

Bits of the world in brief

Fifth Estate Collective

1984

Big Mountain News announces the annual spring "Survival Gathering" April 19–22 to be held at Big Mountain Dine (Navajo) Nation. Native peoples and their supporters are invited to participate in the gathering which has been planned to commemorate and honor the resistance of the Navajo and Hopi Elders against the U.S. government. Governmental attempts to remove and relocate some 14,000 Dine peoples from the ancestral lands of the Hopi and Navajo have not been successful. So far only about 200 families have succumbed to relocation programs; 2,800 families still remain. The government intends to clear the land, mine it for coal and uranium, and incorporate it into agribusiness ventures. For information on the continuing struggles of the Navajo and Hopi, and on the upcoming spring gathering write: Big Mountain Support Group, 1412 Cypress Street, Berkeley, CA 94703.

"A Gathering of Anarchists" sponsored by Chicago's Autonomy Center, which houses Impossible Books, will be held Friday, through Sunday, May 4–6 at the Center, 3951 N. Ashland, Chicago, IL 60613. The purpose of the Gathering according to the announcement is to plan for May Day events in 1986 (which seems to us a bit premature) as it is the year of the 100th anniversary of the Haymarket Affair and the 50th anniversary of the Spanish Revolution. Also, on the agenda will be efforts to coordinate anti-electoral events and propaganda against the U.S. presidential elections. And, never to be neglected, "Enjoying ourselves, meeting with and being with other comrades." As it stands, several of us from the Fifth Estate are planning to be in Chicago, so we hope to see some of you there.

Also, in Illinois, a coalition group is planning direct action against the Rock Island Arsenal to shut it down on June 4th. Rock Island is the headquarters for the U.S. Army Armament, Munitions and Chemical Command (AMCCOM) which manages inventory, assembly and transport of the nuclear and chemical stockpiles, prepares for emergency airlift of the weapons, and keeps the computer records on the U.S. nuclear arsenal. AMCCOM has an annual budget of \$9 billion, twice that of the state of Illinois and four times that of the state of Iowa. Regional meetings are currently being organized and information can be obtained by contacting the Disarm Now Action Group, 407 S. Dearborn 370, Chicago, IL 60605, (312) 427–2533.

Red painted Amazon Indians attacked a road-building crew with poisoned arrows in the dense jungles of eastern Peru in January. About 50 Indians of the fierce Piramasco tribe were trying to protect traditional tribal hunting grounds from the road crew, which is opening up the area to oil exploration by Campana Petroleo Shell el Peru. The Indians, who were naked but covered in red body paint withdrew in fear when army helicopters dispatched to rescue the workers hovered menacingly above them. The Piramasco Indians are estimated by anthropologists to number no more than five hundred. Considered to be one of the fiercest tribes surviving in the Amazon jungle, they have little contact with modern Peru.

The Vancouver B.C. Sun reported in its January 13, 1984 edition that the government of British Colombia is planning to shoot wolves by the hundreds from airplanes in order to reduce the wolf population. The plan calls for the removal of 80% of the 500 to 700 wolves that inhabit the northern Peace area, located about 300 kilometers northwest of Fort St. John. The B.C. Environmental Minister, calling the wolves "one of the most dangerous, vicious, wasteful and unrelenting killers in existence," alleges they have killed many game animals. The costly plan is to be financed by a \$100,000 raffle held by northern hunters.

Farley Mowat, author of *Never Cry Wolf*, an account of his trek to Alaska in the 1940s to do research on wolves, decried the “killer instinct” of those people who want to kill wolves and use the rationale that wolves themselves are killers. “People who want to kill will always lie to be able to keep on killing,” he commented. “I’m appalled by the plan to shoot wolves from planes in B.C. It’s disgusting. It’s in keeping with the sort of people you have in government there...Any minister of your government is more vicious than any wolf.”

Due to a computer error more than 40 Pennsylvania counties recently received official warning that a nuclear attack was imminent. Only one county verified the warning and sounded their sirens. Nobody in the community responded. Local officials were to conduct an investigation as to why the warning given to the counties and the sirens alerting the community were ignored. Maybe everyone was too busy watching “The Day After” to respond. A more likely explanation, though, is that people don’t believe a word of official warnings and assurances when it comes to nuclear war.

There will be an encampment by women to protest the escalating arms race and in particular, Project ELF, the Navy’s first-strike one-way transmitter for the oncoming fleet of Trident nuclear submarines. The Women’s Peace Presence will open in northern Wisconsin on May 28, 1984. For further information write: Women’s Peace Presence, 1016 N. 9th St., Milwaukee, WI 53233, (phone 414-272-7457).

Over the past several years, the Bridgman Dunes on Lake Michigan’s Eastern shoreline have been threatened by sand mining which, if allowed to continue, will destroy the natural beauty of the area and cause irreparable ecological damage. Much of this ten-mile strip of dunes located in the state of Michigan’s southwest lower peninsula is around 14,000 years old. There are unique and remarkable plant species here and trees over a century old.

Only 12% of Michigan’s shoreline is made up of dunes and many of them have already been totally destroyed by mining projects. The undaunted machinery of development unceasingly gnaws away at our few remaining natural wonders.

A Martin-Marietta subsidiary, which previously “owned” the dunes, acquired a mining permit from the National Resource Commission (NRC) and began to scoop up the dunes’ sand and sell it to the auto industry for use in molding automobile engines! Due to heavy opposition on the part of Bridgman residents and environmentalists, they were unable to continue in their venture. A lawsuit ensued and in the interim the land was sold to a Connecticut mining firm called Unimin.

At this point, we can only hope that the new NRC staff will withdraw the mining permit. This wouldn’t stop the search for sand, of course; those engines must be built. They’ll target inland sand deposits instead and, little by little, from the inside they’ll push the last few wilds over the edge.

Although we have no illusions about writing such commissions, sometimes it makes a difference, so, here’s the address should you want to voice your objections: Natural Resource Commission, P.O. Box 30028, Stevens T. Mason Building, Lansing, MI 48909.

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