. However, a slow drawn out plot in which a couple of angry kids plan some kind of haphazard offensive and have to face grave consequences—getting beaten and interrogated before they even carry out the action—seems like a pretty incoherent assessment of the dilemma of repression for the privileged dissident.

An essay by Mike Ryan in the new

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18

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REVIEW BY HANNAH E. DOBBZ

member the Sacco and Vanzetti support rallies.

The story of Niccolo Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti was one so powerful that it is still lamented almost 90 years later. In 1920, the two Italian-American anarchists were convicted of murder outside of Boston and held for seven years before their execution in 1927. To the authorities' chagrin, the execution resounded as an electric shock heard 'round the world, as the two had garnered support from the far-reaching corners of the planet. Everyone knew the names Sacco and Vanzetti, and nearly everyone resented their deaths.

In 2006, Peter Miller directed a documentary about the plight of Sacco and Vanzetti. Laid upon the backdrop of black and white footage from 1927, Miller skillfully combines interviews with historians, including Howard Zinn and Studs Terkel, and icons like Arlo Guthrie (whose father wrote songs about the duo), in addition to folks who were then only children but still re-

It is a true challenge to recreate the feelings of anger and injustice that accompanied the trial and death of these anarchists profiled for their ethnicity and political beliefs. But Miller achieves this through his masterful storytelling in addition to the connection that we all feel to this kind of repression, whether the enemy is profiled as anarchists or communists, Italians or Arabs.

In this sense, the film is not only about Sacco and Vanzetti. It resonates as a universal illustration of prejudice, fear, hype, and hatred. Our Sacco and Vanzetti of today could easily have slightly darker skin and headscarves instead of bowler hats. But the potential for scapegoating is still there, and that's what makes Sacco and Vanzetti such an important film. Today's generation growing up in a time of endless war must know that there were folks who fought before them and that the struggle still continues. °