

Bits of the world in brief

Fifth Estate Collective

1986

WELLINGTON, New Zealand—A Maori land-rights activist, driving a van with a traditional native people's insult painted on its side, was arrested in February when he tried to join visiting Queen Elizabeth's motorcade. The Queen was the repeated target during her visit of Maoris protesting the continuing theft of their homelands by the New Zealand government.

The van, driven by Dun Mihaka, carried an image of a Maori baring his buttocks, an act called "Whakapohane," and expressing great contempt. Freaked-out Wellington police rammed the van and arrested Mihaka on charges of dangerous driving before he could join the royal convoy which was heading for a wildlife preserve. Prior to European domination the so-called "preserve" had been undesignated wilderness open to all.

We recently came across a seemingly throw-away clause in the Business section of *The New York Times* which inadvertently gave an insight into the nature of monopoly capitalism. The article in which it appeared was a long blather about the effect of world oil prices, but quoted one Benjamin Hardy, whom the "newspaper of [capitalist] record" described as "vice-president of Equator Bank Ltd., a Hartford-based Bahamian banking subsidiary of the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank that deals exclusively with sub-Saharan Africa." In this three-continent labyrinth of capital, winding in and out of both capitalist and communist nations, a small cadre of international financiers manipulate the lives of billions. So distant is this process from popular control and so elusive and widespread are its tentacles that dreams of reform are impossible. Hope lies only in its destruction.

We are saddened to have to report that the Vancouver 5 has become the Vancouver 4, as former Direct Action member Julie Belmas has testified against her co-defendants during her appeal. Faced with a twenty-year sentence, she began supplying the Crown with information needed to assure the continued imprisonment and denial of appeal for Ann Hansen and Brent Taylor whom she characterized as the "ringleaders" of the group which was convicted of a series of bombings against military and anti-ecological targets.

According to sources close to the case, Belmas experienced a complete collapse in prison, begged the court for leniency and agreed to cooperate fully with the authorities. The most harmful aspect of this development has been that Belmas passed on information previously unknown to the Crown which provided a further basis for denying the appeals of Ann and Brent that were heard in February.

Other Direct Action members Gerry Hannah and Doug Stewart are in medium security prisons, but Ann and Brent remain in maximum security where they may be for years. Doug had a parole hearing in May, but the results are not known as of this writing. The Four need our support now more than ever. They can be reached care of Free the Five Defense Group, P.O. Box 48296, Bentall Sta., Vancouver, B.C., V7X 1A1, Canada.

UPDATE—The British Columbia Court of Appeals on March 18th upheld the lengthy sentences of both Ann and Brent, while as a "reward" for her cooperation, Belmas had her 20-year sentence reduced by five years.

The much played Jerry Falwell Game may be over, and its goal of bankrupting the right-wing religious faker, if not accomplished, has at least cost him an incredible chunk of cash. People all over the U.S. have been calling the appropriately named Lynchburg Baptist Church facility at its toll-free number and either hanging up or making fake pledges to support Falwell's racist, anti-gay, pro-war ministry. (See FE last issue.) The Reverend reports in his

latest letter to the faithful that “militant gays and others” have made a million “profane and harassment” calls to him at a cost to the church of \$1 a call; an estimated 50,000 sets of bibles have been destroyed at the cost of \$600,000 and 25,000 “fake” calls seeking “Christian counseling” have jammed his phone lines to the point where Falwell has been forced to disconnect his toll-free number.

Might be time to move on: another right-wing ministry worthy of gaming is Rev. Pat Robertson’s 700 Club. Robertson, an arch-conservative, is considering running for President. The toll-free number for his “prayer line” is 1-800-446-0700 and he is just waiting for the faithful to call.

The Heathen Science Monitor, Box 3181, Minneapolis MN 55403, suggests a war “game” as the next target for freedom phone commandos. Dial 1-800—USA-ARMY for the Army’s toll-free “hotline” and ask them some “hot” questions about their boss’s plans for invading Nicaragua and other countries.

UFO aliens could be sponges. Don’t be surprised if the first alien from outer space is a sponge, confides a world-renowned physicist. “If and when intelligent aliens make their presence known, they may turn out to be sponges,” claims Ronald Bracewell. “I see no reason why such beings could not control technology similar to our own,” says Bracewell. (source unknown)

Reagan is Given Lethal Injection after Apologizing for His Crimes

In 1923, two issues appeared of what could be considered one of the earliest of the modern self-published zines, *Bilboquet* (French printers’ slang, meaning job printing of stationary, visiting cards, announcements, etc.), written entirely by Antonin Artaud under pseudonyms. The following editorial statement from his publication appears in *Antonin Artaud: Selected Writings*, edited by Susan Sontag, from the Noonday Press.

“There aren’t enough magazines, or if you will, all existing magazines are useless. We are appearing because we believe we are responding to something. We are real. This excuses us from being necessary. There should be as many magazines as there are valid states of mind...

“All magazines are slaves to a way of thinking and as a result they despise thought. They all have the serious defect of being edited by several people. Thus they imagine that they are reflecting a state of opinion, when they are really only a grab bag. For there is no such thing as a state of opinion, there are various opinions which are more or less worthy of being expressed. But humanity is incurable. No one will ever prevent people from being sure of their own thought and suspicious of someone else’s; if someone who has a valid point of view wants to give it an audience, he has no choice but to start a magazine. We have a point of view that is worth expressing. Circumstances external to the fact of thinking correctly or incorrectly prevent existing magazines from accepting this point of view in its absolute nakedness. There are no free magazines; all magazines have what amounts to a creed. Thus we are choosing the only means of being ourselves and of being ourselves totally...”

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