

Tales From The Planet

Fifth Estate Collective

2000

Silvia Baraldini, an Italian national, imprisoned in the U.S. for nearly 17 years for a series of armored car holdups in support of the Black Liberation Army (BLA), an urban guerrilla group, was released in August 1999.

She was given a hero's welcome in Rome, after arriving on a private jet arranged for her by Italy's leftist government. Several Italian cities offered Baraldini honorary citizenship, calling her a victim of American injustice.

Numerous U.S. prisoner support groups fought for her release over the years. Baraldini was convicted of several robberies and attempts including a 1981 heist of a Brinks truck in Nyack, N.Y. in which a guard and two cops were killed. She was also convicted of helping BLA member, Assata Shakur, escape from prison in 1979, although she was never accused of any violent act herself.

The memory (of imperialist devastation) lingers on. Twenty-five years after the Vietnam war ended, the 11.2 million gallons of Agent Orange the U.S. doused on the area's forests to deny cover to the guerrilla forces continues to take a heavy toll on the Vietnamese people.

Mother Jones magazine's January/February cover story estimates that the chemical has killed or injured 400,000 people there, while also contributing to birth defects in as many as 500,000 Vietnamese children. Can you say, "War crimes?"

Shouldn't the architects of that slaughter where upwards of 3 million noncombatants who were in the way of the imperial war machine's attempt to suppress the revolutionary movement be brought to the international bar of justice along with the Milosovics and Radovan Karadzics?

Arrest Kissinger and McNamara! Someone should pay for the evil deeds the U.S. committed in Vietnam.

Alexis Buss of Philadelphia has been elected General Secretary-Treasurer of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) replacing the long-serving Fred Chase.

Also, the Wobbly headquarters has moved from Ypsilanti, Michigan to Buss' home city.

Buss, whose graphic design has often graced these pages, including the spread on Voltairine de Cleyre in this issue, faces an uphill battle with inadequate union finances, and a membership debating the role of old fashioned syndicalism versus those who want to include other social struggles including radical environmentalism.

The *Industrial Worker* newspaper (doesn't it need a new name and design job?) will continue to be published by the IWW Detroit collective. A new IWW office is currently being refurbished for the national headquarters, but mail should be sent now to P.O. Box 13476, Philadelphia PA 19101.

The Unabomber's brother, David Kaczynski, received an award in November from the New York Bar-Association for turning in his relative.

David made the "difficult decision" after reading the Unabomber's manifesto, which was printed in *The New York Times* and *Washington Post* and recognizing his brother's ideas.

But hadn't the Unabomber promised an end to his bombing campaign if his message was printed, and wasn't another alternative to confront Ted and tell him of his suspicions and threaten to turn him in if he didn't live up to his promise to cease? Maybe Ted's claim that David was motivated by sibling rivalry has some justification.

Five Chicago anti-fascists face the prospect of prison after police in Decatur, Illinois attacked an anti-nazi rally on November 21. All five face felony charges including mob action, battery, and destruction of property.

Decatur gained national notoriety last Fall after six black students were expelled from a local high school. Reacting to a series of black-led protests against the expulsions, local neo-nazi leader, Matt Hale, held a World Church of the Creator (WCOTC) rally to show fascist support for the school board, and to publicize white supremacist terrorism.

WCOTC adherents were involved in several murders of people of color in 1999.

Midwestern anti-racists came to Decatur to show Hale that fascist organizing will not go unchallenged. As they approached the WCOTC rally site, the anti-fascists were viciously attacked by cops using pepper spray, but many of the anti-racists held their ground, waving anti-fascist banners and drowning out Hale's racist message.

Despite actively being supported by the cops, Hale and his followers fled the site and hid in a nearby bathroom.

The struggle to keep the five activists out of jail while continuing the fight to expose and confront fascist threats, is time consuming and has already cost thousands of dollars in legal fees and bonds. Contributions are needed immediately to support the Decatur Five. Anti-Racist Action Chicago can be reached at 1678 N. Milwaukee, #420, Chicago IL or ara@wwa.com; 312-4091482.

Good news in the eight-year fight for justice in the 1990 car bombing of Earth First! activists, Darryl Cherney and the late Judi Bari. (See Summer 1990 FE)

In September 1999, a federal appeals court rejected the Oakland police claim of immunity from prosecution for their false arrest and illegal searches of Judi and Darryl in the wake of the bombing. The three-judge panel went even further, reinstating charges that the Oakland cops conspired with the FBI to violate the First Amendment rights of the two forest defenders.

At the core of the ruling is evidence of the Oakland police role in falsely arresting Judi and Darryl within hours of the blast that crippled Judi, and in concocting two search warrant affidavits, both of which grossly misrepresented key facts about the assassination attempt and about the nature of Earth First! activities.

The appellate court victory brings an end to an 18-month standstill, but still a trial date is not expected until Spring 2001 at the earliest. According to Tanya Brannan, a staff worker with the Redwood Summer Justice Project which supports the lawsuit, "Ten years is right on schedule when you sue the FBI."

Financial assistance is still needed in the suit. For information or donations, write Redwood Summer, PO Box 14720, Santa Rosa CA 95402; info on the web at www.monitor.net/~bari.

Montreal will host its first Anarchist Book and Freedom Fair, April 29-May 6. The week long event will include a May 4 film festival and rock concert. There will be food, poetry, debates, art and workshops. Books, zines, and posters will be on display throughout.

Artists interested in displaying their work, authors and publishers who want to exhibit their books, or for further information as to location and exact times contact Jean-Francois at 514-769-9059; or lombrenoir@tao.ca

Four Fifth Estate friends and contributors will be among those attending an international conference on "Anarchists and the Jews: Story of an Encounter," being held in Venice, Italy, May 5-7.

Organized by the Centro Studi Libertari/ Archivio Giuseppe Pinelli of Milan, the event will examine "the strong attraction between the Jewish tradition and the libertarian utopian one." Prominent in that tradition are Emma Goldman, Alexander Berkman, Paul Goodman, Martin Buber, Noam Chomsky, and, yes, even Murray Bookchin.

The international meeting, sponsored by the Peace Foundation of the Venice City Council will include theatrical and musical performances, debates and documentary films. Papers on the subject will be presented including one from a Detroit comrade, with simultaneous translation in Italian, English, and French.

For schedule information contact Centro Studi Libertari, via Roveta 27, 201 Milano, Italy; email: csl@eleuthera@tin.it or www.club.it/biblio/archivo.pinelli.

Last July 10, students from Murray Bookchin's Vermont Institute for Social Ecology were dramatically reminded of the controversy surrounding Montreal Black Rose Books publisher Dimitrios Roussopoulos when his talk was punctuated by a pie in his face.

The *entarteur* (pie-man) shouted in a francophone accent, "Fuck all authorities," and ran from the room.

He left behind sheets describing the people and projects (including the Fifth Estate) Roussopolous has come into conflict with over the last 30 years. The publisher of many of Bookchin's texts has often fought with others over money, his imperious authority, and his electoral strategies for achieving anarchism.

The pie thrower has done similar actions in the past against other politicians.

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