

Tales of Resistance

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2004

Timoney Three Acquitted!

Camilo Vivieros, Darby Landy, and Eric Steinberg, known as the Timoney Three, were acquitted April 6 of all charges against them arising from their arrests at the 2000 Republican National Convention protests.

Former Philly chief pig John Timoney (who later led the assault on demonstrators at the Miami FTAA protests) personally accused the three of property damage and assaulting him and other police officers.

Katie Krauss, a representative of the R2K Legal Collective, reported that Timoney was unable to remember the exact street intersection where the supposed assault occurred and kept his testimony very general. Activist video footage, also had an impact on the decision to acquit. For more info see: www.friendsofcamilo.org

Hunt the Rich!

A crew of activists calling themselves the Orange Safety Bloc confronted and shocked the fur and black-tie clad attendees at the National Rifle Association's (NRA) annual member's banquet. Held in Pittsburgh in early May, the event featured former Halliburton CEO Dick Cheney as the keynote speaker.

Brandishing absurdly-sized mock weapons, decked out in all their hunting finery, waving a black and orange flag, and standing behind a "Hunt the Rich" banner, these anti-capitalist hunters took aim at the root of not only gun violence, but all violence perpetrated inside and outside the US.

With chants such as, "Cheney, Cheney, show your face; we want you for our trophy case," and, "1-2-3-4, Hunt the rich and feed the poor" 5-6-7-8: now's the time, disarm the State," the Orange Safety Bloc sought to bring to light the social and economic conditions which foster violence, rather than focusing on the single issue of firearms.

Government Interferes with Bl(A)ck Tea Society

When Bl(A)ck Tea Society members arrived for their scheduled open meeting on the Boston-based MIT campus in early May, several cops greeted them, including two armed and uniformed Cambridge police officers, the chief of the MIT campus police, and a plainclothes agent who refused to identify himself.

They blocked the door to the reserved room, denying the meeting space the group has used for months. MIT never informed the Bl(A)ck Tea Society members of any such cancellation. When asked, Chief of MIT campus police John DiFava, refused to identify who was responsible for shutting down the meeting space or who directed him to block the entrance.

However, campus sources pointed the finger at Democratic Party presidential candidate John Kerry's Secret Service detail which visited the MIT campus multiple times to convince officials that they should not allow the

Bl(A)ck Tea Society, an expressly non-violent group, to meet on their premises. According to the Boston Herald, this is part of a larger pattern.

The Secret Service also visited local institutions in Georgia, to pressure them not to host activists who were organizing for the June G8 summit held in Savannah. These police tactics—meant to deter activists—will not accomplish their goals.

Along with other local community and labor groups, as well as national organizations planning their own actions to counter the Democratic National Convention in August, the Bl(A)ck Tea Society will continue to plan for the protests. See our calendar on page 61 and www.blackteasociety.org for info.

Starbucks Attacked

When coffee giant Starbucks invaded Portland, Oregon's Hosford-Abernethy neighborhood in early May, a few days before its "grand opening," the new store had three windows vandalized. A Starbucks spokeswoman emphasized "this type of incident is extremely rare."

(Not really so, since Starbucks shops have also been targeted in Seattle, San Francisco, and Texas.) The Portland store is in a neighborhood with a reputation for social activism, so the direct action against the chain drew immediate attention. The new Starbucks is across the street from the Red and Black Coffee Collective, a neighborhood, self-managed operation.

Local activists said opposition has always been stronger and more widespread than Starbucks management will admit. They predicted it will continue to other familiar corporate names seeking to develop the area. "The question really is how do we keep our neighborhoods unique?" one activist remarked. "It's not by bringing in big corporations."

Farmers Stop Monsanto's Plan To Commercialize Gene-Altered Wheat

For five years, a small but organized band of farmers in Canada and the northern Great Plains of the US have fought against genetically engineered wheat. Fearing introduction of wheat that would cost them vital markets among skeptical consumers in Europe and Asia, farmers formed a tactical alliance with environmental groups that oppose genetic engineering in principle.

On May 10th, Monsanto Corp. scrapped plans to commercialize genetically engineered wheat, the biggest defeat yet for advocates of agricultural biotechnology—and a victory for skeptics who said the company was trying to foist on the world a crop it did not want or need. Monsanto said it would indefinitely delay plans to commercialize Roundup Ready wheat, a product that three years ago seemed headed for quick approval in the United States and Canada.

Conflict between Classes Erupts at Chattanooga Protest

When Vice-President Dick Cheney came to Chattanooga on April 19th for a \$1,000-a-plate fundraising dinner, a group of about 40 activists and angry young people congregated in a local park, then marched to the hotel where the event was being held. To their surprise, the protestors made it to the front entrance of the plush hotel before being met by a large contingent of armed police officers.

The crowd spread out and began to chant, "Dick 'n' Bush, we're all screwed!" A spirited demonstration ensued that was short on prepared chants and long on impromptu heckling.

As the city's upper crust left the building decked out in suits and gowns, protesters began to dole out taunts: "Look at the little ruling class couple! They have to hire someone to fight their wars for them. You want Iraq 'liberated'? You go fight!" "Look at you, you make me sick; you never worked a day in your life. Feel the hate, buddy, this is what it's like for the people you oppress." "You just spent \$1,000 to eat dinner with a millionaire. What a bargain!"

The suits began to take circuitous routes to the parking garage to avoid the protestors, who responded by moving to the garage's door. Taking advantage of this lateral momentum, the cops forced the crowd to move another block, onto the sidewalk by the street. The crowd was openly defiant, arguing with the police while people called out, "Free speech is a bad ruling-class joke."

But the crowd moved on without a physical altercation. Then, the uniformed "war heroes"—Iraq conflict veterans—began to come out of the hotel. The soldiers and their friends waited until they had a fairly large group, almost half the number of the protestors, and then decided not to avoid the protest, but to go straight through the middle of it.

As neither side was intimidated, a verbal melee ensued with protestors shouting, "racist," at a soldier who yelled, "Kill all the ragheads." The exchange was heated, with three of the uniformed military personnel going nose-to-nose with protestors. Within a few minutes, the soldiers left, with the protestors close behind. A few of the hecklers followed the soldiers to their cars (apparently, military personnel don't get privileged parking like their masters).

(from a longer article by Prolecat, posted on www.tnimc.org)

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