

# OUR *LITTLE* SECRETS

suggesting that Doug stop reading so many U.S. journals. Instead, he suggested the contest: Lustig and I signed on.

Starting with the October 10 issue, and for the next four issues, we put the following ad in the New York Review of Books. (We used as few words as possible, as we had to pay by the word.) "Contest: \$1,000 prize to the first person who offers a definition of "terrorism" that both a) captures its character as a mode of combat, and b) excludes all official U.S. military strategy and tactics. Respond to the NYR Box 16050. Society for the Promotion of Accuracy in Political Speech. Frank Bardacke, Douglas Lummis, Jeffrey Lustig, founders."

We now invite everyone to take us up on the bet. Proposed definitions can be sent to CounterPunch, PO Box 228, Petrolia, CA 95558 (not to the NYRB). They must be received by December 31, 2002. We propose to read them, write an essay discussing them, submit it to the New York Review of Books, and see what happens.

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## TURNER BROKE?

Ted Turner is out of money. Well, at least his foundation is. A few years ago, Turner claimed that he was devoting his life and a big chunk of his wealth to funding hardcore environmental activism. But in mid-November the grantees of his Turner Foundation received an email announcing that the Foundation had fallen on hard times and that as a consequence it would not be handing out any grants for at least the next two years. The staff of the Foundation got a similar curt note along with a pink slip.

The memo pins the blame on "the current state of the stock market and the resulting decline in the Foundation's asset base".

Where'd all the money go? Last time we checked Ted still had billions. The Turner Foundation didn't operate like many other philanthropic outfits, which putter along on the endowments of dead oil barons. Every quarter Turner would simply refill the accounts with an infusion of cash.

Ted's no financial genius, but it's hard to lose all that money in a single lifetime. The more likely scenario is that Ted's simply lost interest in the environment as a cause and not something to own. He continues to gobble up land across the West. He now owns nearly 2 million acres, making him the second largest private landowner in the country. When you own that much land in the West environmental groups, even ones that you've doled out money to, begin to ask questions about what you're up to. In Turner's case, he was experimenting on wolves, locking out the public from lands in New Mexico that were formerly open to hiking, and charging enormous fees to hunt elk and fish for trout on his estates.

People who know the Foundation from the inside tell us that the end could be foreseen the moment Ted divorced Jane Fonda. "Jane's the one who was committed to funding militant environmental groups," a former Turner staffer tells us. "Ted is obsessed with population. He would rather distribute Norplant implants across the third world—and urban areas in US cities—than underwrite some group that's go-

ing to blockade a road to stop a clearcut." When Fonda was playing an active role in the Foundation, it was one of the few charities willing to give money to groups that engaged in direct action.

There's no reason to feel sorry for Ted, though. He seems to be doing just fine. CounterPunch talked to the members of a Montana rock band who'd been hired to play a party last month at Turner's ranch in Montana's Madison River Valley. "It was a huge soiree with trout and buffalo meat fresh off the ranch," one of the band members told us. "During one of the breaks, we noticed an extremely dignified and sharply dressed black man talking with Turner. This is not an every day sight in rural Montana. It was Kofi Annan." Remember, Turner has given the UN billions.

## UTOPIA, A BIT TOO LATE

"Others, such as whistle blower and 26-year veteran of Russia's chemical weapons program Vil Mirzayanov, suspect a military gas may have also been used. 'In the 1980s we developed an analogue to the well known psychotropic drug BZ, which we called Substance 78,' he told Newsweek. 'It is a hallucinogenic drug,' says Mirzayanov, 'which causes people to have happy dreams, to sleep and not to care about wars and weapons.'"

## THE OSAMA OF BHOPAL

BY ROMI MAHAJAN

The ex-CEO of Union Carbide, Warren Anderson, has lived well the last 18 years. The surviving victims of his crimes have not. And the death toll of his crimes continues to mount.

Anderson has been absconding from justice since the 1984 Bhopal gas disaster. Now, pressure for Anderson's extradition to India is increasing. The extradition campaign is being led by several organizations representing the survivors and seeking redress for the dead and the dying.

Amid litigation brought by these organizations, Union Carbide was forced to hand over documents that indicate unequivocally that Anderson knew that the Bhopal factory's Methyl Isocyanate (MIC) unit had not tested safe and, further, that Anderson had ordered severe cost-cutting measures in the hazardous

parts of the plant.

In short, the gas leak was a predictable outcome of his actions. Anderson must be extradited and be forced to live the rest of his life in an Indian jail. Why? Two reasons: Justice and Deterrence.

Before getting into either argument, let's look at the facts in more detail:

On the night of Dec 2-3, 1984, tons of the deadly gas MIC spewed from a Union Carbide pesticide factory in Bhopal. The cloud of gas engulfed entire wards of the city; thousands of people died horrible deaths, drowning in their own bodily fluids, lungs and eyes aflame. Tens of thousands were maimed that night itself. As time passed, ailments developed and the drinking water in the gas-affected wards became toxic, thus producing a continuous and constant set of wracking health risks.

Over the past 18 years, the number of people whose lives and bodies have been shattered exceeds 200,000. As of today, 30 people die monthly as a result of gas-related ailments and over 120,000 people are in need of urgent medical care. Of these, 80,000 are too sick to perform manual labor, thereby rendering them unable to support their families.

The conditions that precipitated the accident were the results of inhumane cost-cutting efforts by Union Carbide. The proximate cause of that night's gas leak was the turning off of the refrigeration unit in order to save \$40 a day. That the plant was of flawed design and a major safety hazard was known to Union Carbide. Previous accidents and a company-performed safety audit disclose a total of 61 hazards including 11 in the phosgene/MIC unit. The plant was a powder keg. Nothing was done about it.

After the accident, Union Carbide acted immediately to mitigate its financial exposure and in keeping with this to take repellent measures, including the withholding of key medical information on the leaked gas, also the dispensing of unsound medical advice in order to support the company's ridiculous claim that MIC was nothing more than a potent tear gas.

After denying financial responsibility for years, Union Carbide finally settled out of court with the Government of India and agreed to pay \$470 Million. On the day the paltry settlement was an-

nounced, the stock price of Union Carbide shot up \$2. Families of the dead received \$1,250 and each injured victim got between \$400 and \$500.

Argument 1: For justice to not be miscarried further, Anderson must be extradited, prosecuted, and jailed in India. This point flows directly from the fact that a grievous crime, in fact a super-crime, was committed. The unfortunate part is that in elite circles, one finds almost universal agreement that those who commit small crimes should be brought to justice; super-crimes are requited in the form of golden handshakes, country-club memberships, and fawning articles in the Wall Street Journal.

In more sane circles, however, it is acknowledged that boardroom decisions that result directly in death are criminal acts and that the criminal actors should be punished. If justice means anything, Anderson should be jailed in India. (Cruel and unusual punishment would be to force him to drink a glass of the contaminated water that thousands of Bhopalos bathe in and drink everyday-water contaminated by

tainly be one lived in extremis. Warren Anderson committed a deadly crime. For 18 years he's avoided justice. For 18 years Bhopalis have been sick, wracked with pain, dying.

It's time for Anderson to pay the price for his crimes.

## MARTHA'S HIDEOUT

Speaking of the rich in Montana, two mountain ranges to the east from Turner's sprawling ranch is Big Sky, a lavish resort town along the Gallatin River, just north of Yellowstone National Park. A few weeks ago friends of CounterPunch were delivering flowers arrangements from a shop in Bozeman to Club Yellowstone, a private ski resort where the initiation fee is \$250,000 and members are expected to have at least \$3 million in "liquid assets".

Our flower delivery crew deposited the floral arrangement in one of the Club's condos (minimum price \$1 million), where none other than the nation's apex flower-arranger herself, Martha Stewart, had taken refuge from hostile reporters and the

***The cloud of gas engulfed entire wards of the city; thousands of people died horrible deaths, drowning in their own bodily fluids, lungs and eyes aflame. Tens of thousands were maimed that night itself.***

Union Carbide's plant.)

Argument 2: To deter other business leaders from committing such crimes, Anderson must be extradited, prosecuted, and jailed in India. Corporate leaders live in the warm cocoon of indemnity. For their actions there is all too often no reaction. They make profit-based decisions that affect the health and well being of thousands of people without consideration of the effects on these people, and with no fear of retribution.

Would Warren Anderson have issued edicts for paltry cost savings if he thought that he personally would be held liable for the predictable outcome of his actions? One step to help ensure that corporate leaders are far more circumspect is to make them live aware of their personal exposure when they make decisions that deleteriously affect peoples' health or well being. Life in an Indian jail would cer-

inquisitors of Capitol Hill.

Club Yellowstone bills itself as the nation's most exclusive ski resort. It's the brainchild of timber baron, Timothy Blixseth, a man who, like Martha, has had his own history of unsavory but profitable financial dealings.

Blixseth acquired the 13,000 acres of land for Club Yellowstone through his Big Sky Timber Company for about \$200 an acre. Now he's selling off about 800 2-acre lots for \$2 million each. The Club is surrounded by national forest and sits in prime grizzly bear habitat. "What we're selling is privacy and exclusivity", Blixseth declared.

Blixseth was originally based in Oregon, but his timber company defaulted on 10 timber sale contracts with the Umpqua National Forest, bilking the federal government out of \$7 million. The (OLS continued on page 6)

## *A Mighty Echo of Seattle*

# Quito's Days of Rage and Hope

BY DANIEL BURTON ROSE

Quito Ecuador. The continental Days of Resistance against the Free Trade Area of the Americas opened with drawers dropping. On the morning of Tuesday October 29, in front of the Swiss Hotel, seven pairs of bared bums mooned in opposition: "ALCA NICAGANDO" ("No FTAA--Not Even F-ing Around"). Ongoing inside was the 7th Summit of the Business Forum of the Americas, which preceded the 7th Summit of the Ministers of Trade for the FTAA with a parallel agenda.

Conceived in Miami in 1994 the FTAA plans to harmonize the laws of each country in the hemisphere, except (of course) Cuba, with the protocols and prohibitions of the Elders of the WTO. This includes über-national courts, a redefinition of expropriation as an act which prohibits potential profit-making, and the challenging of laws protecting labor, the environment, indigenous sovereignty and human rights. The U.S. is creating a three pronged assault: diplomatic, infrastructural and military. These include: the Central America Free Trade Agreement, an extension of NAFTA to Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and El Salvador, which U.S. negotiators hope to enact by mid-2003; Plan Puebla Panama, to provide communications, dams and highways for capitalist integration in Central America; and Plan Colombia, to re-militarize Latin America in the name of "drug eradication" and now, overtly, "counter-terrorism".

Quito is a city of prolific and poetic graffiti. The most prominent are now public displays challenging the FTAA. The FTAA's Spanish acronym, ALCA, lends itself to much creative use: "ALC Arajo" ("ALCA go to hell"); "NO ALCAcapitalismo"; "ALCAquita" ("little shit").

In the Continental Meeting of Parliamentarians on the FTAA, which took place October 28 and 29, Argentinian Nobel Laureate Adolfo Pérez Esquivel denounced the proposed agreement in these terms: "the accord is going to destroy the productive capacity of our peoples, of the national industries and is going to generate dependency; it's a new form of colonization." Thirty-six deputies from 14 coun-

tries attended the encuentro, organized by Acción Ecológica.

At the simultaneous Continental Gathering of Campesinos Against the FTAA, the most prominent voices were indigenous. Leonidas Iza, president of the Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador (CONAIE), stated dramatically that the "FTAA would signify the death of the agricultural sector". Abadio Gree of the National Organization of the Indigenous of Colombia said that the FTAA was a struggle for the resources of Pacha Mama ("Mother Earth"), and that fighting it was "a war for life."

In Ecuador over the past decade indigenous people have been the primary mobilizers. They came onto the political scene as a social force with an uprising in June of 1990, backed by CONAIE. The accumulation of hundreds of disparate land disputes erupted in a cascade of protesters blocking the Pan American high-

way, and, at the gates of Congress, their several thousand members joined up with a group of disaffected army colonels, among them a Lucio Gutiérrez, who had been sent there to stop them.

Together the group marched into Congress, took over the Supreme Court and opened the Presidential Palace. A group calling itself the Junta of National Salvation, composed of then-CONAIE president Antonio Vargas, Col. Gutiérrez, and an obscure former Supreme Court Justice named Carlos Solórzano, took control. They ruled for the next few hours until a Colonel Jorge Brito, also involved in the ruling triumvirate, unilaterally ceded control to Mhuad's VP, Gustavo Noboa, in response to US threats of complete isolation.

The indigenous movement flexed its muscle again when Colonel Gutiérrez decided to run for President. The primary in October of this year placed the Colonel first. A district breakdown of the distribu-

***A gray paper maché plane labeled "Plan Colombia" and "DynCorp" weaved through protesters and doused an open fire in the crowd as if it was fumigating coca.***

tion of votes shows that the indigenous movement provided him with up to half of his support.

Gutiérrez is a troubling champion for the indigenous movement. He is said to have served in a commando force set up by the León Febres Cordero government (1984-88), which, with the help of Israeli mercenaries, eliminated the small urban guerrilla group Alfaro Vive Carajo ("Alfaro Lives Dammit" - a reference to a Liberal reformer and President of the country at the turn of the century). He served as aide-de-camp to Presidents Bucaram and Mahuad. Though he says the malfeasance he witnessed in those administrations is the source of his passion against corruption, one of his first actions as a presidential contender was to nominate both his wife and his brother as congressional deputy candidates.

Col. Gutiérrez spent the week of the anti-ALCA protests in the United States.