

Anarcho-punk Resource Magazine • Free Worldwide • Winter-Spring 2003

PROFANE EXISTENCE

Making Punk a Threat Again!



Back with a bang!



P.O. BOX 8722
MINNEAPOLIS MN 55408 • USA
blackened@visi.com
www.profanexistence.com

#41

WINTER/SPRING 2003

THE CONSPIRACY:

Editors: Dan • Maygun

Abbi • Adrienne • Brian • Charlie F. •
ciderpunk • 'Diamond' Doug • Emo
Wuss • Jake • Joe • Jon (Eco-News
Editor) • Jordan • Josh • Mollie Hatchet
• Nate • Newt • Roach • Suzy Boone •
Zach

*Opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those
of the PE collective as a group.*

100% DIY PUNK ROCK!

Profane Existence is created by
volunteer labor force.

Thanks to no fucker (except those that
deserve it - you know who you are!)

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and other helpful individuals in the move-
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punk rock gig. However, the rest of you un-
lucky bastards are going to have to pay to
have it delivered!

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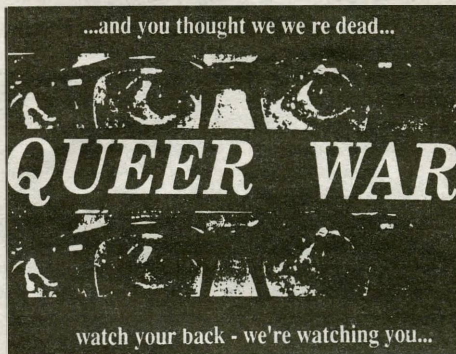
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We're still working on the international dis-
tribution network, so additional sources will
be posted on the web site and in future is-
sues.

Smash Minnesota's Would-be Anti-Gay Laws

A predictable new round of bigotted, anti-Gay at-
tacks have been proposed in the Minnesota legisla-
ture this season. The first new measure is HF341,
which would strip all protections of discrimination by
"sexual orientation (which includes gender identity)"
from all Minnesota laws, including the Minnesota Hu-
man Rights Act. This would strip equal rights for
Minnesota's Gay, Lesbian, Bi, and Transgender citi-
zens against discrimination in employment, housing,
education, etc. It would also remove the "hate crimes"
classification from attacks against the GLBT persons.
Governor Tim Pawlenty has not publicly stated whether
he would sign this legislation if it were to pass both
houses of the Minnesota Congress.

On the other hand, Governor Pawlenty has stated
that he would not sign any legislation that ratifies con-
tracts with state employees which provide for domes-
tic partner benefits. Two measures, HF330 and SF293,
are bills intruded to ratify current state employee con-
tracts, but specifically exclude domestic partner ben-
efits for same-sex partners. These would strip
healthcare benefits for families of many state employ-



ees, many with children, benefits extended to families
of state employees for the past 27 years. The GLBT
community is being specifically targeted in an attempt
to break down the collective bargaining process used
by state employees to negotiate its labor contracts.

This neo-fascist bigotry is being pushed by or-
ganization such as the Minnesota Family Council, who

hope to:

- Repeal the Human Rights Amendment that pro-
tects GLBT people from discrimination in schools,
public accommodations and housing (happening
now).
- Eliminate health care benefits and sick and be-
reavement leave from the same-sex partners of
state employees (happening now).
- Ban the promotion of homosexuality in schools
and mandate abstinence only until marriage sex
education.
- Give preference to married couples for adoption
and foster care placement.

The need to fight back against anti-Gay attacks
in Minnesota is stronger than ever. Even the smallest
erosion in equal rights legislation should be consid-
ered an attack on the equality of everyone. If these
bigots can successfully attack the rights of the GLBT
community, then it leaves the door wide open for at-
tacks on everyone else. Who's next?

For more information relating to this article,
please see: <http://www.outfront.org>

EVENTS • PROTEST • ACTION • EVENTS • PROTEST • ACTION

Southern Girls Convention

March 14, 15 & 16, 2003

Asheville, NC - Warren Wilson College

The Southern Girls Convention is an annual grassroots
meeting of pro-woman activists devoted to empower-
ing women and girls in the

South, and discussing Southern culture,
views and stereotypes of the South, and the struggle
for social justice. Each year's convention is hosted by
a different Southern community and facilitated by local
organizers who manage fundraising, facilities, enter-
tainment, the website, and more. The participants them-
selves facilitate workshops and discussions, and share
ideas, learn new skills, and have fun as a community.

Southern Girls Convention has been held in Mem-
phis, Tennessee, Louisville, Kentucky, Auburn, Ala-
bama, and Athens, Georgia. This year, the fifth annual
Southern Girls Convention will be held in Swannanoa,
North Carolina (a bit outside of Asheville). As in years
past, we hope that SGC will provide a space to share
skills, meet others working on the issues we care about,
explore various issues affecting the South, and
strategize on how to organize and make positive
changes in our communities. Please, feel free to bring
video projects, zines, writing, and anything you are in-
terested in sharing to the convention. We hope to see
you there!

Southern Girls Convention c/o Emilee Kasinecz / CPO
#7245 / Warren Wilson Road / Asheville, NC 28815
sgc2003@hotmail.com
<http://www.southerngirlsconvention.org>

Stop the World Agricultural Congress May 16-18, St. Louis, MO

Shut Down the World Agricultural Forum! Say NO
to Corporate Greed and the Raping of the Seed!

Agriculture is the most fundamental industry of
man, responsible for providing the food, water and shel-
ter necessary for sustaining human life. Yet, each year
an expanding world population increases the strain on
dwindling land and water resources. Already, 800 mil-
lion go without food to meet their basic nutritional needs
and experts predict that by 2025 the world's population
will have grown by an additional 3 billion, leaving two-
thirds of the world's population to live in water-stressed
areas.

We, revolutionary anti-capitalists in the midwest,
see how agriculture and agribusiness play an impor-
tant role in corporate globalization and the affects it
has on biodiversity, rights of farmers, poverty and hun-
ger, health, and on the Global South.

St. Louis (home of Monsanto), will be the host of
the next WAF Congress on May 18-20, 2003. Join us
in active resistance against the WAF. We want to give
the CEOs of Agribusiness (and the many other corpo-

rate killers scheduled to be present) a very warm (not-
)welcome.

Say NO to corporate globalization, privatization
of Mother Earth's resources (like water!), biotechnol-
ogy, brutal exploitation of organic and indigenous farm-
ers of the Global South, the FTAA, the WTO, the IMF/
WB, and capitalism!

Say YES to Mother Earth, biodiversity, rights of
farmers all over the world, sustainable agriculture, and
a world not dominated by the corporations!

Keep your eyes peeled and your ears open for
more to come...

[Information on North American events
against biodevastation this spring can be found
at: <http://www.biodev.org>]

SouthWest Anarchist Network Conference

April 11-13, 2003 Phoenix, AZ

The SWANC will be an event to continue to cul-
tivate the connections of anarchists in the southwest of
the US and the northwest of Mexico. We intend to cre-
ate an anarchist network and further develop strate-
gies specific for our specific region.

Hope to see you there!

Phoenix Anarchist Coalition
SWAN@phoenixanarchist.org
www.phoenixanarchist.org/swan

Days of Resistance to the Gang of 8 1-3 June 2003 - Evian, France

It is now certain that an international Gang of Ter-
rorists, known as the "G8", plan to meet in the town of
Evian. Some of the leaders of this Gang are already
responsible for crimes against humanity defying the
imagination - including the assassination of several
thousand people every year in Columbia, the deaths of
hundreds of thousands of children in Iraq, indiscrimi-
nate bombing and nuclear pollution in Afghanistan and
an ongoing genocide in Tchetchenia. The real agenda
of their meeting will of course be secret, but it will cer-
tainly include the threat of the new massacres and vio-
lences necessary to maintain their control over crim-
inal traffics in arms, oil, drugs, etc. not to mention the
extortion and "protection" rackets by which they levy
huge profits on all kinds of legitimate activities world-
wide.

We therefore call on all the inhabitants of the re-
gion to be attentive to any activity of suspicious for-
eigners who could be accomplices of the Gang, and to
immediately inform the Anti-Gang Coordination of their
activities and whereabouts, so that they can be im-
mobilised. Given the size of the Gang, we are ap-
pealing for help to concerned citizens of all Europe.

Attention! Exercise caution! The Gang is armed
and ruthless!

New Liberated Zones in LA

Flory Canto is a not-for-profit community center & rad-
ical bookstore run entirely by volunteers. We intend to
create a social space that promotes the self-develop-
ment & self-sufficiency of our diverse, multi-ethnic com-
munity of North East L.A. We provide access to re-
sources, services, cultural and educational activities that
enhance our social lives. We want to encourage a dia-
logue between residents that aims for the sharing of
ideas and skills that will propel the people of L.A. to-
wards a more cooperative, non-coercive, and self-suf-
ficient future.

Flory Canto / 3706 N.Figueroa Ave / In North East LA
Tuesday-Saturday 2-7 pm/ Closed Sunday & Monday
(323)276-8350 / email: mail@florycanto.org

Activist store opening in Luna Sol Cafe (vegan/vegetar-
ian restaurant) on Feb. 1st 2003. Open everyday from
11am-8pm Located inside of Luna Sol Cafe where we
transformed part of the Cafe into a store. This will be
the first Peace Punk store in Southern California. We
will carry feminist/animal rights books, shirts, buttons,
patches, Cd's, Lp's, Ep's, tapes, videos, and more...
Luna Sol Cafe, 2501 West 6th Street Los Angeles. (213)
380-4754

We take stuff on consignment so please help out.
Also check out the zine library section.

BEFORE YOU CAN GET OFF YOUR KNEES... YOU GOTTA GET OFF YOUR ASS!

*This magazine serves to document and aid the world-
wide anarcho-punk movement. In order to have the
most complete, international, and up to the minute
coverage, we need help from contributors around the
world like you!*

SCENE REPORTS: We encourage people to write
reports about what's going on with the political and
punk movement in their area. Please be as detailed
as possible and provide addresses for bands, zines
and other cool DIY punk happenings (venues, stores,
mailorders, labels, etc.) We would also like some
information on political activities punks are involved
in. Don't forget to send photos!!!

NEWS: We have now combined our news and
protest sections into one, all-covering area. Send us
information about the group which you are involved
with: We are looking for information about squats, gig
collectives, free spaces, action groups, etc. which
relate to the subjects covered in PE. We are also
interested in over-all coverage of the events in your
area and up to the minute news of resistance against
fascism and all forms of oppression.

LETTERS: We regularly print letters from our read-
ers and welcome all feedback on anything printed in
this magazine or otherwise important to the anarchist
punk movement or the greater struggle against tyr-
anny.

OPINION PIECES: After being absent from sev-
eral issue of Profane Existence, the opinion columns
section has been reinstated. Aside from periodic
editorials from the P.E. staff and columnists, this
section is open for general contributions of a nature
relevant to the content of this magazine. In particular,

we are looking for well-written, in-depth, and re-
searched pieces for this section that concern cur-
rent issues and events.

FEATURE ARTICLES: We will print well-written
articles of a social or political nature that may not fall
into our regular sections. All articles are welcome,
but we will only print ones which we feel are most
pertinent to the readers of PE.

**FUCKING ALTERNATIVE - FUCKING PUNK
ROCK:** Articles and ideas for the "how to" section
of Profane Existence Magazine are welcome. Please
see this section for submission guidelines.

Submissions may be sent to us by E-mail with the
subject "PE Magazine" to blackened@visi.com
or by mail to the Profane Existence address.

AD INFO: Unfortunately, we have not found a
printing press sympathetic to the anarcho-punk
cause, so we have to sell ads to pay for this maga-
zine! We will not print major label ads or any ads that
we feel are irrelevant to the content of this maga-
zine. Please send payment with your ad (checks to
"Blackened")

1/2 page (7 1/2" x 10") = \$400
1/4 page (5" x 7 1/2") = \$200
1/6 Page (5" x 5" or 2 1/2" x 10") = \$120
1/8 Page (3 3/4" x 5") = \$90
1/12 Page (2 1/2" x 5") = \$60
1/24 Page (2 1/2" x 2 1/2") = \$30
Business Card = \$40

DEADLINES: Ad deadline is the 15th of January,
April, July, and October. Issue out the end of month.



HELP SUPPORT FREE PRISONER SUBSCRIPTIONS!

We offer free copies of Profane Existence maga-
zine to those held hostage by the state. We feel
this free service is important, because most pris-
oners are not in a position to afford such luxuries
as information from the outside. Because Pro-
fane Existence has been recognized as a re-
source for prisoner's struggles, we receive large
amounts of requests for copies from prisoners.
Please show your support of prisoner solidarity by
donating generously to the PE prisoner sub fund.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

FOR PRISONERS:

You have received this issue of Profane Exist-
ence because you have recently written us re-
questing a copy. In order to receive the next issue
you must write back with a request for the next
issue, as we currently lack the resources or
means to maintain a permanent prisoner sub-
scription list.



YOU CAN'T CIRCLE THE "A" IN

By Dan

In the months since the previous issue of PE came out, I have received my share of pats on the back and congratulatory words. Still, I find myself frustrated, not only with a generally lackluster PE #40, but also with the general lack of participatory response it received. The first problem I can attribute to my own doing; I rushed into getting the magazine published before thinking about what I really wanted to accomplish. My other disappointment is partially a result of the first, because, other than the vague "please contribute" prose on page two, I really offered few ways for response, contributions, or general participation. Even so, I also feel compelled to place blame on the shoulders of an apathetic and anti-political punk scene.

I fear that this so-called movement has drifted away from disrupting business as usual, and has is now all about being in business. Punk finally achieved mainstream acceptance in the past half decade. It's not that the world suddenly opened its eyes to the enlightened political message of punk. In reality it was a case of finding a more marketable brand of bubble gum flavored, pop punk bullshit deemed safe enough by directors of MTV and the rest of the corporate music/media scum. To all of the asshole traitors who sold out for a piece of the corporate punk niche market, all I have to say is FUCK YOU! To all of those who have no moral dilemma paying high ticket prices for punk gigs, frequent Clear Channel shows, and shell out major label prices for so-called independent label releases; I hope you choke on the corporate dick in your mouth.

My tirade could end there, but blasting mainstream, corporate punk is still not being critical enough. Even within the confines of the non-corporate or supposedly DIY portions of the punk movement, the same sort of marketing and trend following is occurring with disgraceful regularity. Bands that are innovative, thought-provoking and different are too often overlooked by safe reshapes of whatever the flavor of the week happens to be. A little while ago it was Swedish d-beat crust, then it was Japanese thrash, then it was over-produced-to-death metal sound, and now we're back to the '82 Finnish thrash.. Labels that were releasing emo and pop punk five years ago are jumping on the band wagon. All the while, most of the original politics, both in the message and means of production, are now lost. It's even to the point absurdity where bigger labels are fighting each other over the rights to reissue "classic" releases, nobody cared about five years ago, if they don't just outright bootleg them.

On top of this it seems that less and less labels have any interest in distributing their own records. A part of being DIY (read DO IT YOURSELF), means actively taking part in the whole process. At this point, very few bands are even participating in releasing their own records, handing over this task to a record label to do the dirty work. This is inherently not very DIY, but most bands find it difficult to release their own records, or at least make excuses for not doing so. In turn, many record labels have given up control of their distribution to a select few professional wholesalers. What this means is a complete disconnection between bands and the audience, increasingly putting a heavy emphasis on marketing by middlemen. Sound familiar? Yes, it's the same corporate business structure that the DIY ethics were supposedly against. Good-bye mutual aid, cooperation, barter system and anti-establishment. Hello capitalism, profiteering, and fu-

ture marketing professionals.

It's pointless to name names, not only because I am partially to blame, but also because this is very much of the status quo all around. Even within the "underground" punk scene, what we have done is create a micro-economy, which creates its own trends in music styles and fashions, usually by recycling old garbage on a fresh young consumer audience. Almost all punk publications overwhelmingly emphasize music and bands. Of course this isn't surprising, since these same publications depend on record labels to foot their printing bills (and paychecks in some cases). Therefore it's also no surprise that any politics of punk, let alone social revolutionary politics, are almost completely set aside. Simply put, the basic ideals and politics of punk expose the very real hypocrisies of the state of punk in 2003.

Instead of continuing the status quo of business as usual, the punk movement must re-examine the core ideas of what made punk different than what came before it. I understand that this view may not be very popular with those who enjoy their elite status within the punk system, but I think it seems to me that punk is on the very real verge of extinction, or at least complete irrelevance as any credible social movement. If we are all not directly responsible for building it, we are all at least guilty tolerating a punk scene riven with rock stars, egomaniacs, profiteering scum, and downright fascist mentalities.

Even though Profane Existence probably has the largest circulation of any international punk magazine, I harbor no illusions that we have enough influence to create an overall consensus of opinion as to the future of punk. However, I do believe that we have the power to create dialogue as well as provide our own alternative ideas and practices. This has been the subject of a great deal of discussion here and will be greatly reflected in what we do with Profane Existence Magazine. To a less obvious extent, this is also being reflected in the direction that the Profane Existence record label and, the separate but affiliated entity, Blackened Distribution.

There is always going to be some element of money changing hands whenever products are produced, this magazine being a perfect example. Even though it is produced completely with volunteer labor, donated equipment and space, someone still has to pay for the printing and mailing costs that occur each time we publish. So far this has been partially picked up by our advertisers and the rest paid by donations. While we can't foresee any way of avoiding display ads in the near future, we would prefer to try alternative methods of funding this magazine. PE record sales, T-shirts, etc. do help, but do not contribute very much as we try to keep prices as reasonable as possible. As for the magazine itself, the no cover price policy is something we would like to maintain as long as possible. We feel bigger circulation, achieved without a cover price, far outweighs the small amount of money we would get back and fewer issues distributed. We also do not want to waste our time making invoices and dealing with the hassle and resentment that debts bring.

One solution to the funding problem is to ask that as many people subscribe to the magazine that can afford to. The subscription price in the US works out to \$2.00 per issue. This pays for the postage and printing costs for your copy, as well as the printing cost of 8 more, or the printing and postage cost of sending PE

ADVERTISING

to one prisoner (we send about 200 individual copies to prisoners each issue). With enough subscriptions, we could theoretically cut out all display ads and have more room for the good stuff. It would also help take away from reliance on the business side of punk. It's a matter of does the punk movement need another ad-filled, mindless music magalog, or is there really enough support for a magazine that puts politics before music and fashion? If you think this magazine is worth supporting, then please subscribe. If you live in an area where PE is available for free, then send a donation equal to the subscription price, as done by some cool (or should I say rad?) folks in LA.

There will be some very noticeable changes in Profane Existence Magazine. The main will be moving away from the focus on bands and music, and returning to a more thorough focus on anarchism and political content, not only in theory, but in practice. The interview with the Seward Cafe will be part of a series of features we plan on doing with collectively run businesses. Our goal is to show the principles of anarchism in action, as well as alternatives to the prevailing hierarchical, capitalist economic structure. We also plan to start a series of primers (introductory articles) on a variety of subjects. Some ideas thrown around so far include anarchism, vegan/vegetarianism, anti-fascism, anti-imperialism, anarcho-feminism, polyamory, and more. Some old features will be resurrected, starting with "Fucking Alternative, Fucking Punk Rock." This was a long-running section in early issues of PE dedicated to bringing anarchism and DIY ethics

to a fun, usable, and to an everyday level. Limited space prevented an appearance this issue, but we hope to see it return with a bang next time. What you will not see in the future is endless pages of reviews, although we don't plan to get rid of them altogether, and fewer band interviews.

So where does reader-participation fit into this?

For one, the letters section is a very good way of spreading your thoughts and observations to a wide audience, as well as promote discussion amongst the community. There is also a very real lack of cohesive news reports coming from the anarcho-punk community. We are involved in actions and activism worldwide, yet are hardly anyone making any noise. When the shit goes down, let us know about it. This magazine will go a lot farther than a post on the internet will and is a much more permanent documentation. Reports on regional political/anarcho-punk activities and bands (aka "scene reports") are also very much welcomed and encouraged. If you're knowledgeable in certain subjects, use your expertise to write a relevant article for PE. By all means, please share your knowledge!

As always, the main idea is to get smart, be motivated, get shit done, and most importantly to have fun while doing it. The fucking system is set up to make life difficult for the misfit, the nonconformist, and the square peg. The bastards will stop at nothing to crush the spirit of resistance, but they'll never win so long as you maintain that defiant smirk in the face of their tyranny.

LETTERS



Dear Profane Existence,

This war is bullshit. This is my way of getting heard. Bush is only bullshitting this whole war because the American economy sucks. And he'll just blind the cattle (middle class tax payers) with the Iraqi war. The government says they are having this war because Iraq is making biological weapons. That sucks, but so is North Korea. Why aren't we shitting them? Because if we fight North Korea, we can't get oil after we kill thousands of innocent people and make more money for the extremely rich CEO's. But if we fight Iraq, then we get lots of oil, so we can destroy the earth and kill many people. You're fucking stupid Bush!

Will

Dear Profane,

Hello and greetings! My very best to you and all of you at Profane! I was surprised and glad to see my letter in the letter section of issue number 40. I was like Adam that's a coincidence oh shit that's me! Thank you for putting me in my favorite magazine of all times. It really made my day in this place.

Also it was a great pleasure to show it off to my friends here in Hotel Hell as I sometimes call it. It's weird living in a converted prison. But from the outside this place is awesome. It's got 9 floors and it overlooks the town. The elevators are dysfunctional so we are forced to use the stairwell for movements.

Well in regards to issue number 40 which I thought was a pretty f-ing great issue by the way. So in regards to the Christ issue article it sorta hit hard me being an anti government christian anarcho-punk rocker and all. Despite such anti-Christian songs put out by some quite good punk bands through the ages I still just don't think Christ-bashing and punk are supposed to go together. Actually upon further rational thought in an evil Capitalist system such as ours all the righteous have to do is look around to see being right with God is plenty rebellion. In this evil empire

that the Golden State has no problem in claiming its number one positions. With the proverbial have and have nots clashing all the time. What's wrong with the world? ...Everything. What's right? Not a whole lot!

Actually I think Jesus is a very cool and very damn punkrock too. I am hoping the dudes who wrote that article can figure that out one day!

Ok back to you guys now than you again for remembering me and also for the great issue! They are going to let me out of here sooner or later and I look forward to supporting you guys' cause.

Adam

Hey there PE!!

I have been into punk for only a handful of years, but I am just beginning to embrace the anarchist philosophy and lifestyle. I sent away for your zine in an attempt to become more aware of what the DIY anarcho-punk "scene" represents.

I was blown away by the lightning fast speed it took to reach my house. Once I opened up the envelope, I found issues 39 and 40, which I could not find in my heart to close it up and set it down.

PE is the best music zine I have read in such a long time, that I can not remember the last great music mag I had the pleasure of reading. Felix touched up on crust music which was a great introduction to me. I am beginning to explore the deeper realms of punk rather than the epitaph/fat records style punk that seems to be the only punk that people I know actually pay attention to. Thanks a lot Felix.

I am also stoked on the mail order catalog that is printed on the back. I have a whole list of bands that I wanted to check out and Blackened Distro opened the door for me. Thanks again.

I am also writing to try to get in touch with some anarcho punks from the San Francisco Bay Area, where I plan to make my new home in the spring time. Gotta break out of small town hell!!!! I am not getting any younger. Thanks for everything, PE!!!

Stu / 240 East Kline Avenue / Lansford, PA 18232

Profane Existence,

I recently picked up the latest issue of PE and wanted to see about getting a stack of them to distribute in Washington D.C. where I live. Lots is happening in DC these days, including lots of anti-war activity. Among other things, what will be DC's only infoshop / anarchist bookstore / free space, The Brian MacKenzie Center, is opening up. This is within a larger project, called the Arthur Fleming Center, which is a project started about ten years ago between Emmaus Services for the Aging (who do service and advocacy work for the elderly in the Shaw

neighborhood of DC) and Positive Force DC - the punk activist group. The building, which will provide office, store, meeting, show, and other space for about a dozen social justice and community groups, will finally be opening in February. It will be an incredible resource for the activist community and city at large, so it's really exciting and amazing that this project is finally coming to fruition.

I also wanted to write to let you know how crucial and important I think the existence of Profane Existence Magazine is right now. In DC right now, there is (like I said in the beginning of the letter) a lot of activity and organizing against the war, which is really great, except the majority of it seems to be really single issue focused, failing to make the connections to war and capitalism, imperialism, etc. and taking a very traditional approach to organizing; very top down, authoritarian, and operate under the illusion that creativity, militancy, or tying in other issues will alienate the public, provoke the police, and other such generalizations of the liberal persuasion. I really appreciate Profane Existence for it's very real, militant, agitational, and honest approach. And as much as punks hear that we are only preaching to the converted, I know that it is simply not true. There are thousands of kids who are into punk rock, who although may agree with the politics of punk, aren't necessarily organizing or active. I think PE is great for connecting anarchism and activism to punk. Sp thanks for the great work you do.

One of the projects I work with in DC is Positive Force. Although I wasn't in the group at the time, I remember when PF and Profane, with Seth Tobocman and others, collaborated on the poster campaign against Columbus Day. I think it would be cool if PF and Profane collaborated on similar projects in the future.

Anyway, I wanted to touch base, introduce myself, and hopefully we can keep in touch about the respective organizing and projects we are doing. If Profane will be coming out on a regular basis, our infoshop would like to distribute it as it is released. We can send a donation or cover postage. If you can send a stack of the "Fuck Em All" issue, that would be rad.

Thanks - R

www.positiveforcecdc.org www.dcinfoshop.org

Sounds awesome - we'll keep it up until the Department of Homeland (In)Security starts lobbing Hellfire missies our way! - Dan

PE,

I admit that I have not read a Profane Existence in a short while. I just don't understand why bands are now overpowering the causes. I had had nothing but admiration in PE's dedication. The more I learn on my own the less I hear from you. I thought at one time I was a punk person,

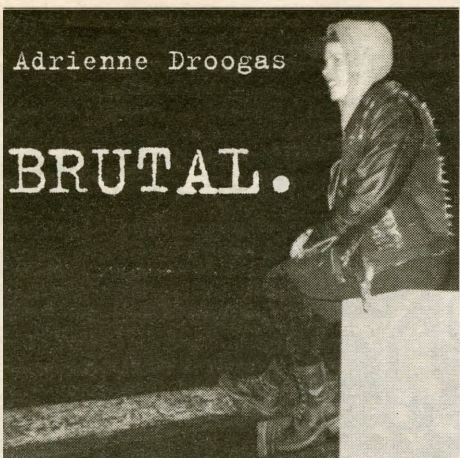
but as I read more and look harder at myself, I have been selfish. In trying to be punk I forgot why I was punk to begin with. I forgot I wanted for us all to be equal before I wanted to be better than the ones that thought they were better than me. I forgot for a minute that I want to help free everyone else. So many else. It makes me sad right now. It's taken me a long time to write this. Please Respond.
Karen Vanderhoff / jchaxerd@aol.com

Profane Existence,

A few weeks ago I organized a war protest, not an easy task mind you. It was a 24 hour protest down here in Blue Dirt. I had been watching the shit on TV and reading about it in the papers and was becoming increasingly pissed off and decided to do something about it. I ran into trouble with the city council, there is a curfew for people under the age of 18. In other words, you can't stay out late and start shit, unless you're 18 or older, which I'm not. That was the first thing they chose to throw out in front of me. So I spent a few days researching city code, for a town as small as this there is a shit load of it, and found an exception to the rule. So at the next meeting I showed them that it was legal. Enter Bureaucracy. "What about the adjacent businesses, have you even asked if they want a protest there," to which I responded "No, but it doesn't matter anyway, there are no conditions on the right to assemble as far as I know." Then they decided to research the case law and bring it up at the next meeting. So at this point the date I set the protest for was about a week and a half away, I still didn't have the permit, and I had gotten next to nothing done for the actual protest. "Fuck it," I said and proceeded to contact every newspaper in the area as well as the MCLU. After about 24 hours I was in contact with the MCLU (a nice guy by the way), and the Mankato Free Press. I told the MCLU what was going on and said they would send the council a letter. The next day I did an interview with the Free Press, and they came down and took a bunch of pictures of me. A few days later I was in The Star Tribune and then on NPR. Come the day of the meeting there were reporters for newspapers and I had just done an interview for channel 5 (and I will never forgive myself for it). Needless to say, I got my fucking permit. Not all the press was good though. The day after the meeting there was an article in one of the papers that was so petty that they had to resort to mocking my clothing. Fuck 'em. The protest went well. We got plenty of obscene hand gestures and eventually egged by some asshole jock. Other than that it was great.

Moral of the story: War = bad, Government assholes = bad, eggs = bad, Freedom of speech = good.
Red white and brain washed,
Mark D. Walker / Stay Alive Records / 108 1/2 Main St. / Blue Earth, MN 56013 / USA





I went to an anti-war protest in San Francisco with my best friend Wendy-O Matik. We waited in line for over an hour just to buy our tickets to jump on public transportation to head out to the protest, and once we stepped off of the train, we were swept up in this stream of people, protest signs, chants, and emotion. Since the protest, the cops have been trying to say that only 30,000 people were present, but that's a load of crap. The organizers of the protest tried to peg it at 200,000 people, but when that many bodies are gathered and ebbing and flowing their way through blocks of a city, how can you even tell? All I know is that I was surrounded by people who all had the common goal of wanting this blood lust to end. There were incredible protest signs that made my eyes burn with tears and made my throat tighten, and others that made me laugh out loud. My favorite sign had to be the small, red one that this guy was carrying that said "Frodo Failed". I pointed it out to Wendy and we both had to laugh. There was one guy who was off to the side, dressed as a money grubbing Uncle Sam and standing next to him was a woman who was done up as a bound and gagged Statue of Liberty. The march moved along slowly and it took nearly three hours just to walk the few blocks from Embarcadero Station to Civic Center. By the time we reached the final destination of the protest, I was beginning to physically ache from walking slowly along for hours and knew it was time to head home. I'd made my presence known, had marched with tens of thousands of people, and I left with a sense of being a part of a much bigger fight. That even as America marches towards an inevitable war, that there are still so many people struggling to find a path of resistance.

I've got to hand it to George W. Bush... he's a pretty sneaky fucking bastard. One of his most underhanded accomplishments is the creation of the Homeland Security Department that he signed into law late last year. We all know about the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Those government organizations were created a long time ago and there is nobody on this planet, no matter how red, white, and blue the blood may flow through their veins, who is going to be happy if the CIA or the FBI shows up at their door asking questions. Both of those organizations are viewed with fear and distrust by most people, mainstream America included. But now, just think about this new organization...The Homeland Security Department. Doesn't it sound comforting and inviting? Don't the words just flow out with a sense of purpose and protection... an organization designed to protect our homes, government officials designated to make our lands secure. If the Homeland Security Department comes knocking on your door, then you're the lucky American who has been chosen to help fight nasty terrorism. It makes me sick. Just a simple manipulation of words and the biggest threat to our civil liberties becomes a respected organization. A conservative politician by the name of Christopher Cox is going to be the head honcho of the new Department and the agencies that are currently falling under this label are the Coast Guard, the Customs Service, Secret Service, and the Immigration and Naturalization Service. What's been going on with the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS for short) has proven to be some of the most blatant acts of discrimination. They are forcing a "special registration" called National Security Entry-Exit Registration System for males over the age of 16 from these countries: Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Eritrea, Lebanon, Morocco, North Korea, Oman, Qatar, Somalia, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen, Iran, Iraq, Libya, and Syria.

Anyone seeing a connection here? And anyone else hearing the not so faint echoes of 1942 with the detainment and encampment of Japanese Americans? Those who are being forced into special registration are fingerprinted, photographed, and interviewed. If there is any question or suspicion over someone's visa or paperwork, they are put into "detention cells" and detained without bail and without representation and face possible deportation. If you do not register, you face definite deportation. Fucked if you do, fucked if you don't. It's like someone beating you over the head with a rock and bashing in your skull with a hard place. Eventually, the plan is to have all people from any country go through the special registration and face possible deportation. Lawsuits are being filed since "it is unlawful and unjust to arrest and deport people who are eligible to apply to legalize their status based on family relationships or their employment." None of that really seems to matter, though. People are being detained by the hundreds, and out of those detained and released, there are many who are still being held.

The INS also has plans to require any person coming into or leaving the United States to fill out a form that provides this information: name, date of birth, citizenship, sex, passport number, country of residence, U.S. visa number, address while in the U.S., and alien registration number if you have one. Then, this information is sent to the officials at the airport that you're flying into. If any name comes up with a "red flag", then the police will be waiting for you when you step off the plane. And this new law being considered would apply to you, me... everyone. Oddly enough, nobody even seems to be able to explain what those red flags could be. Is writing for Profane Existence a red flag? If being involved in this magazine sets off any alarms, then Dan won't be traveling out of the U.S. anytime soon. Since the threat of terrorism is so fucking vague, then it's really easy to label someone as being a threat to national security and off to jail you go with no bail and no hope.

Once again, I'm ending this column without really knowing what to do. I'm so upset by everything I hear on the news radio in the morning, and yet I feel helpless to

effect change. I can march through the streets until I'm completely fucking exhausted, but how do I stop this blood lust for war? What actions do we take to reclaim our rights? How do we help those whose rights are currently being violated by a racist, paranoid government system? I wish I knew. Anyone who feels this same burning frustration and wants to exchange ideas, please feel free to write. It might take me awhile, but eventually I do respond to all e-mails. peace/equality, Adrienne buffypugs@hotmail.com



Here's a recap of my last personal column:

1. Girl I lost my virginity to has sex with my best friend and another guy at the same time
2. Got raped by a girl while on ecstasy and alcohol
3. Boyfriend attempts suicide; later dies of AIDS
4. I attempt to OD on GHB

I know I'm pretty nonchalant about the events I'm describing in this magazine that 20,000 people read, but you have to understand that all these things happened a long time ago (some as long as 4 years). I talk about them because they are major events in my life that have shaped and determined the beliefs that I hold dear to me now (i.e. atheism, anti-sexism/racism/homophobia, veganism, straightedge and anarchism). So I consider them "learning experiences." Yeah...I know how its sounds. I'm an asshole.

Well back to my tales of woe. So after I took the GHB and didn't die. I felt really stupid. I thought people would begin to think of me as a cry for help as opposed to someone who genuinely wanted to die.

"Oh he just wants the attention," I heard people say. "You know his boyfriend died but the only reason he's sad is because he wanted the spotlight." Fuckers.

So I sort of kicked back on hanging around those types of people to concentrate on the amount of despair I was going through. Actually, I would hang out with one other person. I got to know Beth as Nowell's best friend. They were so inseparable that she even smelled like him to me. She had all of the same mannerisms as him and she even looked slightly similar to him.

One day, while I was weeping in Beth's arms and being the ever so pathetically depressing person that I am (hence the nick name Emo Wuss), she reached down and kissed me. And, being in a emotionally weak state I decided that I would kiss back. Though it sucks to say this of a person that I loved dearly, I think the main reason that I was with her was only because that she reminded me so much of Nowell. She's probably the sweetest person I've ever met in my life, a person I've never even had an argument with or so much as felt anger towards, and I used her to console myself. The word asshole springs to mind yet again.

Well in our misadventures as a couple, we met up with a girl named Kat. Kat's from...well, far away. Kat has a Mohawk. Kat is a punk rocker. OK so maybe not in terms of what I hold to be punk today but definitely at the time I thought she was the real deal. I had been exposed to punk rock via bands like Nirvana as well as my friend Selena. I hadn't fully taken on the beliefs as mine but I was definitely hooked. And this strange looking female appeared to my like an exotic creature. Not only was I interested in her, but Beth was too.

I was still very actively pursuing subtly destructive forms of expression. One of them happened to be drugs, and the other turned out to be sex. We invited Kat over to have some beer, watch some porn, etc. while Beth's parents were out of town.

Threesomes usually happen when you're drunk. Usually. So we became a part of one another's mating habits for a short while. Unfortunately things were not meant to be with us three. It seems that addiction to failure has a way of coming back into your life at the most inopportune times to fuck it up.

So me and Kat go to a party. It's at the same place where I got cheated on. The same place I got raped. The same place my "friends" let those things happen to me. This place seems to get some negative vibes from the afterlife or something because everything bad that has happened to me has happened at this house. But... I'm OK. I'm fine. What could possibly go wrong? I have my new girlfriend. I have really begun to deal with some of the issues regarding Nowell and I couldn't feel more alive.

First off, never take drinks from anyone, even people you deem to be friends (especially if your only friends for a week). Second, don't re-enact your rape.

It wasn't a planned re-enactment. Its more like a "Oh lets have sex on the couch you were raped on because you never told me you were raped," re-enactment. Me and Kat were drugged to entertain these people. So we did, not according to there standards of entertainment... but entertainment nonetheless.

I'm doing the old fade in and out of consciousness routine that I did so well back in the day. I see something in Kat's face I never saw before. A slight shift of the eyes that I never perceived but was fixated upon noticing it. Then something in her smile made me quiver. It struck me as so familiar. It touched a nerve somewhere in the recesses of my brain...and each time I would fade back into the picture I would see less and less of Kat and more and more of my ex rapist. Laughing at me. Taunting me.

What I remember clearly was that when I lunged at her throat I heard a squeak. Within seconds of my hands wrapped around her throat I felt a thud and I was out cold. Beth arrived just in time to crack some hard as a rock piece of fucking furnishing on my head. I came to and some guy was laughing. I took it to mean that he thought it was funny what just happened so I beat the shit out of him. Well, I tried.

Kat disappeared, never to be seen again. Beth took me home. That was the end of us. At the time it felt like the end of me.

I got a call a week later. "I'm having your kid. At least I think its yours. I want you to get a bloodtest," my infamous first girlfriend said these words to me. The dumbass hung up the phone before I could get more in-

formation. So for two months I was in agony. I couldn't kill myself because I wanted to give the kid a life better than his shit mother would. I couldn't stand the thought of having a child with this person though and that made me even more depressed.

I get another call from her "It's a boy. I named him after you, because I still love you...he's not yours though." Click. This time I hung up.

That weekend I took 13 shots of tequila, a few mickeys and two mixed drinks made up of a third tequila, a third vodka and a third Pepsi. I weighed 120 pounds and I was around 5'9". I had all this in half an hour's time. That party was affectionately dubbed the puke party. It was also a family party...well it was us young ones.

The next day, even though I was depressed and hungover, I swore to myself "No more of anything."

That was my sophomore year of high school. Three years ago. I decided I would live my life the way I wanted to, with no regrets and nothing influencing my perspective. I wanted to be free of suffering. I wanted to cause no suffering. So I became straightedge and vegetarian in one fell swoop. Two months later I became vegan. I still hate fruits and veggies. After two years of exposure to punk ideals, they finally sank in. It wasn't about rebelling through destruction but rebelling through creating. Creating a world in which all this shit that happened to me would be an outrage and not a common story found in younger and younger kids each passing year.

So yeah, this was just another one of those "Punk saved my life articles." But really, it did.

I mean c'mon, you weren't expecting me to just complain and be all emo for the sake of your entertainment. The reason I write about personal issues is because, as I stated in the last column, I believe openness and honesty of who we are and where we come from is the only way we can build upon the caring and dedicated community we have within punk (well...some caring and dedicated people within punk). I'm not high and mighty because of my beliefs. I still have or have had as much bullshit in my life as other people in theirs. But I didn't let it become a part of me. That's what I'm trying to convey here. That no matter how much you have to endure there is a community that has been through it and isn't afraid to speak out against it. A community that will support you as a person, mistakes and all, as long as you're willing to fight for something better. So don't hesitate to communicate with someone in this magazine if you find you share a similar experience or belief or just plain want to argue with them!

Sergio ilovepunkrock666@yahoo.com



I've been thinking a lot lately about movement. That vague little noun used to describe a myriad of activities and endeavors. From political movements to orchestral movements to fucking bowel movements, this word is broad and interesting. But what interests me most of all is the idea of physical movement. What drives us to movement, to travel, and journey far and wide? And why it's been said time and again that the journey is most often better than the destination...

Almost all of my correspondence with friends (and others related by lifestyle) has had something to do with movement. Somewhere in conversation or letter, the topic of travel will arise. From people moving to new cities, states, or countries, to those planning journeys or are currently on them, movement plays an integral role. It excites me to no end to think of so many people on the road, to think of droves of nomadic people living an almost lost lifestyle and scoffing at the irony of societies undying quest for stability and security. It is a lifestyle that incites curiosity and simultaneous nervousness in those who wouldn't dream of what it must be like to live free, to live without the backdrop of security etched in stone.

I think many of us "afflicted" with the travel bug were hooked long before we even left our homes to roam. Daydreamers from way back, so to speak. Always hanging on the idea of an adventure. Running on the notion of a heroic voyage, someplace far and unknown, somewhere beckoning us to come and complete it, like the perfect puzzle piece.

And while innocent, this has the potential to breed the romanticism of travel, spawning countless ballads and southern rock songs. Painting pictures of living like a "free bird" or traipsing about the country in a boxcar singing folk songs with a toothless grin. The romance attracts us, and is commonly the underlying basis for most travel endeavors. Yet, as most who hit the road know, it can simplify and trivialize an act that is quite the contrary. Romance leads one to leave out just how emotionally and physically taxing travel can be on a person. The jumbled sleeping patterns or lack there of, the infrequent or questionable meals, partying, and miles/km spent in movement leaves most running on E and unable to take care of themselves properly. And yet I find that a lot of people I meet keep pressing on and not giving themselves the well deserved break and time they until they fall ill and are forced to. (Unfortunately I learned this the hard way after months of running hard I succumbed to intense bronchial, ear, and tooth infections, all at once, leaving me with a high fever, unable to eat or drink, and hacking up gallons worth of gunk into a sock on the floor of a squat for a week!)

And yet I must say, it is a noble and passionate act to live out of a backpack. To find love, friendship, and camaraderie in new people and places you've never been, or to be alone and unaccepted in a foreign environment. To be given a free meal, a place to stay or to get ripped off and go hungry another night.

It's really about surprising yourself, learning your strengths and weaknesses in trying and stressful times. It's about trusting your instincts- knowing when independence is essential and also not being too proud to ask for support when it is needed. And most importantly, it's about

adventure, putting yourself out there, taking risks, and having a fucking blast! molliehatchet@yahoo.com



I got off work early, to make sure I had plenty of time to get to the post office. I had a sneaky suspicion that the new Profane Existence was waiting for me. There was no better day than today to get the new PE, either. Tonight I was going to see Jello Biafra at the Spitfire Tour on the Ole Miss campus. There was bound to be alot of people I knew there and plenty of out-of-towners, too. This type of shit don't happen every day and if there was ever an opportunity to get the new PE into the hands of the right people, it was tonight.

I rushed to the post office only to discover it was Veteran's Day. My stomach sank. "Shit, muthafuckin, hell!" I raged. I knew I couldn't get them. I checked my box anyway and sure enough there was the package slip with the zip code 55408 - Minneapolis!

I got to the show a little early and the place was already crawling with people I'd never seen before. Its funny how a punk legend in these parts will bring out all kinds of backwoods punks. And not even just punks, but plenty of other radicals, rockrollers, and, of course, just the curious.

There were folks from all over the South. My friends were there, of course, and some people I see every now and then at Cooters shows. There was the usual handful of Memphis and Arkansas people, and I even met some folks who drove from the Gulf Coast, which is a good six hours away. The event organizers announced that a couple of girls drove all the way from Minneapolis to the show. The most curious person, however, was a young fellow in a "Resist" t-shirt with "Profane Existence - Making Punk A Threat Again!" on the back.

"So you read Profane Existence?" I asked "Uh, read it?" he replied. "Yeah, Profane Existence. The fanzine." "I didn't know it was a fanzine." he said. "Do you like Resist?"

"No, I just like the T-shirt. I bought it in Biloxi." I was pretty much dumbfounded. How could any punk rocker not know PE is a fanzine and Resist is a punk band? I didn't know what to say.

"Well, you should check 'em out." I said, as I thought about the new PE just sitting in the post office waiting for Veteran's Day to be over.

Jello's speech was sarcastically entertaining and bitterly hilarious. The impending oil war in Iraq was his main focus, and he managed to make fun of everybody from "John Asscrack" to "King George the II," who Jello lampooned as "Beavis." All the while he filled in the hard realities and facts of why a war in Iraq is an oil war and will ultimately lead to bigger problems for you and your children sometime in the future. People give Jello Biafra a lot of shit these days, but the man's speech was informative and inspirational, and he reaches out to people of all kinds when he talks. I didn't agree with everything he said, but then again, I don't agree with everything anyone says.

The next day I didn't get off work early, but I still made it to the post office to pick up the new PE. I stayed up all night reading every word and checking out every detail about it because it had been so long since the last issue and I was as enthralled over it as I was with issue number one, way back in 1989! Despite getting only an hour or two of sleep that night. It was worth it. I felt supercharged and ready to tackle the world. Ready to fight greed, fight injustice, and smash boundaries everywhere. Too bad I had to go back to work...



STATE VIOLENCE STATE CONTROL

PART ONE: SATURDAY NIGHT; FEELING THE BURN

"If love could die along with death/This life, it wouldn't be so hard" (Christdriver - "Clean Eyes")

It's been a little over four years since he's been gone. And it's strange-time passes by and you forget how some things hurt and then there are the things that you're not really meant to get over. My friend Shawn is one of these things. After a two-year battle with cancer, Shawn finally let go in August of 1998. It's weird how something like the death of a close friend will sneak up on you from time to time; like I said, the days go by but some things stay with you no matter what happens. I'm all right most of the time, but every now and then something makes me stop what I'm doing. I'll hear a Black Sabbath song that reminds me of him, or see one of his obituaries (the one that was printed in a past issue of Profane Existence) thumbtacked to my wall and it's enough to make this "full metal jacket" punk cry like a little kid or one of those "emo" kids that he likes to make fun of so much.

As I said, Shawn fought cancer hard for a long time. However, in the interim, his father was diagnosed with a similar form of cancer and ended up dying four months before he did. Shawn's mother survived it all-something I cannot fathom ever having the strength to do. And four years went by, with us always in touch and making plans to get together on May 12th (Shawn's birthday) and August 17th (the date of his death). Then the day came when I got a phone call and found out that she had been diagnosed with cancer. Within two months she was gone as well, and I drove to Lexington, Kentucky the following Wednesday for the funeral. This funeral was extremely hard to take-the service featured a lot of the same music and many of the same people that Shawn's funeral did, as



well as his father's before him. It definitely brought back a lot of shit-the only thing I could think about was being one of the pallbearers at Shawn's funeral and how hard it was to keep a stiff upper lip through it all. I hope I never have to go through anything like that again, but I know I will.

Now I'm sitting here all by myself on a Saturday night wondering why the fucking hell I'm not out at a show or something like that. I've been on-again, off-again fucked up over Shawn, compounded by the fact that so much has happened since he died but I still keep coming back to it all. I have a lot to hang on to, though-a bunch of his old Slayer and Napalm Death CD's and a ton of memories of all the crazy shit we got away with together. It's hard, but I would rather have known Shawn and eventually have to deal with the pain of losing him than never to have known him at all. Fucking A - I miss the guy. I always will.

PART 2: HOMELAND SECURITY AND PREACHING TO THE CONVERTED

Dan told me the theme of this issue of Profane would have something to do with "homeland security." Personally, I am both amazed and appalled at what Americans are willing to sacrifice following the destruction of the World Trade Center towers on September 11th, 2001. Since that day, there has been a lot of clamping down on American civil liberties, with ever-increasing instances of wiretapping, electronic surveillance, and the like-and most Americans actually support this! The response to this statement is by large something to the effect of "Well, if you're not doing anything illegal, you have nothing to worry about." But how will this hold up when you are arrested and held without bail, on trumped-up charges (or even no charges at all) just because someone suspects you're in league with terrorists? This happened with initial mass arrests following September 11th and is still going on today, with increased xenophobia and scapegoating of Arabic and Islamic people within and outside of the United States. We even have someone in charge of this so-called "homeland security," none other than Mr. Thomas Ridge, whose name may ring a bell with some PE readers. As governor of Pennsylvania, Ridge served as one of the forces that has kept political prisoner Mumia Abu-Jamal on Death Row since the early '80s. And I won't even get into the continued lumping in with anti-capitalist protestors and anti-war activists as constituting a "terrorist threat."

So this is all going on, as the United States goes to extra lengths to not only maintain a false sense of security among its citizens, but to further its own imperialistic bloodlust under the facade of "stopping terrorism." I can only hope that the rest of the world doesn't see all Americans as paranoid, murderous thugs. There are a lot of us who don't support this shit.

Vile Dominion #2 will be out by the time you read this. Send a buck or some postage and I'll get one to you. Until then, drink lots of coffee, listen to Bolt Thrower and The Awakening, and try to stay happy despite all the shit. Be good to your friends too, because none of us are going to be around forever.

Cheers-Doug / 1970 Westwood Northern Blvd. #5 / Cincinnati, OH 45225 / USA diamond666@hotmail.com



"More In Common With The Amoeba Than the Microchip."

In 1999, a presumptuous scientist exclaimed Pieter Johnson had released. "Clearly one of the most important papers so far published". It gave the public exactly what they wanted: A reason not to worry. Presented at the apex of the research effort done towards determining causes for the overall massive global decline in amphibian populations and specifically flagged by major outbreak of frog abnormalities (i.e.: multiple legs, spinal de-

formations, and eyes found in their throats etc). Johnson's paper stated that these abnormalities occur naturally in the wild due to a parasite known to disrupt normal development. The public's concern vanished. Pollution control agencies lost their funding and activist efforts abandoned.

The results of Johnson's research are correct. It does explain the naturally occurring 1% cases of amphibian abnormalities found in the wild. What it doesn't explain is ponds where up to 70% of the amphibian are afflicted with abnormalities, or in locations not exposed to these parasites. An outbreak this large could only occur when a population's immune system is drastically compromised. Something like highly transmittable AIDS epidemic for amphibians. But why should we care, other than the fact that amphibians are considered an environmental indicator species? (I.E: the preverbal canary in the coalmine.)

You have no reason to worry, - unless you are a woman. You can look forward to a future with high predisposition to early onset of uterine, fallopian, cervical, breast, and vaginal cancer, along with infertility. Your daughters will experience premature onset of puberty, and definite malformations of the uterus. Men have other concerns. You can look forward to a future filled with cancer targeting the prostate, epididymies, testis, and seminal vesicles. As well as decreased libido, impotence, and low sperm count. Your future sons will look forward decreased penis size, decreased blood androgens, and un-descended testis.

If that doesn't make you want to grab your uglies and run, future generations will also have shared concerns to look forward to! Let the war of the sexes find common ground, both suffering from life altering/threatening malformations of the external genitals, skeleton, thyroid, circulatory system, digestive system, liver, kidney, immune system, adrenal glands, sexual development, and metabolism. There will be an increase of hermaphrodites, missing limbs, and underweight births. There will be a human wide loss of brain functions, mental capacity, motor control, emotional response and self-control.

Over the past 10 years there have been observations of these alarming trends. See of any of this sound familiar? An increase of cancer detected in people during their early 20's. Increase in tumors, and cysts found in the reproductive area, particularly in young women. Persisting extinction in areas where the species have been rehabilitated. Lower test scores. An increase in serious cases of attention deficit and hyperactivities. Fertility problems. Viagra. Massive societal problems with depression and other associated emotional coping skills. Developmental problems associated with everything physical, mental, sexual, and embryonic. Maybe you've caught something in the papers about fish and amphibians found in streams near paper mills. Males with eggs (not sperm) found in their testis. Obesity due to metabolism malfunctions. Increased cases of weak immune systems and an increase in allergies. Even cases of missing limbs and multiple limbs?

These symptoms can all be traced back to one common cause: Endocrine-mimicking chemicals. Synthetic compounds that act like hormones. Hormones are the way a body communicates with itself. It is the brain's messenger to the rest of the body, signaling it to start, regulate, and stop each and every one of its functions. Each hormone-sensing site works like a puzzle piece, and only sends a signal when the fitting piece comes into place. Chemicals such as pesticides, synthetic hormone treatments and plastics, when they biodegrade, break down into organic compounds that happen to fit with our natural hormone receptacles and overload the system with false signals. Consider it a computer virus to the motherboard of all motherboards.

This issue is nothing new. Rachel Carson's book Silent Spring, addressed this over 40 years ago, and although a lot was done to mend some of these initial environmental violations, many of the sources that caused the original "silent spring", have gone stealth. When you are talking about hormones, it is in measurements parts per billion. The devastating effects of hormone mimicking chemicals are being measured parts per trillion. Point being: a little goes a VERY long way, and no amount of pollution can be considered negligible. "One can begin to imagine a quantity so infinitesimally small by thinking of a drop of gin in a train tank cars full of tonic. One drop in 660 tank cars would be one part per trillion; such a train would be six miles long." (Colborn,

Dumanoski, and Myers. p 40)

There are three major categories for endocrine mimickers: Xenoestrogens (and other synthetic supplemental hormones), Pesticides, and Plastics.

Xenoestrogens: example: DES (diethylstilbestrol), administered to women from the 1920's until 1962, for any potential birth related problem, estrogen related issue, and/or could be used as a "morning after" pill. It was also used by farmers to "beef up" their livestock. It was taken off the market do to its proven side effects seen in the women taking DES in their offspring: Reproductive organ dysfunction, abnormal pregnancies, a reduction in fertility, immune system disorders, depression, vaginal cancers occurring in their 20's, missing limbs, phocomelia, organ malfunctions, brain damage, deafness, blindness, epilepsy, autism, deformed and upside down uteruses, infertility, and entopic pregnancies.

Pesticides: example: DDT (dichlorodiphenyl trichlorethane). DDT was originally used during World War II as a biological weapon causing a destruction of self-protective enzymes. It disrupts cellular respiration, (the breakdown of food into useable energy). It causes organ failure. Failure of the adrenal glands, gonads, thyroid, liver, kidneys, and intestine. Finally, due to its carbon base and organic composition, it has a tendency to bind with some cells' DNA and instigate many different types of cancer. After the war, the very same DDT was effectively re-assigned. A use originally discovered from the biological weapon initial test subjects: insects. Many similar formulas are still being used currently in pesticides. Think pesticide, think watered down poison. Keep in mind that we are still talking about life threatening effects seen in concentrations in parts per trillion.

Polymers (plastics): The most common offender is phthalate, a polymer used to make plastics flexible. As a solid, it is generally inert. But when the product begins to break down its chemical formula begins to change. With the combination of other organic compounds and exposure to UV rays, there has been a massive amount of evidence pointing to these breakdown products being another source of endocrine (hormone) mimicking chemicals. Known offending products include: baby toys, most plastics, spermicides, detergents, lab flasks, plastic containers, protective linings in canned foods, textiles, paper, toiletries, and rubber nipples on baby bottles. So where is the public alert?

Foremost, like most problems, there is a lack of public information and awareness being passed around. Much of it has been suppressed and discounted by the corporations that manufacture these products. Still, there is plenty of research and publications that are very accessible to the public. This is no secret.

Part of the problem is finding specific evidence linking A to B. Most toxic chemicals are tested in condition where the agent is only in the presence of itself. What is not being tested is breakdown products, duration of a chemical's half-life, and most importantly, how these breakdown products interact once free in the environment. Many of these chemicals become increasingly toxic when exposed to other biological matter. Companies are not required to consider the long-term disposal effects related to the products they make. It is lack foresight that is our greatest threat to the environment.

Because the effects of endocrine mimicking chemicals are generational, there is a great span of time (a person's whole life up until that time) that is hard to monitor and determine the exact critical moment of exposure to a toxin and the effects it alone caused. Even when considering birth defects, there still is a 9-month span of potential exposures to harmful chemicals. Science has so far found that most of the most profound birth defects are caused by exposure to harmful chemicals within the first 3 months of pregnancy. Much of that time, a woman may not even be aware that they are pregnant. By the time a malformity manifests itself, it is too late. One of the major problems seen so far is that many toxins, heavy metals, and hormone mimicking chemicals, stay within an organism permanently. They store themselves and accumulate in the body's fat storages. These are places where most of our hormone receptors are: breasts, uterus, thyroid, brain, etc. Think of every exposure you've ever had to a toxic chemical. Every time, you were taking a little bit with you for the rest of your life. If you are a female, you'll not only be living with a lifetime of exposure yourself, but each of your offspring will be inheriting it though your uterine wall, and breast milk. This compounds one's exposure to toxins generation after generation.

There are laws against how much toxic waste a country can produce. Predictably, countries and corporations (especially in the U.S.) produce more than their share of toxic waste. To prevent fines and stricter regulations, legally and illegally, they pay impoverished nations to dispose of their toxic waste for them. Paying them to take the blame. These countries are so desperate, they are willing to prolong suicide over prolonged debt. Think of the long-term debt they are also being paid for with the public health problems associated with taking on these toxins? Many companies are able to disguise the toxic content of their products by listing these chemicals as a "trade secret". Think about how they say cigarette companies get away with having arsenic in their cigarettes. This is legally exempt from the Freedom of Information Act. So even if a product is designed to kill, it can legally be kept from the consumer.

What can you do?

Most importantly, educate yourself about the issue. The best resource I've read about the subject is the book, *Our Stolen Future*, by Theo Colborn, Dianne Dumanoski, and John Peterson. This book was written in 1997, and currently, we have even more information, more evidence, and even more sources of endocrine mimicking chemicals than I have listed here.

Spread the word, talk to strangers, and bring up the topic as often as you can. Companies such as Dow Jones Industrial tried to prevent *Our Stolen Future* from being published. Fortunately for them, it was the lack of public response that thwarted a lawsuit and major damage control. Remember, corporations won't stop polluting until they are forced to. The only way that will happen is when the public demands it. Write your congressman.

Use as little plastic as possible, and choose a glass alternative. Recycle. When choosing toys for small children, pick ones made from natural resources (wood and non-synthetic textiles). Blocks, not action figures. Wash your produce with soap and water! Most pesticides are designed to withstand outdoor conditions: i.e.: rainstorms etc. Water alone won't do it. Stick to organic produce. Do what you can to prevent any further global warming. Keep in mind that UV rays are one of the number one causes for cancer, and for creating new and even more toxic chemical compounds from pesticides and plastics. Ride your bike. Exercise helps build your immune system, and aid against cancer.

Avoid consuming livestock in any form. If you eat meat, try to eat less or none at all. One of the most disturbing effects seen lately is in animals found at the top of the food chain, such as polar bears. Suffering from many of the afflictions stated earlier, and becoming an endangered species because of it. Because animals store their lifetime of exposure to toxic chemicals in their fat storages, if another animal eats that animal, they will assume the consumed animal's toxins as well. Livestock is one of the top contributors to global warming, and destruction of fertile topsoil as well.

Use alternatives to pesticides. Try organic methods first. Ladybugs feast of aphids. Try putting your plant inside a plastic bag and blowing in cigar-smoke, keeping it sealed for a day or two. Keep in mind that anything that kills insects probably has the potential to be harmful and poison you as well. Preferably, use soapy water. It dries out an insect's exoskeleton, rather than using a poison. Boycott companies known for their hazardous waste.

Think in the long term. Not only about waste products, recycling, and environmental issues, but family planning as well. Over population has more to do with most of our environmental problems than anything else. If you plan to have children, start preparing your body early. Care for yourself like you would your own child. You have only one you for the rest of your life, and you never know if what you are exposing yourself to will have long-term effects.

Lastly, speak for those who cannot. It is the people taking in our toxins in third world countries. It is the plants and animals already suffering the effects of our waste. It is our future generations yet to be conceived. The frogs are indicating a serious problem. Something is very wrong, and if we ignore and silence our warnings, we can't claim innocence. "No witchcraft, no enemy action had silenced the rebirth of new life in this stricken world. The people had done it to themselves." - Rachel Carson, Silent Springs.

Abbi: abbigedon@hotmail.com

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Seward community Cafe

As a part of our effort to highlight the connection between political ideals and action in our daily lives, we have decided to feature a series of interviews with local, democratically-run collectives. For the first, we have chosen one of our favorite local hangover hospices and/or place to get yummy veggie grub, the Seward Cafe. Present from the Seward Cafe collective are Roger, Miriam, and Nikolas. For the PE Team are Dan and Maygun.

PE: How long have each of you been working at the Seward?

Roger: I've been here a total of about four and half years, but that's been on and off since 1995. Miriam: I've been working here about a year. Nikolas: It's been about two and a half years.

PE: How long ago did the Seward start?

Roger: October 14th, 1974. I remember the day, because I was reading the history lesson a couple of weeks ago. We're coming up on our 30 year anniversary in about a year and a half.

PE: Was it always collectively run?

Nikolas: Yes, from the very beginning.

PE: Is there anyone here from the beginning?

Nikolas: Not anymore. Frank was here until about two years ago. He was one of the original members — the only one that stayed so long. I guess it was about a year and a half ago that he left.

Roger: Yeah, he retired and went to live in Kansas.

PE: Can you tell us how the collective has changed over the years?

Roger: Well, a million and one people have been through here and worked here. At various stages, it's gone through so many changes of atmosphere, but also no change in that we've always done the same thing. In terms of the people working here there was the hardcore punk phase, then there was the "theater geek" phase...

Nikolas: Let's talk about the hippy phase...

Roger: Oh yeah. That was a long phase, but we don't like to talk about it. [Laughter].

PE: Can you tell us about the building? Has it always been like this?

Nikolas: The original building ended right there [pointing to the wall dividing the building in half] and this is considered the new addition. Well, I guess it's not really new anymore.

Roger: It was added around '81 or '82.

Nikolas: At the time, the collective secured a loan and built the addition. It was originally a mom and pop kind of hamburger joint, bar and grill kind of thing.

Roger: The Fireside Inn.

Miriam: There was beer on tap.

Roger: It was just the front room with the bar and a kitchen in back. The kitchen has actually been expanded twice now.

Nikolas: When the cafe first opened, there was beer on tap and it was hamburgers and french fries. Things have changed quite a bit, although they move slowly and take years to happen.

PE: How long did the cafe serve beer?

Roger: Quite a while; like five years or so. The tubes for the beer taps are still in the walls. They come up from the basement and end somewhere in the counter.

PE: The cafe owns the building and the land

around it then?

Nikolas: Yeah and that's been a really great thing.

PE: Has the cafe always had the extra land or was it bought later?

Roger: I'm not exactly sure in what order it was done. I know they bought the restaurant building first. I think there was a barn or something [pointing to the garden lot next door].

Nikolas: It was a garage actually.

Miriam: The land is a trust.

Roger: Well, there's been a lot of talk about making into a trust, but I don't think it's actually been done.

PE: How many people are in the collective?

Nikolas: Right now there are 16 or 17 people. There's only two people working here who aren't a part of the collective. It takes six months to become a collective member. There is an initial intake period where you figure out what shifts you want to work, if you want to cook or work counter. There's a couple of evaluations in there, but after six months you can decide if you want to become a collective member. Most people do join the collective, which is usually why they're here. At that point, there is an evaluation and the collective votes on that person.

PE: Not everyone working here is necessarily a collective member?

Nikolas: No. Some people are on their way. Everyone once in a while there someone will decide that they just want to cover some shifts, but don't want to take on the responsibility of management duties. That's OK, so long as it's in the very far minority, because we need a lot of people taking on management duties.

PE: How is this organized and how are decisions made?

Nikolas: It's consensus. We have a meeting once a week. Nothing is done by majority, it's all done by consensus. This does leave room if someone wants to stand aside for a decision and let everyone else do it. There is also the opportunity to block a decision and then the whole thing is revisited.

Roger: There hasn't been a block in a while.

Nikolas: Yeah, there's hasn't been one in a long time.

PE: With PE we found that it was better to have everyone come to a consensus instead of someone walking away angry.

Roger: Yeah, if someone is unhappy for some reason, then there was probably something wrong with the proposal.

Miriam: Coming to a consensus ends up taking more time, but I think it makes more sense in the long run.

Nikolas: When people have been working together for a long time, then they are more like-minded and it really makes it an easier situa-

tion.

Roger: At different times, there have been some more volatile personalities within the collective, and that always makes decision making... uh, different and more difficult. When someone says "I know exactly how it's going to be and I'm going to tell you right now..." Then it is just much more difficult than when everyone is a little more laid back and not so strident about their desires.

PE: Has anyone been asked to leave for hampering the decision making process?

Roger: Not for hampering the decision making process. We've fired people because they sucked... [Laughter]

Nikolas: People have been asked to leave. Generally, by the time it gets to that point, that person knows that things aren't working out and they have to move on. It's not a pleasant situation for that person to come to work and be in that environment. Things generally work themselves out before someone is asked to leave. We do practice conflict resolution and probably do it every couple of months.

PE: Is that part of the organizing structure?

Nikolas: Yeah. It's not this big thing though, like "Oh my god, we have to have a conflict resolution." You know, there's just problems that come up between people at work and they just want to get it out. I think it's the healthiest way to deal with it. It should be just part of work, not a big emergency situation. We should try to catch it early and work it out before it gets too serious. That really helps prevent those situations from coming up where it gets so bad that someone has to leave.

PE: How have internal problems, such as sexism, racism, or homophobia been addressed within the group?

Miriam: People can choose to address the problem directly with the group. Otherwise, they can bring it up with the Personnel committee and they will ask how they want the issue addressed. It can either be talked about with the whole collective or else it can be addressed directly with that person, through some sort of mediation. Sexism is the problem that comes up the most within the different dynamics of the group. In our hiring process, we try to take all of those things into account with the questions that we ask. We also try to keep a good gender balance within the collective.

PE: You try to find those issues before they become major problems?

Miriam: Yeah.

Nikolas: We've never had any serious problem. Nothing has ever gotten so bad that it has gotten out of hand.

PE: So it's never gotten so bad that anyone was actually kicked out?

Miriam: If things can't be resolved through mediation, talking directly, or through the collective, then a Breach of Trust Agreement can be set up. The Personnel Committee talks to the individual that is having the problem, identifies the problem, and comes up with some sort of plan of behavior that the person has to agree to. If that doesn't resolve it within a certain amount of time, then the collective would discuss whether or not to fire that person. It is a consensus decision, to fire and hire people.

Nikolas: Within the last few years, that really hasn't been a problem.

Roger: I should add that this has never been a racially diverse organization. I think before I worked here, there was a more diverse group.

PE: Is that something you have tried to address?

Roger: I actually find the concept of recruiting for diversity to be distasteful and dishonest.

Nikolas: We've talked about this in depth on a retreat. Asking why is it this way and if there is anything we can do to be more open and more appealing than to such a narrow group. I can even remember Frank talking about how the Cafe was never really racially diverse. I guess there was a time when it was more so in the past.

Roger: More so meaning anything more than none at all.

Miriam: Our customer base is somewhat diverse, but the vast majority of customers are white people.

Roger: I guess one thing, as one of our former collective members named Mike Harris pointed out, is that we are the only place on Franklin Ave. between the American Indian Center and the Mississippi River that will let Native Americans, or anyone for that matter, come in and pee.

PE: When you need people, how does someone get a job here? What is the process?

Miriam: We put up hiring signs and the Personnel Committee will go through all of the applications. First we go through a screening review with the personnel committee and we decide who we want to call back and bring to the collective. You have two interviews: first the screening and then with the collective interview. If the collective consensus, then that person will be hired.

PE: So the collective is subdivided into com-

mittees?

Nikolas: yes, there are different committees that do different tasks. When you are in that six month intake period for the collective, you go to different meetings of the smaller committees and try to find out what you enjoy doing. If you are really into cooking and are into that aspect, you know health code and stuff, then you may decide to go on the kitchen committee. If you're really into interpersonal relationships, then you may want to become part of the Personnel Committee. If you like numbers and money...

Roger: And computers...

Miriam: Taxes...

Roger: Lawyers and the IRS, then you go into the Finance or Legal Committees.

Nikolas: Some people are forced into the Legal Committee.

PE: Yeah, some probably aren't very much fun. How many committees are there?

Roger: Finance, Kitchen, Legal, Maintenance, Outreach and Personnel.

PE: Is it mandatory to be on a committee if you are a part of the collective?

Nikolas: Yes. I should mention that Outreach is taking care of ads and making T-shirts.

Roger: And going to neighborhood meetings and stuff like that.

Nikolas: Maintenance is basically about making sure everything is up to code; no live wires sticking out of the walls, and stuff like that.

PE: How is a collective structure different than a cooperative?

Roger: A Cooperative generally has a more top-down method of structure to it. A case in point is that place [pointing to the Seward Food Coop next door]. They have the traditional structure of business. They are a buyers coop, which means that the people who are running it are the ones who make the decisions. They are also the ones who hire the employees who stock the shelves, run the cash registers, and this and that.

PE: But they claim to be owned and run by the customers?

Roger: No. I guess it's kind of owned by the customers, because they sell memberships.

Nikolas: The customers pay their \$80 membership or whatever, so they feel like they own a share and are buying into it, but they have no say into how it's run.

Miriam: They basically get to come to the annual meetings.

Nikolas: Yeah, they can come and put their vote in, but generally the same people just get voted in year after year. I guess if someone is making a big stink, then they may be voted out, but it's pretty stable that way. The big difference there is that the actual workers don't have a say in how things are run, who they buy from, and all of those basic things. In a collective, it is the workers who are the management as well as the grunt workers, so they have a direct say in every issue.

Roger: And are directly responsible for everything that is going on.

Nikolas: This is definitely not a do your work and go home kind of job.

PE: Do you think there is a calculated deception being made by some of the co-ops into making people think it is more democratic institution?

Nikolas: I think it used to be much more democratic, like the whole coop movement back in the 70's. It started off really radical, but now the only one still doing that is North Country Coop. The others just really try to give off this feeling of being really good for the Earth or really radical or something...

Roger: But they really just want to make money.

Nikolas: Yeah, they've just found their niche where they can make money and that they are doing. North Country is the only exception in Minneapolis.

Roger: I think there may be one in St. Paul too, but I can't say for sure.

PE: Is there any kind of organization of collectives that you are involved in?

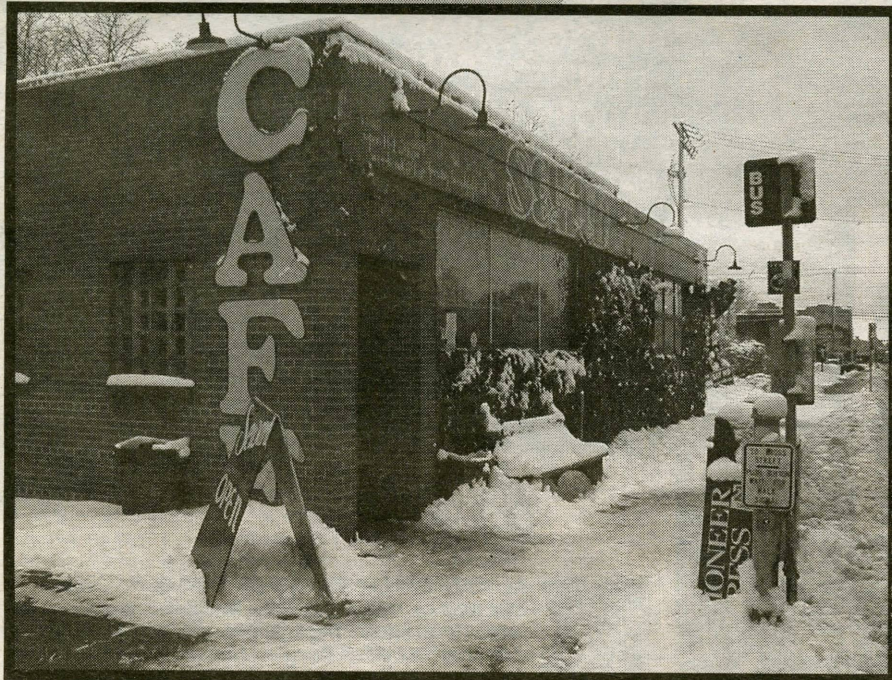
Roger: We're kind of involved in this local loose-knit federation called the Minneapolis Collective of Collectives. Basically it's a group of people from various collectives around town, like the Hard Times Cafe, Arise, North Country...

Miriam: Northland Poster Collective

Roger: Gallumph Interactive Theater, Peace Coffee... I went to a couple of those meetings, then got "meetinged out." Basically it was an idea to try to see if all of the collectives could somehow assist each other with reciprocal discounts. I think it's on hiatus right now, but some really good projects came out of it, like discount cards.

PE: Is this still going?

Nikolas: Yes, but in the last few weeks I think they've been rethinking something. For the most part I thought it was really good. I think they realized that at first they were meeting way too often, like every week or every other week or something. So I think they decided to just not meet so often. Aside from the discount cards, I also think there was more of an awareness raised. Like you may work in a collective and know of a couple of others, but you may not re-



alize all of the other places. I thought that was great and it created a little more sense of solidarity between the different collectives.

Roger: There were also some differences. Like the places that were about food had a lot more to do with each other than the places that didn't. Nikolas: Yeah, we already have some affiliations with similar places, like the Hard Times, which we give a 33% discount for people who work there and they do the same for us. We also do a discount with North Country.

PE: How are the employees compensated here?

Miriam: We all get paid \$6 an hour for the first year. After that, if you are a collective member, then you get \$7 an hour. There's some other benefits if you are collective member, like a shoe allowance of \$40 every six months. There is also a certain amount of sick pay hours and a child care allowance, once you are a collective member. We also divide our tips evenly by the amount of hours that you work, not by which shifts you work. We all get the tips at the collective meetings with your check.

Nikolas: There are some other perks for being a collective member as well. Everyone gets a free meal during their shift. For every meeting that you go to you get a "Burger Bucks" card, which is worth \$13 worth of free food. Once you are a collective member, you get \$7 and tips work out to about \$1 more.

Roger: Yeah, it kind of offsets the taxes taken out.

Nikolas: So you still make out with about \$7 an hour, which is more than we've ever made. One of our goals is to be able to pay everyone a liveable, decent wage. It would be nice to give everyone another raise in the next couple of year.

PE: Do you ever do trades or barter with other organizations?

Nikolas: Yes, but we haven't done any for a while. Roger: We do more food donations than anything. Like someone will have and event and they'll ask us to donate a snack or something. We've donated pancake batter to Women's Prison Book Project annual pancake breakfast benefit for the past few years.

Nikolas: It seems like every month or so, there will be a group that sends us a letter and asks us to donate some sort of food or drink item.

Miriam: A lot of times people will trade Burger Buck cards in exchange for services, like with our friends.

Nikolas: Yeah, some people will pay for tattoos with them. Basically, anyone who wants to come and eat here, you can pay them with that. As for food trades, sometimes we'll do a trade with like Pizza Lucé. You know, they feed our staff and we feed their staff for that shift on that day. Roger: That basically takes the place of your shift meal for that day.

PE: Has there been a purposeful intent of the Seward Collective to attract a more activist based community as customers?

Nikolas: Not really.

Miriam: It just happens. The people who want to support us do so because they agree with our politics and want to eat here.

PE: Is this a reflection of the area or would the Seward be able to survive in another neighborhood?

Roger: Potentially it could happen anywhere.

Nikolas: The neighborhood is definitely ideal though. We have the West Bank right next to us and there are also a lot of people who live in Phillips to the other side of us.

PE: Do you do a lot of outreach to the community?

Roger: We advertise in the neighborhood newspaper sometimes, and of course ads in other stuff. There is a guy who has been going regularly to the neighborhood group meetings and the civil commerce group meetings. There was a lapse for a couple of years where we didn't do much of that and it was kind of bad. The less you go to those meetings the less they pay attention to you and tend to ignore you.

Nikolas: We also do ads in local theater groups when they do handbills for productions. We've also done buttons and T-shirts.

Roger: And mugs too.

PE: What other activities take place in the space aside from the cafe?

Miriam: We have art shows, music shows, meetings...

Nikolas: So long as it's not too violent of a band, we'll have bands play.

Roger: There have been lengthy discussions about what kind music we should try to have and what not to have. Those were lengthy, lengthy debates.

Nikolas: We ended up deciding to make these decisions on a case-by-case basis. We generally won't have thrash bands play, although we have in the past, but it's still just a case by case basis. There have been bands in the past that we've decided against based on their reputation for being incredibly violent. It's not that we're

against that, but we are a restaurant and we have all of these windows, plants and stuff, and it's just not the right environment for it.

Roger: It's always fun to come open up in the morning and find an empty 40 oz. bottle in the children's play area [laughter]!

PE: Do you have a lot of benefit shows?

Roger: Yeah, lately we've been doing mostly benefits for ourselves. We had a giant kitchen refurbishing project to pay for.

Nikolas: People will call, or people that usually come to eat here, will have some sort of meeting or event or a benefit here. It's pretty cool for us, because we're only open until 3:00 and 4:00 on the weekends, so we have the space and we'll hire it for free if we're down with the cause, or else just charge a minimum cost.

PE: How often?

Roger: Hardly ever a couple nights a week.

Nikolas: Usually about once a week at the most.

PE: You just talked about having benefits for the Seward. Does the cafe generate enough money to keep going, special projects aside?

Roger: Business has actually shot up in the past three years.

PE: Any specific reason?

Roger: We raised our prices a little bit, which brings in more money, but only a little bit. I think that the Seward went through a period about eight years ago, when the cafe turned into more of a club house. A lot of the regulars started leaving and the place kind of fell into shambles and was not really a pleasant place to eat in. There was a bit of a coup after that, where some people took it over and worked without wages for a while, because business was way, way down. They then slowly built it back up, made it more pleasant, started to do a little more outreach to our regulars, and people started coming back. It seems like as the character of the collective becomes more tightly knit and coherent, then the atmosphere and the food improves. More care given to the place makes people notice it.

Nikolas: We've also gotten a lot of younger, fresh blood over the past couple of years. You know, people are more gung ho with new ideas and are ready to just plow ahead.

PE(Dan): I remember for a time when people here seemed to be just burned out on it.

Roger: Yeah, the structure here used to be set up so that it would make people burn out. It actually almost seemed like it was designed to destroy your mind and body. Now it's much better.

Nikolas: We have been really careful not to throw out the baby with the bath water though. You know, not to say just scratch all of those things that we did in the past. We've been really careful to keep the "history lesson" that Frank made on tape. When we have enough new people that have been hired, then we show the video. We really do want to instill a sense of history and remember all of the things that have been done before, so we don't make the same mistakes over again.

PE: How long ago did the Seward stop serving dinner?

Roger: That ended in '94. That was during our period of extreme crisis.

Nikolas: We found that it just wasn't profitable to be open at night. It really could be made that way. But we would have to get more people working, to keep people from getting burned out, and of course do more advertizing and pitched it that way. Really, it could be done. It's been done a couple of times in the past.

Roger: It actually was open for dinner all the way until '94, but we had to cut some stuff out in order to make the operation more streamlined and make it work better. It works better as just being a breakfast and lunch place.

Nikolas: They just figured out that 80% of our money comes from breakfast, especially on the weekend.

PE: The menu of the Seward is primarily vegan and vegetarian, but then why do you still include sausage on the menu?

Roger: The restaurant is ours, but to some extent it is also the Seward Community Cafe too. The sausage is a throwback to the day when the Seward used to serve hamburgers, and people still come here and want sausage with their breakfast. I don't think there is anyone who works here that would care two shits if the pork sausage was thrown out, but people who come here to eat would.

PE: Is it ordered often?

Nikolas: Yeah, on the weekends is when we sell it the most. We've had this discussion at meetings a few times. Some people think it's stupid, we shouldn't have it, and it goes against everything we stand for. At the same time, we are serving the community, and not everyone is vegan or vegetarian. I'm a vegan myself, but I still think it's good to have that option for people. We don't want to come across as coming down on anyone or being exclusive towards anyone. That's another one of those history things that we've maintained, in that we've always kept one



meat product on the menu.

Roger: It's kind of a joke though too. Sometimes we'll be out of it and we'll ask "Maybe you'd like to try the vegan sausage?" And they'll say "That was great! Much better than those other sausages." I've eaten those sausages and they're not so great. They're just kind of little tiny things and don't have any flavor.

PE: Are most of the collective members vegetarian or vegans?

Nikolas: I think we have the most vegans we've ever had in the collective. At least five or six.

Miriam: I think it's more like half vegan.

Nikolas: There's actually only a few that aren't vegetarian.

Roger: I think I may be the only person here who actually eats dead things.

Miriam and Nikolas: Jesse.

Roger: Oh yeah, Jesse and I are united in our shame! [Laughter].

PE: Do you make an effort to get your food from as close to the growing source or from other collectives as often as possible?

Nikolas: Yes, definitely whenever possible. Our bread supplier, People's Company Bakery, just went out of business after twenty something years. So we just found this new place in Duluth, which is this really cool little worker collective that makes really good bread.

Miriam: Positively Third Street Bakery. They've been a cooperative for a long time.

Roger: They send us our bread shipments in empty Leinenkugels cases. That's cool.

Nikolas: All of the business that used to get their bread from People's Company, like Hard Times and North Country, now get their bread from them. It's cool that we now have this connection up in Duluth. Roots and Fruits is one of our big distributors. We're trying to lessen our dependence on Blooming Prairie.

Roger: They just got bought out by Whole Foods. Nikolas: Yeah, it goes back to that whole coop structure of the management just making money off the workers. It's pretty hard, because we have to try to balance buying stuff at a cheaper price and still stay afloat.

PE: Have you ever felt targeted for the political activism or activist crowd that comes here?

Nikolas: By the police?

PE: By the police or the neighborhood.

Roger: We've definitely been treated like dirt from certain aspects of the neighborhood, because we're not very excited about making lots of money and becoming rich with the restaurant. We've never [knocks loudly on the window frame] had any kind of interaction with the police. We've had trouble with licensing, during that period of transition, where all of these people had taken on new responsibilities to do license renewal and permits and stuff. It turns out that they hadn't done any of it and neglected to tell anyone that they hadn't done it. Then the licensing department started paying visits and call and saying "We need this, this, and this or we close you down." We had to scramble and get all of that taken care of pretty quick. But the police have never. It's not like we really have anything here that the police are really interested in.

Nikolas: I've seen obviously off duty cops come in here to eat...

Roger: One time these three cops came in, just after a friend of mine was brutally beaten by the police, and I was wearing a T-shirt that was written on in marker something extremely rude and blatant thing like "Fuck the police" or "I hate cops" or something. Anyway, there were these three guys who obviously were policemen, with no necks and nice clothes...

PE: And moustaches...

Roger: Yeah, they had moustaches. They sat in the corner booth and we just glared back and

forth at each other. One of them was apparently the brother of someone who used to work here, which is why they came in. They never came back though.

Nikolas: The place has a reputation and is known for it's activism. We have our bulletin board up and it's pretty obvious that its used by a lot of the activist community. I think that's pretty well known in the police force and the city. It's not exactly a hidden thing, but we've never had any outright problems. We're not exactly holding rallies here...

Roger: or growing weed in the basement, or anything like that.

PE: Any grand future plans for the Seward?

Roger: Umm... we're going to build a tower of diamonds up on the roof once we start making lots and lots of money.

Nikolas: That's been in the planning stages for quite a while now. Oh and don't forget the gold plating guy....

PE: What about the kitchen renovations you were doing the benefit for?

Nikolas: We actually just finished that. It was a major project that we've been working on for the past year. Finally we did it this past fall.

PE: What did that entail?

Nikolas: The main part was getting a make up air system. Looking back in the notes from the early middle 80's it was...

Roger: the Holy Fucking Grail for years.

Nikolas: Yeah, the notes back then said it's the next big project that we need to do right now. Twenty years later we finally did it and I feel that was a really huge accomplishment. At the same time we really got the kitchen up to code. Even the little things like making sure the walls were made of the right material and there was stainless steel on the walls behind the grills. There aren't really health issues, but health code requirements. That's what we did a lot of those benefits for.

Miriam: And a new roof too.

Roger: Yeah it used to rain through the light fixtures in the old building.

Nikolas: We try to do a retreat every year. That's kind of the time where we can just get away and talk about ideas. We've thought about doing stuff like exchanges with collectives in other parts of the world. We would be able to trade collective members for a while and let people travel the world and be able to work in other collectives. Usually, once the really demanding things, like the health code stuff, after all of that is done, then we end up with more time to really think about creative ideas for stuff to do. We're definitely into doing new and creative stuff.

Roger: Still, there's really enough stuff to do around here that planning new things isn't of immediate concern. Like there's the garden and the green space. We've been kind of half-assed about that lately. The cafe used to have a couple of plots in the garden in which we'd grow stuff for here, although we're not technically supposed to. We also want to work on making the perennial bed more attractive and pay more attention to the grounds and the building.

PE: We want to make interviews with local collectives a regular feature in the next few issues of PE. However, we thought it would be a cool idea to ask the people we are interviewing who we should do next. What do you say?

Miriam: Hard Times.

Nikolas: Yeah, Hard Times, unless you want to spread out the food ones.

PE: It's your ball game...

Roger: North Country would be fascinating, because they've been around a lot longer than we have. They have a huge history and they're a much larger business than we are.

Nikolas: They would be the one place that goes back further than us, probably by five years or so.



WALL OF DEATH

"If this were a dictatorship it would be a heck of a lot easier, just so long as I'm the dictator." -- George W Bush (CNN)

By Maygun

February 15, 2003. The World Says NO to War. Between 12 and 20 million people take to the streets across the globe to protest the possibility of war on Iraq. People from all walks of life, each there for their own individual reasons, all united for a larger cause, utilized this day as a time to make their voices heard.

A message was clearly sent this Saturday to world leaders (for lack of a better word) from across the globe: millions of people don't want the United States to invade Iraq. Several Million people are saying NO TO WAR. That should elicit some sort of response, right?

Wrong. Apparently millions of people have no voice. Apparently the Bush administration has decided that the needs of the public are overridden by the needs of our "president's" fanatical dream to achieve world domination. This entire thing is premature ejaculation.

I for one am fucking angry. I see this not only as a blatant disregard for the voices of millions of people all over the world, but also as an utter lack of respect for human life, diversity and opposition. I see this as a travesty. As a blow to our personal liberties as individuals.

I also see this as a challenge. George Bush and his cronies have obviously said "your voice is not enough. It does not matter". To me, that means we need to do something else to make our voices heard...perhaps passive resistance is no longer an option. Perhaps it is time for direct action.

My question, then, is how do we accomplish this? What sort of actions will get their attention? And are you ready to engage in this sort of activity to truly achieve social change? How far would you go to stand up for your beliefs? If taking to the streets in peaceful protest isn't enough to change their minds, what is?

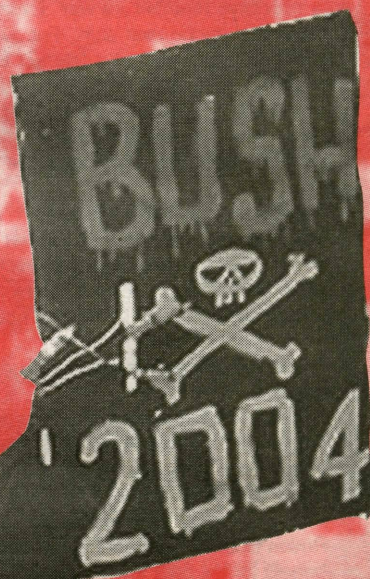
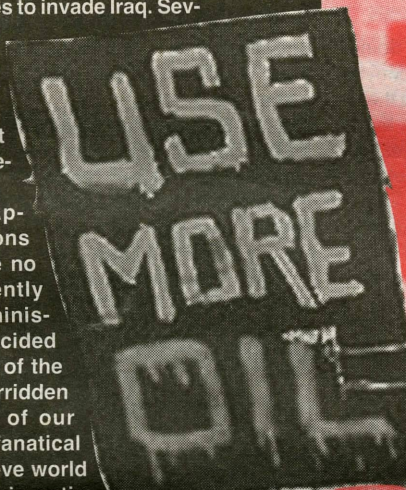
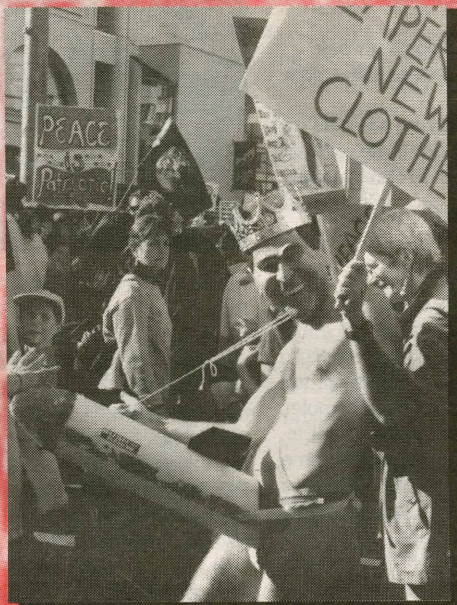
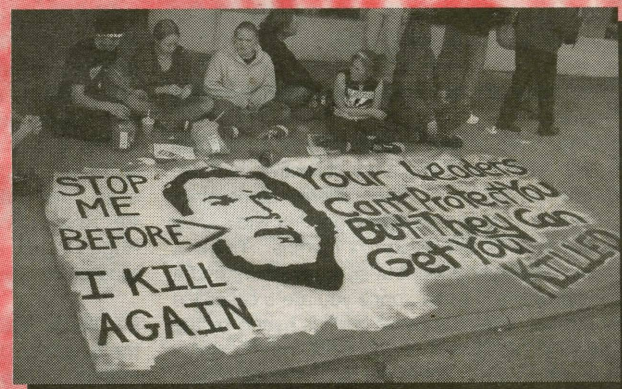
I say we continue to voice our opposition, our cries growing louder and louder until our voices are heard. These protests, marches and rallies all over the world are indeed a threat. Protest permits were denied in New York and Minneapolis; police brutality entered otherwise peaceful protests in New York City, Seattle, Los Angeles, and Colorado Springs. It is obvious that these protests and demonstrations have been noticed; why else would law enforcement officials attempt to deny permits, use force against protesters who were well within the confines of their right to express their opinions, and arrest people for stating their beliefs? They did so because the beliefs of these millions of protesters did not, and do not, match the beliefs of the government that is calling the shots.

I say too fucking bad, George Bush, too fucking bad Colin Powell, too fucking bad Donald Rumsfeld-this isn't your country, this isn't your world, this isn't your choice. The public has spoken, and the public says NO WAR.

And we will continue to say this, however we must, until we are certain that our views have been heard, and that they are being acknowledged.

Now is a time for everyone to get off their asses, get out into the streets and take some responsibility for the fate of their not too distant future. Now is not a time for apathy. It is a time for action.

"I understand people's willingness to protest, but they should not protest the decisions our coalition is making, because it is in the best interest of freedom and humankind." -- George W Bush (US Newswire)



THE SYSTEM

Step 1: READY nearby fence...

Step 2: Take AIM at the system

Step 3: FIRE! (Then run like fuck!)

"See the cops ahead, link arms, march in unison, now charge, wall of death the system, moshtricity" - RAMBO

To Kill Iraq: The Reasons Why

by Michael Parenti

In October 2002, after several days of full-dress debate in the House and Senate, the US Congress fell into line behind almost-elected president George W. Bush, giving him a mandate to launch a massive military assault against the already battered nation of Iraq. The discourse in Congress was marked by its usual cowardice. Even many of the senators and representatives who voted against the president's resolution did so on the narrowest procedural grounds, taking pains to tell how they too detested Saddam Hussein, how they agreed with the president on many points, how something needed to be done about Iraq but not just yet, not quite in this way. So it is with Congress: so much political discourse in so narrow a political space. Few of the members dared to question the unexamined assumptions about US virtue, and the imperial right of US leaders to decide which nations shall live and which shall die. Few, if any, pointed to the continual bloody stream of war crimes committed by a succession of arrogant US administrations in blatant violation of human rights and international law.

Pretexts for War

Bush and other members of his administration have given varied and unpersuasive reasons to justify the "war"—actually a one-sided massacre—against Iraq. They claim it is necessary to insure the safety and security of the Middle East and of the United States itself, for Iraq is developing weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear missiles. But UN inspection teams have determined that Iraq has no such nuclear capability and actually has been in compliance with yearly disarmament inspections.

As for the fact that Iraq once had factories that produced chemical and bacteriological weapons, whose fault was that? It was the United States that supplied such things to Saddam. This is one of several key facts about past US-Iraq relations that the corporate media have consistently suppressed. In any case, according to UN inspection reports, Iraq's C&B warfare capability has been dismantled. Still the Bushites keep talking about Iraq's dangerous "potential." As reported by the Associated Press (2 November 2002), Undersecretary of State John Bolton claimed that "Iraq would be able to develop a nuclear weapon within a year if it gets the right technology." If it gets the right technology? What does that say about anything? The truistic nature of this assertion has gone unnoticed. Djibouti, Qatar, and New Jersey would be able to develop nuclear weapons if they got "the right technology."

Through September and October of 2002, the White House made it clear that Iraq would be attacked if it had weapons of mass destruction. Then in November 2002, Bush announced he would attack if Saddam denied that he had weapons of mass destruction. So if the Iraqis admit having such weapons, they will be bombed; and if they deny having them, they still will be bombed—whether they have them or not.

The Bushites also charged Iraq with allowing al Qaeda terrorists to operate within its territory. But US intelligence sources themselves let it be known that the Iraqi government was not connected to Islamic terrorist organizations. In closed sessions with a House committee, when administration officials were repeatedly asked whether they had information of an imminent threat from Saddam against US citizens, they stated unequivocally that they had no such evidence (San Francisco Chronicle, 20 September 2002). Truth be told, the Bush family has closer ties to the bin Laden family than does Saddam Hussein. No mention is made of how US leaders themselves have allowed terrorists to train and operate within our own territory, including a mass murderer like Orlando Bosch. Convicted of blowing up a Cuban airliner, Bosch walks free in Miami.

Bush and company seized upon yet another pretext for war: Saddam has committed war crimes and acts of aggression, including the war against Iran and the massacre of Kurds. But the Pentagon's own study found that the gassing of Kurds at Halabja was committed by the Iranians, not the Iraqis (Times of India, 18 September 2002). Another seldom mentioned fact: US leaders gave Iraq encouragement and military support in its war against Iran. And if war crimes and aggression are the issue, there are the US invasions of Grenada and Panama to consider, and the US-sponsored wars of attrition against civilian targets in Mozambique, Angola, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, Yugoslavia, and scores of other

places, leaving hundreds of thousands dead. There is no communist state or "rogue nation" that has such a horrific record of military aggression against other countries over the last two decades.

With all the various pretexts for war ringing hollow, the Bushites resorted to the final indictment: Saddam was a dictator. The United States stood for democracy and human rights. It followed that US leaders were obliged to use force and violence to effect regime change in Iraq. Again, we might raise questions. There is no denying that Saddam is a dictator, but how did he and his crew ever come to power? Saddam's conservative wing of the Ba'ath party was backed by the CIA. They were enlisted to destroy the Iraqi popular revolution and slaughter every democratic, left-progressive individual they could get hold of, which indeed they did, including the progressive wing of the Ba'ath party itself—another fact that US media have let slide down the memory hole. Saddam was Washington's poster boy until the end of the Cold War.

So why has George II, like his daddy, targeted Iraq? When individuals keep providing new and different explanations to justify a particular action, they most likely are lying. So with political leaders and policymakers. Having seen that the pretexts given by the White House to justify war are palpably false, some people conclude that the administration is befuddled or even "crazy." But just because they are trying to mislead and confuse the public does not perforce mean they themselves are misled and confused. Rather it might be that they have reasons which they prefer not to see publicized and debated, for then it would become evident that US policies of the kind leveled against Iraq advance the interests of the rich and powerful at much cost to the American people and every other people on the face of the earth. Here I offer what I believe are the real reasons for the US aggression against Iraq.

Global Politico-Economic Supremacy

A central US goal, as enunciated by the little Dr. Strangeloves who inhabit the upper echelons of policymaking in the Bush administration, is to perpetuate US global supremacy. The objective is not just power for its own sake but power to insure plutocratic control of the planet, power to privatize and deregulate the economies of every nation in the world, to hoist upon the backs of peoples everywhere—including the people of North America—the blessings of an untrammelled "free market" corporate capitalism. The struggle is between those who believe that the land, labor, capital, technology, and markets of the world should be dedicated to maximizing capital accumulation for the few, and those who believe that these things should be used for the communal benefit and socio-economic development of the many.

The goal is to insure not merely the supremacy of global capitalism as such, but the supremacy of US global capitalism by preventing the emergence of any other potentially competing superpower or, for that matter, any potentially competing regional power. Iraq is a case in point. Some nations in the Middle East have oil but no water; others have water but no oil. Iraq is the only one with plenty of both, along with a good agricultural base—although its fertile lands are now much contaminated by the depleted uranium dropped upon it during the 1991 Gulf War bombings.

In earlier times, Iraq's oil was completely owned by US, British, and other Western companies. In 1958 there was a popular revolution in Iraq. Ten years later, the rightwing of the Ba'ath party took power, with Saddam Hussein serving as point man for the CIA. His assignment was to undo the bourgeois-democratic revolution, as I have already noted. But instead of acting as a compradore collaborator to Western investors in the style of Nicaragua's Somoza, Chile's Pinochet, Peru's Fujimora, and numerous others, Saddam and his cohorts nationalized the Iraqi oil industry in 1972, ejected the Western profiteers, and pursued policies of public development and economic nationalism. By 1990, Iraq had the highest standard of living in the Middle East (which may not be saying all that much), and it was evident that the US had failed to rollback the gains of the 1958 revolution. But the awful destruction delivered upon Iraq both by the Gulf War and the subsequent decade of economic sanctions did achieve a kind of counterrevolutionary rollback from afar.

Soon after the collapse of the Soviet Union, US leaders decided that Third World development no longer needed to be tolerated. Just as Yugoslavia served as a "bad" example in Europe, so Iraq served as a bad example to other nations in the Middle East.

The last thing the plutocrats in Washington want in that region is independent, self-defining developing nations that wish to control their own land, labor, and natural resources.

US economic and military power has been repeatedly used to suppress competing systems. Self-defining countries like Cuba, Iraq, and Yugoslavia are targeted. Consider Yugoslavia. It showed no desire to become part of the European Union and absolutely no interest in joining NATO. It had an economy that was relatively prosperous, with some 80 percent of it still publicly owned. The wars of secession and attrition waged against Yugoslavia—all in the name of human rights and democracy—destroyed that country's economic infrastructure and fractured it into a cluster of poor, powerless, right-wing mini-republics, whose economies are being privatized, deregulated, and opened to Western corporate penetration on terms that are completely favorable to the investors. We see this happening most recently in Serbia. Everything is being privatized at garage sale prices. Human service, jobs, and pension funds are disappearing. Unemployment, inflation, and poverty are skyrocketing, as is crime, homelessness, prostitution, and suicide. Welcome to Serbia's free market paradise.

Judging from what has been happening in Serbia, Bosnia, Macedonia, Panama, Grenada, and elsewhere—we can anticipate that the same thing is in store for Iraq following a US occupation: An Iraqi puppet government will be put in place, headed by someone every bit as subservient to the White House as Tony Blair. The Iraqi state-owned media will become "free and independent" by being handed over to rich conservative private corporations. Anything even remotely critical of US foreign policy and free market capitalism will be deprived of an effective platform. Conservative political parties, heavily financed by US sources, will outspend any leftist groupings that might have survived. On this steeply unlevelled playing field, US advisors will conduct US-style "democratic elections," perhaps replicating the admirable results produced in Florida and elsewhere. Just about everything in the Iraqi economy will be privatized at giveaway prices. Poverty and underemployment, already high, will climb precipitously. So will the Iraqi national debt, as international loans are floated that "help" the Iraqis pay for their own victimization. Public services will dwindle to nothing, and Iraq will suffer even more misery than it does today. We are being asked to believe that the Iraqi people are willing to endure another massive bombing campaign in order to reach this free-market paradise.

Natural Resource Grab

Another reason for targeting Iraq can be summed up in one word: oil. Along with maintaining the overall global system of expropriation, US leaders are interested in more immediate old-time colonial plunder. The present White House leadership is composed of oil men who are both sorely tempted and threatened by Iraq's oil reserve, one of the largest in the world. With 113 billion barrels at \$25 a barrel, Iraq's supply comes to over \$2.8 trillion dollars. But not a drop of it belongs to the US oil cartel; it is all state owned. Baghdad has offered exploratory concessions to France, China, Russia, Brazil, Italy, and Malaysia. But with a US takeover of Iraq and a new puppet regime in place, all these agreements may be subject to cancellation. We may soon witness the biggest oil grab in the history of Third World colonialism by US oil companies aided and abetted by the US government.

One thing that US leaders have been interested in doing with Iraqi oil—given the glut and slumping price of crude in recent years—is keep it off the market for awhile longer. As the London Financial Times (24 February 1998) reported, oil prices fell sharply because of the agreement between the United Nations and Iraq that would allow Baghdad to sell oil on the world market. The agreement "could lead to much larger volumes of Iraqi crude oil competing for market shares." *The San Francisco Chronicle* (22 February 1998) headlined its story "IRAQ'S OIL POSES THREAT TO THE WEST." In fact, Iraqi crude poses no threat to "the West" only to Western oil investors. If Iraq were able to reenter the international oil market, the *Chronicle* reported, "it would devalue British North Sea oil, undermine American oil production and—much more important—it would destroy the huge profits which the United States [read, US oil companies] stands to gain from its massive investment in Caucasian oil production, especially in Azerbaijan." We might conclude that direct control and ownership

of Iraqi oil is the surest way to keep it off the world market and the surest way to profit from its future sale when the price is right.

Domestic Political Gains

War and violence have been good to George W. Bush. As of September 10, 2001, his approval ratings were sagging woefully. Then came the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, swiftly followed by the newly trumpeted war against terrorism and the massive bombing and invasion of Afghanistan. Bush's approval ratings skyrocketed. But soon came the corporate scandals of 2002: Enron, WorldCom, and even more perilously Harken and Halliburton. By July, both the president and vice-president were implicated in fraudulent corporate accounting practices, making false claims of profit to pump up stock values, followed by heavy insider selling just before the stock was revealed to be nearly worthless and collapsed in price. By September, the impending war against Iraq blew this whole issue off the front pages and out of the evening news. Daddy Bush did the same thing in 1990, sending the savings and loan scandal into media limbo by waging war against that very same country.

By October 2002, the Republican party, reeling from the scandals and pegged as the party of corporate favoritism and corruption, reemerged as the party of patriotism, national defense, and strong military leadership to win control of both houses of Congress, winning elections it should never have won. Many Americans rallied around the flag, draped as it was around the president. Some of our compatriots, who are cynical and suspicious about politicians in everyday affairs, display an almost child-like unlimited trust and knee-jerk faith when these same politicians trumpet a need to defend our national security against some alien threat, real or imagined.

War also distracts the people from their economic problems, the need for decent housing, schools, and jobs, and a recession that shows no sign of easing. Since George II took office, the stock market has dropped 34 percent, unemployment has climbed 35 percent, the federal surplus of \$281 billion is now a deficit of \$157 billion, and an additional 1.5 million people are without health insurance, bringing the total to 41 million. War has been good for the conservative agenda in general, providing record military spending, greater profits for the defense industry, and a deficit spending spree that further enriches the creditor class at the taxpayer's expense, and is used to justify more cuts in domestic human services.

Liberal intellectuals are never happier than when, with patronizing smiles, they can dilate on the stupidity of George Bush. What I have tried to show is that Bush is neither retarded nor misdirected. Given his class perspective and interests, there are compelling reasons to commit armed aggression against Iraq—and against other countries to come. It is time we dwelled less upon his malapropisms and more on his rather effective deceptions and relentless viciousness. Many decent crusaders have been defeated because of their inability to fully comprehend the utter depravity of their enemies. The more we know what we are up against, the better we can fight it.

Michael Parenti received his Ph.D. in political science from Yale University in 1962. He has taught at a number of colleges and universities, in the United States and abroad. Some of his writings have been translated into Bangla, Chinese, Dutch, French, German, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, and Turkish.

He appears on radio and television talk shows to discuss current issues and ideas from his published works. Dr. Parenti's talks and commentaries are played on radio stations and cable community access stations to enthusiastic audiences in the U.S., Canada and abroad.

He lectures on college campuses and before a wide range of audiences across North America and abroad. His books are enjoyed by both lay readers and scholars, and have been used extensively in college courses. Among the many topics he treats are:

Democracy and Economic Power
Imperialism and U.S. Interventionism
Terrorism and Globalization
Political Bias in the U.S. News Media
Ideology and History
Race, Gender, and Class
The Overthrow of Communism
Fascism: Past and Present

Imagination Against Colonialism

A personal report of actions and experiences in Palestine with the International Solidarity Movement

By av

Introduction

Israeli tanks are said to be indestructible. But numerous times while in the Gaza strip, friends recounted a story to us. It went a little something like this: back in February, Palestinian militants opened fired on an armored settler bus that was driving along one of the settler-only roads in southern Gaza. The bus being bulletproof, no one was harmed. But, as planned, the "IDF" sent out tanks to respond to the attack on the settler bus. As the tanks rolled across the desert they passed over the bombs the militants had buried beforehand, and three were totally destroyed.

The story is always told with a gleeful pride in the action. I think if you had spent a couple of nights in Ramallah, trying to sleep through the terrifying sound, sight and feeling of a fucking tank pounding through the streets at four AM, you would have some sense of why. Certainly if you had spent your whole life under military occupation you'd have a pretty clear picture in your head of the beauty of a tank being blown to bits.

The destruction of a tank is symbolically significant because, perhaps like no other machine can, tanks crush the human imagination. Tanks exist to flatten. Tanks destroy with a thoroughness - an utterly mechanical lack of apology - that is mind-blowing. But more powerful still is the way in which - unlike bombs and missiles - tanks destroy with a force that is immediately, intimately, and undeniably, the work of human beings.

In many ways, the tank is the perfect Zionist weapon. The Zionist project is designed to be simultaneously impenetrable - permanently dominant - and explicitly and obviously done by and for actual people. While the "facts on the ground" are about destroying homes, crops, villages, etc. and rebuilding them for Jewish use, much of the work of Zionism is the systematic assault on human values. Zionism is as much about destroying memory, initiative, imagination, hope and dignity as it is about seizing land.

In the face of this reality, much of the most brilliant and creative work possible is the assertion of brilliance and creativity in and of themselves. Every tangible action taken against Zionism gives birth to - and keeps alive, and nourishes, and defends - the exact liberating human qualities which are being rolled over by Zionist doctrine and tanks. Defiant action is a reminder that humans might still choose to be actors in their own lives, all the other despicable nonsense aside.

"It's always easier not to think for oneself. Find a nice safe hierarchy, and settle in. Don't make changes - don't risk disapproval. It's always easier to let yourself be governed..."

"Ideas never were controlled by laws and governments. You can't crush ideas by suppressing them. You can only crush them by ignoring them. By refusing to think - refusing to change. And that's precisely what our society is doing!..."

"It is the nature of the idea to be communicated: written, spoken, done. The idea is like grass. It craves light, likes crowds, thrives on crossbreeding, grows better for being stepped on..."

- Ursula Le Guin *The Dispossessed*

PART I: GAZA

Peace At What Cost?

We spent a full week in Gaza, primarily in the middle area in a town/camp called Nuseirat, just south of Gaza City. We also spent a day and a night in Raffah, which borders Egypt.

So you have a sense of the setting, understand that the Gaza Strip is an incredibly small strip of land, where, if there were no checkpoints and other obstructions, you could probably easily drive from north to south in an hour or less, and from west to east in even less time. About 30-40% of the land is Israeli settlement land, and all of the roads that

connect the settlements and that connect the settlements with the green line territories are sources of Israeli military presence and control. The Palestinians never really see the settlers at all, and vice versa, but the settlers are still able to steal water and other resources, and otherwise exert their dominance over Palestine.

All of Gaza is under complete lockdown. (Essentially) no one can leave Gaza and virtually no one comes in. People who once worked inside the green line are now jobless, and people who used to live or study in the West Bank, are now stuck in Gaza, since the beginning of the Intifada. It seemed like almost the whole place was a refugee camp, all at different stages of development and permanence. Everywhere we saw buildings with concrete and rebar sticking out of the roof - the construction utterly stagnated. Many of the roads were still dirt, and the UN and various other governments seemed to be responsible for virtually all of the different schools and community centers that we saw.

In Nuseirat, our main real "project" was to assist Palestinian municipal workers in the repair of a well that was shot by Israeli tanks and has been broken since the beginning of the Intifada. People in the middle area are receiving about a third of the water that they need, and much of this water is lower quality (salty) than the water in this broken well. The trouble with the well is that it is some 400 meters from an Israeli settlement called Natzerim, and thus is heavily guarded by the IDF.

The day after I arrived in Gaza, a group of us went to scope out somewhat the situation at the well and to tell the Israelis of our plans. We worked out an arrangement with the PNA military that we could enter their compound the next day to walk out to the well and attempt to repair it. Then we went towards the IDF tower, looking all cowardly and surreal like in some crazy movie. All of us with our hands up in the air and holding our passports up high. The soldiers responded in brilliant fashion.

After telling us to stop walking towards them, they screamed down from the tower "are you tourists?" Granted, we were in the middle of a totally barren desert, an obviously and explicitly military zone, many, miles from the "hip" touristy section of the Gaza Strip. We screamed "yes, we're tourists." They yelled "take off your clothes." And it went like that for about five minutes until they finally sent a jeep down to talk to us and we told them of our plans. They were utterly nonplussed.

The next day (Thursday) we went out to the well with some workers. The IDF pretty much totally ignored us and we mostly just sat around and ate grapes while the workers assessed the damage and figured out what equipment they would need to bring back. We decided to return on Sunday with a bulldozer to make a road out to the well with, and all the welding equipment and such needed to repair the well.

When we arrived on Sunday we were (for some reason) stunned to see that the Israelis had totally bulldozed all of the crops (grapes and figs) within about a hundred meter radius of the well. Still, the workers went about the work just fine, and the well got going again. My friend and I even rode on the outside of the tractor as it went plugging along digging up a nice dirt road so that the workers can get out to the well frequently to make repairs and refuel it. This caused somewhat of a confrontation as there really is no way to make a bulldozer look like a benign tool. The Israelis brought a fucking tank within about fifteen feet of our group and sat their pointing the barrel of the gun at as for a couple minutes (those of us not on the bulldozer were doing that nifty ISM-passport pose I mentioned earlier) and then they just got bored and drove off.

So, Sunday was essentially a success. People were in pretty good spirits. It was the first genuine and obvious accomplishment of our time in Palestine, actually.

But, apparently about a half an hour after we left, the Israelis came around with their own bulldozer and totally destroyed the road the workers had just made by building all sorts of sand dunes in the way

and digging trenches in it and so forth. (The Israelis might have also fucked with the well, we couldn't quite tell). Palestinians told us Sunday night that this had happened, but, for some unfathomable reason, none of us really seemed to believe them (some, deep unconscious loving trusting illusions about the colonizer...)

Anyway, when a group of us returned on Monday morning, we didn't have a bulldozer come out with us, so when we saw the destroyed road we were totally powerless. We just looked at the damaged well, and maybe the workers learned what was wrong with it or maybe they didn't (we didn't have an English Arabic speaker with us either), and that was all. Well, except for the soldiers screaming at us from their tower "we'll kill you motherfuckers" and driving their tank after us as we walked away from the well.

There was another group of ISM folks off in Gaza City preparing for a rather large press conference just generally about ISM in Gaza and so forth and I was for trying to get both our group, the press, and the fucking bulldozer out to Natzerim with us, but because of problems with cell phone signals in the Gaza Strip, we couldn't reach the other folks in time. So, the press conference went off without a hitch in its own pre-planned, general and spectacular fashion, while a real news event - a real instance where media presence might have tipped the balance - passed without ever happening.

All of this was a big mistake on our part and represented a pretty large setback in the well project. After the press conference, there wasn't a prayer of getting the media to come out to the well with us, and besides, in order to get the bulldozer we needed (for a number of strange and not so encouraging reasons) we needed the mayor's approval and he was too scared to do his job.

So, we essentially wasted Monday. A big strategic error and a lot of momentum lost.

I can't quite remember when, but I think it was Saturday night, a whole group of angry middle-area Gaza residents met with the mayor to register their complaints about the water crisis. But the mayor gets no good votes in my book. On Monday he told us he'd be ready at 9:30 AM. Tuesday to take the bulldozer out to the well and try and get it going good again. 8:30 on Monday he called to bail out. And, starting Monday he kept bringing up talk about digging a new well. I couldn't tell really how to evaluate this. I mean, fixing the one by Natzerim likely still won't meet all of the water needs, so maybe a new well is necessary. But if you're just building a new well to avoid the difficulty of fixing the old, then you're just lame.

I admit - the situation with the water by Natzerim is intense. The Israelis are, as usual, not at all fucking around. And, as usual, they don't want Palestinians to control access to their own water on their own land. They would rather their settler-land grabbers to have all the good water and fuck-all to the Palestinians. And, the well requires a functioning road which requires bringing a bulldozer out to the land likely more than a couple more times. And, most importantly, it seems as if workers [who are now scared of being shot by the IDF and especially scared when there aren't internationals around] need to get the well daily to check on it or refuel it or something.

So, there will need to be a pretty tremendous change in the current power structure and use of that small section of land. Palestinians will have to actively control and consistently defend that land and water such that the Israelis no longer find it worthwhile to frustrate their efforts. And, it is really fucking hard to think creatively about how to change a situation like that in a sustainable way.

But I grew really discouraged by the combination of PA bureaucracy and the lack of creativity/initiative amongst the ISM. I was really disheartened by how quickly people in our group began to generate ideas that rested - not on our own efforts - on the intervention of powers greater than ourselves (such as the UN or media conglomerates or financial donors). Such conditioning that "someone else" is better prepared to solve a given problem than "I" am is really pervasive

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The "someone else" known as the Palestine Liberation Organization signed agreements starting in 1993 with Israel and America that became known as the basis of a "peace process" between Israel and Palestine. And here "I" am in Palestine nine years later trying to learn how to positively place myself within this mess and sham of peace that is now here. Everybody says they want peace. But peace at what cost?

PART II: THE WEST BANK

Direct Action

The first action I was involved in took place in Ramallah, in response to the Israeli bombing of Gaza on 23-7-02. We had discussed perhaps a dozen possible actions that might be bold enough to sufficiently confront the military, inspire Palestinian resistance, and bring international media attention. In the end we decided to invade an Israeli army "base" in Ramallah and paint their tanks, jeeps and APCs with slogans and buckets of red paint. The "base" was simply a building that had been seized by the Israelis to serve as a headquarters for the imposing of curfew. And, most importantly for our action, they use the space to store their vehicles whenever curfew is lifted.

The action was brilliantly designed. With the guidance of an amazing ISM organizer, every measure was taken to ensure that the action: struck as powerful a blow against the military as possible, risked as little as possible for the local Palestinian population (and the ISMs) and maximized participation from the 30 people available in Ramallah at the time. The action combined the strategic wonder of the best guerrilla actions with a nonviolent, participatory ethic that both recognized what was possible and expressed a warmth, a hope, that militarist methods lack.

About ten of us were on the paint crew, while the other 20 or so came as a demonstration, intending to distract the military - with their raucous chanting, signs and media presence - away from stopping/detaining/arresting the paint crew. We intended to stay, at the very most, only ten minutes, and then leave secure in the understanding that the occupying forces are too scared to follow after us through enraged Palestinian neighborhoods.

As it turned out, as soon as the demonstrators entered the property, the Israelis began firing sound bombs and shooting into the air. As soon as the coordinator with the paint crew heard the first sound bomb, he started yelling "GO! GO! PAINT! PAINT!" As we all scrambled over a small stone wall and began running across the 15 meters or so of sand that

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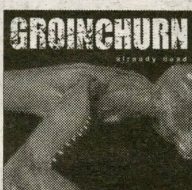
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separated us from the military vehicles.

We had all been very carefully prepared for the scene that we were suddenly thrust into. We knew the risks; we knew what was the likely response from the Israelis. Nonetheless, the situation was far freakier, far more frightening than I expected it would be. I don't know whether I would have convinced myself to jump over the wall and thrust myself in the way of the military to deface their property if a confident and bold leader hadn't been there screaming "JUST GO! PAINT! KEEP GOING!" "IT'S ONLY SOUND!" "DON'T WORRY, IT'S IN THE AIR!" And so forth.

Most of the group began on the APC nearest the stone wall, painting "MURDERERS" and "INTIFADA" (this one got aborted at INT) and splashing full buckets of red paint all over the vehicle. I ran around the back of another vehicle and, with the steadiest hand I could muster painted "GET OUT!" As the deafening sound of automatic rifle fire continued and as soldiers ran around hectically within a few feet of me. All the while, the voice in my head is saying (repeatedly, dozens of times) "they're not shooting at me, they're not shooting at me."

As soon as I'm finished I run back to the wall and watch the rest of the scene unfold. One friend has his legs swept out from under him, and is kicked and shoved by a soldier before being able to dash off towards our group. Another friend is the last to the APC, and is grabbed by a soldier. But she just keeps at her work of painting a huge dollar sign on the APC, and seemingly totally ignoring the fact that her shirt is being yanked at by a man with a machine gun. When she finishes she runs back to the group.

As soon as we were done—the whole event taking no more than 5 minutes — we scale the wall and start walking back home. The demonstration crew stayed on a few minutes more to be sure that the Israelis don't follow after and to directly deliver a message to the soldiers. I'm not really much inclined to speak directly with armed oppressors about what "our message" is, but when I watched the video footage i was quite impressed by the boldness of the woman who stood before the soldier and said "i want you to know that our struggle will continue until you all withdraw. We will keep coming back until you're gone."

In the aftermath of the event, there was almost no way to reconcile it in my mind. The action was a total success. The military was purely embarrassed, and their embarrassment, their vulnerability - and our defiant capacity - was broadcast throughout the world. No one was arrested, and everyone in our group accomplished what they had intended to. But the action was so intense, and so incredibly brief, that it sparked something in me that I didn't know how to define or explain. It was like a flooding realization that certain things that you would never put in the "possible" category in your mind are, in fact, quite explicitly and delightfully possible.

I hope that at least a part of this sensation was shared with the local Palestinian population. I think that it was.

We met many people in the days following that action that had seen or heard about what we had done and, in recognizing us, went to great lengths to share their gratitude. Regular folks in Ramallah the next morning shook our hands and said "mabrouk, mabrouk" (which means "congratulations"). And, a Palestinian man saw one of the signs from the demonstration which said "Puerto Ricans in Solidarity With Palestine" and spent hours tracking us down and driving out to Ramallah from Jerusalem to meet us and share stories and hope about the parallel struggles for liberation from military occupation in Puerto Rico and Palestine.

The next action wasn't planned at all. It came about the next day, out of necessity, when we entered the village of Iraq Boreen at about seven at night. All of the men of the village had been detained for twelve hours prior to our arrival, their IDs seized and ran through computers and so forth while the men just waited, penned up in their own community center. The Zionist logic behind this was that this was a "necessary" "security" procedure carried out in response to a Palestinian attack on a bus full of settlers about a week before in nearby Immanuel (the militant attack on the settlers wasn't a suicide operation. The

armored bus was forced off the road by a bomb of some kind and as the terrified religious-fascists came off of the bus Palestinians dressed in IDF uniforms opened fire on them and killed seven. The fact that the militants got away meant that at least three nearby villages went through similarly humiliating scenes as the one we witnessed in Iraq Boreen).

When we arrived in the village, six men were still waiting for their IDs to be returned, and one man was being held in a military jeep. There wasn't a great deal of cohesion amongst our group as to how to approach this situation. Our levels of experience/willingness to engage in confrontation and our general political outlooks spanned a broad and rather uncomfortable spectrum. Clumsy consensus meetings in the street combined with tense expressions of conflicting brands of "i know what to do" to create a rather chaotic and disempowering scene for at least fifteen minutes.

While those in the group who felt - with almost a religious insistence and consistency - that the best path is nonaggression and polite, conversational interaction with occupying soldiers played their "negotiation" games, the rest of us just waited awkwardly. The only semi-enjoyable thing about these moments was the point when the Israelis pulled out their copy of the day's newspaper and recognized one of the women amongst us as the woman in a newspaper photo vandalizing one of their APCs. We all sort of chuckled uncomfortably, though we had different reasons for our laughter (and for our discomfort) than the soldiers.

Then the Israelis just decided it was time to go. They all loaded into their jeeps and prepared to drive off - six Palestinian IDs and one man effectively stolen. Immediately a number of us decided to sit down on the road to block the jeeps from leaving. As soon as we sat down, an elderly Palestinian woman sat down amongst us, quietly and confidently. And when the Israelis couldn't intimidate us away with their horns blaring, they trying backing up. A group of folks rushed off to block the road from behind, as well. Somehow in the dashing attempt, a soldier tripped and fell. He decided to take out his frustration about this accident on a young man amongst us who had lain down on the pavement to stop the jeep. The kid took a nice shot to the head from a rifle butt, before others gathered around him and the soldier backed off.

The scene continued like this for a number of minutes, with the soldiers desperately trying new escape schemes and our folks scrambling to deter them one more time. The soldiers repeatedly dragged people off the road, but since they were not cops, the ISM folks just got right back down in the middle of the street. The military was able to get out of the stalemate by using the professional do-gooders amongst us as a means to divide the group and overcome the people who were using their bodies as roadblocks. Three ISMs were diverted off the road by a professional military "negotiator" (whom we were told by the compliant faction was a really nice man who saw clearly that "things don't need to happen this way"). Meanwhile the soldiers simply dragged the rest to the side of the road and drove around.

When my friend who had been dragged around quite a bit got up after the jeep had driven off he screamed right into the faces of the soldiers he saw "FUCK YOU! FUCK YOU!" And there were, of course, more do-gooders amongst us who were quick to remind us all that "the message is de-escalation" and so i chimed in "yeah, but 'FUCK YOU!' Is the truth." Directly after this scene, the soldiers grabbed someone from our group and me and about three others circled around him and held onto his body so he couldn't be kidnapped. Again, the self-appointed conscience of our group chimed in with "come on now, quit all that pushin' and shovin'. We don't need that kind of bullshit now."

I was growing more and more appalled and enraged. The "consensus" meeting that was then called really pushed me over the edge. The main discussion topic of this impromptu meeting was "who will go back to Nablus and who will stay here?" I couldn't believe that the question was even being seriously considered. And, of course, it came with further reiterations of the old bullshit about "negotiation." I said, as forcefully and clearly as I could, "it is totally irresponsible to leave now. The work isn't done. The motherfuckers still have the IDs, have taken one man and still haven't gotten out of this village. Let's abolish the question of who will leave tonight, and let's also abolish the role of

'negotiator.' Let's create instead the role of a 'demander' that can say, simply and bluntly, 'we want the IDs back, and we want you the fuck out of this village. You are not welcome here.'"

Needless to say, I didn't gain much popularity with this viewpoint. Many people did decide to leave after all, and negotiators were sent to talk to the soldiers. Those who left that night didn't say a word to me the whole rest of the time that I was in Palestine.

But the Palestinian response was a whole different story. In the middle of our bullshit consensus meeting, a Palestinian women interrupted, nearly in tears, to say "Thank you. Thank you all for everything that you've done. I would like to welcome you into my home tonight." Another man came up to me and said "You are my favorite. You seem strong, like you have no fear. I like especially how you say 'FUCK YOU, MOTHERFUCKERS!' To the Israelis. I like that." It was sort of embarrassing to hear him say this, but he didn't want me to be embraced at all. He was genuinely pleased by what we had done. And his satisfaction with our confrontation with the Israeli army was shared by absolutely everyone that i interacted with in Iraq Boreen.

In the wake of that action, for the first time in Palestine, I felt legitimately and wholly welcomed into a community. And I felt welcomed not just because I was a foreign visitor, a sympathetic tourist, but because I had done something which everyone had seen and was extremely grateful for. The people were so beautiful to me in Iraq Boreen. They offered me a warmth and an openness that is unparalleled in my life, and I am extremely grateful for the time I was able to spend in that village.

When I was in Iraq Boreen the day after the round-up, my idea was to create scarecrows that would be terrorists (we decided to choose Bush and Sharon as our representations of "terrorists"). These stick-people "terrorists" could then be handed over to the Israeli authorities with a simple message: "you say you're looking for terrorists, so here you go. Have them, we don't want them. But you can't have our men anymore. Get the fuck out of this land. You've gotten everything you came for."

It was a simple action. Maybe not even overwhelmingly creative. But it generated positive activity within the village as we all scrambled around searching for junk that could be used to make stick-people. And people seemed pleased by the message of it. Unfortunately, we never got to use the scarecrows for an action, because the day we had planned to do so had to be devoted, instead, to roadblock removal. In the day that we waited to prepare for the scarecrow action, the Israelis came with bulldozers and sealed off all of the access roads to Iraq Boreen and nearby Tell village.

So there we were with thirty villagers and all the shovels and buckets the villages could muster, plugging away at the removal of three fifteen-foot mounds of dirt placed in the way for no good reason at all. This is the relentless quality of Zionism.

But I think that if there is going to be an actual Intifada - a realization reached as the result of a hard shock or a shaking off - then we will, all of us, need to begin generating ideas and actions which soar beyond simple reaction. Our efforts will need to begin to assert a new identity, a new vision of what human beings are capable of accomplishing.

Maybe it will start with simple little ideas like the scarecrow action, or the painting of the tanks. And ideally, actions such as these, and even better ones, will multiply exponentially, and spread out, internationally.

"The offer of Zionism is the final burial of human dignity, initiative and hope. Our offer must be the creation of millions upon millions of hopeful, imaginative, autonomous ideas and realities. Anything less and we will lose..." Alberto Valentino

"The duty of the individual is to accept no rule, to be the initiator of his own acts, to be responsible. Only if he does so will the society live, and change, and adapt, and survive. Revolution is our obligation: our hope of evolution. The Revolution is in the individual spirit, or it is nowhere. It is for all, or it is nothing. If it is seen as having any end, it will never truly begin. We can't stop here. We must go on. We must take the risks." - Ursula Le Guin, The Dispossessed

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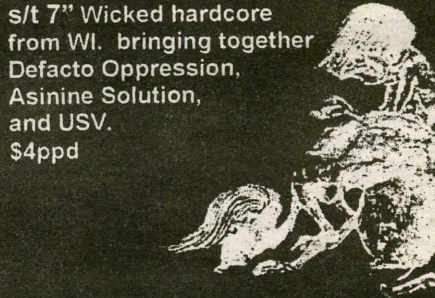
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CONTRAVENE

Contravene is an amazing anarcho peace-punk band that sounds like they've been very heavily influenced by oldschool Swedish punk. They layer catchy melodies and beautifully sung vocals with heavy as crust screaming and fast as thrash riffs. Oh and by the way, they are female fronted! A refreshing change from your average all male scene. This interview was conducted at the Lafayette Community Center in LA on the night of the Profane Existence record and magazine release show. By Emo Wuss.

Profane: Why don't you tell me who's in the band and what they do?

Shelly: I'm shelly and I sing.

Ben: Ben, I play guitar.

Gomez: I'm Gomez.

Ben: Oh and I sing.

Gomez: Yeah, I bloody up my knuckles.

Eric: I'm Eric and I play bass and sing.

Profane: When did the band form?

S: It was probably august of 99. Is this thing recording?

B: (Into the mike). Is this thing on! Testing! (Laughter)

Profane: Where are you from?

B: Phoenix, Arizona.

Profane: Why did you decide to have the band be the way it is musically and politically?

E: I guess musically, we made it this way just because it's the style of music we all listen to. There are not a whole lot of bands that play this sort of style anymore; like the old peace punk style. And so when we wanted to start that was the type of music we like to hear and don't hear of anymore so we just did that. We all work on it together. Like we all write parts together and its just the way it comes out. And politically as well. We wanted to form a band that wasn't just music there would be something to the band. It wasn't just a rock band that went out and played to play. We have something to say. There are problems we address and try to provide insight into solutions or ways we can change them.

Profane: What do you think of the scene as it is now compared to the earlier days?

E: I think one of the major differences is that there are a lot more bands now. Like in the late 70s early 80s there Crass and Conflict and all those bands, and they were original bands. Like the only bands doing that. As opposed to now, there's just a fucking sea of bands, you know? And I think that's one of the major differences. As far as the scene goes I wasn't around in the 70s or 80s in Europe so I don't know the way people interacted with each other back then. But it seems, just from the time we spent in Europe on Tour, that its a lot more organized and the scene there supports itself better than I think it does over here in the states. That's one thing that should definitely be addressed. People should work together more here to make the scene more self sustaining and cooperative.

Profane: Why do you think so many bands have chosen to go the more apolitical route in recent times? Although the people themselves may be political, why do you think there music isn't?

S: I think that part of it is that they worry who they're going to offend. They want as many fans as possible and sometimes I think they sacrifice stating what they really believe and how they feel about things for fear that people are going to say something like "Quit being so PC" or "Quit caring about this or that." Certain people don't care about things and don't want to hear people preach to them about it.

B: I guess its apathy, on a certain level too. I mean, even we know people who at one time were in political bands or doing political actions and whatnot and who now, be it (looks away) sorry I got distracted. Oh shit, where was I going with this? They just went the completely opposite direction and will listen to anything based on how it sounds regardless of what it's saying and to us that's pretty silly. S: Yeah. Whenever there's a band that sounds great musically but the lyrics are questionable or really fucked up I don't know. I can't personally listen to that. It destroys everything for me.

Profane: Seeing as you have a woman in the band, I'd like to know what your opinion is concerning the lack of recognition or even straight out alienation of females/queers/minorities in the scene.

S: It really sucks that it's like that and I do notice it too. I'm half Mexican but I don't look it, so I totally see the difference in treatment when I've been with friends or family members who are obviously Mexican. And as far as being a woman, I've had both positive and negative experiences within our scene. Some people are extremely supportive and make you have no doubt that punk is a great thing to be involved in, but I've also experienced the type of people who don't take you seriously. They think you are in this to pick up on guys or to be picked up on, or when you voice an opinion they call it whining or

bitching. A lot of times you'll be selling stuff at a distro-table and people will be looking for the guy in charge. All I can say is we just have to keep fighting and let people know we wont accept this stereotypical white/hetero thinking.

E: I think it's reflective though of the way the scene is as well because it is an overtly straight, white male scene. We just talked about people in bands that aren't necessarily political. There's also a large amount of bands in the scene that will go out of their way to be anti-woman, anti gay or anything like that. Whether its for shock value or whether its what they really believe. To people that are coming into the scene or are interested in it and they see that you take it at face value. Regardless of what anybody says about it being a joke. If you're a woman or gay or whatever and see something that's completely anti you, you would walk away from it. I definitely think its a reflection of the way the scene is.

B: There are even people in bands where we live that sing lyrics that are supposed to be tongue in cheek, you know? But its not funny to the people its directed at.

S: Everybody's supposed to know it's a joke but what if you don't know the band?

B: And even if you do know its not one of those things that you can just overlook if you give a shit about the things they are allegedly singing about.

Profane: Well how do you all fight this in your daily efforts?

All: (in silence looking at Eric)

E: You guys are bastards!

B: You're the best talker!

E: I think one obvious way we've done it is lyrically. We've written a number of songs dealing with that very issue. You know, the things that you say and how they affect others. And that's one thing that we've talked about a lot on an individual basis. When we interact with people it gets brought up. I know myself personally have made a lot of enemies over the years with people that have said fucked up stuff and I called them out on it. People don't want to hear that. So yeah, a few ways are lyrically and individually. Another is with the number of collectives that we've worked with or venues that we've done. That's one thing we've always stressed is that people should always feel welcome and if you're making them feel uncomfortable you in turn will not be welcome to festivals or show or meetings or whatever it is. That's how we've chosen to combat those issues.

Profane: Well what do you think of all female/minority/queer groups? A lot of people I know are really resentful towards that and think its reverse discrimination.

B: I can't tell you first hand, but I can understand that people want to feel safe and comfortable, and I can see why these groups exist.

S: At the same time, I don't know if I can consider it reverse discrimination so much as a group of people who have something in common that have gotten together and are voicing things that have happened to them and letting people know about them. Unless they're blatantly saying things like were superior. I think other people should listen and learn from what other people are saying because nobody knows better than those people who are talking about there experiences.

E: I think that another reason is that it's another way to build strength and community. The same way we build strength and community in the punk and activist scene by interacting with other punks/activists. I think its the same thing because if you belong to a certain group, whether its discriminated against or not, whenever you get around other people that are the same as you it lets you realize that you are not alone in your struggles. It gives you a sense of empowerment knowing that there are people out there that feel the same as you and that are there to support you and have your back. And I think that totally helps to strengthen you as an individual as well.

Profane: Why do you think it is that so many punks tend to follow most of the traditions and norms that exist in mainstream society like racism, sexism or homophobia?

B: Because those are the things that are ingrained in us from the time that were young. We're taught to be consumers and are told, directly or indirectly, that homosexuality is wrong, and that sexism and racism are ok. Throughout our lives we basically have to deal with that and try and realize that what we've been told our entire lives is fucked up, and

do what we can to change our thought process and lifestyle.

Profane: Do you think that punk is too narrow in its approach? Do you think it pigeonholes itself and that's why its not as effective as it could be?

E: To an extent it has. Obviously it's established it's own niche as far as society goes but it's also something that's becoming more mainstream, regardless of whether or not it's bigger bands that aren't necessarily political punk. Like Green Day or Blink 182 that broke into the mainstream and they don't necessarily have political connotations or overtones. They're still punk bands that expose more people to punk and I think that might be bringing more people into it. There has also been more of an exposure of radical politics to the mainstream society as well I think. Things like WTO and the like got major news coverage and now you are starting to see more people becoming aware and taking stands on political issues that might not have done so in the past. Like especially with the impending war issue. There are mothers and fathers, families going out and protesting against the war now. I don't know how much punk and/or radical politics becoming more mainstream has to do with that but I would like to think that these are things that can help people to see that we are capable of making a difference and that our individual voice does mean

make a big impact.

Profane: Tell me a little bit about the Arizona scene right now. How is it politically and musically?

B: Music wise right now it's hard. It's pretty stagnant. We used to have a really cool place called The Tribe that we could do shows at, and it recently became unavailable. There's some good bands that are around. Carol Ann is still around. Bodhisattva is another great band. There are always good bands, now all we need is a solid show space, but that's easier said than done.

G: Politically there's earth first that's up and going. They're pretty strong. There's Food Not Bombs and Copwatch and Ruckus. They're usually doing their thing.

B: There's demos and actions on a regular basis too.

Profane: I know you also recently did a European tour. Can you speak about the difference between the scene here as compared to over there?

S: It's a lot different over there. There's a lot more fighting to get things changed. Generally there were more punks and the average age seems to be higher there than here. There are punks doing stuff everywhere, they have a lot of squats and the scene seems much more self-sustaining.

E: It seems more like a movement there. As opposed to a social scene like how it is here.

G: I was just gonna say that when I got back, a lot of people asked me What's the political scene like over there? and its not a scene at all. It's like everyday life for them. At the squats that's what they have to do to live. It was crazy seeing how people live like that on a daily basis. Like working together and helping each other out no matter what. It was crazy seeing families with like 50 year olds and their children living at these squats with a bunch of punker kids just completely co-existing. I thought that was really cool.

E: The squats there when you think of a squat here you automatically think of a building with no electricity and junkies hanging out there. The squats we stayed at were the size of hotels with full electricity, working kitchens, and no drugs allowed in the building. I mean they were really amazing to see.

B: They had everything. From building sculptures out of old car parts to screen printing shops to indoor gardens and all kinds of other great stuff. We all walked away from the experience really inspired to do these

kinds of things back home.

S: It made me ask myself if we were ready for that here and I honestly don't think so. Most people I've met here, if they were put in that situation, would trash the place and they'd fuck each other over.

Profane: How did the tour actually come about?

S: We talked to Kleister of Skuld Releases and he said he knew some people who set up tours all over there and he talked to them.

B: It was kind of at the beginning, us just pipe dreaming. Hey lets go to Europe next year!

E: We would talk to Kleister on the phone because we would workout trades with records and I was telling him one day "Yeah we really would like to come to Europe one day". And he was like "Oh that would be cool". And a couple weeks later he calls me and says "So you guys wanna come?" "Uh, OK!"

Profane: Wow, cool. Ok...a bit off topic but what do you think of the war on Iraq?

G: No comment!

S: Obviously the whole war thing is a bad idea. It really does endanger the lives of not just the people we're sending over there but the people that live in the countries we're bombing the shit out of. It's also endangering the lives of the people here in this country because a lot of us don't want to do this war thing and it puts us at risk of being retaliated against. We've got this tyrant asshole who's out there doing this on his own...directing them to bomb whoever it takes and now people want to retaliate. And then you have all the people who this war doesn't even represent and they're dying on both sides. It's really a sad situation but I guess that's the way all wars are.

E: I think the only difference with this war is that they almost have a justification now. Because all they have to do is say "Look what happened on Septem-



photo by Jeremy/M.O.P.

something.

G: I think the mainstream doesn't take punks as seriously because they see them on TV as fashion. You see a punk walking down the street and any American will go Oh look at that adolescent kid, he's just lost or doesn't know what he's doing, and so they don't take them serious anymore and that's kind of a downfall for punk right now. It has to be a mentality rather than just an image.

Profane: How do you think that we can make punk expand its horizons so that we can make effective change in society?

S: I think they way the punk scene functions here in LA is a good example of a way to reach out to people and make an effective change in society. I notice they tend to involve the community a lot more than what we are used to back home. That might be stepping outside of the punk scene at that point, but it impacts more people and gives everyone a chance to learn more.

B: Its not just about punks, its about everybody else in the world. We need to reach out and communicate with the rest of the people in our communities. S: The change part is not just a punk rock thing. The change part is worldwide and sometimes you do have to step outside of the fashion and the fun part of being into punk rock and talk to people on a different level.

E: I think another way to make an impact is just individually. Like the way you choose to live your life. How you interact with other people. Even things like vegetarianism and veganism make a huge, huge fucking impact. That's a simple alteration you can make in your life to make a really big difference in the world. Things like that you know. The way you conduct yourself. The companies you support or don't support. Just your individual choices I think





ber 11th. If we don't go to war this will happen everyday." So they have something now that they can almost use as a tool to say "But don't you remember this?" It justifies anything they do. If they wanted to go over there and drop a hundred atom bombs on everything but the US, they would probably get the backing from the American people to do it because they would show pictures of 9/11 and they would do the same thing they did on 9/11. They'd pull out old file footage from other events and throw it up there showing people celebrating a soccer match and say it was people in Palestine celebrating us getting attacked.

S: That was such bullshit.

E: Yeah, and people would be like "Fuck that, lets just kill them."

Profane: Well what do you think of the huge anti war movement out there? Do you think they might actually be able to stop this impending war?

S: I'd really like to think so but I fear George Bush. He's a monster. He doesn't care what anybody in this country is saying. He's not listening to anybody. It's strictly what he wants to do. I heard him on the news one day and it was scary but I was laughing because they were telling him not to go to war and his response was "You have to realize Saddam Hussein is the man who tried to kill my daddy" (in southern accent)! You just see the rage in his eyes and think, maybe he's doing this for the wrong reasons.

E: (southern voice) You tried to kill my daddy!

All: (laughter)

Anonymous bystander: The only solution is assassination.

S: They're gonna come after you. They got you on tape.

Anonymous bystander: My name is Bob Dole.

All: (laughter)

Profane: Ummm, well, going back to the popularity of punk in recent years. What would you recommend to people wanting to get into the whole lifestyle? How did you get involved?

S: When I first got into it I just started going to shows at the local venue that was doing them, which turned out to be a pretty shitty place. But at the time I didn't know and I saw some bigger punk bands there. Eventually you just kind of start meeting people hearing about more bands and getting drawn into it.

B: Pick up literature and buy books and buy records and just absorb those ideas. Go develop you own sets of ideas, and put them into practice.

E: I think one thing that's extremely important to all the people that are just getting into the scene too is to not get discouraged. Even if you end up sitting at home by yourself in your house working on projects alone. It still matters more than being surrounded by a thousand people that are full of shit. A lot of people come into it and they see the outside politics of it. It looks really political but then you get in the guts of it and there's a lot of apathetic people. And it's just talk. Then people begin to get disillusioned and drop out. Just stay motivated and stay dedicated to it.

S: Yeah if nothing else don't be afraid to write to a band or something. Write them and get to know somebody that's not in your state. Next thing you know, you'll know all kinds of people all over the place.

B: Pen pals!!!

G: Get involved with Food Not Bombs so you can get into shows for free.

All: (laughter)

B: Casmars!

Profane: How can people contact you?

Our regular mailing address is

Contravene / P.O. Box 41356 / Phoenix, AZ 85080-1356 usa

Or we can be reached through email at:

contravene@doityourself.com

We also have a webpage that lists all of our contact info along with upcoming shows, tours, releases and other stuff. You can see that at <http://www.contravene.cjb.net>

Profane: Final comments?

G: I just wanna say thank you to everyone in Europe and Germany. All the other places we went to. Places to stay, food and treating us like family. It was something we're not used to.

S: Yeah I wanna say sorry that I haven't been able to keep as good of contact with everyone over there as I told myself I was going to when I came back. I just wanna say hi to everyone we met and say thanks for the good time!

B: Yeah. A great big hello to all our friends from Europe, and here too!

G: Nice greetings from Contravene.

All: (laughter)

Catchphraze Records/Catalyst Distribution

<http://www.catchphrazerecords.com>

REVIEWS • REVIEWS • REVIEWS • REVIEWS • REVIEWS • REVIEWS • REVIEWS

ALL IS SUFFERING - Execution by Flamethrower CD

Riding forth from the mists of southern Maryland, these chaps brutally deliver 5 songs of crusty grinding thrash whether you like it or not. Blistering vocals, epic songs with a subtle underlying melody...does this sound familiar? There are many bands out there doing the His Hero Is Gone/ Tragedy thing, and All Is Suffering definitely have that sound. But All Is Suffering do it soooo well, and with an originality that is elusive to many bands of the genre. Epic, dark, crusty, and haunting all describe this CD, and definitely evil... (but with that dark sense of humor that makes evil fun). This disc is a definite standout from the hordes of bands doing the same style. 21 minutes of brutality that will leave your neighbor's ears ringing. (JM)

AIS / 4220 Solomons Island Rd / Saint Leonard, MD 20685

ANGRY FOR LIFE - s/t CD

The CD artwork is black and white and kind of desolate looking. The songs have titles like "War of Belief", "1984" and "Black Meadow". The band is called Angry For Life... This is another crusty release, right? Wrong. This is melodic hardcore punk at its damn finest! Politically charged punk with two vocalists who can carry a tune and yet sound gritty at the same time. These guys (and gal) know how to write catchy songs with plenty of melody AND intensity, but it's the raw honesty of this band is what makes them so amazing. This band has ex-members of Krupted Peasant Farmers if that gives you an idea of where they are coming from, gruff but catchy, know what I mean? Did I say catchy? A great debut! And catchy. (JM)

Vine Hell Productions / PO Box 36131 / San Jose CA 95158

ANTISCHISM - s/t LP/CD

This is a semi-discography of this fine early 90's PeacePunk/HardCore band. It has everything except the STILL LIFE LP, including several EP's, their half of the split LP with Subvert, a couple of demo tracks and some out-takes from the Still Life LP. It also contains a cover of "Sacrifice" by the legendary Rudimentary Peni. Speaking of great cover songs, the Twin Cities very own State Of Fear covered "Greedy Bastards" from this collection on their 2nd 7" several years back. This is an absolutely essential classic. (Ciderpunk)

Prank Records / P.O. Box 410892 San Francisco, CA 94141-0892 USA

ASS CHAPEL - Rotting the Body 7"

Ass Chapel, despite the misleading name, in indeed hardcore, and good hardcore at that. There are only four songs on the record, and the packaging is pretty lame compared to many other records, but overall it's still a good record. I didn't think that it was anything groundbreaking, but they have great tearing vocals, and ripping guitar riffs. (xzachx)

Hungry Ghost / P.O. Box 620241 / Middleton, WI 53562

ASS END OFFEND - Becoming Our Destruction 7"

Well paced punk that has well placed transitions where it becomes much faster and then slows down again to show its more hardcore side. Their lyrics are actually more poetic than anything else. Don't get me wrong though, it's definitely not what you'll hear at your poetry readings. My one complaint would be that there are only four songs to listen to. (xzachx)

About \$3-4 Poisoned Candy Records / P.O. Box 9263 / Missoula, MT 59807

BATHTUB SHITTER - Angels Save Us EP

Man, with a name like BATHTUB SHITTER, these guys from Japan could play kazooos and accordions and I would probably still be into it. Fortunately, they instead unleash a barrage of terrifying grindcore not unlike UNHOLY GRAVE. The lyrics are a lot more political than I thought they would be-definitely a lot of anti-capitalist ideas going on here. Very tough and brutal mayhem happening on this one. If I ever get married, these guys are playing my wedding. (Doug)

Rusted Lock / PO Box 27620 / 2631 Nicosia / Cyprus

BRODY'S MILITIA -Violence Solves Some Things EP

BRODY'S MILITIA blast out of the backwoods of Ohio with some definitely raw, pummeling thrashcore. Imagine MOB 47 as a bunch of drunken rednecks and you're not too far off from the music on this 7". This definitely goes well with some of the newer thrash shit like 9 SHOCKS TERROR or MUNICIPAL WASTE. They have a lot of other shit out as well so definitely get in touch. (Doug)

Get the Axe Records / P.O. Box 3019 / Oswego, NY 13126 / USA or get on www.thrashyourface.com

BLOOD SPIT NIGHTS - Full Metal Jacket EP

Abrasive, raw punk the way only Portland punx do it. If you like the SHITCLICKERS you will definitely be into this as well. Bonus points for having a song called "Raw Christ Puncher." "Blood, Guts, Charged to Death," indeed! (Doug)

2224 NE Everett / Portland, OR 97232 / USA

THE CHASE s/t CD

The Chase are an all-female band from Portland, Oregon, who have replaced the role of guitar with a cello. There are fifteen listed tracks, six of which are instrumentals. Musically, they are varied in style, ranging from haunting instrumental interludes, to rather crunchy punk in a Crass-like style. The vocals on some tracks have a haunting quality, but the more melodic tunes weren't as inspiring. The lyrics are written from apersonal-political perspective and attack subjects from discrimination of women and

non traditional roles/relationships, to the hypocrisies of religion. There is also an an abortive rendition of Madonna's "Papa Don't Preach" hidden at the end, serving as a little comic relief to an otherwise stark delivery. With a little spit and polish, this band could really go somewhere. (Dan)

4206 N Commercial / Portland, OR 97217 / thechase57@yahoo.com

CONTRA LA CONTRA Anti-State Anti-Fascist Anti-Capitalist LP

Raging anarcho-punk from Belarus, with female / male vocals in the style of Homomilitia, Post Regiment, etc. The lyrics seem to be Russian, but English translations are provided. Word through the grapevine is these folks are being accused in connection with a break-in at a local weapons store. (Dan)

Alerta Antifascista / PO Box 2318 / 24913 Flensburg / Germany

COUNTY Z - Graveyards and Grocery Carts LP

An incredible new band from Minneapolis that empazises DIY punk politics and ingeniously experimental music forms. Featuring aggressive violin playing and haunting female vocals throughout, the closest musical comparisons would be Guts PieEarshot and Submission Hold. This band has played a lot around town, including numerous benefits, but I still have yet to see them live and kick myself each time I miss 'em. This record is self-released by the band and has a rather cool hand-stenciled cover. Highly recommend! (Dan)

\$6 post-paid (USA) from County Z / 2208 16th Ave S / Minneapolis, MN 55404

COUNTY Z - There Goes the Neighborhood 7"

Directly following up their debut LP, Minneapolis' own County Z hammer out three more haunting and melodic tracks here. Experimental sounds, including off-beat rhythms, a violin / guitar trade off, and a female vocalist that can range from hauntingly sad to ragingly angry in the same breath. (Dan)

New Audio Terror /

DEADFALL - s/t 7"

At first this Deadfall record sounded pretty shitty, which is why you should always check the rpm of a record BEFORE playing it. After changing the rpm to 45 I found that Deadfall has a pretty good sound. They sound much like Aus Rotten's song "Poison Corporations" and even Conflict. They're a fairly new band and are still on the path of developing their sound, but I would recommend this to anyone in search of good music. By the end of the record you'll probably have these tunes stuck in your head and find yourself singing along to them. And I would definitely look for these guys in the future, as they can only improve. Also, it comes packaged in a pretty poster. (xzachx)

Deadfall / P.O. Box 22641 / San Francisco, CA 94122 / or /

scottykarate@hotmail

DEFACTO OPPRESSION - Screen Symphony Suicide CD

Hardcore in the vein of Holier Than Thou? Defacto delivers straight up thrash with their metal influenced chords and ripping vocals. Cheers to Defactos drummer, Adam, for the awesome, fast as hell drum beats and rolls. "The Train" has to be my favorite song on this. I love when the song gets real melodic and the screaming bursts out of my speakers. This is what hardcore is all about. (Suzy Boone)

Defacto Oppression/ 6884 182nd ST/ Chippewa Falls, WA 54729

DESTROY! - Discography 1990-1994 CD

This is a damn good cd. If you don't have all their stuff already here it is on one convenient disc. It has all the Destroy! stuff put out during their existence except for the '89 demo which still circulates in trading circles if you really want a copy of it. If you like Disrupt or early Extreme Noise Terror you'll love this. This has the same content as the NECROPOLIS cd that Sound Pollution released in early '95, just so you know. Grab this bastard and thrash up a fucking storm! (Ciderpunk)

Havoc Records / P.O. Box 8585 / Minneapolis, MN 55408 USA

DISGRUNTLED NATION - s/t 7"

Ok, this is a pretty horrible recording, very muddy sounding. BUT, if you can look beyond this, you'll find that this 7" has great music, that speaks in a metaphorical sense about politics and social subjects. One thing that I enjoyed about this record was its transitions. They manage to move from slow more melodic beats, to screaming punk, and then back again, with ease. Some real sing-along good fun. (xzachx)

917 Patrick Creek Road / Kalispell, MT 59901-7528

DROPDEAD/TOTALITAR - split 7"/CD

This is to be one of the best splits I've heard in a while! Nine songs in nine minutes...how can you go wrong with that? The first six are from DropDead and they fucking smoke! It had been far too long since their last record ('98 or so) and it's great to have some new stuff finally. We get three songs from those Swedish HardCore masters Totalitar on this disc and as usual they completely kick your ass! Add this 7"/CD to your collection today! (Ciderpunk)

Prank Records / P.O. Box 410892 / San Francisco, CA 94141-0892 USA

DISTRAUGHT / MOLOTOV COCKTAIL - Live at CBGB's split 7"

Two classic Distraught songs on their side including "Life Through

a Hole", from their EP on Havoc records. Molotov Cocktail has two songs of loud, beers in the air punk rock. Excellent recording by both bands on this record. (Brian)

Sorry no Label or Contact Info Given

EFFIGY / HAVAISTYS split EP

EFFIGY hail from Japan and play heavy, metallic crust in the vein of MISERY and AXEGRINDER, although they are a little more up-tempo than those two bands. HAVAISTYS play raw Finnish HC with a little more of a metal edge. The EFFIGY side did a little more for me, but I'd definitely be into hearing more from either of these bands. (Doug)

Whisper In Darkness / PO Box 40113 / Portland, OR 97240-0113 / USA

FILTH OF MANKIND - The Final Chapter CD

The Polish metal edge crust gods sequel to their EP "Czas Konca Wieku". It is defenitly heavier than their EP, but with the same sound of bone crushing drums, ear shattering guitars and gut wrenching vocals. Filth of Mankind continues the spirit of Amebix with a modern sound. A must have (Brian)

HG Fact /105 Nakano Shinbashi-M / 2-7-15 Yahoi-Cho,

Nakano / Tokyo, 164-0013 / Japan

FRAMTID - Under the Ashes LP

D-beat Crust as fuck existence, with lyrics powerful anti war lyrics. This has to be one of the best bands to come from Japan since SDS. Fans of AGE, ABRAHAMS CROSS, and BATTLE OF DISARM, will love this 12". If you see this record you would be a fool not to pick this one up. (Brian)

Crust War / 1-28-3A, Shikitsu-Nishi 2 / Naniwa-Ku , Osaka City, 556-0015 Japan

HEROD - Sinners in the Eyes of an Angry God CD

Herod is a hardcore band with some metal inlays. They have roots in the band "Dead to the World" and take rise from Buffalo, New York. If comparable to any band, I would say that they have a sound comparable to that of System of a Down, only on a much smaller label. (xzachx)

Sounds of Revolution / 1620 George Ave. / Windsor, Ontario /

N8Y 2Y6 Canada

INERTIE - Makoahanac CD

Hey, I didn't know His Hero is Gone was from France. Well they're not! But these guys are. INERTIE hail from Bordeaux and from my understanding have been around for less than a year. Their sound is incredibly tight and very reminiscent of His Hero is Gones heavy guitars, gruff/deep vocals and crashing drums. This is only a demo but its damn good with five songs at thirteen minutes. INERTIE chant about European society, religion and the plagues of life. Awesome stuff. (Suzy Boone)

Vincent / 5 Rue Des Augustins / 33000 Bordeaux

KYLESA - s/t LP/CD

This is one album I've been hearing a lot of good things about. This band has former members of Damad, for those keeping track of that kind of thing. The music is heavy as fuck with a doom and gloom feel to it. They make me think of early Neurosis as well as Christdriver. I'm a big fan of male/female vocals whether they're doing the trade off thing or doing dual vocals and these folks pull it off as well as anyone. Believe the hype surrounding this band, and get this record/cd. (Ciderpunk)

Prank Records / P.O. BOX 410892 / San Francisco, CA 94141-0892 USA

LOST-s/t EP

LOST is Agnes' (HOMOMILITIA) new band. Musically, it doesn't remind me a whole lot of HOMOMILITIA at all. LOST are definitely more metallic-sounding, with very personal lyrics. Agnes' vocals really make this band what it is, since I'm a sucker for raw-sounding female vocalists. Good stuff-I'm definitely anticipating a full-length from this band. All hail LOST! (Doug)

Malarie / PO Box 155 / 75661 Roznovpr / Czech Republic

THE MIRRORMEN - Breaking Class MCD

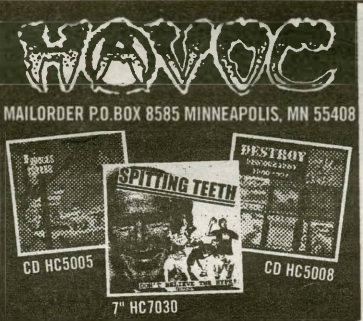
OK, first of all, this cd is actually a cd ep as it only contains six songs (one being an excellent DRI cover). That said, this is a great release. I threw on this disc and was immediately blown away by the American-style 80's hardcore that blasted out of the speakers. But wait, it gets better, the singer has a British accent, and on closer inspection yep, the band is from England. These guys blaze through five catchy hardcore songs that make you throw your fist in the air and stomp around the room, but make sure to put the cd on repeat! Plenty of breakdowns, shouted choruses and strong vocals, these guys are great at what they do; hardcore for 2003!! Kind of like what Deadstoolpigeon might sound like with a less raspy singer?? The lyrics deal with the shit that goes on in the world, but from more of a personal (and clever) perspective. Damn this is good. (JM)

A Malt Soda / PO Box 7611 / Chandler, AZ 85246

NASH - Microcosmos CD

Mixing hardcore, metal and elements of emo, Nash breakdown musical barriers in almost every song. Their sound is a mix similar to Enwetak and Kill Mannequin with higher and scruffier vocals along with the occasional grunts. Let's just put it this way, any band using a line from Fight Club as an intro has already caught my attention and won me over. (Suzy Boone)

Sharpest Blade Records/ Florian Parzer/ Mozart Weg 1/ 4780



New release DESTROY Discography CD
Re-release of the Necropolis LP on Sound Pollution with the entire Destroy vinyl output as "bonus tracks." All the 7" and comp tracks. HC5008

New Release SPITTING TEETH Don't Believe the Hype 7" Off-the-hook fast critical hardcore from Seattle. The guys who brought you the Million Man Mosh return to burn! HC7030

ANDI PETERSEN'S ARME Blod Ser Mera Virkeligt Ud På Film 7" Second ep from Danish HC ragers. Sounds like the missing Dischord 7" from 1981, or lost Black Flag sessions from 1980, but in Danish! HC7029

VITAMIN X Down the Drain Second full length. Fast intense Hardcore from Holland. The perfect mix between straight edge youth crew and fast-core thrash. LP HC1207 & CD HC5007

WOLFRIBRIGADE Progression/Regression Havoc brings you more savage Swedish Hardcore. Wolfbrigade (formerly known as Wolfpack) shred your ears with a total Scandinavian d-beat crustcore assault. Vinyl version is a Picture Disc! Split release w/ Farewell records of Germany. LP HC1206 (PICTURE DISK) & CD HC5006

CAUSTIC CHRIST S/T Two guys from Aus Rotten, 1 from React and 1 from Submachine combine to create a new hardcore powerhouse. Combining the stylings of early Corrosion of Conformity with faster Swedish hardcore resulting in a manic HC sound. HC 7028

RISTETTYT Tervetulo Kuolema One of the great Finnish hardcore bands of the 80s returns. No weak rehash here, full on hard driving Finnish style hardcore that put Tampere on the map! Licensed from Fight Records, remixed with a bonus track! HC 7027

IDENTITY PARADE: PHOTOGRAPHS BY KRISTOFER PASANEN, 1995-2000

150 Pages, Black & White, Hardcover Havoc records is proud to present our first effort at publishing. Kristofer Pasanen has compiled an amazing book of his life photographs of bands taken over the last five years. Hundreds of bands are photographed from Crust to SE to Emo; see the website for a complete list. HC-IDP (BOOK)

SKITSYSTEM Enkel Resa Till Rännstenen Second LP from the masters of dark Swedish hardcore. Heavy and brutal b-beat mixed with crusty HC and thrash styles. A pulverizing steamroller of Swedish hardcore. Split release with No Tolerance Records of Sweden. LP HC1205 & CD HC5005

New on CD NINE SHOCKS TERROR Zen and the Art of Beating Your Ass The "lost" LP re-issued. This is a totally remastered and remixed second release of the hard to get first LP which came out on Devour Records of Japan in 1999. An over the top wall of thrash. Brutal no-holds-barred sonic assault. This is the most powerful material by the most intense band in hardcore today. CD contains all Nine Shocks' recorded material other than the Paying Ohmage LP. 38 tracks total, including all the 7" and comp tracks. LP HC1204 & CD HC5009

MISERY The Early Years Incl. the Born, Fed, Slaughtered, Blindead, and Children of War 7's, the Misery side of the split LP with SDS, and the Production Through Destruction LP. 71 Minutes of Amebix style apocalyptic crust. Split release with Crimes Against Humanity Records. CD HC5004

HOLDING ON Just Another Day LP / CD Crucial hardcore from Minnesota's Holding On! Mixes the crunch of Judge and Chain of Strength with the anger and raw power of Negative Approach. Totally pissed off, raw, powerful Hardcore! Split release with THD, Havoc and 1% records. LP HC1203 & CD HC5003

DS-13 Killed by the Kids One of the best bands in hardcore today. Amazing second LP of early 80s-style thrashy HC/punk. Excellent production, Pushead cover art. LP HC1202 & CD HC5002

VARIOUS ARTISTS When Hell Freezes Over Compilation LP Featuring Code 13, Misery, Dreadnaught, Onward to Mayhem, Arden Chapman, Segue, Feed the Machine, Scorned, Calloused, Fallen Graces, & Pontius Pilate. All new material by 11 Minneapolis punk/HC bands. Styles vary from street punk, to crust, to grind, but it's all punk and all Minneapolis. Split release between Havoc, Sin Fronteras, and local bands. HC1201

CODE 13 Complete Discography 1994-2000 All the 7's and comp tracks with one unreleased song. CD HC5001

ASSEMBLY OF GOD Submission Obedience Denial

New band with members of Brother Inferior, Burnpile, and Subsantity. Fast punk/HC a lot like the later Brother Inferior material. HC7026

VITAMIN X People that Bleed Thirst 7" by this Dutch SEHC band. Fast HC sound similar to DS-13 or Life's Halt. Great political SE lyrics and high energy HC. HC7025

TEAR IT UP S/T Ex Dead Nation, killer fast hardcore with lots of drive and energy. HC7024

DS-13 / CODE 13 13 song split 7" Sweden and Minnesota united in fast, raw hardcore pride. HC7023

REAL ENEMY / HOLDING ON Twin Cities Hardcore split 7" Political straight edge and youth crew hardcore. HC7022.5

NINE SHOCKS TERROR Mobile Terror Unit 7" EP Awesome raw fast thrash from Cleveland. HC7022

KAAOS Nukke Re-issue 1985 Finnish HC, classic stuff. HC7021

CLUSTERBOMB...and the Dirty Little Weapons 7" EP Brutal dis-core from Stuttgart, Germany. HC7020

UNITED SUPERVILLAINS (USV) Escapist 7" EP crucial fast HC similar to old Boston bands like DYS, Siege and SSD full speed ahead! HC7019

SPAZZ 151 S/T 7" EP Second 7" by this Texas HC powerhouse. Hardcore like Black Flag, Poison Idea or Battalion of Saints. HC7018

DEMON SYSTEM 13 Aborted Teen Generation 7" EP U.S. press of this amazing Swedish hardcore band, fast aggressive powerful old-school hardcore. HC7017

CODE-13 A Part of America Died Today 7" EP Third and best EP from Minnesota thrash punk defenders of the faith-twelve songs. HC7016

TAMPERE SS Kuolutt & Kuopattu 7" EP Demo and comp tracks from this crucial Finnish hardcore band of the early 80s. HC7015

TAMPERE SS SS Sotaa 7" EP More incredible Finnish thrash hardcore first released in '83. HC7014

NOTA/BROTHER INFERIOR split 7" Tulsa, Oklahoma's best hardcore old and new. HC7013

PROTESTI S/T 8 track EP Originally released as a demo in 1983, this is Finnish HC in the classic Propaganda Records style. HC7012

HEIST Pain Is Causing Life 7" EP Wicked fast and brutal HC in the Infest tradition. Second EP by this Australian thrash outfit. HC7011

DISTRAUGHT S/T 7" EP Brutal heavy hard-core from Brooklyn, NYC. New remixed second press with bonus track. HC7010

MURDERERS S/T 7" EP Legendary chaos punk/ HC. Manic HC-punk like Disorder, much more thrash than their recent stuff. HC7009

CODE-13 They Made a Wasteland and Called it Peace Furious hardcore punk from beneath the streets of Minneapolis. HC 7008

H-100's Texas Death Match 7" Snotty, harsh, early 80s hardcore with a seriously bad attitude. 3/4 of Nine Shocks Terror. HC 7007

MASSKONTROLL Warpath 7" EP Brutal Swedish-style hardcore similar to No Security, Doom, etc. ex-Resist, pre-Defestation. HC7006

CODE-13 Doomed Society 7" EP Blistering hardcore punk. Ex-Destroy but more of a punk/HC sound than full-on grind. HC7005

BRISTLE System 7" EP Rip roaring old school punk/HC from Seattle, powerful and catchy

We can't promise to review everything sent to us, especially stuff sent right at deadline time!

REVIEWS • REVIEWS • REVIEWS • REVIEWS • REVIEWS • REVIEWS • REVIEWS

Sharping/ Austria

9 SHOCKS TERROR - Zen and the Art of Beating Your Ass CD

These guys are great. Totally maniacal thrash mayhem from start to finish! This cd has everything these guys put out except for the PAYING OHMAGE LP which is still available, so if you're looking for some of the harder to find records or some comp. tracks you missed along the way get this cd. Also do yourself a favor and see 9 Shocks live the next time they rip through your area, you'll be glad you did. These guys are completely fucking insane! Two thumbs up!! (Ciderpunk)
Havoc Records / P.O. Box 8585 / Minneapolis, MN 55408 USA

OPUS DEAD - s/t 7"

Opus Dead is a refreshing listen. It's nothing especially innovative, but they have an awesome sound that's distinctively their own. The vocalist had a clear voice, which is seldom heard, and together with their strong bass and guitar lines they form a clear sound that keeps you moving. There are only Spanish lyrics, and the entire CD booklet is also in Spanish, so I could only really interpret what one year of high school Spanish allows. I believe that they're on the same label as Sin Dios, whom they also sound reminiscent of, so if you like Sin Dios, I would definitely recommend Opus Dead. (xzachx)
La Idea / Apdo. 18251 / 28080 Madrid, Spain / or / laidea@sindios.net

ORGANIC - The Life and Times of Sal Sagev CD

This is one hefty release! 25 tracks in a semi-discography form from this 7-year-old Las Vegas band. The style of music is fast, catchy, and melodic with that sore throat, pour your heart out, singing style ala Hot Water Music. Lots of breaks and hooks and soul searching passionate lyrics. If you like early East Bay stuff like Crimpshrine and Fifteen mixed with the raw, unpolished energy of Against Me!, then you'll fall in love with Organic. Definitely a gem. (Hatchet)
Microcosm / PO Box 14332 / Portland, OR 97392-0332

PHALANX - s/t CD

If Phalanx were an animal it would be likened to a fire breathing black steed, thrashing and galloping like one pissed off beast. This is definitely their sound, from the galloping drums to the guitar and bass metal/crust style to the guttural glass swallowing vocals, finally rounding it all out with a little keyboard ambience, this is one mean recording! 17 tracks make this a self-described discography with two line-up studio recordings and songs from a split 7" with Decrepit. Also included is a glossy color insert with lyrics and a mini fold out poster. This is a great release of 2002! (Hatchet)
Aborted Society Records / PMB 1377 / 1122 East Pike St. / Seattle, WA / 98122-3934

PHOBIA/RESIST & EXIST - split LP

Here it is, the first new release from Profane Existence records in like 3 or 4 years! Phobia play heavy as fuck crusty hardcore. The vocals go from growls to screams, and the music goes from slow and heavy to blast beat craziness. Check em out. Resist & Exist bring to mind old UK peace punk, in my opinion at least. They remind me a lot of early CONFLICT. Both bands have the political lyrics that don't let up. Great record, PICK THIS UP! (Ciderpunk)
Profane Existence Records / P.O. Box 8722 Minneapolis, MN 55408 / USA
CD available from Chey Records / P.O. Box 772121 / Coral Springs, FL 33077

PROTOKOL - Mommy Says Don't Talk to Bastards cassette

Protokol is a mix of hardcore and grindcore. The songs that ARE hardcore are actually done fairly well, especially the thought-provoking song, "You are Not My Friend". I'm sad to say, however, that of the 18 songs, about 12 of them are grindcore, and all of them sound exactly the same (like shit). However, they explain themselves and their cause, which is against the Malaysian government and its propaganda. To the listener, beware, because this tape may have a startling affect; such as torturing creatures, pillaging villages, and going on rampages. (xzachx)
Pure Minds Records / Lot 26 7, Kg Che Zainal, Tambahan / 3 1200 Chemor, Perak / Malaysia

SOD 'N' DAN - s/t CD

Sod 'n' Dan are from Slovenia, and play politically as well as socially conscious music. One of my favorite songs from the CD is "Pizda rt Joski" (literally translating to "Cunt, Butt, Tits"). It's a story about the horrors of rape and how it can affect someone. To the likeness of Aus Rotten, they have double vocals in most of their songs, and play an intense mix of deep growling vocals and higher pitched screaming. Throughout their songs, they also have some unexpected, but well placed, transitions that help to keep the songs constantly moving. I loved this whole CD and think that it's some great NEW crust punk to listen to that also gives some insight to another country. If you like punk or hardcore music at all, I would definitely recommend moving your ass to buy this, it's phenomenal! (xzachx)
7 euros (about \$15) Jani Rihtarsic / Na Plavzu 59 / 4228 Zeleniki, Slovenia

SUBTRACT TO ZERO - s/t LP

This is a difficult record to review because it is such a vast and unusual recording. Two songs make up this entire LP and each

give a sort of noise/ambient interpretation of each title. It is interesting to listen to the many instruments and manipulations used to create these songs such as bass, drums, French horn, guitar, accordion, saw, noise machines, beta player, radio, tape loops, and keyboard. The vocals are screamed and strained and knarled and you have to wonder how it can all be kept up for a good twenty minutes or so! Subtract to Zero definitely have that complex, experimental, angry edge that I think bands like Servitude and Segue would have headed into if not disbanded. The record comes in an interesting disjointed cover with moody art printed with soy ink. I think I like this record, the passion is definitely audible. (Hatchet)
Primary Thoughts / PO Box 4995 / Portland, OR 97208

WORLD BURNS TO DEATH - The Sucking of the Missile Cock LP

One of my favorite records at the time of this writing-I was a big fan of this band after their first EP and the full length completely blows it away. I hear a lot of Scandinavian HC influence in this band but at the same time of reminded a lot of GAUZE, especially in the vocals. This is definitely some fine dirty and raw punk for you. As one would guess, lyrically this band is very much against American warmongering, amongst other things. The cover art is extremely irreverent as well. This band has definitely done its homework. I'm having a hard time finding the words to describe how good this LP is, so just go out and get it. (Doug)
Hardcore Holocaust / P O Box 26742 / Richmond, VA 23261

V/A All Power to the Poepel, Not the State CD

This is a benefit compilation for the Black Star Collective and proceeds also go to the Mumia Working Group of Refuse and Resist. I like this compilation a lot because it is jam packed with 23 very diverse punk bands and spoken word artists. The songs do not coincide in subject matter but are all politically oriented in their own right. Bands include: Global Holocaust, Submission Hold, Good Riddance, I-Spy, Gasp, Naked Aggression, Marilyn's Vitamins, Citizen Fish and more. Spoken word by Mark Bruback and a page dedicated to each bands lyrics and info. This is a great album going to a good cause. (Hatchet)
Black Star Recordings / PO Box 5081 / Torrance, CA/90510

V/A - No Hold Back... All Attack!!! 3xLP

This is one release a lot of us from the Twin Towns Of Terror have been looking forward to for a long fucking time! Back in '95 the local compilation 2XLP/CD NO SLOW...ALL GO! was released with a lot of really cool bands that were tearing it up, and here we are 7-8 years later with another fine example of kick ass music from Mpls/St. Paul. Some of the bands featured include SCORNE, RED VENETTA, THE SOVIETTES, MENSTRUAL TRAMPS, CALLOUSED(R.I.P.), THE GOOCHERS, FREEZE BABY, BLEEDING HICKEYS, THE SUBVERSIVES(R.I.P.), PONTIUS PILATE(R.I.P.), PATH OF DESTRUCTION, MISERY, CUT THROAT HOODS, A-BOMB NATION, DAMAGE DEPOSIT, EL PUNKEKE & THE ALIENS, THE SCAMPS, and the infamous ED GEIN FAN CLUB. The double cd version of this will be out soon. TWINCITIES HARDCOREPUNKROCKNROLL.2002. By all means.... PICK THIS MOTHERFUCKER UP! (Ciderpunk)
You can get it from Havoc Records

V/A Farewell to Arms Three CD

International anti-military benefit. What better time to support an anti-military benefit? I really like this CD. It sounds great and comes in a nice cardboard foldout case and has a book with band info and contacts. There are so many good bands on this comp: Kontrovers, Life's a Riot, Forca Macabra, Oi Polloi, Pax Americana, Seem Red, Demon System 13, Drop Dead, and many more--27 bands altogether. I strongly recommend this CD. Great listening for the whole family. (Josh)
Aseistakieltajaliitto / Rauhanasema, Veturitori 3 / 00520 Helsinki / Finland / www.aseistakieltajaliitto.fi

V/A Fast'n'Loud Apresenta Caos em Portugal CD

This CD rips. Hardcore punk, even some grindy stuff. Bands like Crise Total, Soda Caustica, O.D.D. and many more. Well put together, clean recording. The lyrics are in Portuguese, which I do not speak, so I can't comment on them. However, looking at the artwork I'm sure they're of good content. (Josh)
Fast'n'Loud / AP.13037 / 1019 Lisboa Codex / Portugal

IN PRINT

Aborted Society #5 Spring/Summer 2002

8" x 5" / 50pgs. / \$1.00 PPD

Fancy full-color glossy cover with a replica as a poster insert, but this ain't no high falutin' mag, just a really nice DIY punk effort all the way. This zine has a lot of shit on it's plate with a tilt on humor, such as "Starting a Crust Band for Dummies", which is hilarious, as well as Punk Rock Mad Libs that left me in stitches. Also included is a fashion punk coloring contest, articles on bike punks, sex work, punk rock gossip and rants of the Seattle scene, an article about Bush and viagra (?), and in depth vinyl reviews. ABSOC is in a cut n' paste format with lots of collaging to look at, as well as a comic and photos from a trip to Europe (where I actually met these clowns. HA!). An overall great fanzine, check it out! (Hatchet)

Aborted Society / PMB1377 / 1122 East Pike St. / Seattle, WA 98122-3934

Animal Liberation Front Supporters Group Nov 2002

Full Size /24 pgs/.75 mo \$18yr

This color cover glossy magazine is chock full of every thing you'd expect once again. It starts with addresses of ALF prisoners for support including their stories and letters. Then goes to a gripping Huntingdon Life Sciences update (including some photos). Then comes the international news dept. letting us know about the animal rights activity around the world. Following that there is an insiders account of the Barry Horne(RIP) hunger strikes. After that is a (thankfully) short obituary section. And last but not least the diary of actions area. This is a little shorter, but never a let down. It's every thing you'd expect from the people who risk their lives to ensure the freedom of those who don't have a voice. (Jake)
Animal Liberation Front Supporters Group/BM Box 1160/ London/WC1N 3XX/info@alfsg.co.uk

Blackthorn #2

Newspaper/20pgs/send stamps in USA

This amazing newspaper starts with an interview with a member from the IWW. It speaks about why and how the IWW exists. This paper also gives an in depth process on brewing our own alcohol (for those of us who like to drink) so as to avoid big business involvement in our drinking. There is also an amazing article about the Palestine/Israel conflict. Also an interview with Eterna Inocencia from Argentina. The highlight has to be the Urban Permaculture piece! It gives a piece by piece set up on urban sustainable living. Blackthorn wraps it up with an article by a 46 year old prisoner giving the facts on his situation. This paper is as great as the first! (Jake)
Blackthorn / PO BOX 11046 / Portland OR 97211

EnRAGED- #?

8" x 5" / 34pgs./\$?

This is a zine put together by Revolutionary Action (RA), a collective passionate about Direct Action and practical and effective tactics for getting a political point across. There are articles on protests gone awry, a May Day demonstration turned police horse trample, a debatable column that critiques the Green Party, and a really interesting piece about clocks and time restraint. There is also step-by-step instructions on how to make a DIY graffiti stencil out of an old backpack! Very cool. And many protest photos and graphics round out this great zine. (Hatchet)
RA / POBox 167 / Keiraville, NSW 2500 / Australia

Free Society #13

1/2 size / 74 pgs / \$3

This 1/2 page zine starts with letters and news, and then gets into show reviews. There is an interview with Submission Hold followed by some activist files protest reports. The band 401 is also interviewed, and they are a mid '80's approach to punk/hardcore and are included on a free cd. Free Society is not a bad read if you like show reports. (Jake)
Stuart Morris / 148 London St. / Peterborough, Ont. K9H 2Y5 / Canada

Prison Focus #16 Summer 2002

8 1/2 x 11" / 31pgs. / \$?

"Prison Focus is a publication of California Prison Focus, a non profit organization that works with and on behalf of prisoners in California's control units." This newsprint mag is chock full of writings on injustices in the prison system. The prominent themes this issue are on the ever-growing visitor and mail restrictions, HIV and HepC in prisons and the lack of medical care provided, and the harsh and unjust treatment of transgender and gender variant inmates. There is also recommended reading lists, political prisoner updates, letters, and poetry and art from those incarcerated. Prison Focus is a really impressive publication delving in passionate activism for prisoner's rights. (Hatchet)
Prison Focus / 2940 16th St. Room 307 / San Francisco, CA 94103

Slug and Lettuce #73 Autumn 2002

Newsprint / 19pgs. / Free in person / 60c PPD

S&L is quite a legendary resource zine of its time. I am always ecstatic to get my hands on one that I read it cover to cover as soon as it arrives. It is packed full of columns, punk art and photography, and reviews galore. As any loyal reader knows, we get a glimpse into Chris' life through her usual lengthy and engaging column, as well as the seasonal columns of such favorites as Mike Antipathy, Sascha Dubrul, Adrienne, radical parenting rants, herbal tips, and personal musings. There are enough great zine, music, and book reviews to spawn a healthy collection for any newcomer. This is the type of zine you give to anyone questioning the positive actions of the punk community. Inspiring! (Hatchet)
Slug and Lettuce c/o Christine / POBox 26632 / Richmond, VA 23261-6632

Stolen Sharpie Revolution

Photo copied b/w 1/4 96 gps \$3 ppd

This is an excellent zine for those who are interested in starting their own zine or for those who already do their own zine, but might want a new perspective. It also has tips for making copies, zinester etiquette, promotion and mailing for those of you interested in starting a distro making screens for patches, t-shirts, or beating corporate alcohol by homebrewing. This has you covered. They even tell you how to make paper! Fuck yeah! (Jake)
Alex / Microcosm / PO Box 14332 / Portland, OR 97293

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14)

Profane Existence #41

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www.seditionrecords.com

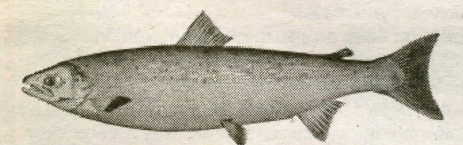
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Box 18921 Denver, CO 80218 List alternatives.



Maybe this section should be called "Fish Stories" since that's what its primarily consisted of for the first two installments. That's just a coincidence really since that's what I'm into and that's the information I come across. It may or may not change in upcoming issues as my contacts and resourses grow. So maybe some of you are asking "What does all this fish news and biological jargon have to do with punk rock?" As far as I'm concerned, it's got everything to do with it. Coming from an anarcho-punk background, ecological issues have been some of the most urgent in songs and debates. Over the years, we've spent hours and hours raking over these topics in conversations, zines and record jackets— what's wrong with the environment, our destruction of natural habitats, the waste and the greed, etc. We've run these issues around in circles for decades now. After so long, maybe we get a feeling of powerlessness, frustration, or even just sadness. Let's face it, the truth hurts. These are the issues that politicians don't like to talk about. Maybe because there aren't clear answers, or maybe because the answers we do have aren't the answers we want to hear. Ecological issues are multifaceted, and often there are no "good guys" and "bad guys" (as we can see where government regulation may be necessary to preserve species). The stories compiled here can give us a better understanding of some of the current environmental issues, shedding some light on some contrasting viewpoints and proposed solutions. With all the propaganda out there telling us what to buy and how to think, it's important to gain an understanding of the issues at hand. While we may remain skeptical, what we shouldn't remain is silent. Comments and contributions can be made to: fireduprecs@yahoo.com (This issue's sections was cut due to space limitations... more next time.) -Jon

The first piece in this section was actually written directly for publication here in PE by Roach(ex-REACT shouter) who's spent the majority of the past five years in Maine working with Atlantic Salmon. Comments can be directed to him at: roacherhead@yahoo.com

Wild Atlantic Salmon: Indicator on the Brink



The issue of the Atlantic salmon is, publicly, practically unknown and that seems to be both its strength and weakness. The internalized fight to restore wild salmon populations has been fought by State and Federal agencies, and Private organizations comprised mostly of salmon fishers (women and men). That isn't much of a sampling of people with environmental concerns. Someone interested in salmon fishing can expect to spend \$500.00 for the basic set up, and for this audience, and myself, I would guess this isn't what we'd want to spend 500 bucks on. That keeps the general interest somewhat internal. Comparatively, the average person can walk out in the woods, see (or even read about) a clear cut and know they don't want that. Meanwhile most of the people I talk to don't realize that Atlantic salmon are a Listed, Endangered Species in the US. The capital spent to bring back salmon is a big issue. And perhaps why it's good the battle is internalized. The average taxpayer might not be happy to know how much government money goes into salmon restoration yearly. That coupled with the continued decline in the population makes people uneasy about funding a "government pork-barrel project" (my uncle's name for the programs). On the broad scale it's not that much: it's been said to cost a person a cup of coffee a year in tax moneys.

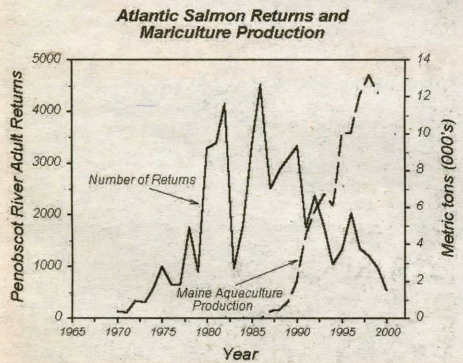
But it's an important battle being fought, to any one with environmental concerns. When you stop to ask, "why"? With all the money and research going on over many years, why can't we bring the salmon back? When you consider the time and effort that has gone into regulations to clean up waterways, create passage by dams, habitat restoration efforts, ending recreational salmon fishing completely - why does the population continue to fall? What if the ultimate question is - what happened to our Oceans? That said, the following is a brief summary of Atlantic salmon in the US:

Wild Atlantic salmon were extirpated from their southern most reaches in the 1800s due to damming of streams by mills, and poor, or nonexistent, water quality, control measures. These southern most reaches included the Connecticut River, which likely once held the largest run of Atlantic salmon in the United States. There were early attempts to restore salmon but without passage over dams, continued poor water quality, and general habitat destruction, those attempts failed.

Now the last remaining Wild Atlantic salmon are found only in a few rivers the state of Maine. Elsewhere in the US there are restoration programs (fish are reared in hatcheries and released, to try to restart the lost stocks) that have lingering returns, including the Connecticut River. The problem appears to be worse in the US but throughout the North Atlantic salmon populations are following similar trends.

Life History – not all of the terminology here are important to remember, they're there if you want to learn them

In late May through early November, adult salmon, generally 5 years old return to their natal streams from the open ocean. After two plus years of feeding on the abundant sources of food in the open sea,



they have grown, averaging about 10 pounds (4-5kg). The strategy in going to sea is probably utilizing the greater abundance of larger food items at sea. Food resources in a river are much more finite, especially in the less "productive" rivers that Atlantic salmon live in (to get into stream productivity is an ecology course so basically clean cold water and fewer bugs and fish species to eat than in warmer waters). The increase in size means the female can produce more eggs. More eggs means more individuals that may survive the natural elements to become a 5 year old breeding adult.

In the fall, late October to November, adults spawn. The female selects a very specific area: water moving fast enough to get plenty of oxygen but not so fast as to blow eggs away, and course gravel to build the nest (*redd*). She'll dig a pit in the gravel by undulating her body, with males courting and fighting for her all the while. The Male will swim up beside her and they will simultaneously disperse eggs and sperm (*milt*) into the redd. The female will now bury the eggs. One female may build three redds in a season, and one male usually mates with more than one female. Unlike Pacific salmon that die after they spawn, Atlantic salmon can return to sea and, if they survive, spawn again. There are records of males returning to spawn 4 times (that's a 10-year-old salmon).

A likely reason for rearing juvenile salmon in streams is the relatively safe environment: fewer predators, and a stable source of food for early growth. Predation in streams still exists but seems to be a safer place to learn the dangers of the natural world.

The eggs hatch in the spring and the larva (*sac fry*) will feed on the remaining yolk sac. Soon, they begin to feed on particulate matter at the *fry* stage. In about a year they are feeding on insects and are now at the *parr* stage. After about two years in the stream the parr undergo physiological changes to prepare them to live in salt water, the process is called *smolting* and the product is yet another life stage: the *smolt*. Smolts are approximately 5-9 inches (13-23cm), and head for the sea in the spring. They will make the transition from fresh to sea water in a matter of days. This is probably the most dangerous time in their lives: they're in a new environment with more, and larger, predators.

Once out in the open ocean it is believed they'll do all right, and in a few months they'll be mixed with salmon from all over the Atlantic. They will spend one to three years at sea and return to repeat the cycle again.

The importance of the life cycle is understanding that salmon live in two environments of environmental concern: inland and off shore. The latter being the least understood of the salmon's life history. Knowing where Atlantic salmon live and the requirements they need to survive helps in the big picture. What is skewed or screwed in the environment to be depleting the species?

Becoming an Endangered Species – (Thank You Richard Nixon)

It's funny to consider that the President, perhaps most consistently disliked in American History, also signed the Endangered Species Act. Anyhow, the Atlantic salmon is no Bald eagle. It's not depicted anywhere on the national emblem (though that would have been convenient). In fact every year, the first Atlantic salmon caught in Maine was ceremoniously handed to the President. President Bush no. 1 was the last.

As returning salmon runs became increasingly low there was a push to list the species as endangered. The state feared this would damage the economy of the state. Tougher regulations on companies, tends

to send them away to other states that will be more lenient towards their practices – true fair-weather friends. In Maine three major Industries are Logging, Blueberries and Aquaculture, all of which can affect salmon. Logging under current practices is the least affected. Blueberry and Aquaculture farms were heavily effected.

Maine has a unique soil make up in certain areas. Geologically speaking it's only been dry a very short time (the last ice age). The product is a very sandy, very porous soil. This is Ideal soil for blueberries. But it is also where the majority of the last, wild salmon rivers lie. Blueberry farms were pulling water from the rivers to irrigate their crop. It takes a lot of water due to the porous nature of the soil. This porous, attribute also holds less of the contaminants that a richer soil would filter out. Since farmers do dust for insects, there is a fairly direct path from the crop to the soil to the river, with little time to breakdown harmful chemicals. Eventually farmers were required to pull water from underground aquifers.

Aquaculture was initially created to reduce the strain on the oceans natural fish populations, by creating a self-sustaining food source. Unfortunately, farms have proven to "suffocate" shellfish and other communities that live on the seafloor beneath them. They also have a negative effect on wild salmon. Salmon raised in sea pens are bred to be eaten. There is little concern for their natural ability to survive, and find their natal streams – they're bred to be a tasty dish. Seals and other predators think so too, occasionally breaking into pens for an easy meal. That or a storm can damage a pen and release thousands of salmon. Farmed salmon still have the instinct to spawn and will, with wild fish, causing a disruption of the species genetic integrity. Worse, like any other animal, when there are many individuals in a confined space it is very convenient for disease to spread. In fact, in a confined area water is a far more conjunctive media than air. Some fish diseases are so infectious farmers or hatchery managers must destroy their entire stock. All these problems are compounded when considering the size of the remaining population of wild salmon. Any disruption to their limited, natural genetic community could be utterly destructive.

That was the weak link that politicians in Maine cued in on: genetics. Because historic records of salmon family lines were questionable, they argued that there were no grounds to consider salmon as a unique species. Since there had already been considerable mixing of aquaculture, and Wild fish. Also, methods of managing fish populations were not thoroughly scientific in the old days. Not only were fish selected for reproduction merely by appearance, most of these fish came from Penobscot River (Maine, USA) and Mirimichi River (New Brunswick, Canada) stocks. Studies had found a greater success with local stocks. By 1969, this practice was halted for a local stocks only program.

In 1997 the state came up with a thorough "Conservation Plan for Seven Maine Rivers", as a compromise to the listing. The plan was thorough but, ultimately the state alone did not have the finances to carry it out alone. Meanwhile environmentalists were suing the federal government for allowing a compromise, on a species that was said to be below the numbers required to sustain itself.

The federal government came back to the table with a "Distinct Population Segment" in eight Maine rivers. Geneticists found salmon in these rivers to be genotypically unique to other salmon communities. It's not surprising when you consider they need to return to natal streams. Studies have also been done showing distinct physical (phenotypic) attributes as well: in a river with a large set of falls, salmon tend to have a larger tail (caudal) fin. In November 2000 the Atlantic salmon was listed "Endangered" in the US. The State of Maine then counter sued, and they're still in court.

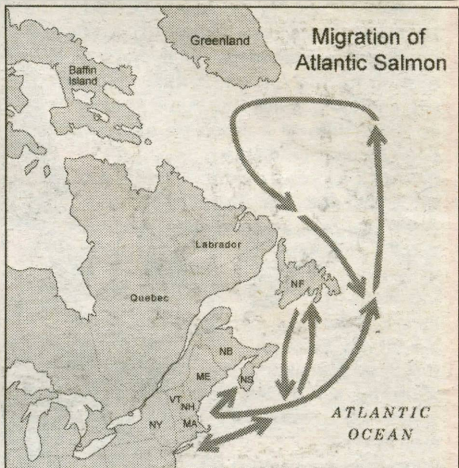
It's not fair to call Maine the enemy, it is home to one of the poorest counties in the US (home to five wild salmon rivers) and has a troubled economy. There are many grassroots organizations in the state and some larger groups attempting to focus on Ecotourism as a means to boost the economy. It's a difficult transition to make; from a traditional utilitarian based economy to a more, ecological based one, with an already thin wallet. People tend to stick to what they know for stability up front, though it may hurt in the long run.

The Big Picture

Some say the Endangered listing is too little, too late. Some rivers have had no spawning in them in recent years. I helped collect, count and release the last known parr in the Ducktrap River last fall. And if every one of those parr make it to smolt, and head to sea, the chances of them returning remain slim. I've worked with Atlantic salmon for the past 5 years and have never seen a salmon redd other than in pictures.

At Sea

As said previously, salmon move to the open ocean and mix with salmon from all over the North Atlantic. There is still a commercial fishery for Salmon in Greenland and the Faeroes (that I know of, there could be others as well). Greenland has a commercial salmon fishery, which has reduced its allowable harvest every year; still 10s of thousands of tons are still being removed. These are known to



be of mixed origin (North America, Greenland, Iceland and European), simply because many of the salmon are tagged by biologists before they go out to sea and are reported. Though commercial harvest surely contributes to the decrease in returning salmon, proportionately it doesn't seem to account for all losses.

Inland

Another problem less talked about is the unnatural increase in predatory species. Recreational fisheries are a catch 22 for people involved in fish ecology. In the US portions of any money spent on fishing equipment, outboard motors, etc. goes towards fisheries management programs. You also have to purchase a fishing license which costs about \$20. This is usually money well spent: going towards research, some purchasing of lands to keep from development and, funding hatcheries to raise fish to stock (and of course, paying employees). This is often done with little consideration of competition between species. It is also done illegally, or by accident when people release fish from one body of water to another, either to introduce fish where they want them or by dumping a bait bucket full of fish. As I mentioned before many of these streams already have limited resources so putting more competitors into the environment lessens the salmon's chance for survival. People want a lot of fish to catch, and a variety of fish to catch. Few popular game fish are actually native to Northeast US. Over time water bodies have been stocked with different species to give fishers a variety angling opportunities. Trout are more active in the colder part of the season, (several alien species have been introduced from Europe and the West Coast of the US). As the water warms up bass (an alien warm water species) will be more active. Bass are voracious eaters: I've caught bass the same size as the lure I was using (Yes. I do fish for bass, in salmon rivers). They tend to colonize well in some of these rivers, which get very warm in the summer. Warmth brings us to another problem: Climate

A lot of data is being compiled regarding *ice-out time*: when ice melts off lakes, and it appears to be getting earlier in the season that waters are open and clear of ice. High temps in rivers also seem to be increasing, 29 Celsius is considered lethal to salmon fry, and temperatures in the 30s have been recorded in some of these rivers.

Here in the North Eastern US we have a big problem with Acid rain, even though there is less industry in Maine than in other parts of the country. If you ever watch the weather radar over this part of the country you'll notice patterns most commonly moves East and North, then is slowed by the warming or cooling (depending on the time of year) of the ocean. We're really at an armpit area for pollutants. Maine gets airborne pollutants from Canada, and whatever makes it up the Eastern Seaboard. After a good spring rain, pH levels in Eastern Maine streams have been shown to shoot up. A pH of five is all salmon and trout can take before heavy stress, fatigue and eventually death. Some of the salmon rivers have gone below that mark, but luckily only temporarily.

It doesn't seem likely that the Atlantic salmon is a weak species on it's way out in some noble Darwinian fashion, as has been suggested by some. The salmon, Pacific or Atlantic is a vital indicator of the condition of our global environment. Humans hold the door open and will probably trip them on the way out. I've presented the basic facts, as I know them, and now (if you made it through this) you know. If you're interested I've added websites where you can dig deeper and find out what action you can take.

The status of fisheries worldwide is in question at this time. So, what has happened to our oceans?

¹Salmon served in restaurants is either Pacific salmon or, more commonly, farm raised. Most common origin: Chile, North Atlantic or Pacific Northwest.

²There are companies working cooperatively with salmon restoration on responsible practices, as well as organic farms in Maine, that use no pesticides

³There were those farms that drilled hastily and utilized a shallow aquifer, which still pressures the river

⁴It is worth noting that they have also assisted in the raising of wild eggs for restoration projects

⁵ Scotland recently lost over 150,000.

AFTERTHOUGHT (a trashback from the writer): I tried to write an unbiased report on the salmon issue, an issue I've dedicated a good part of my life to. Not because I'm crazy about fish, but I want to know why we can't bring them back. They were coined the "king of fish" and "the fish of Kings", tough, survivors. Now with Salmon on the brink, and so many other, more well known, environmental issues, this country is preparing for a war to finish off some bullshit meant to put an Honorable close to some Patriarchal crap. Environmental issues will take a seat at the back of the bus, while the man in the tit-pocket of the oil companies is busy, putting folks to death. All because he was slapped in the face with the reality that the meek can still sneak in and kick your dog.



Interview by Emo Wuss

RAMBO: Andy 23 on guitar, John 24 on guitar, Mike 24 on guitar, Todd 27 on guitar, Bull 28 on guitar, t a r , on propa- drums, Tony bass.

RAMBO: We've been together for three years or so, we didn't take it that seriously at first. After a few lineup changes we've reached the current more stable version of the band. Andy, Jeremy, and Jay all started practicing together and then Tony decided he was going to sing. He sucked real bad at first and sounded like a bird. Then Beau took over bass and we played shows as a 4 piece for about a year. John joined a year later and Mike jumped on as prop and propaganda master. We lost Beau and Jeremy over a year ago and Todd and Bull joined. That is the current lineup that has done all the touring.

RAMBO: We usually try to do everything by consensus, it's hard when creative and personal visions of things come into play but, I think it functions pretty well.

RAMBO: We are all vegan, straightedge, anarchists and cyclists.

RAMBO: Well we feel it's one in the same for us—we take our politics into our personal lives as much as possible. Since we spend a great deal of our time with the band a lot of our activism is related to projects we can accomplish with the band. We believe that if you are an activist and in a politically oriented band it is your duty to make your band a model for your beliefs. You gotta back your words up with action or they mean nothing. Right now we are working on a free show to coincide with an upcoming anti-war gathering and march. We also play and organize benefits.

Profane: An aspect that shows off how much fun you guys are to see is the props at the shows, like the tanks and the cardboard helicopters. What's there purpose and how do you go about deciding what to make and how to make it while on the road?

RAMBO photo: Matt Average

RAMBO photo: Matt Average

RAMBO: It IS cause we're that damn sexy! I have mixed feelings on nudity. Not everyone wants to bump into some dude's dizzle at a show. It can make people very uncomfortable and we don't want that!

Profane: Do any of you ever get naked at shows?
RAMBO: I've gotten naked during RAMBO sets. Basically people disrobed me. Crazy stuff happens all the time, it's hard to top the four garbage bags full of plastic colored balls being set loose at the Babylon in Minneapolis. So many shows come to mind. Shit gets crazy a lot.

RAMBO: If you mean the activist scene, very productive. There is an amazing collectively-run anarchist book store called the Wooden Shoe, a meeting space called the A Space, a bike workspace and library called the Bike Church, and the Mariposa Food Co-Op. Additionally there are amazing community-based groups like the Kensington Welfare Rights Union, Books through Bars, and the Pentridge Kids Community Garden. There are also many anarchist owned houses and land trusts. In general there is all kinds of ill anarcho shit going on. As for the city itself--the city government has its head up its own ass. The pigs are brutal, but lazy, so you can get away with a lot of shit. The cities Licensing & Inspection Agency are bastards who make it very prohibitive to small business and lately they have been cracking down on DIY all-aces show spaces in the city.

RAMBO: We believe that Clear Channel, the huge media corporation, is pulling the city Licensing & Inspection Agency's strings in order to shut out local competition. Luckily one of our main venues, the First Unitarian Church, got the permits it needed and is back up and running. The Philly L & I Agency that is currently going after so many of our DIY all-ages venues is the same one that shut down Stalag 13—a Philly show space that I helped run for three years.

Profane: What do you think about the possibility

RAMBO: I am horrified at the possibility of war. The United States bombs Iraq weekly and has for the past 12 years. The economic sanctions result in the starvation of Iraqi civilians and the widespread depriva-

RAMBO: It's illegal to answer this question, let your imagination run wild...I'd make out with him and he'd pop multiple boners and totally change his world view and wear a studded vest.

RAMBO: We do not lump firefighters in with pigs, my father is a lieutenant in the Philadelphia Fire Department and he is the best guy ever. Over three hundred of them died in the WTC attacks because it is their job to save people's lives. I know most firefighters don't want to be called heroes, but what could come closer to the definition than a firefighter? I think firefighters deserved all the recognition they got, I wish they'd also get better pay, benefits and funding for equipment and personnel. As for the pigs, they are definitely milking this for all it's worth. Here in Philly the three people falsely accused of assaulting Police Commissioner Timoney during the Republican Convention had their charges reinstated after 9-11, and 9-11 was openly mentioned at the hearing, solely to incite fear and sway the judge. Look at the Patriot Act – everything that the pigs have been doing for years has been made legal.

has shed some of a bit compared to earlier days:

RAMBO: Yes. Although the European and South American punk scenes have been keeping it real since the eighties, the US political hardcore scene has been going downhill since the mid nineties. Along the same time Profane stopped existing it got replaced by Crimethinc as a gateway to activism in punk. In general it is a more "lifestyle" activist thing than the antagonistic approach that the anarcho punks used to have. Bands are less overtly political now. The substance of the music and original influencing bands got sacrificed for the style. And what's up with the fashion and all these kids in tan carharts? Give me a break! I guess it's a hard fact to swallow, but you put the average crust punk in earth tones and they look like a hippie!

RAMBO: The US tour we did this summer was amazing. Tons of kids making props all over. We are going to Europe this winter. Brazil this summer and the West

RAMBO: We have a demo (out of print), an lp and cd on 625productions, a split 7" with Crucial Unit on Ed Walters Records, soon out is a split 7" with Caustic Christ on Busted Heads and we are going to do another lp with 625 in the spring, and a split 9" with Creed (we cover each other's songs) on Jade Tree.

RAMBO: One of my closet friends is Christian. It's odd, I kind of think of it like my friend has this imaginary friend that he talks to and has a bunch of friends who all have the same imaginary friend and have this imaginary friend club and throw him birthday parties, but his politics are right on and all of the bull shit with Christianity like misogyny and homophobia isn't there, he went to Iraq! In his band he plays totally normal bars where dudes that could and would kick his ass hang out and he's up there talking about US foreign policy and sweatshop. Basically, if you're not a dill, we'll hang out with you.

RAMBO: Mike, our propaganda master, and I have done drug studies. As for the straightedge thing, there are issues with inebriation. I try to minimize medication in my life but, as an asthmatic I take my inhaler. It's a shitty compromise I make to facilitate my lifestyle. Right now 4 of us are trying to get on a Viagra nasal spray study so we can pop multiple Ramboners and have money for tour.

RAMBO: RAMBO is 100% sex positive. As long as both parties communicate and respect each other, nothing rules more than making one of your friends make funny faces and noises.

RAMBO: Jay played bass for our first few practices. The song "Honorable Discharge" that Jay sings on is a joke about him being kicked out of the band. The thing about his exclusive deal with Jade Tree was a joke also. Tim and Darren from Jade Tree are friends with members of RAMBO and we were just fucking with them for having contract deals with crappy indie rock bands. In the video on the cd you can see Tim and Darren in the pit. Tim is in a surgeon's outfit, and Darren is in a cop outfit.

RAMBO: Andy who plays guitar is a filmmaker. Because our live shows have a theatrical aspect, **RAMBO** wouldn't be fully represented without documenting it. Since Andy does film it gives him a chance to add to the diversity of mediums that is **RAMBO**.

RAMBO: We basically started out with a group of friends and Mike was always a part of that circle. He is a full member of RAMBO. Propaganda is a big part of RAMBO so it was only natural to have Mike be a part. He's our Gee Vaucher.

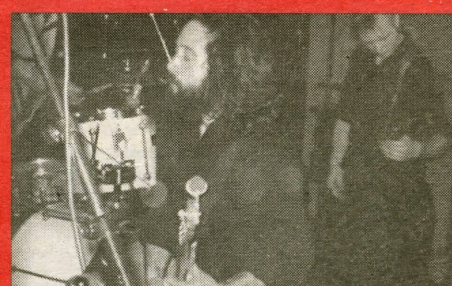
RAMBO: I'm reading a book called Guerrilla Radio about the underground radio station turned political movement that toppled the regime in Serbia (I forgot the author but if I go home and get the book I'll never send this interview) 911 by Chomsky is amazing...shit I'm drawing a blank on new books since what we put on the reading list in the LP

RAMBO: I got eight stitches in my shoulder from getting doored, a huge scar on the back of my calf from my chairnring when I hit a sunken manhole cover. I also broke a piece of my tibia off that anchored my ACL, which I tore along with my meniscus. Sometimes I get saddle sores and nasty chaff. Basically being a bike messenger takes a toll on your ass.

RAMBO: In DC during the IMF protests I was part of the classic fence charge where kids picked up a chainlink fence and charged the pigs with it. That was the inspiration for "Wall of Death the System". There are many other interesting protest stories but again we need some security culture here...

RAMBO: Only one we can talk about...security culture dude!

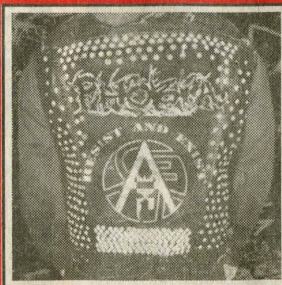
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Back with a bang!

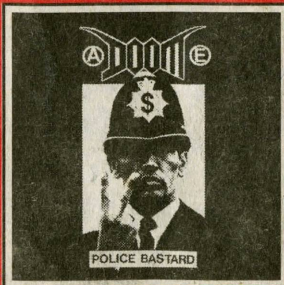


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