

Tales from the Planet

Fifth Estate Collective

2004

Operation Rescue Founder Pied by Biotic Baking Brigade

Agents of the Biotic Baking Brigade-NYC cell pied Operation Rescue founder Randall Terry, who was speaking on behalf of his new anti-abortion group, the Society for Truth and Justice.

The anti-choice group was holding a meek protest outside Planned Parenthood's Manhattan office. Agent Cheesecake served up an organic chocolate cream pie while Terry was ranting to the local media about the evils of homosexuality and abortion.

The pie slinging took place in front of a counter-protest and an absentminded and slow-witted 'community affairs' officer of the New York Police Department. This action was dedicated to all those nameless and faceless people who have risked their lives to defend a woman's right to choose worldwide. Biotic Baking Brigade. <http://www.bioticbakingbrigade.org>

Man, Snakes versus Bank

South African police are looking for a man who released several poisonous snakes at a bank in a revenge attack after his car was repossessed. Issuing a statement to the media from his hiding place, the man said he walked into the bank and "I asked people to move away so that they would not get bitten, then I put my bag on the floor and opened it". The five snakes then slithered into the reception area as panicking staff and customers ran away. He has warned that he will target Absa bank branches across South Africa if the dispute is not resolved.

Traveler Homestead Defends Against Cops in Britain

In mid-January, a horde of cops came to evict a travelers homestead in Great Britain. The bailiffs had arrived shortly after first light with orders to evict the group of travelers from land they had been living on for the last three years. But by the afternoon, the officials had retreated, driven back by burning barricades, trenches filled with flaming rubbish and a human chain which refused to budge. Day one of "the Battle of Bulkington" ended with the travelers claiming victory over Nuneaton and Bedworth council, which insists they must move.

The travelers bought the plot of land in the north Warwickshire village of Bulkington from a farmer almost three years ago, planning to turn it into a model site complete with its own village green. Around 20 families moved in but planning permission for a private travelers' site was refused.

Nevertheless, buildings, fences, and roads began to appear on the land, which is in the green belt. More than a year ago the travelers argued their case in the high court. Though they lost they still refused to give up their homes, prompting the council to call in the bailiffs. But when they arrived the travelers were ready. They set on fire two

caravans and an old van which they had parked at the entrance to the site. They also torched rubbish piled into two metre-wide trenches which had been dug around the site. Around 40 men formed a human chain outside the site. A four-hour standoff, observed by 40 police officers and a number of firefighters, followed before the bailiffs were called off.

Takeover of Factory in Canada

An aluminum smelter at Jonquire, Quebec has been taken over by its workers after the owners announced that the facility would be closed down and sold. The workers are represented by an affiliate of the Canadian Auto Workers union, which backs the action. At press time, the workers were safely running the factory and the local community was protesting the closure. The owner, multinational corporate giant Alcan, claims the facility is out-dated and its workforce aging. The mill's foremen are making inspections at the mill, which still runs 24 hours a day, "but the operating decisions are being made by the operators."

The Quebec government has named a mediator to try to resolve the dispute.

Los Angeles Critical Mass Rides Through Grocery in Solidarity With Strikers

Entering the parking lot of the Vons at Sunset and Hillhurst (grocery store being picketed by strikers in Southern California), the critical mass group chanted, "Don't cross the line, boycott Vons." After circling the parking lot once to the cheers of the picketing strikers, someone yelled, "Let's ride into the store!" It was one of those amazing things to watch; the energy of an event takes over and everyone seems to be doing what should have been obvious to do. Half of the bicyclists, about twenty or so, entered the store in a single file line and proceeded to ride down various aisles, simultaneously chanting "Don't shop at Vons, support the strike!" Employees and customers alike stood dumbfounded as the group, with helmets on and lights blinking, made their way out of the store and back into the parking lot.

Puerto Rican Students Protest ROTC on Campus

In early January, over 30 students at the University of Puerto Rico took over the Army ROTC building on campus. Enduring threats from ROTC officers, cadets and university security, the students held the building for 24 hours.

Civil disobedience and direct action protests will continue until the demilitarization of the University of Puerto Rico is attained. The encampment that students have maintained since the beginning of the fall semester at the former Air Force ROTC structure stands proudly today as a symbol of dignity and perseverance.

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Tlalnepantla declares autonomy

Tlalnepantla, Morelos, Mexico, January 20 (AGR)—On Sunday, January 10, the town of Tlalnepantla declared autonomy from Mexico. The government's response, four days later, was to send an invasion force of 700 police, as well as snipers and helicopters. According to the official report, there was one man killed. According to the townspeople of Tlalnepantla there are many more dead, already disappeared and buried by the police in the mountains surrounding the town. The government has prohibited the passage of human rights groups to enter the mountains in search of such casualties.

Historically, the town officials of Tlalnepantla have been elected through a traditional process called *usos y costumbres* (uses and customs), in which a town assembly reached consensus on who would be the Municipal President. After this process, that person would register with the Institutionalized Revolutionary Party (PRI). In turn, the PRI would sponsor the person elected through *usos y costumbres* as their candidate in the formal elections.

This ensured that the Municipal President of Tlalnepantla would always be registered as a candidate supported by the PRI, and at the same time, allowed the town to continue to use their traditional electoral process.

A conflict began this past electoral period of July 2003, when the candidate that was elected through *usos y costumbres* refused to register with the PRI. Upon his refusal, the PRI responded by sponsoring another candidate, Elias Osorio, already notorious for dishonest practices. In the elections, Elias Osorio won with a total of approximately 400 votes, or about 10% of the population. A large number of those votes were the result of bribery and falsehoods. Another factor in the victory of Osorio was the mass confusion in the community that resulted in little participation in the elections.

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Bush's Regime Change in Georgia

by Don LaCoss

As expected, Mikheil Saakashvili was elected president of the Republic of Georgia on January 4th, and he did so with about 97% of the vote. Located between Russia and Turkey in the Caucasus Mountains, Georgia had been previously run for at least a dozen years by autocratic thug Eduard Shevardnadze, the former foreign minister of the USSR under Gorbachev. He was forced into early retirement in November by what the Western media has characterized as a popular uprising.

But don't be fooled by the glib news reports praising Saakashvili's political success as a victory for democratic civil society in Georgia, such as the naive op-ed titled "A Jolt of Democracy in Georgia" that appeared in the bosses' newspaper of record, *The New York Times*, on January 14. While it is true that, with the exception of ex-Communist Party middle managers who made up his venal and corrupt apparatus, no one was sad to see Shevardnadze go, it must be said that something sure smells fishy about Saakashvili's so-called Rose Revolution.

Despite what you've been told, Saakashvili's election was not the apotheosis of the Georgian people's will for liberal-democratic reform. Beyond the media mirage of heroic, nonviolent, rose-waving rebels, one can see far more sinister and cynical machinations that should be of concern to radical anti-imperialists, anti-capitalists, and environmentalists. Georgia's Rose Revolution was not a spontaneous revolt by the people, but a carefully orchestrated regime change having more to do with made-in-the-USA Astroturf than grassroots democracy homegrown in the Caucasus.

The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline development project is the key to understanding the US imperialist conniving that is behind Georgia's Rose Revolution. Upon completion, the BTC pipeline network will be the world's longest, costing well more than the initially proposed \$3.6 billion and capable of extracting and exporting 50 million tons of Caspian oil and natural gas to Western markets beginning in late December 2004.

The fact of the matter is that Saakashvili's ascent to power in Georgia has been stage-managed by Washington Consensus globalization marketeers, the energy-resource extraction industry syndicates that run the White House, and the Pentagon's neoconservative commissars. The objective was to tap into the petroleum wealth of the Caspian Sea that would turn Central Asia into the next Middle East.

Serb president apologizes to Bosnia

In November, the President of Serbia and Montenegro apologized to Bosnia for the 1992–95 war in which some 200,000 people died, most of them Muslims.

The president offered the apology during a visit to Sarajevo where more than 10,000 people died during a siege by Serbian forces that lasted for three and a half years. One-half of the population of the former Yugoslav republic lost their homes during this period and displaced refugees still number in the tens of thousands. Marovic said it was time for forgiveness.

The ethnic cleansing by the racist Bosnian Serb gangs and army was carried to a successful conclusion by 1995. Atrocities defined the period where “organized killings were recreational and sadistic.”

Drawing from the *Asheville Global Report*, websites, personal reports, and newswires including Indy-media and the Allied Press Syndicate (www.allied-press.org), Tales of the Planet (sometimes known as Tales of the Police State) is compiled for the *Fifth Estate* by John Johnson and Tequila Mockingbird.

Please send us your dispatches and blurbs, especially news of unusually heroic and humorous acts against authority. PO Box 6, Liberty, TN 37095 or fifthestate@pumpkinhollow.net

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