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The Truly Mythical State of Jefferson

When I arrived in Southern Oregon years back, I learned of this concept of the "mythical State of Jefferson," an area of Northern California and Southern Oregon that once played at seceding from the United States government. Nowadays, it's an ad slogan that you hear on this local yuppie Clear Channel station that gets passed off as college radio. Last time I heard a college kid on the station was back in 1983, when they used to let the frat boys play Talking Heads and the Go-Go's for four hours a week. Now it's PC pap all day long and all night, too, though I do love my Nature Notes and the sincere voice of Colleen Pike turning sales pitches into public service. So I have to listen, and sometimes even contributed when gifted chatter-boxes like the late Joanie McGowan held the station hostage for long enough. But I always wondered about this State of Jefferson business.

I occasionally go to the State Line Liquor store in the real state of California just south of the Siskiyou summit to get tax-free hooch. The State Line is one of the last structures left over from the destruction of the town called Hilt, that was dismantled in 1974 by the Fruitgrowers company, when corporate management decided that, since fruit was no longer boxed in wooden crates, they didn't

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Thanksgiving Edition

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Plus much more -- see page 2

Sunset For Domestic Spying

*Anti-Terror Deputy Says National Security
Letters Solve The "Chicken and Egg
Problem" of Deciding What To
Investigate Next*

According to a November 6, 2005 article by Barton Gellman in the Sunday edition of the Washington Post, the FBI has been issuing "National Security Letters" at a rate that is a 10,000% increase (one hundred times as many) over past practices. These letters are a fearsome privacy invasion that Congress authorized in the middle of its 911 funk, when the quickest way to be seen as a patriot was to trash civil liberties. All indented quotes are from Gellman's Washington Post article, entitled *The FBI's Secret Scrutiny — In Hunt for Terrorists, Bureau Examines Records of Ordinary Americans*:

The FBI now issues more than 30,000 national security letters a year, according to government sources, a hundredfold increase over historic norms. ... Issued by FBI field supervisors, national security letters do not need the imprimatur of a prosecutor, grand jury or judge. ... The Bush administration defeated legislation and a lawsuit to require a public accounting, and has offered no example in which the use of a national security letter helped disrupt a terrorist plot.

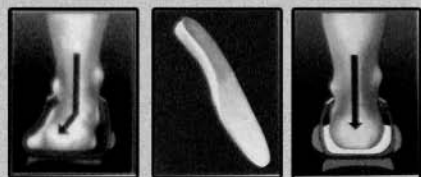
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-R. Donatelli, C. Hurlbert, D. Conaway, R. St. Pierre, "Biomechanical Foot Orthotics: A Retrospective Study," Journal of Orthopedic and Sports Therapy, 10(6):205 (1998).

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East side, west side: AFP is all around the town! Visit page 30 for a complete map of locations where the AFP can be found.

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About the Thanksgiving Edition of the Ashland Free Press

We created the AFP Thanksgiving Edition to meet the demands of a long weekend, too much food, dessert wines, and the consequent need for good reading material and herbal teas. Imagining people reclining in Lazy Boy rockers in their relatives' living rooms, trying to avoid watching the game in the den, we cast about for provocative topics to fight drowsiness. We are therefore much obliged to Cyrus Magee for his inquiry into the origins of the State of Jefferson myth, and to Lo-Fi Nikita for his exploration of FBI use of National Security Letters. Moksha Mokma riles us with news about the secession movement in Vermont. In this month's Socrates Now! column, No Politician Left Behind, Mitch Frangadakis proposes a curriculum for politicians that might help to abort more stupid education legislation. Breaking new ground by entering the fiction category, at Tara's urging I included The Stadium Plot, a political horror story I wrote after my dad died in February 2002. I chose to revise and publish it, since with the passing of years, the story's premise had become less bizarre, as previously inconceivable conspiracies became plausible, and inconceivable practices, like officially-sanctioned torture in secret prisons, became routine. The story suddenly has become altogether too timely. The piece on Che is a retrospective on the class warrior who became the icon of revolt, and is more popular today than at any time in his life. Iggy Pop is also an important cultural figure, and my daughter Maria Luz de Luna's wonderful piece on his birthday party concert last year is a nugget of pure joyful energy. We recently retained Casey Bourgeois, local vegan musician and inveterate scenester, to serve as

AFP's man-about-town. Casey promptly sniffed out a story and filed a piece on Turned Up Missing, a local band rumored to be hoping to generate escape velocity at their next release party. Josh Carreon contributed album reviews and editorial advice. My old friend the hermit, Michael Wear, donated two poems, like jewels of autumnal treasure, to adorn the whole. Jacob Hammond, AFP Operations Manager, webmaster and graphic artist, boiled down all these ingredients into thirty-two pages of alternative printed material, and you are holding it in your hands. We thank our lucky stars that Jacob's fantastic wife Kelly has tolerated Jacob's overworking in the name of free speech, and that my wife is similarly understanding. But why do we do it? Encouragement from our readers keeps us going, and wonderful advertisers provide the go-power! So from everyone at AFP, thank you for reading, contributing, and advertising, and have a Happy Thanksgiving!

Very truly yours,
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"No Politician Left Behind"

That's it. Enough already. Unless the public discourse changes dramatically -- and soon -- my mind is made up. When it come to public education our elected leaders are failing, and our current President is their Headmaster.

Politicians insist that the solution to our educational woes is black and white: As for our teachers, rowdy and disconsolate lot that we are, what is needed is more compulsory training, more public scrutiny, and most importantly, more evaluations. As for the students all they need is more testing. And since we all now know what the true problems are, we can rebuild the little red schoolhouse in a proper fashion by extending the probationary period for teacher tenure to six years. Without any training on their part politicians know all there is to know about better schools and being a better teacher. Once their fixes are in place, if those teachers and students insist on failing us once again, the church-based voucher system will be our saving grace.

I look at it this way: If your child had a life-threatening illness, who would you trust to diagnose their disease? Your doctor, or your car mechanic? Which one has more direct experience and knowledge related to your child's health? Seeking medical care from an auto mechanic makes as much sense as listening to these politicians prattle on about their inspired cure-alls. If we keep listening to these quacks, our public school systems will suffer a slow, painful death.

All of this said, I appreciate the challenges posed by our failing school system and our ill-equipped teachers. So, here's the first part of my solution. Let's make every politician's salary commensurate with the current starting pay of our Junior College instructors. That seems fair enough. A quick perusal of the Internet will show this to be around \$35,000 a year. (Private universities oftentimes start much lower). Raising a family of four on that salary should prove quite educational for everyone concerned.

Then, once they've gotten used to traveling coach instead of first class, let's test the buggers. You see, our President is correct. We can solve the problem with more testing. The only problem is that he wants to test the wrong people!

Therefore, the second part of my solution is a qualifying "Political Aptitude Test" for all aspiring politicians. This will demonstrate competency in the following areas:

1. World history: They will have to learn more than glib quotes from our dead forefathers. They could start with the history of the northern Indo-European tribes, work their way south-east into Persia, and finally begin serious meditations upon the Mediterranean cultures of ancient Greece. It's only about a three-thousand year trip from there to here, with lots of useful information to be gained along the way (particularly about educational and political systems; see Plato's Republic).

2. U.S. History: They must each write a ten-page essay exploring a difficult topic. For example, Donald Rumsfeld might be required to explain the difference between Hamas and the band of American brigands who destroyed British ships and cargo in Boston Bay while camouflaged as natives. (That was quite a "tea party"!). President Bush could pontificate on the U.S. treatment of the American Indians, including the government sponsored program of dispersing small-pox

infested blankets and bottles of whiskey to the Indian tribes. If that proves too difficult, perhaps he could explain why the U.S. invaded Canada in 1812.

3. Accounting: Those who control the purse-strings should know where the money comes from, where it goes, and how to account for it to the public. For example, thousand-dollar screw-drivers will be summarily used upon those who sanctioned their purchase. The first task would be to locate the two billion dollars currently unaccounted for in the current Iraq war. (Hint: Hand calculators allowed, but aspiring politicians must leave their accountants at home.)

4. Logic: Testees will learn to distinguish between truth and fiction, factual statements and sales pitches, value systems and scientific methodology, valid conclusions and "spin". Proctors will wear a bull-shit meter during this section of the test.

After completing this four-part curriculum, political aspirants wishing to formulate educational policy will be required to serve as a teacher's assistant one year. They will have to do more than read "My Pet Goat" to a class of first-graders. Instead they will actually present a year's worth of curriculum in reading, mathematics, science, music, art, P.E., history, and English grammar. (We'll leave out sentence diagramming, just to play fair.)

To make the experience more reality-based, this edifying, educational experience will take place in a normal inner-city school. A random choice should land us with the usual challenges most teachers face each school day: Neighborhood violence, rampant poverty, drug and alcohol abuse among students and their families, learning disabilities, physically and emotionally abused children, outdated or simply no text books, no school supplies like paper and pencil, and many students who speak no English at all.

At the end of the year we'll test the lot of them, both the aspiring candidates and their students. If their students fail, the politician's provisional credential will be revoked, and his or her current political aims ended for the time being. To show that we liberal-progressives are as compassionate as conservative politicians, washouts won't be left to wander the streets. After all, there are far too many homeless already. Qualified counselors will guide their re-entry into the private sector. Of course, the worst of the bunch won't need our help. They will always find work in private, conservative think-tanks, making lots of money churning out deceptive sound-bites like: "No Child Left Behind."

*Socrates Now! is a regular column authored by **Mitch Frangadakis**, local philosopher who is also found at www.socratesnow.com.*

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The Truly Mythical State of Jefferson

Continued from page 1

need fallers, log truck drivers, a mill, or housing for all those people, either, and told everyone to get out. Which they duly did. Bill Rooker and his wife Laurie are the last two remaining inhabitants of the town of Hilt. You can read the history of the town of Hilt in a photographic display at the back of the State Line Liquor store. It's sad and poignant to imagine that a little town that had a school, church, baseball team, spelling bees, etcetera, just blew away because it was a company town where the company owned the dirt, the houses, the streets, just about everything. The Trinca Family stuck it out by running the State Line for about thirty years after the town folded, but a couple of years ago they sold out to Penny and her husband, who still serve the famous Pilot Rock burger, thick milk shakes and other classic food on red and white checked tablecloths.

At any rate, I was on my way to the State Line, having pulled off southbound I-5. I'd just made a right at the stop sign and was almost feeling that whiskey bottle in my hand, when suddenly a little monument caught my eye off to the right. I pulled over and read what it said: "Jefferson Davis – 1808 – 1889 – Highway No. 99 California – Erected by Daughters of the American Confederacy, May 1944." Jefferson Davis? Not Thomas Jefferson? I scratched my head a moment and reached back into my knowledge of Civil War history to come up with this deeply-buried tidbit: Jefferson Davis was the President of the Confederacy, as in Abraham Lincoln's opposite number. Hmmm, a monument erected about eighty years after the end of the Civil War by the original Dixie chicks. So I started researching and learned a few reasons why there are so few black people in this area, which seems so friendly.

It turns out that Oregon was the only US State to completely exclude "Free Negroes" from the State. It also turns out that former Oregon governor Walter Pierce, who ran the top office in the twenties, was a card-carrying member of the KKK, and at one time the Klan claimed 200,000 members in the State of Oregon. It further turns out that, until a date that history seems to have obscured from appearing in the Google database, the City of Medford had a "sundown law" that required black people to be out of town by sundown. Today, I bet a black person could eat at The Outback at any hour of the day or night. I wouldn't necessarily suggest drinking till closing time at The Satin Slipper or Dilligaffs, but that's progress, a little at a time.

Then I read an online article by Vic Varis, an African-American writer, entitled "Dixie in the North." His work is well-footnoted and quotable, even in the short expanse of this article, and I've included his bibliographical notes, for those of the scholarly persuasion inclined to check Mr. Varis' facts:

"Pioneers moving into the massive expanse of Oregon arrived each year from the Ohio and Mississippi River Valleys. These included families from bordering Southern states of Illinois, Indiana, Ohio and Missouri, as well as Kentucky and Tennessee (Moreland, 1993). Many of the pioneers left the South where they could not compete with slave owners use of nearly free labor. Though there was no love for the Negro, they would not, for one reason or another, own slaves. They arrived hating both slavery and blacks (Moreland, 1993, McLagan, 1980; Robertson, 1901).... In the 1840's the Provisional Government of Oregon began to incorporate the first of the infamous "Exclusion Laws." These laws were designed to restrict entry, commerce, litigation and intermingling of races (McLagan, 1980)."

Oregonians voted eight-to-one to exclude blacks from the State. The exact vote was 8640 to 1081, and the precise language incorporated into the Oregon Constitution read:

No free negro or mulatto not residing in this state at the time of the adoption of this state constitution shall come reside, or be within this state, or hold real estate, or make any contracts or maintain any suit

therein and the legislative assembly shall provide penal laws for the removal by public officers of all such negroes and mulattos, and for their effectual exclusion from the state, and for the punishment of persons who shall bring them into the state or employ or harbor them. (Platt, 1903).

But excluding black people from the State wasn't enough for the die-hard slavers. As Mr. Varis explains, Southern Oregon was the hot-spot for turning Oregon into a slave State, that is – to join the Secessionist Movement of the Southern States: "In southern Oregon there was so much opposition that a 'die-hard pro-slavery' group developed plans to create a separate pro-south government to be known as the Pacific Coast Republic. Even after this was squelched by the state legislature and the war was ended, advocates of the South 'refused to admit defeat' and formed a clandestine movement to reestablish slavery somehow in Oregon (McLagan, 1980)."

So the secessionist movement in Southern Oregon went back to the Nineteenth Century battles over statehood and slavery, eh? Interesting, but doesn't the State of Jefferson have some kind of alibi? Isn't there some evidence to show that Thomas Jefferson was the inspiration for the name of the State? If you surf on over to www.jeffersonstate.com, you see that there is a photograph of Thomas Jefferson there, and a link to "history," that tells the standard story about how the "secession" of the State of Jefferson was a publicity stunt dreamed up by some California politicians that lasted less than three weeks, from October 17, 1941, when the secession was declared, until November 7, 1941, when the bombing of Pearl Harbor made jokes about secession officially seditious and not at all funny. But no mention of how the Jefferson name came to be chosen.

Well, let's look at symbols. The State of Jefferson flag is a primitive thing, sort of like the label on a bottle of "double-X" booze, with the two X-es set diagonally to each other. Mythically, this symbolizes that the people of the State of Jefferson had been "double-crossed" by both Oregon and California, and needed to create a third state to address their needs. But I've been down south where they fly the Stars 'n Bars everywhere, what you northern folk call the confederate or the rebel flag, or other such malapropisms. It's the Stars 'n Bars and darned if those bars aren't arranged in a large "X." Additionally, three southern states – Georgia, Mississippi, and Alabama, still include the Stars 'n Bars as part of their official State flag, harvesting endless acrimony with civil rights groups to protect the South's right to display its "historic heritage." The Georgia, Mississippi, and Alabama flags thus each display a large rebel "X" that takes up about half of the flag, the other half being devoted to some random, easily ignored design. Try as I might, I could find no Northern states incorporating an "X" into their state flags.

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Citizens of Vermont Hold Meeting on Secession

"...governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it..."

-Thomas Jefferson, The Declaration of Independence

On October 28 at the Vermont House chambers, in the states capital of Montpelier, over one hundred Vermonters attended The Second Vermont Republic's secession convention. The first such state wide convention on secession since North Carolina voted to secede from the Union on May 20 1861. The theme to the convention was "Vermont Independence: An Impossible Dream or a Vision of the Future?" Vermont's ties to secession go back to the fourteen years between 1777 and 1791 when the state was an independent republic.

The key note speaker was James Howard Kunstler, author of The Long Emergency, a book about peak oil. Other speakers included Professor Frank Bryan, UVM; Kirkpatrick Sale, author of Human Scale; J. Kevin Graffagnino, Executive Director, Vermont Historical Society; Professor Eric Davis, Middlebury College; Shay Totten, editor, Vermont Guardian; Antoine Robitaille, journalist Le Devoir (Quebec City); G. Roderick Lawrence, CEO, Stevenson Kellogg (Canada); (Rev.) Ben T. Matchstick.

General Ethan Allen also attended the convention (via Jim Houge, a local Vermont actor). General Allen led the Green Mountain Boys to victory against the British at Fort Ticonderoga in 1775 without firing a single shot. Once given the opportunity to speak, General Allen wasted no time in letting everyone know what a real revolution could be like, imparting some wisdom upon those in attendance wishing to secede. "Let history record that we, still carrying on without firing a shot, brought to their knees all those who, in the name of security made enemies, in the name of patriotism wrought treason and tyranny, in the name of peace made war, and in the name of liberty would turn us into slaves."

Vermont citizen Thomas Naylor, who is not a speaker, shared his thoughts that evening. "Vermont is smaller, more rural, more democratic, less violent, less commercial, more egalitarian, and more independent than most states... It offers itself as a kinder, gentler metaphor for a nation obsessed with money, power, size, speed, greed, and fear of terrorism." Naylor is a former Duke University economics professor who retired to Vermont and has written a book called "The Vermont Manifesto -- The Second Vermont Republic."

Earlier this year, the secession group The Second Vermont Republic issued a declaration known as the Middlebury Institute Letter which may be viewed at <http://www.vermontrepublic.org>. The following is a partial excerpt:

"Moreover, the accumulating signs point to a series of major crises that will seriously disrupt and may even destroy the American system in the near future. These include economic disruptions in the wake of global 'peak oil' production before 2010, deterioration of the power of the dollar through mounting and uncontrollable national debt and trade imbalances, continued degradation of vital ecosystems on which the nation depends, climate change and severe weather causing widespread devastation of coastal areas, extended use of military force worldwide leading to increased terrorism and the

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reinstitution of the draft, [and] judicial takeovers at the Federal level by rightwing ideologues capable of altering fundamental legal rights... Those who want to absent and cushion themselves from suchlike devastations would reasonably want to explore ways of removing their communities and regions from dangerous national political and economic mechanisms that are incapable of reform."

To many, the thought of secession might not seem appropriate. Under the current situation of heavily centralized control in the hands of an out-of-touch bureaucratic government that has outsourced their duties of providing clean drinking water, adequate energy policy, healthcare, correctional facilities, and even the military, it is not a surprise that some do find it appropriate. Secession can come in many forms. A unified secession of independent States from a centralized authority happened in this country not too long ago.

Moksha Mokma

Sunset For Domestic Spying

Continued from page 1

National Security Letters (NSLs) can be delivered to anyone, require production of any information desired by an FBI agent, and if pending amendments to the authorizing laws are approved, will subject anyone who refuses to comply to criminal penalties. A lawsuit filed by a library employee, who objected to ratting out library patrons for simply sitting at a particular computer, is pending in Connecticut to dispute the authority of the FBI to proceed in this fashion.

The FBI came calling in Windsor, Conn., this summer with a document marked for delivery by hand. On Matianuk Avenue, across from the tennis courts, two special agents found their man. They gave George Christian the letter, which warned him to tell no one, ever, what it said. Under the shield and stars of the FBI crest, the letter directed Christian to surrender "all subscriber information, billing information and access logs of any person" who used a specific computer at a library branch some distance away. Christian, who manages digital records for three dozen Connecticut libraries, said in an affidavit that he configures his system for privacy. ... Christian refused to hand over those records, and his employer, Library Connection Inc., filed suit for the right to protest the FBI demand in public.

The FBI preserves and stores all the information it gathers in a data bank that mixes in data gathered from private data-mining com-

panies like Lexis-Nexis, that has previously admitted revealing altogether too much information to the lawyers and law enforcement agencies that access its database.

In late 2003, the Bush administration reversed a long-standing policy requiring agents to destroy their files on innocent American citizens, companies and residents when investigations closed. Late last month, President Bush signed Executive Order 13388, expanding access to those files for "state, local and tribal" governments and for "appropriate private sector entities," which are not defined.

Assuming that these records that are being accessed can properly be defined as "papers and effects" subject to Fourth Amendment protections, it would appear that the Fourth Amendment is flagrantly violated by this practice, because this hallowed Constitutional provision prevents the issuance of search warrants without probable cause to believe that the target of the search warrant is engaged in criminal activity. Certainly the records of who you talk to, exchange email with, or receive emails from, are entitled to privacy protection, and would not have been coughed up by any information service provider without a subpoena or warrant issued "on probable cause." Considerably less is required to stimulate the issuance of a National Security Letter that will achieve the same effect.

Senior FBI officials acknowledged in interviews that the proliferation of national security letters results primarily from the bureau's new authority to collect intimate facts about people who are not suspected of any wrongdoing.

Thus the FBI, an organization that cannot even get a computer system up and running after spending \$170 Million dollars on the project through Strategic Applications International Corporation ("SAIC"), has turned its ineptitude into an excuse for further invasions of privacy. Unable to even translate the Arabic language communications that the FBI has been intercepting for the last decade, the agency has apparently turned its efforts to spying on us, because they can read English. This is a lot like the man crawling around on the ground looking for a key under a streetlamp, who when asked by a friend why he is looking there, responds, "Well, I lost it in the house, but there's more light out here." Well, the Saudis are said to have bombed our country, killing thousands, but we sure wouldn't want to try spying on the Saudis — you know they speak a different language!

Criticized for failure to detect the Sept. 11 plot, the bureau now casts a much wider net, using national security letters to generate leads as well as to pursue them. Casual or unwitting contact with a suspect — a single telephone call, for example — may attract the attention of investigators and subject a person to scrutiny about which he never learns. A national security letter ... yields [data that reveals] where a person makes and spends money, with whom he lives and lived before, how much he gambles, what he buys online, what he pawns and borrows, where he travels, how he invests, what he searches for and reads on the Web, and who telephones or e-mails him at home and at work.

The sunset provision on this useless and intrusive system of domestic spying will reduce the use of NSL's at the end of this year, unless Congress renews it. Always demanding a mile when the time is up to return their borrowed inch, the privacy invaders plan on using the renewal requirement as a means to advance their citizen-scrutinizing agenda further. Congress is poised to increase the power of FBI agents delivering NSLs. New legislation assures that intimidating G-men will now come pre-armed with the right to arrest those who refuse to disclose information, like the Connecticut library employee.

The Truly Mythical State of Jefferson

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Next, I decided to look for pictures of participants in the Jefferson publicity stunt. You know, if they were burning crosses just incidentally, that might round out the evidence, but no such smoking evidence was found precisely. Just a recent article in HomePower magazine that displayed a photograph of some armed Jeffersonian secessionists detaining a white woman in a forties automobile. I looked at the picture a long time, but no matter how long I scrutinized the squad of armed mountain-men, I did not see a copy of the Bill of Rights poking out of anyone's pocket. Of course they weren't actually hassling the lady, just saying hi and coincidentally keeping out any "free Negroes." I read and reread the whole article, but I couldn't find anything connecting these people with Thomas Jefferson.

Further research disclosed that the secessionist females, the Daughters of the American Confederacy, the would-be Scarlett O'Haras of Oregon, proliferated their racist agenda all over the country under the guise of this Jefferson Davis Memorial Highway ruse. A relatively-recent article on the subject states:

"In exploring along the old 99 route you might be surprised to find a handful of historical markers labeling this road The Jefferson Davis Highway. This is a curious though little known juxtaposition but California has four highway markers to prove it. And on each end of the highway in Washington, in Vancouver and in Blaine near the Peace Arch, stand stone monuments attesting to the fact. One wonders why the president of the Confederacy was so honored out west." The Jefferson Davis Highway Out West, by Jill Livingston © 2003.

Well I know. Like my friend Iggy said, if it looks like a duck, walks like a duck, and quacks like a duck, "It's a goddamned duck." Thank you, Daughters of the American Confederacy, for memorializing what the State of Oregon's Political Correctness Team has sanitized into a "myth." Some things, like slavery, bigotry, racism, and revisionist history, are just facts. And perhaps adopting random legends you find lying around is not such a good idea. *Cyrus Magee*

Spill the beans or go to jail will become the rule.|| As the Judith Miller case shows, courts are increasingly willing to jail people to extract information, so a law criminalizing noncompliance with secret information requests could lead to more secret internments, an expansion of secret CIA torture cells, and other foreseeable acts of State-sponsored-terrorism against private citizens. Congress is thus planning to grant the FBI, a rogue agency that squanders tremendous amounts of money and accomplishes nothing except intimidating people, more power to intimidate.

In fact, as the Dec. 31 deadline approaches and Congress prepares to renew or make permanent the expiring provisions, House and Senate conferees are poised again to amplify the FBI's power to compel the secret surrender of private records. The House and Senate have voted to make noncompliance with a national security letter a criminal offense. The House would also impose a prison term for breach of secrecy.

Congress, of course, is proceeding on faith that the FBI knows what it is doing with all this data on non-criminal activity. A strange assumption, however, since the FBI is simply out to lunch for all ordinary investigative purposes. Have you ever tried to report a crime to the FBI if you're not a bank with a robbery on its hands? You get an answering machine and no call back. Of course, call and say that your neighbor got drunk and said he wanted to kill Bush and they'll just drive a SWAT team up to his house and blow it up. After Ruby Ridge and the Waco massacre, who could say that these are people to trust?

Like many Patriot Act provisions, the ones involving national security letters have been debated in largely abstract terms. The Justice Department has offered Congress no concrete information, even in classified form, save for a partial count of the number of letters delivered.

And of course, like only Nixon could go to China, only a conservative has the moxie to take aim at this policy. Where are Charles Schumer, Diane Feinstein, Teddy Kennedy, Barbara Boxer, Hillary Clinton, Charles Rangel, and all the other alleged liberals? Let's hear it for the paranoid Right!

"The beef with the NSLs is that they don't have even a pretense of judicial or impartial scrutiny," said former representative Robert L. Barr Jr. (Ga.), who finds himself allied with the American Civil Liberties Union after a career as prosecutor, CIA analyst and conservative GOP stalwart. "There's no checks and balances whatever on them. It is simply some bureaucrat's decision that they want information, and they can basically just go and get it."

The FBI's head lawyer Valerie Caproni is entirely cavalier about the power her agency wields, expressing zero concern over the fact that these secret information demands on citizens have proliferated into use as a "routine tool."

"If you have a list of, say, 20 telephone numbers that have come up . . . on a bad guy's telephone," said Valerie E. Caproni, the FBI's general counsel, "you want to find out who he's in contact with." Investigators will say, "Okay, phone company, give us subscriber information and toll records on these 20 telephone numbers," and that can easily be 100." ... Since the Patriot Act, the FBI has dispersed the authority to sign national security letters to more than five dozen supervisors — the special agents in charge of field offices, the deputies in New York, Los Angeles and Washington, and a few senior headquarters officials. ... "Congress

has given us this tool to obtain basic telephone data, basic banking data, basic credit reports," said Caproni, who is among the officials with signature authority. "The fact that a national security letter is a routine tool used, that doesn't bother me."

The FBI applies circular reasoning to explain away the lack of even reasonable suspicion to pry into the private activities of 30,000 Americans who are not involved in crime in any way. The words "fishing expedition" come to mind, but the FBI's spokesman chose a poultry metaphor to explain the agency's position.

If agents had to wait for grounds to suspect a person of ill intent, said Joseph Billy Jr., the FBI's deputy assistant director for counterterrorism, they would already know what they want to find out with a national security letter. "It's all chicken and egg," he said. "We're trying to determine if someone warrants scrutiny or doesn't."

Like a funeral director presiding at the death of our civil rights, Mr. Billy is at pains to assure us that the FBI applies strict bureaucratic protocols when violating the Fourth Amendment Rights of all Americans.

Innocent Americans, he said, "should take comfort at least knowing that it is done under a great deal of investigative care, oversight, within the parameters of the law."

I did say the NSLs were useless, correct? As the Gospel says, "By their fruits ye shall know them." Well, NSLs have produced no fruit except the invasion of privacy:

As the Justice Department prepared congressional testimony this year, FBI headquarters searched for examples that would show how expanded surveillance powers made a difference. Michael Mason, who runs the Washington field office and has the rank of assistant FBI director, found no ready answer. "I'd love to have a made-for-Hollywood story, but I don't have one," Mason said. "I am not even sure such an example exists."

Of course, dispensing with a need for probable cause or reasonable suspicion to believe that an investigative subject is involved in criminal activity eliminates a lot of impediments to investigation, like knowing what you're investigating. The current investigative approach allows agents to work on non-crimes while the murder of thousands of people in broad daylight in New York City on November 11, 2001 has provoked a war but remains an unsolved crime for which no one has been convicted outside of Germany, where a man is doing a twenty year term for conspiring to bomb the WTC. Of course, the agency has to look forward, trying to imagine new, undreamed of plots to unravel. Old crimes are so boring, and good people are hard to find, so it's best to just allow them to have a field day opening new files on non-criminals for no reason at all.

A model request for a supervisor's signature, according to internal FBI guidelines, offers this one-sentence suggestion: "This subscriber information is being requested to determine the individuals or entities that the subject has been in contact with during the past six months."

Defenders of NSLs use the tried and tested method of shifting the burden to the opponents to "show abuses" of the policy:

Sen. Pat Roberts (R-Kan.), chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence [said] "there has not been one substantiated allegation of abuse of these lawful intelligence tools."

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The Revolution Will Not Be Capitalized: The Story of Che Guevara

I don't know if it was the full moon, high in the sky, that woke me up so early today, or thinking about Che Guevara, whose charismatic image filled my thoughts as I lay tossing and turning in a comfortable bed. But here I am, writing at four in the morning, captivated by the memory of a man whose image is everywhere, and who, although the subject of a recent popular movie, "The Motorcycle Diaries," remains a big blank to most of us here in the United States. Che is not so poorly understood in Latin America, where he is considered a martyr to the cause of social justice. Just last week, images of Che, emblazoned on huge yellow flags, invaded the front page of the New York Times, waving over the heads of thousands of protesters rallying in the streets of Rio de la Plata, Argentina, against President Bush's presence at a Latin American trade conference. So who was the man known as "El Che"?

Born in 1928 in Rosario, Argentina, to an affluent family of mixed Spanish, Basque and Irish descent, Ernesto Guevara was the oldest of five children. His father, Ernesto Guevara Lynch, was a playboy who attempted some agricultural ventures during his youth, then married and settled down to a relatively unproductive life in a large house with Che's mother, Celia de la Serna, an attractive and highly intelligent woman who loved her children, and particularly her eldest son, deeply. Although well-off, the Guevara family was known more for its scatterbrained charm than for concrete achievements, and the young Ernesto, who went by the nickname "Fuser" in his youth, dressed in shabby clothes and did nothing to advance his position in Argentine society. Afflicted with life-threatening asthma attacks from early childhood, Ernesto overcame obstacles to physical activity by throwing himself into soccer and other sports with unusual intensity, and early on learned to administer his own injections of asthma medicine.

Guevara entered medical school at the University of Buenos Aires in 1948, but in 1951, took off on a long road trip with his friend and fellow medical student Alberto Granado. The two set off from their hometown of Alta Gracia after an anguished departure from Guevara's childhood sweetheart, "La Chichina," the daughter of a wealthy family. As Guevara describes it, leaving behind his beautiful girlfriend to explore the rough reality of Latin America marked the beginning of his lifelong rejection of privilege.

Guevara narrated the story of his trip with Alberto Granado in a chronicle translated into "The Motorcycle Diaries" in 1996. With two full-grown men riding an old British Norton 500 cc motorcycle nicknamed La Poderosa, "The Powerful One," over primitive roads through the Andean highlands, most motorcycle mechanics would have predicted that the highly-pedigreed mechanical steed would not be up to the task. The two men made it halfway up the length of Chile before the bike gave out after an accident picturesquely described in The Motorcycle Diaries:

"As we went around a tight bend at quite a speed, the screw came off the back brake, a cow's head appeared round the bend, then lots more, and I clutched the hand brake which, soldered in an elementary fashion, broke too. For a moment I saw nothing but the shapes of cattle flashing by on all sides, while poor Poderosa gathered speed down the steep hill. By an absolute miracle, all we touched was the leg of the last cow. In the distance was a river which seemed to be beckoning us with terrifying certainty. I steered the bike on to the

side of the road and it flew up the two-metre bank, ending up lodged between two rocks, but we were unhurt."

Shortly after this routine collision with a mountainside, "La Poderosa finally gave up the ghost," but the two determined young men continued on foot. Guevara's record of the event is laconic: "It was our last day as 'motorized bums'; the next stage, as 'non-motorized bums', looked to be more difficult." On foot and hitchhiking, the two continued through the Andean highlands of Chile and Peru, through mining areas where the descendants of the Incas labor in virtual slavery, and into a leper colony in San Pablo, Peru. The two young medical students were well-received by the patients, doctors and staff, but because they declined to attend Catholic mass, were refused food by the nuns who ran the colony, and thus dined mainly on scraps smuggled out by the patients. On Saturday, June 14, 1952, Guevara turned twenty-four, and the entire leper colony put on a celebration that he described in a letter to his mother Celia:

"On the 14th, they gave me a party with lots of pisco, a kind of gin which makes you beautifully tipsy. The medical director toasted us, and I, inspired by the booze, replied with a very Panamerican speech, which earned great applause from the eminent, and eminently drunk, audience. The scene was one of the most interesting of our trip. An accordion player with no fingers on his right hand used little sticks tied to his wrist, the singer was blind and almost all the others were hideously deformed, due to the nervous form of the disease which is very common in this area. With the light from lamps and lanterns reflected in the river, it was like a scene from a horror film."

Guevara paraphrased his recollection of the "very Panamerican speech" as follows:

"Although we're too insignificant to be spokesmen for such a noble cause, we believe, and this journey has only served to confirm this belief, that the division of America into unstable and illusory nations is a complete fiction. We are one single mestizo race with remarkable ethnographical similarities, from Mexico down to the Magellan Straits. And so, in an attempt to break free from all narrow-minded provincialism, propose a toast to Peru and to a United America."

After the party, the next day, Guevara and his companion Alberto left Peru on a river raft the lepers had constructed for them. They headed for a point downstream, but unable to pull their "little Kontiki" out of the river's main course, missed their disembarkation point, and ran aground at a nameless river bend in Brazil, where they had not intended to go. After spending much of their remaining money purchasing cut-rate plane fare to Colombia, the two men turned their detour into a sporting triumph:

"What saved the day, though, was that we were asked to coach a football team while we were waiting for the plane which came only once every two weeks. Initially we only meant to coach them so they didn't make fools of themselves, but they were so bad we decided to play too, with the brilliant result that what was considered the weakest team went into the on-day championship totally reorganized, got to the final and only lost on penalties."

In Colombia, the two were offered jobs in a medical university,
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Sunset For Domestic Spying

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When we're talking about nullifying the Fourth Amendment, the shoe should be on the other foot, and the bonehead insistence that no one is harmed by NSLs is ridiculous. Listen to this apparatchik who is collecting a Federal Treasury paycheck to engage in disinformation that might convince an idiot or a Congressman:

To Jeffrey Breinholt, deputy chief of the Justice Department's counterterrorism section, the civil liberties objections "are eccentric." Data collection on the innocent, he said, does no harm unless "someone [decides] to act on the information, put you on a no-fly list or something."

How stupid can you get? If a Man In Black shows up at your small town Internet Service Provider with an NSL in his hand and demands a record of all your email and online purchases, and tells them not to tell anyone, do you think that is a routine thing that causes you no harm? Suppose they go to the Video Store, the Library, the Utility Department and Adult and Family Services to get their records, too. Suppose they go to your counselor, your minister, your yoga teacher, your kid? This causes no harm? Have they forgotten that in Texas, the standard method of killing a political campaign is just to leak that there's an "FBI Investigation" in the works? Give me a XXX-ing break!

As usual, it takes a true conservative to say the obvious:

Barr, the former congressman, said that "the abuse is in the power itself." "As a conservative," he said, "I really resent an administration that calls itself conservative taking the position that the burden is on the citizen to show the government has abused power, and otherwise shut up and comply."

The ACLU, of course, finds it hard to formulate a sound bite that will resonate with the working class, and worries about domestic spying as a deterrent to wide-open media consumption.

At the ACLU, staff attorney Jameel Jaffer spoke of "the profound chilling effect" of this kind of surveillance: "If the government monitors the Web sites that people visit and the books that they read, people will stop visiting disfavored Web sites and stop reading disfavored books. The FBI should not have unchecked authority to keep track of who visits [al-Jazeera's Web site] or who visits the Web site of the Federalist Society."

Of course the chilling effect on intellectual freedom is considerable, but a more imminent threat is presented: information service providers are spying on their customers, thirty-thousand of them, silently surrendering electronic records clearly protected by the Fourth Amendment. The sun should immediately set on this vehicle for invading corporate data-vaults to spy on their customers.

When the FBI amasses data about innocent people, it will be used to suppress political dissent. Created by J. Edgar Hoover, a man with absolutely no morals, in his own corrupt image, the FBI grew into a factory for political blackmail, conducting extensive spying operations on Ralph Nader, John F. Kennedy, his brother RFK, Martin Luther King, and many others. The file on Dr. King got so large that after the FBI coughed it up in response to a Freedom of Information Act request, it was turned into a very long and revealing book. As a result, King does not have the dignity of a private life, some-

thing that many of us think we're entitled to.

When "preventing terrorism" supplants "solving crimes" as the agency's mission, the genie of bureaucratic mischief is let out of the box. Terrorism is an abstract and unassailable boogiemer whose face appears always in the final mushroom cloud. As Dick Cheney has made clear, although the mind recoils from the thought, even torture can't be off the table when mega-populations are at risk of cataclysmic death. So shredding the Fourth Amendment so armies of bureaucrats can sort through cell phone bills for clues to where the terrorists are planning to strike next is obviously must-do stuff.

There's no way to know if corporations that you pay good money to for what you assume is private service, have in fact received NSLs and are trolling for data on you, that they then forward to the FBI. You can become a subject of NSL inquiries just by getting a phone call from someone the FBI defines as "a bad guy." Would that include getting emails from Scooter Libby, Tom DeLay, Mike Abramoff, Bill Frist, or Karl Rove, all under indictment or investigation for criminal activity? Of course Ronnie Earl, the Texas Attorney General prosecuting DeLay for laundering corporate campaign dollars, doesn't have the FBI on his team, so he can't use them. And Mr. Fitzgerald, the Rovegate federal prosecutor, probably would raise howls down at the courthouse if he used NSLs to investigate the nation's top criminal organization. It's always revealing to see how much privacy wealth and power commands, and how little respect government officers have for the privacy of rank-and-file citizens.

Now for a closing nightmare. Smart criminals are probably already using forged National Security Letters to obtain data and injure reputations with silent, malicious gossip. The FBI logo can be screen-captured right off the official website, and the return address can provide any address and private phone number. The FBI will not confirm or deny the details of ongoing investigations, so the recipient of a forged NSL will have no way to disprove its accuracy. If the new law passes, the forger's buddy, the thug, can threaten arrest. Using this method, gangsters should be able to get all the information they want about anyone, and silently destroy reputations with total impunity. I predict that the first person to get caught doing this will be an ex-FBI agent. Sorry to tell you, but if you search Google for this string -- "FBI agent convicted" -- you get a lot of hits.

When P.T. Barnum said "never give a sucker an even break," he could have added, "because then he will come to expect it." This seems to be the theory of the current generation of bureaucratic freedom-thieves, who preach daily that all freedoms are contingent, and some rights, like the right to be free from warrantless, secret searches by undisclosed government agents, have entirely ceased to exist. The crippled structure of rights that remains is utterly useless in defending oneself against charges of terrorism, which are prosecuted in secret, and do not lead to trials in which one can be acquitted or convicted. More than a thousand people still in Guantanamo Bay and CIA detention cells abroad remain untried, unconvicted, simply detained for interrogation and torture, after four years of confinement. The current terror-ocracy derives its false legitimacy from the blatantly unconstitutional Patriot Act, which composted the Bill of Rights enacted by the Founding Fathers and its quaint guarantee that no person be deprived of life, liberty, or property except after conviction of a crime in a fair and open legal process before a jury. It is a sad thing, but true. We have lost our democracy, and must now struggle to get it back. In that struggle, it will be a bright day indeed when the sun sets on the use of secret investigative letters propped under the guise of "national security."

Lo-Fi Nikita

Che Guevara

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but after a row with police over Guevara's use of a knife to draw in the dirt, they left for Caracas, Venezuela by bus, where the two travelers parted company. Alberto Granado stayed in Caracas, and Guevara flew to Miami with the intention to fly back to Buenos Aires from there, but due to problems with the plane and the airline, ended up stranded in Miami with one dollar in his pocket. Living in a hotel that he paid with money wired from Argentina, with no resources, Guevara explored Miami for a month before he was able to return to his homeland, but *The Motorcycle Diaries*, for whatever reason, record nothing of this visit to the US mainland.

Guevara graduated from the University of Buenos Aires school of medicine in 1953, and immediately thereafter went to Guatemala to take witness and participate in the social reform efforts championed by President Jacobo Arbenz, who had been elected by a 65% popular vote. In Guatemala, Guevara acquired the name "Che" from his use of this common Argentine expletive – a word that serves the purpose of "Wow" or "Hey," as in "Che! This is some great food!" He also met Hilda Gadea, who became his first wife and intellectual inspiration. Together, they had one child, "Hildita," and shared their zeal for Communism as the remedy for the sickness of class distinctions, exploitation, and poverty. But they were not able to enjoy the liberalized environment of Guatemala for long. Arbenz's primary goal was to re-distribute land, 72% of which was owned by 2% of the people, and as a result, was grossly underutilized. Since virtually all agricultural production in Guatemala was managed for the benefit of the US-based United Fruit Company, the United States was hostile to Arbenz. Thus within a year of Che's arrival, although Arbenz enjoyed popular support, he was unseated in 1954 by Col. Carlos Castillo Armas, backed by the CIA. The CIA's involvement in the coup, then under the direction of Allen Dulles, was well-known even at the time, and the US Ambassador to Guatemala, John E. Peurifoy, was fully complicit in the timing and execution of the coup. See, *The Invisible Government*, Chap. 11, D. Wise and T.B. Ross (1964). Assisted by US air support, the new regime turned Guatemala City upside down overnight, putting all social activists in immediate danger of arrest, torture and death, Armas' standard operating procedure for keeping order. Guevara briefly took refuge in the Argentine embassy during the coup, then fled to Mexico City, filled with anger at seeing Guatemala's populist dream crushed by outside interference.

In Mexico City, Guevara met Fidel Castro, recently exiled from Cuba by Gen. Fulgencio Batista, the island dictator who ruled an empire of corruption with the approval and aid of powerful US interests, including organized crime. The meeting shaped the history of Latin America. Fidel Castro, an attorney and powerful speaker, combined pragmatic goals with a willingness to take extreme, often badly-calculated risks. Guevara, a doctor and an avid reader of Marx, was eager to join any revolution with prospects for overwhelming the entrenched plutocracies he had found everywhere during his travels in Latin America.

The Cuban revolution started badly and ended well. On December 2, 1956, Castro and Che, with a group of supporters, launched their attack from the United States, sailing in an old boat dubbed the "Granma," and landed on the Southeastern coast of Cuba near Niquero. Although they'd planned their arrival to coincide with a planned uprising in Santiago de Cuba two days before, the Granma was carrying four times its prescribed load of passengers, and had to negotiate tough seas, so it was late. The uprising in Santiago had been put down, and there was nothing to distract Batista's forces from tear-

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ing apart the expeditionary force, that landed ashore in a swampy, exposed area and was promptly decimated, leaving only fifteen survivors. Guevara had come as a doctor, but dumped his medical supplies and instead hauled a crate of ammunition into the jungle. While healing the body politic was his passion, his approach to the project was surgical.

On the day of the invasion, there was nothing to do but flee to fight another day, but once they were established, the movement grew with a sense of inevitability. Castro and Che formed a complementary bond and built a stronghold in the Sierra Maestra mountains. As the group grew, Che proved a valuable organizer of the illiterate workers and former criminals who formed the backbone of the rebellion. Fidel, on the other hand, was a master with the bullhorn who loved to engage the enemy in a standoff, then take the opportunity to harangue the opposing military leaders with diatribes against Batista and exhortations to act as honorable men. He addressed an idealistic argument to the opposition, speaking to them as a friend and compatriot. He reminded them that they were all Cuban patriots, honest men who wanted to see a free Cuba, a goal that was blocked by the puppet dictator's US-backed regime. Fidel's preaching was so convincing that he repeatedly talked Batista's troops into surrendering weapons, vehicles, supplies, and soldiers, all in a single package.

After a few months in the Sierra Maestra, Castro promoted Che to the rank of Commander ("Comandante"), awarding him the single star that adorned the dark beret he is wearing in the iconographic photograph. He gathered a cadre of loyal soldiers around him, and established discipline within the revolutionary ranks. As the movement grew in popularity, it faced the risk of degenerating into gangsterism.

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Che Guevara

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Local militias, headed by small-time strongmen, often merged with the revolutionary forces to gain armed strength, but didn't adopt revolutionary ideals of honesty and respect for the citizenry. Thus, Che established revolutionary courts that heard accusations of criminal conduct such as rape and theft, which occurred commonly, and executed the perpetrators. Soldiers fighting under Che were required to study more than military tactics. They learned to read, absorbed Marxist doctrine, and became committed, well-informed leaders of other people like themselves. This legacy of Che's work raised the rate of literacy in Cuba to over ninety percent, up from 10% before the revolution, and currently the highest in Latin America.

Che also led the decisive attack in the Cuban revolution, attacking and conquering Santa Clara, and derailing a troop and supply train that arrived to relieve government troops. Che and Castro clinched the victory over Batista in 1958, when he fled to the US-controlled Dominican Republic, then to Portugal, and finally to Spain, where Generalissimo Franco had managed to hold onto his dictatorial rule quite effectively. Batista died in Spain in 1973 after authoring "The Growth and Decline of the Cuban Republic." Franco died two years later.

In January, 1959, Castro and Che were the two most powerful men in Cuba. Che was commander of the largest military prison, and the chief prosecutor of ex-Batista secret police, traitors, and torturers. He tried and sentenced many people to death, using firing squads in which all of the higher officers were required to take positions, so that responsibility was shared at all levels. Until the mid-sixties, Che was unquestionably Fidel's right hand. He served as the head of the Cuban National Bank, and also undertook to reorganize production to supply basic needs after the United States imposed an embargo on all Cuban products, devastating an economy based almost entirely on the sale of sugar. Although he married a second wife, Aleida, and divorced Hilda, he remained a devoted father to Hildita and visited her almost daily despite a heavy schedule that included working nights and weekends in fields and factories after he had completed a full day of administrative work. Che and Aleida had four children. Declaring that he had set nothing aside to care for them, he expressed no concern for their welfare after his death, asserting that the State would care for their needs.

By 1965, however, Che was a bit of a third wheel. The Soviet Union had replaced the US as Cuba's trading partner, and Che was first sus-

picious, and then strongly critical, of the USSR's style of communism. After his position became clear, he became a political liability for Castro in the new age, and despite efforts to paper over the rift, Che increasingly found himself marginalized within the government.

Perhaps some people can never retire, can never hang up their guns. Certainly Che did not even try. Throughout 1965 Che devoted himself to the struggle against the remnants of colonial rule in the Belgian Congo, renamed Zaire under the liberal leader Patrice Lumumba, who was killed by Belgian assassins in 1961. In February of 2002, the Belgian government apologized to the Congolese people, and admitted to a "moral responsibility" and "an irrefutable portion of responsibility in the events that led to the death of Lumumba." Despite his desire to assist the people of Zaire, Che was unable to achieve anything of value. He collaborated with Gen. Kabila, but had little faith in his ability or commitment. As long as Africa was led by persons of Kabila's stripe, said Che, the people of Africa "have many more years of slavery to look forward to."

From 1965 to 1967, Che's whereabouts were undisclosed. Castro, however, made public the contents of an undated letter that Che had written to him, describing his desire to go forward with international work beyond Cuba's borders, and resigning all official connection to Cuba. The reasons why Che wrote this letter, and the reasons that moved Fidel to make it public, remain unclear, but it certainly served to prevent Che's return to Cuba. Che spent time in Tanzania, East Germany, and Prague, writing and contemplating his situation and that of the world.

In 1967, Che was in Bolivia, attempting to start a revolution in that desperately poor country. After some early successful operations, however, President Renee Barrientos put the Bolivian army to work tracking down the famous guerrillero. The CIA and Special Forces trainers came to Bolivia and created a crack unit of 400 local soldiers. Felix Rodriguez, a Cuban CIA agent who had survived the Bay of Pigs fiasco, led the hunt. Applying a scorched earth policy, the Bolivians continued a campaign of arresting, interrogating, and torturing anyone who might have information about, or sympathies with, Che and his troops. On October 8, 1967, the Bolivian soldiers ran Che to ground. As he climbed up a narrow chimney of rock that might have led to safety, he was confronted by two Bolivian soldiers above him. He raised his rifle, but it jammed. He pulled his sidearm and attempted to fire, only to find that the magazine had fallen out, and there was nothing to shoot. Thus, he was taken prisoner, and on direct orders of Barrientos, was executed after his body was riddled with bullet wounds to make it seem as if he had been killed in a gun battle. His pain was evidently severe and protracted. It is reported that he told his killer, who had been chosen by lot and wasn't up for the job, "I know you are here to kill me. Shoot, coward, you are only going to kill a man". Then next day, his body was strapped to the landing struts of a helicopter and flown to Vallegrande, where it was exhibited to the press. Rodriguez kept Che's Rolex watch and showed it off as a trophy. Che's hands were removed by a doctor and given to the CIA to check the prints to be sure the right man had been killed.

On October 15, 1967, Castro acknowledged that Che was dead, and proclaimed three days of public mourning. Thirty years later, Cuban scientists unearthed the skeletal remains of a handless body from where they had been concealed beneath an air strip near Vallegrande. The remains were positively identified by DNA matching, and returned to Cuba. On October 17, 1997 the remains of a soldier who died at the age of thirty-nine were entombed with full military honors in Santa Clara, Cuba. His memory now belongs to the ages.

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Born In Tibet, Again - The Exile of The Twelfth Trungpa Tulku

Trungpa XI, The First American Lama

Chogyam Trungpa, the 11th Tulku of the Trungpa line, was the most influential Buddhist teacher in the United States for over twenty years, and long after his death in 1987. During his lifetime, he commanded a loyal cadre of students with top social and money connections who insulated him against criminal and ethical charges with a skill that Michael Jackson might envy, and gave negative events a positive spin that would put Karl Rove to shame. He lectured endlessly, if often drunkenly, and his wordsmith-students crafted these lectures into books that were revered as spiritual classics: "Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism," and "The Myth of Freedom." After Trungpa's death, these students promised to put out 108 volumes of his teachings, to be called "The Dharma Ocean Series," but the series pooped out after a half-dozen titles failed to sell well, and I picked up most of them at markdown prices at a remaindering outlet in Salem, Oregon. That seems emblematic of Trungpa's stock in the spiritual marketplace, which as this article shows, is now so devalued by his own heirs that they have deliberately severed most of the obvious associations with his tradition, and effectively exiled the person who is supposedly the current incarnation of the great guru to a lonely hamlet in Tibet.

The teacher of Alan Ginsberg and other leading literary lights, such as Sam Bercholz, founder of Shambhala Publishing, the spiritual publishing powerhouse, Trungpa XI entered a spiritual America where teachers were virtually all Hindu swamis, and ate their lunch. Today, Tibetan Buddhism is the only way to fly for the showbiz and literary elements, and while a few Zen outfits still try to sell the bald look, and Vipashyana does steady business with librarians and other quiet types, the Dalai Lama is the 800 pound gorilla. Tellingly, in The Guru, Marisa Tomei pouts in the bathroom that her cheap society mom isn't willing to spring for "a real Tibetan Rinpoche" to provide the spiritual entertainment for her New Age birthday party.

Trungpa's biography, Born In Tibet, put him on the map as the escaped scion of Tibetan spiritual aristocrats. He moved to England, and obviously not short on cash, got into Oxford, where he behaved like the local lords, and wrecked his car while crooked by piling it into a joke shop. He married an Englishwoman with a title named Diana who now goes by the name Lady Diana Mukpo, who brought him two sons from a prior marriage -- a couple of foul-mouthed kids named Gesar and Ashoka who have been recognized as Rinpoches even though they have not a lick of religious training. But those kids have only tarnished Trungpa XI's legacy. His eldest son, originally named Osel, then named Mipham, then "the Sakyong," has entirely usurped his father's throne, and placed the ancient Trungpa Lineage under his own authority. The purpose of this article is to explain how this happened, citing legal and ecclesiastical documents as evidence, and to point the finger of accusation at those who have made a mockery of their own traditions in the pursuit of wealth and spiritual authority.

Trungpa XI was the focus of controversy at his first western center, Samye Ling in Scotland, and the more-traditional Akon Tulku usurped his authority in a typical Tibetan ecclesiastical coup, even stealing Trungpa's official seals, and prompting the iconoclastic young lama to decamp for the United States in the early seventies. He landed on his feat on the East Coast of the nation, founding the

Tail of the Tiger (Karme Choling) retreat center in Vermont, and soon the stories began.

This was no robe-wearing, wise old man with an inscrutable look that could be an ad for herbal tea. He was a rock and roll lama who quickly figured out that the smartest people in the United States were a bunch of acid-taking, birth-control users with degrees in literature and political science and religious history, who were just beginning to realize that worshiping a fat fourteen-year old Indian kid wasn't very cool, and yoga was for housewives who didn't want to do Jane Fonda. He saw Warhol, heard Lou Reed, wrote poetry with Ginsberg, conquered Richard Alpert aka Ram Dass, and got jerked and sucked off like Jimi Hendrix, but probably was less fun for his groupies -- there's a big difference in size between Tibetans and Africans.

Trungpa was a Buddhist impresario who made kingly treatment of Tibetan Lamas the standard, teaching his students to prostrate themselves body and mind, getting junkies, poets, real estate executives and ingénues to roll out the red carpet for the Sixteenth Karmapa and his entourage. He brought to these puritanical shores the powerful blend of regal pomp, supernatural power, and tantric transformation that is Tibetan Buddhism. Everyone today knows that the Dalai Lama does a "Kalachakra Tantra" ceremony all over the world, ostensibly for "world peace," but it takes a Buddhist old-timer to remember when the Karmapa performed the "Black Hat Ceremony" that celebrates the assassination of the last anti-Buddhist Tibetan king by a yogi. The first ceremonies were undoubtedly done in high school auditoriums, public halls, and buildings renovated by fervent devotees, but by the end of his life, Trungpa saw his countrymen selling out stadiums like spiritual rock stars. He built the road that the Dalai Lama now walks on.

Trungpa XI, Holder of the Karma Kagyu Lineage

Lineage was Trungpa XI's strong suit -- he had ten lifetimes of his own behind him, and the illustrious lineage of Tilopa, Naropa, Marpa, Milarepa, and Gampopa to back that up. This lineage was his inevitable starting point, and with a small bow to his Nyingma teachers, he remained Kagyu through and through to the end of his days. This was clear from the beginning, when he appended to Born In Tibet a bureaucratic document entitled "The Administration of the Ka-Gyu Monasteries of East Tibet." (Reproduced below at the end of this article.)

In 1976, Trungpa XI put out a large-format book entitled "Garuda
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The Stadium Plot

A work of fiction

Joe Mathers moved to Phoenix with his family when he was still in preschool. His dad and mom were decent folks, who didn't leave him much but a work ethic, but that proved to be all that was needed in Phoenix. As the years went by he grew up and got through high school, racking up a degree in construction engineering from SciTech in fourteen months after high school graduation. He kept his credit record clean and within a few months after getting certified by SciTech, his high school sweetheart, who had a job in a local watering hole pushing electric punch, was riding sexily by his side in a new red impulse-drive Jaguar pickup. He was moving up in the local Phoenix economy as fast as one of the elevators that shot up from the hills north of town two hundred and fifty stories high. Construction engineering was a great field.

The town's insanely accelerated growth had never slowed down. People had moved from the devastated Gulf coast to the desert in droves, never wanting to see water again. Lakes had been created north of town by damming water that would've flowed wastefully through the desert. Desalinization plants down at Rocky Point produced drinking water that was pulled through a two-hundred and fifteen mile-long pipeline studded with solar pump relay stations. Skyscrapers sprang up in greater profusion every year. Officer workers flooded in to man banks of computer terminals, processing the flood of the data that the world economy generated. Using Google Earth, you could watch suburban sprawl moving outward from the urban center at an astonishing rate. Capital flooded in, following itself, and Phoenix grew apace.

The people of Phoenix were very patriotic. They'd come like Joe's dad from everywhere to try and make a good life, and they had made Phoenix beautiful and prosperous. Sure, it was hotter than hell in the summer, but the golf courses were lush, the bars were cool, and the hotel lobbies gleamed with polished brass and crystal chandeliers. The jail always seemed to be overflowing, and consumer bankruptcies kept the courthouse busy, but if you kept your credit record clean you could buy a house out at the end of the freeway, wherever that was this week. There was enough frustration in the town to keep the mental health clinics busy, and it was almost a relief that the war was there to let people focus the aggression outside.

Towelheads, camel-fuckers, goddamn godless heathen brown-skinned bastards. Not that Joe was into that kind of talk, but then again he'd nod his head along when it was tossed around at work, or at the after-work drinking sessions that got more aggressive as the bitter taste of humiliation sank in over the recent nuking of Dallas. Homeland Security reported the bomb had been trucked over by a towelhead terrorist cell in the Chihuahua mountains. All of the Home-Sec border agents were under suspicion, and many had been directed to report for interrogation and of course, possible torture. The only thing more dangerous than working for Home-Sec was not working for Home-Sec.

President Starr's real name was Smith, but in the style of all politicians in the current age, had adopted a politico-name. President Starr espoused the ethical principles of Kenneth Starr, who masterminded the Republican defense strategy in Dean v. Bush, and convinced Chief Justice Roberts that the Twenty-Second

Amendment did not prevent President Bush from running for a third term, only from taking office if he won. The rest is history. Bush won his third term by a landslide, and before his inauguration, Congress repealed the Twenty-Second Amendment altogether by the required two-thirds majority, and a landslide of State governors promised immediate ratification of the amendment.

On the day of the Dallas nuking, President Starr's face appeared on the cube everywhere, reassuring the nation that we would not collapse under this cowardly assault. He put a helluva brave face on it, but you could see he hardly knew how to deal with the fact that the nation's venerable patriarch, Gee-Dubya, was missing in the disaster. Of course old Gee, as most schoolchildren learned to call him, had been a dotard for the last ten years, but the war was his proud legacy, and he had now become its most famous victim. The rage that boiled in the breast of every true American was unquenchable.

The Presidential edict came down swift and certain before night fell on the tragic day. Dubbed the Subversive Alien Civil Rights Elimination Directive of 2035, "SACRED" reduced aliens to completely rightless individuals, unable to assert any claim to the fairness of criminal or other proceedings. SACRED defined "aliens" broadly as "all persons acting in actual or tacit complicity with purposes, intents, plans, or initiatives inimical to the interests of the nation by means of the dissemination of tools for the accomplishment of actions lending aid and comfort to the enemies of the nation wherever found, which shall include the use of data transmission facilities and all instrumentalities of communication ...". Any person, the President declared, who forms a criminal intent to attack society by lending aid and comfort to the enemy must forfeit all rights of citizenship. Otherwise, loyal conduct in the citizens would diminish, and society as a whole would suffer a loss of rights. Chief Justice Roberts had given that provision the nod in a midnight session set up by phone call from the White House.

A couple of days after SACRED went into effect, Joe was having a beer at his favorite bar, The Trail's End, when Attorney General Reese pushed a soccer game off the cube and shoved his ugly face into the bar. He he was unable or unwilling to conceal his pleasure over the power that SACRED put into his hands. "The Dallas nuking," Reese emphasized, "would most likely have been prevented if the terrorist sympathizers who aided the demonic project had been ferreted out and forced to divulge their sympathies through appropriate methods." He paused, "Those methods give us the power to prevent evil, the power to uproot terrorism, and will now be deployed full-strength to get to the root of the rot in our society."

Reese had meant what he said. As Joe left the bar, the streets were already filling with army trucks and black, windowless vans. As he drove home through the streets, he saw soldiers going into the apartment complexes methodically, leading men, women and children out of their homes and into the vans. A lot of them had looked like Mex's, but that wasn't surprising, since a lot of Mex's were towelhead simps according to Homeland Security, which nevertheless encouraged the employment of Mex's in "non-security" positions, i.e., as janitors. So Joe wasn't that concerned about the roundup. They'd happened before, and he never had a problem, and didn't really know anybody personally who had. His record was clean, and he kept it that way by logging his whereabouts on

GPS twenty-four/seven. He could always prove where he'd been, with whom, and why. Every roundup just gave him one more reason to keep his nose clean and stay away from politics. So far it was working.

Joe was hooked at his waist to a very strong rope way the hell up over the skyline, using his laser to calibrate the exact position for a plastic girder on the 282nd floor of the new Hyatt tower. He had almost dialed in the specs to perfection and was about to do set codes for the auto-crane when his earbud rang with a phone call. He answered. Mandy's hysterical voice broke into his ear. "They just took Lexi away!" Lexi was Mandy's best friend, and a hot brunette into the bargain. "Who took Lexi?" answered Joe. "The fucking Sacred cops, you asshole, who the fuck else?" Mandy was sobbing, shrieking. It wasn't a prank, but Lexi couldn't be arrested – her dad was richer than hell. "It must be a mistake," Joe said. Mandy's shrieked back: "It was no mistake! She's been hanging out with terror-simps – civil righters, evolutionists, global warming nuts – you know she loves that intellectual bullshit."

Joe couldn't calm her down, he couldn't leave the job, and his nerves were rattled. Shit, he thought, just like Lexi to stress out all her friends by getting involved with the civil rights of towelheads. What could be more irrelevant to real life? As if anything was going to change. Tell the towelheads to stop nuking us, then maybe we can talk about civil rights. He turned back to his work, but he screwed it up, tried to redo it, then gave up and decided to come out of the weather. It was getting kind of windy anyway. He returned to his office, a lightweight ovoid cocoon at the center of the auto-crane, like the body of a spider built for constructing and navigating through the skyscraper structure. He flipped the cube to newscast and saw coverage of an ongoing interrogation down at the Rattlers stadium.

The interrogation subject was confessing to participation in an extensive plot to poison the water supply of a large Midwestern city. The guy who was confessing looked like all the terrorists they brought to trial these days – very docile. The show was directed by a Homeland Security interrogator who explained that the terrorist had been truth-drugged, an alternative to torture allowed for those who agreed to confess. However, the interrogator admitted that, however satisfactory truth-drugging might be, the infliction of "the ideal amount of pain" a term he introduced with an explanatory grin, always made a confession more complete. "There are always some questions left unanswered with truth drugs. Applying the ideal amount of pain helps us answer those questions. And answer-

ing questions saves lives." The interrogator concluded with a reassuring smile and a nod.

Joe googled for news on SACRED enforcement in Phoenix, and found a cube-cast of Reese, explaining how the Dallas nukers had been linked to a terrorist nerve center in Phoenix that apparently had operated through a corrupt financial network that had infiltrated the banks. Reese was in Phoenix himself, directing interrogation of high-level suspects personally from field headquarters he had established in the new Rattlers mega-stadium. All "aliens" were being concentrated in the stadium as the first stage of mass interrogations. Reese was gloating like a freak as he ended his speech. Then the speech started to play again, a clockwork asshole cranking out the shit that others had to eat.

He looked at his watch and was surprised to see his shift had ended. Fattie Macdowall was coming up in his own auto-crane just a few floors below him, walking up through the latticework in the slow, methodical fashion that typified Fattie's movement in his control-suit. Joe was relieved to be off-shift. He settled himself back into the gentle grip of his suit, and drifted down to base on the 285th floor. He wasn't surprised when Mandy broke into his ear again, somewhat calmer this time, but now whining, asking the impossible – "Joe, we've got to help her."

Joe replied, "Are you kidding? How could we help her? She's being taken to the new stadium like everyone else. We can't get in, and we can't find her, and if we could, they wouldn't let us out. I worked on that place, and it was designed as a gigantic backup terrorist holding pen. All around the top perimeter, they put gun emplacements that make every seat in the place a perfect target. They can shoot any kind of ammo they want, from stunners to glue blobs to armor-piercing rounds. Perfect for crowd control. There are only thirty entrances, each of which can be covered by a small number of guards. Large vehicles can be driven straight into a network of underground tunnels, and there's enough space under the stadium to get lost in. Lexi will be back when the Sacred cops let her go."

Mandy's response was unbelievable. She began to pout. As if she were going to dare him into going to find Lexi. Just go to the Sacred cops and ask, she said. It didn't sound like a good idea, said Joe. Mandy insisted. It was ridiculous. She teased him into coming to her apartment right away. He said he'd bring pizza. She said to bring some ideas. He sort of mumbled along, thinking he'd have her in the sack before the night was over, and Lexi's Daddy's lawyers would surely save Lexi's ass. After all, she was not of the victim class. It would all turn out okay. He checked his credit rating and it was clean. He liked to check it several times a day.

Hoisting the pizza jauntily over his shoulder, he sailed out of the pizza joint, and was just giving the pizza chick the eye when Mandy called again. "Joe," she shrilled in a whisper, "I've got Lexi on the line. Lexi?"

Lexi whispered back, "Oh guys, I'm so scared."

"What happened?" asked Mandy.

"Jeezus Christ, what didn't happen. I'm hidin' in the can right now. They took everybody's phone away, except mine's in my designer belt buckle, and these bitches that search you are fashion illiterates. I've got an implanted radiomike in my mastoid, but I

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Born In Tibet, Again

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IV, The Foundations of Mindfulness,” with a pumpkin-colored soft cover bearing the red Vajradhatu seal of the Garuda holding a shield emblazoned with the knot of eternity. The first work in the book was Trungpa’s own “Supplication To The Gurus of the Lineage,” which begins:

“Great Vajradhara, Telo, Naro and Marpa,
Mila, the lord of the dharma Gampopa;
The knower of the three times,
The omniscient Karmapa;
The holders of the lineage of the four great and the eight lesser schools;
Dri, Tak, Tsel, these three, Sri Drugpa and so on;
And those who have completely achieved the profound path of mahamudra;
To those incomparable protectors of all beings the Dagpo Kagyu
-- I supplicate you, the Kagyu Gurus,
I follow your tradition and example;
Please grant your blessing.”

Trungpa XI also published written confirmation of his enlightenment from the 16th Karmapa to teach, embellished with flourishes in red ink. The Karmapa’s words are adulatory, proving that he endorsed and embraced Trungpa XI as a highly honored wisdom-holder of the Karma Kagyu lineage who had turned the western lands into a field of bounty for the Dharma. Entitled a “Proclamation to All Those Who Dwell Under the Sun Upholding the Tradi-

tion of the Spiritual and Temporal Orders,” it avers that “The ancient and renowned lineages of the Trungpas ... has in every generation given rise to great beings [and] has magnificently carried out the vajra-holder’s discipline in the land of America”

The Burial of A Legacy

Nevertheless, today, Trungpa XI’s legacy has been buried by his own son and heir, “the Sakyong,” who operates not under his father’s Karma Kagyu tradition, but under a Nyingmapa title, and at the behest of Dilgo Khenntse Rinpoche, the Kagyu-Nyingma cross-over lama. He has also had wisdom and status bestowed on him by Pednor Rinpoche, who recognized Steven Seagal and Catherine Burroughs as reincarnated lamas. The organization that bore Trungpa’s name, Vajradhatu, has been replaced by the Shambhala organization, which is run by the Sakyong, and presumably has all the assets of Vajradhatu, since it has all of its students and ritual possessions. The official story of how this came to be is short, and omits all mention of the manner in which the expected succession of the Trungpa lineage was interrupted and altered in its natural course by the conscious intervention of those who stood to profit from decapitating the lineage and exiling its current leader to the frozen wastes of Tibet.

Here’s the expurgated version, from the Shambhala website:

Several years later, the Vajra Regent passed away as well. During the period following these deaths, the community and its leadership turned to one of Chögyam Trungpa's most revered and only living teachers, Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, then supreme head of the Nyingma lineage. In 1990, at the urging of Khyentse Rinpoche, Trungpa Rinpoche's eldest son, the Sakyong Ösel Rangdröl Mukpo (now known as Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche, as indicated below) returned from a period of practice and study with Dilgo Khyentse in Nepal to lead the community and direct the work his father, Chögyam Trungpa, had begun.

Rarely has impatience to do good work reaped such a reward, and rarely has lama clairvoyance so clearly failed to achieve an important goal. For there was no need to have the Sakyong take the reins in 1990. The 12th Trungpa tulku had been born in 1989, but no lama knew it until 1991, when Tai Situ Rinpoche discovered the new incarnation. Tai Situ is very good at discovering reborn tulkus, although his choice of a Karmapa did not receive universal acclaim, resulting in violent altercations, even murder. But there was no dispute over his convenient discovery of the 12th Trungpa tulku in the backwoods of Derge. Thus, had the Sakyong but waited a year, the 12th Trungpa Rinpoche would have been both born and discovered, and the crisis averted. Even if the Sakyong had felt it incumbent upon him to assume the reins of leadership, still a due respect for his father’s lineage as a high Karma Kagyu tulku should have caused him to limit himself to perform a regent role until the Twelfth Trungpa Tulku could take the throne.

The Best Laid Plans of Tulkus and Men

When Trungpa XI died in Vermont in April 1987, everyone expected the Regent to hold his position until what was expected to be a relatively swift rebirth and reassumption of the Trungpa throne. During the interregnum between the death of Trungpa XI and the birth of Trungpa XII, the “Regent” would hold power and occupy the position of head of Vajradhatu. Trungpa chose his regent badly – a bisexual first known as “Narayana” upon whom he bestowed the nom-de-buddha of “Oseltendzin.” That Trungpa XI was infatuated



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with Tendzin is clear, and it may have blinded his judgment, because a review of Trungpa's poems dedicated to the Regent suggests that by a naïve admiration of the Regent's rapacity, he stoked the flames of a dangerous madness that destroyed all of their plans. Certainly there were plans.

In his second book of poetry, *First Thought, Best Thought*, Trungpa XI dedicated many poems to Tendzin, many overtly sexual and encouraging a cowboy style of governing the sangha. In the Epilogue to a republication of "Born In Tibet" in 1978, Trungpa XI included photographs of himself and the Regent suitable for worship, and laid out his thinking: "My approach to administration and the community in general has been to give more and more responsibility to people but to hold the nerve centre in my control, and I am teaching Osel Tendzin to do likewise."

In 1977, Trungpa XI published *Garuda V, Transcending Hesitation*, in the same format as *Garuda IV*, quoted above. Again this publication was the vehicle for announcing important ecclesiastical news. On page 101 of the book appears the following "PROCLAMATION" concerning the elevation of Osel Tendzin:

"BY the power and with the blessings of the three jewels, the glorious and authentic root gurus of the Practicing lineage of Kagyu and the Ancient Lineage of Nyingma, the herukas and dakinis, Dharmapalas and lokapalas, I hereby empower and declare Karma Cho-kyi Dawa Legpai Lodro Osel Tendzin Chogle Namgyel, Thomas F. Rich, as DORJE GYALTSAP, VAJRA REGENT to act on my behalf in propagating buddhadharma and the vision of the three yanas throughout the world, and to implement, as a Director of the First Class, the purpose and intentions of Vajradhatu as well as those of the Nalanda Foundation. Proclaimed and sealed at the seat of Vajradhatu in Boulder, Colorado, in America by Vajracarya the Venerable Karma Ngawang Cho-kyi Gyamtso Kunga Sangpo, Trungpa Tulku XI, this 250th year of the Parinirvana, on the 27th day of the Fire Dragon Year of the 16th Rapjung, August 22, 1976. [signed] Trungpa XI [Trungpa Seal]"

The importance of this document cannot be overemphasized, as it makes absolutely clear that Trungpa XI had decided not to establish a hereditary lineage of succession, which has become so common with other lineages, and flies in the face of the ancient traditions of the Kagyu lineage as a pure meritocracy, based on "practice," which is to say, achievement. However we may judge in retrospect, this proclamation was Trungpa XI's resounding endorsement of a native-born American citizen, unrelated to him by blood or even nationality, and it was understood as such by the Vajradhatu faithful and the spiritual community at large.

This proclamation was written to serve as an authoritative corporate document. It recites the legal name of the Gyaltsap, Thomas F. Rich, and pointedly names him as the only person authorized to hold Trungpa XI's position as the Director of the First Class in the Vajradhatu corporation. There is no mention of Shambhala International, or of the Sakyong. This document was Trungpa XI's spiritual will, and if there were any doubt of that, the inscription added by H.H. the Sixteenth Karmapa would eliminate it. Appended to the top of the document, with the Karmapa's seal, is the following text: "As set forth below, the supreme Vidyadhara Trungpa Trulku Chogyi Gyatso has appointed his chief disciple, Osel Tendzin, as his Gyaltsap. This I fully acknowledge & rejoice in. Accordingly, let everyone offer to him due respect. Written by the glorious Karmapa, the 8th day of the 12th month of the Fire Dragon Year." The "Gyaltsap," according to the Appendix to *Born In Tibet*, is simply "The Regent

Abbot," second only to the "Trindzin," who is "The Supreme Abbot." If Trungpa XI had intended any changes to this document, for example, appointing a new successor, he would have made it absolutely clear, and published the identity of his new Gyaltsap, with equal solemnity and public exposure. No such document exists.

The Regent Flames Out

In the poem entitled *You Might Be Tired of the Seat That You Deserve* (For the Vajra Regent at Midsummer's Day), Trungpa XI counseled the new Gyaltsap on the right way to do his job:

Dearly loved comrade,
If you do not hold the seat,
Others may take it away;
If you do not sit on a rock,
It becomes mushy clay;
If you don't have patience to sit on a rock or seat,
They give you away;
If you are not diligent in holding the throne,
Some opportunist will snatch it away;
If you are tired of your seat,
Some interior decorator will rearrange it;
If you don't have a throne,
You cannot speak or proclaim from it,
So the audience will dissipate;
If you don't have a government seat to sit on,
Your wisdom and command seal will be snatched by others;
If you run around, thinking that you have a seat to come back to,
It will be washed away by the turbulent river,
Like a presidential platform;
You can never proclaim your command.
Either it will be disassembled by the cockroaches
Or the frivolous multitude will take it away as souvenirs.
It may be hard to sit on the seat,
But one must endure it.
Do sit on your seat,
Whether it is hard or soft.
Once you sit on your seat,
The sitting itself becomes truly command and message,
Then, undoubtedly, multitudes of people will respect and obey it
As the vajra throne of Bodhgaya where Buddha taught.
Truth becomes exertion.
The message of hard fact proclaims itself,
So you don't have to emphasize harder truth.
Offering your seat in order to please others will not give authentic reward
They will take the attitude that you are a pleasant seat-offerer.
So, my son, please don't move around;
Assume your seat, and sit, and be.
If you be that way, truth prevails;
Command is heard throughout the land.
So sit and hold your seat.
Then you will enjoy, because others will admire you.
This is hard to do, but easy to accomplish.

Had the Regent performed his job properly, keeping his own nerve centres under control, he would have lived until the 12th Trungpa tulku had been born, identified, and enthroned as the new lineage-holder. But the Regent failed in his mission, dying of AIDS in 1990, leaving his highly literate crew of disciples unusually silent concerning his habit of engaging in unprotected sex with a wide

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circle of people. The Regent apparently suffered from a bad case of Tantra-Induced Delusional Syndrome (TIDS), that caused him to believe his toxic emissions would bless his students, not kill them.

Two of the Regent's blessing-recipients died relatively quickly, a young man who was Tendzin's lover, and his girlfriend, who didn't realize that dating a Buddhist could be lethal. Call it the collateral damage from the quest for enlightenment – or one more casualty of Colorado's notoriously slack prosecution in high-profile homicides. The Regent never saw the inside of a courtroom, despite having committed, before the eyes of witnesses, multiple toxic assaults on the bodies of people who loved and trusted him. But it's all water under the bridge of innumerable lifetimes, right?

An Enforced Forgetting

Trungpa XI could not escape blame for the debacle, because he was renowned for his own philandering, which in posthumous revelations by female students who had serviced him during his lifetime, were revealed to be no more than desultory servicing of his genitals that left the women with little in the way of amorous memories. Trungpa XI was often quoted as saying that the Tibetan Tantric path is not a safe one – that you could “turn into a diamond” if you did it right, or be reduced to “a lump of charcoal” if you did it wrong. With Trungpa XI gone and the Regent having consummated a sexual suicide pact with his closest disciples, the students were left to figure out what was a diamond and what was a charcoal briquette.

The organization, stuffed with intelligent authors who could have discussed the debacle productively, did not rise to the occasion. The Vajradhatu Sun, the house organ of Vajradhatu, boycotted all news of the scandal, resulting in one issue that featured a broken heart on the front page, with no words to accompany it. This was the only protest allowed when the editors killed what would have been a confessional exposé of great importance. The true nature of the rifts that developed in the organization, leading to its current configuration, would be the subject of an interesting book, if anyone had the guts to write it. But with Shambhala the dominant force in Buddhist book publishing, prospective exposé-writers had better plan on publishing their own editions, and forget having any other literary career. June Campbell, for one example, was punished mightily by other Tibetan Buddhists for exposing her lifelong secret affair with Kalu Rinpoche, who like the Dalai Lama, was thought to be completely celibate. Steven Bachelar, for a second example, has been widely criticized for retreating from wholesale endorsement of lamaism.

Vajradhatu Becomes Shambhala

"Vajradhatu" was originally incorporated in Colorado in 1973, as the consolidated entity resulting from the union of Karma Dzong (a Colorado corporation) and Tail of the Tiger (a Vermont corporation). The original Articles of Incorporation for Karma Dzong establish its purposes as “teaching meditation, Tibetan Religious Traditions, Educational handicrafts, and the practice of charity.” Vajradhatu's revised Articles, filed on February 22, 1973, and signed by Trungpa himself on page 25 of the attached records, state that “this corporation is not formed for pecuniary profit or financial gain, and no portion of its assets, income, or profits shall be distributed to or inure to the benefit of any member, director, or officer of the corpo-

ration or any other private individual” There are “two classes of Directors” under the Articles, and there's only One Director in the first class of Directors – Chogyam Trungpa. The Articles don't spell out what the differing powers of the two classes of directors are, probably because having one man who calls all the shots, officially, kind of conflicts with the notion that “no portion of the assets, income or profits shall ... inure to the benefit of any ... director ... or ... individual.” Theocrats have special needs, and lawyers are willing to devise special corporate structures to suit them. But a corporation with an all-important head Director is quite vulnerable to takeover while the head Director is dead. And that is just what happened in the case of Vajradhatu. While Trungpa was between life number eleven and life number twelve, the Sakyong stole his company.

Today, “Vajradhatu” is simply an assumed business name of Shambhala International, sometimes in legal documents written as “Shambhala International (Vajradhatu).” But it was not always so. Any old-timer will tell you that until year 2001, “Vajradhatu” simply meant “the Church” to the Trungpa-faithful, and it was a spiritual trademark of great value.

Shambhala ®

Lest you think I am taking irreverent liberties by referring to spiritual trademarks, please note that, sixteen months after Trungpa XI's death, on August 9, 1999 the “Vajradhatu, DBA Shambhala International” applied for a U.S. Trademark on the words “Shambhala Meditation Centers,” in connection with providing the following goods and services: (1) “Buddhist religious practices,” (2) “meditation instruction,” (3) “a series of graduated seminars instructing participants in meditation practices and non-sectarian spiritual training,” and (4) seminars and workshops in field of contemplative arts, music, and theater. Trademark Number 75771345 was issued on June 19, 2001. The company has continued to obtain trademarks on four more Shambhala-related names, most recently obtaining U.S. Trademark Number 78297783 on November 30, 2004 on the term “Shambhala Art.” So sorry if you wanted to use that name for your new Tibetan handicrafts store – the corporate Tibetans got there first. But who are the corporate Tibetans, and why have they buried the Vajradhatu name?

Shambhala Eclipses Vajradhatu

There was never any sign that Trungpa XI intended to have Shambhala eclipse Vajradhatu, and in the early years Shambhala was clearly the secondary organization, putting a secular spin on Buddhism through concepts like “fundamental human dignity,” derived from Trungpa's book, Shambhala – The Way of the Warrior. It was, in effect, Vajrayana-lite, and never intended to take the place of Vajradhatu. But times change, and when names change with them, you can be sure it's for a reason.

On the Shambhala website, Vajradhatu is now defined in several amorphous ways, but never as an entity. It is most diaphanously described as a spiritual space: “Vajradhatu (Sanskrit for “indestructible space”) provides a spiritual journey of training on the Buddhist path following a well-defined, graduated method of practice and study developed by Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche.” Alternatively, it is one of the “Three Gates of Shambhala”: “The Vajradhatu Gate offers a method of developing compassionate wisdom and skillful action through meditation practice and study in the 2,500-year-old

Buddhist tradition.” This is clearly the tail wagging the dog, a classic reversal of roles – when Trungpa XI started teaching Shambhala, it was billed as the “secular” offshoot of Vajrayana Buddhism.

Vajrayana Becomes Co-Equal With Tea Ceremony

In the orthodox Shambhala view, Vajrayana Buddhism has been reduced to the status of a “gate” in the larger architecture of the Shambhala edifice. Further, you might ask what the other two gates are. Well, the first is Shambhala itself (a typical Tibetan overlapping of categories to make the numbers come out right), and the other is some silly invention called “Nalanda,” a mishmash of Japanese cultural activities like archery, flower-arranging and calligraphy that co-opt “zen aesthetics,” providing refuge for disciples who reject the eye-popping color combinations that make traditional Tibetan temples resemble the inside of a Turkish bus.

The Ouster of The Twelfth Trungpa

The deconstruction of Trungpa XI’s legacy might be funny if it weren’t the cover for a gigantic property grab by the Nyingmapas, and the ouster of the rightful heir to the Trungpa throne, at least if reincarnation means anything to you. The manner in which the takeover was achieved is easy to see if you observe seven basic facts that are documented in this essay. First, after Trungpa XI’s death and the Regent’s flameout, the Shambhala name supplanted the Vajradhatu name in official usage. Second, Chogyam Trungpa Mukpo remained on the books as Sole First Class Director, for four years after his death in April 1987. Third, on February 22, 2000, “Restated Articles” of incorporation were signed for Vajradhatu, which: (1) changed the company name to Shambhala International, (2) removed Chogyam Trungpa Mukpo from the official record as the sole Director of the First Class, (3) adopted sweeping liability protections for all directors, and (4) failed to identify the new Sole Director of the First Class. Fourth, the Restated Articles were not filed with the Colorado Secretary of State for twelve months after being signed, having cooled in the hands of a Boulder lawyer for the intervening time period. Fifth, the true identity of the Twelfth Trungpa tulku was known to all when the Restated Articles were signed. Sixth, there is no public record of who is now the Sole Director of the First Class under the new regime. Seventh, it may be presumed that the Sakyong is the Sole First Class Director of Shambhala International.

The Paper Coup

After Trungpa XI’s death, he remained on the corporate records as the Sole Director of the First Class until February 22, 2000, when Boulder lawyer and longtime Vice President of Vajradhatu, Alexander Halpern, signed a document changing the name of Vajradhatu to Shambhala International, and adopting new Restated Articles of Incorporation. In the past, various other officers had signed corporate documents, but the Restated Articles do not bear the signature of the Sakyong or anyone but Halpern.

The Restated Articles were clearer than the old Articles about the power of the Sole First Class Director, containing provisions that specifically make the “first class of Director” effectively omnipotent by giving him veto power over all the Board’s actions: “All actions of the Board of Directors shall require the consent of the Director of the first class ...” This is, effectively, the establishment of a Kingship under the guise of a non-profit corporation. But who is the King under this carefully crafted regime? The documents do not identify the new “Director of the first class.”

Whoever he is, he is as protected from corporate liability as the law can make him. You wouldn’t think a religious organization would adopt a provision in its Articles to insulate its Directors from lawsuits. But with AIDS victims outliving their expected expiration dates, the Regent was still casting a deadly shadow from the grave, and the Shambhala lawyers created this paragraph to protect the nameless new Directors, noting carefully that “this provision will not eliminate the liability of a Director for any act or omission resulting before the effective date of these Restated Articles.”

Without exercising too much clairvoyance, I believe I can see that, in the Restated Articles, the Sakyong sought to distance himself from the errors of Trungpa XI and his embarrassing Regent by changing the company name. He eliminated the Trungpa name from the record documents and elevated himself secretly to the role of sole Director of the first class. He specifically gave himself veto power over the Board. And he immunized himself and his yes-men Directors from damages suits for all types of corporate misconduct, “including a transaction from which [any] director derived an improper personal benefit.” This eighth paragraph provides all Directors with as large an immunizing shield as the law will allow, using self-contradictory and confusing language. I wager this wasn’t due to a sudden lapse in grammatical skill, but rather resulted from Alexander Halpern’s studious efforts to build in “wiggle room” for future debates about how much misconduct is immune from liability. If it ever becomes necessary to judicially interpret it, the Shambhala lawyers will agree with me – the eighth paragraph of the Restated Articles are a Class 1 Bunker for the Top Brass.

A Vulnerable Empire Exposed

Placing such documents in the public record exposes them to broad scrutiny, and the new Shambhala order probably wanted to avoid such scrutiny of these suspiciously self-serving Articles. Additionally, they probably needed time to accomplish other political maneuverings, so Vice-President Halpern sat on this important document for over a year before filing it with the Colorado Secretary of State. Signed on February 26, 2000, the Restated Articles weren’t filed until March 2, 2001. (Compare the first page of the document for the filing date, and the last page, for the signature date.)

March 2, 2001 also witnessed the other side of the mirror-magic of making Vajradhatu disappear as a corporation, while keeping the name in limited play. On that day, Vajradhatu was filed as an Assumed Business Name of Shambhala International, and the figure-ground reversal of these two entities was completed. Since then, the

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Born In Tibet, Again

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name of Shambhala International (Vajradhatu) appears on a couple of corporate documents. The identity of the Directors is not disclosed, and this is quite significant. Take note that, from April 1987 until February 22, 2000, the sole First Class Director of Vajradhatu was a dead man, Chogyam Trungpa Mukpo. Now that has got to be a precarious situation, when the designated top-dog, the sole First Class Director, is absent from the planet.

The job of the Regent was to fill that gap, and Osel Tendzin certainly acted like the sole First Class Director of Vajradhatu until his death. The Regent's death left the position open, vacant, a vacuum of the sort that nature hates. If Osel Tendzin hadn't killed himself, and had been on the job enforcing Trungpa XI's wishes on February 22, 2000, with the 12th Trungpa already born and identified, they would simply have changed the name of the sole First Class Director to – well to whose name?

Chokyi Sengay, Well-Connected in Derge, Nobody in Boulder, Colorado

Who is the 12th Trungpa Tulku? According to Konchok.org, Lady Diana's family website, he's a young man named Chokyi Sengay, who surprised the hell out of everyone by being born to a family of shepherds in Derge, who have "ties to the royal family of Derge." Well, he may be well connected in Derge, but in Boulder, they don't know him. Alexander Halpern, the corporate lawyer who worked for a company with a dead top Director for four years, doesn't know Chokyi Sengay. They have never been introduced, but Halpern understands that he lives with herdspeople in Tibet, and doesn't need immunity from American lawsuits. He has no worries, and Halpern isn't worried about protecting him from liability. The Sakyong is his client. That stuff about other lifetimes cuts no ice with him. These Tibetans do things their own way. He relates with the man who signs the checks.

If I could, I'd like to ask Chokyi Sengay, Trungpa Rinpoche XII, a few questions:

How does he like his new body – was it good to get rid of the old, cirrhotic liver?

When's he coming to Colorado? Lots of people miss him.

Which of his close students have gone to visit him? Did he remember any of them?

Is he learning to speak English?

Does he plan to go to Oxford on a Spaulding Fellowship, like his last incarnation did?

Does he know that on the Shambhala.org website, there is no link on the main page announcing that he, the founder of the Lineage, has been discovered?

Has he seen or read any of the books that he published in his last lifetime?

Does he know that he was a bit of a rakehell, and embarrassed his elders by acting out with his beatnik flock?

Does he know that in his last lifetime he arranged his affairs so he would inherit his former status of sole Director of the first class of Vajradhatu, a Colorado nonprofit corporation?

Has he heard of how his Regent screwed up Trungpa XI's plan to pass his wealth and power on to himself, the Twelfth Trungpa? Has he been told about the importance of Alexander Halpern, the Boulder lawyer whom Trungpa XI made Vice-President of Vajrad-

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hatu, and who is now Vice-President of Shambhala International? These are the kinds of questions that a person who had real faith would ask. Lady Diana glosses over the bizarre confiscation of the Trungpa Lineage's wealth by noting that, "during his lifetime Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche, the 11th Trungpa Tulku, made many conflicting statements regarding his future births. Accordingly, his rebirth in Tibet was unexpected by many of his students – and has been viewed by some as yet another surprise of the 'great vajra trickster.'"

Ah, were it only true. What has happened is quite the reverse, and if Chokyi Sengay really sees with the insight of eleven enlightened lifetimes and the recollection of his past deeds, it must all seem a bitter irony. That those he trusted in the last life distorted his legacy into some silly construct called Shambhala, that purports to subordinate Vajrayana Buddhism as one of the "Three Gates" to a cult of secular wholesomeness, on co-equal grounds with flower arranging and the tea ceremony. Truly those who have multiple lives have multiple sorrows.

The Sakyong and the Twelfth Tulku – Best of Friends

Just as the Vajradhatu trademark has been cast into the shadows, the connection with the Karma Kagyu lineage has been downplayed, and thus the importance of the Twelfth Trungpa. In a world governed by the will of Trungpa XI, there would certainly be a biography of the Twelfth Trungpa Tulku somewhere on the Shambhala.org website. You'd expect them to be trumpeting it from a link straight off the front page of its website, somewhere between the links to "Chogyam Trungpa" and "Sakyong Mipham." But no, you can strain

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your eyes, and you won't find anything. I ran a search for "12th Trungpa + bio" through the site-specific Google search box at Shambhala.org and found no links. I tried it again over the full Internet, and discovered the official bio quoted below at Konchok.org, the family album website for Lady Diana, Trungpa XI's widow, who also does Shambhala trainings as her livelihood.

There is information about a meeting between the Sakyong and the Twelfth Trungpa in Tibet during July 2004, in a travelogue from a few naive observers who went along on the trip. Notably among the persons present at this trip from among the Shambhala crew was Sangye Khandro, aka Nancy Gustafson, a still-ravishing blonde translator who was married to Gyatrul Rinpoche for about twenty five years before she moved on to the care and training of Lama Chonam, whom Gyatrul Rinpoche had lovingly rescued from inevitable death by tuberculosis. A rare case of a young Tibetan pulling a romantic coup on an older one. In any event, if the Sakyong brings Sangye Khandro along, all problems are solved. She has always been a huge lama favorite, and while a bit chilly, a big favorite with men of all ages and types, for her entire adult life.

The Peculiar Austerity of the Young Tulku's Current Circumstances

Still, I wonder about how they're treating the Twelfth Tulku -- perhaps a bit too much like a mushroom -- fed on bullshit and kept in the dark. The travelogue has a disturbing bit of information that smacks of internment. As far as I remember, Trungpa XI always enjoyed fine things, as in sophisticated surroundings. Read Born In Tibet if you doubt it -- the man knew privilege as a life-long condi-

tion, and hardship as a passing acquaintance. He lived well and enjoyed it. But in this lifetime, his overseers have decided to host him in conditions that a modern American describes as unbelievably primitive, sunlight deprived, and similar to a televised ordeal from the Survivor reality show:

"By the measure of what we are used to in North America and Europe, the accommodations here are primitive beyond your wildest imagination. It makes camping look like the Hilton, but at the same time the hospitality has been extraordinary. We are pervaded by the warmth, the playfulness and the friendliness of the people. We all feel that we are in luxury, in a certain way -- luxury with a medieval ambience. It's like a time capsule. We live in dirt quarters that are pitch dark, not just for us, but for Rinpoche. To get into Rinpoche's quarters, you go over these planks that are bouncing up and down over a kind of a moat. Suffice it to say that "hole in the wall" (or the floor) is an apt description of a bathroom. By this point, though, we've all settled in and feel quite welcome. It's wonderful. We're getting along well together, or at least as Rinpoche said the other day, "Nobody has been voted off the island ... yet." (The Rinpoche referred to here is clearly the Sakyong, because the Twelfth Tulku doesn't watch TV.)

Which other major Tibetan Buddhist organization has installed the current incarnation of their beloved guru in a hole in the wall, or floor, living in darkness, with mud and planks for a home? Which other Vajrayana group is using the dead image of the last incarnation of the lineage, instead of the living, youthful image of its current tulku? The fact that there are two Karmapas doesn't keep their adherents from keeping them in pleasant conditions and posting pictures and news about both of them all over their websites. Recently, Tai Situ's 17th Karmapa moved out of Tibet, and the news was hailed internationally. Only the Twelfth Trungpa Tulku is regarded with indifference and housed in squalor.

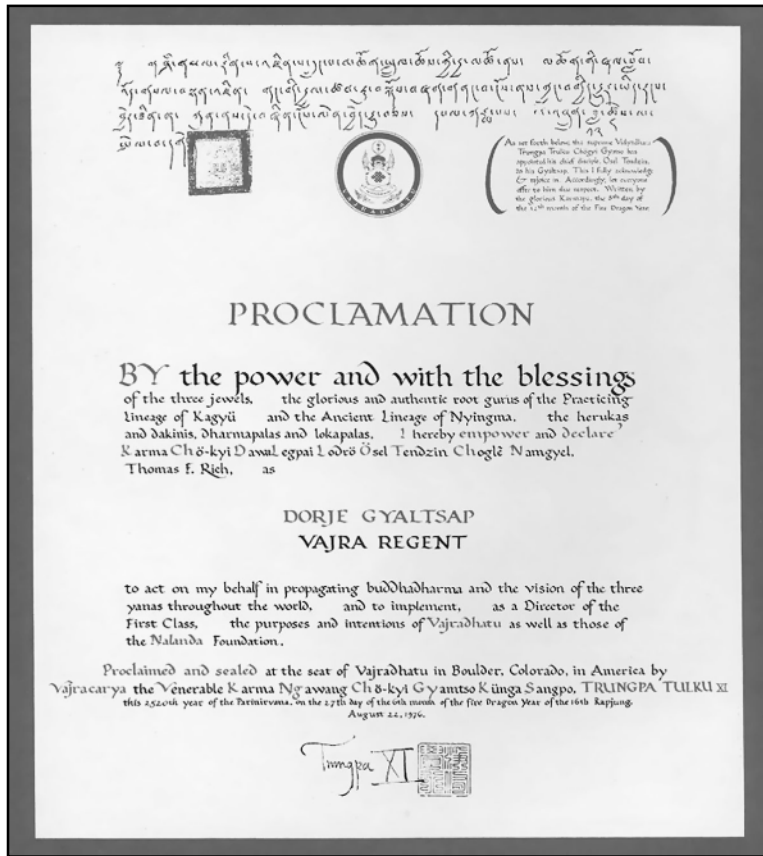
Not only are the vast media resources of Shambhala International boycotting the very existence of the Twelfth Trungpa -- the young boy is so poor that Lady Diana is passing the hat for him at the Konchok.org website -- trying to raise a measly \$10,000 for his yearly support, promising that anything over that will be used to fix up his impoverished surroundings. Ten thousand bucks? The Sakyong's SUV cost six times that much, if he has a Toyota Landcruiser, like every other top lama. In any event, Shambhala International is a money machine, but its leaders have reduced to penury the very person they claim to believe is the reincarnation of the founder of their own organization. Most people would treat the reincarnation of their dog better. Here's the confession right on the website at <http://www.konchok.org/trungpa.html>:

"Trungpa Rinpoche's support and education at Surmang costs approximately US\$10,000 per year, which the Konchok Foundation is committed to providing. If funds received for his support exceed that, they will go towards the much-needed upgrading of his living quarters."

The Sakyong's Usurpation of the Entire Trungpa Lineage

The fact that the young tulku lives in abject poverty and is studiously ignored would seem to be enough. But the outrage does not stop there. Not only has Trungpa XI's entire plan been aborted, not only has the hallowed Trungpa Lineage been subordinated to the corporate manipulations of the Sakyong, an upstart who has hijacked

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Born In Tibet, Again

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an ancient lineage, turning it into an American marketing machine – a worse abasement has been committed, and in plain sight of the faithful, apparently too stupid or too confused to understand. Read on in horror if you dare, as we watch the final reversal of fortune played out in a ceremony that Sangye Khandro justly described as “the kind that would be done only under extremely rare circumstances.” No kidding – for anyone from the old school, this is a gross inversion of the way things are supposed to be.

The following is quoted from the Shambhala.org website, obviously recorded by fools who have no understanding of the depth of the outrage in which they fawningly participated:

June 18: Surmang

This is the second installment of a dispatch received on June 18 from Peter Volz and Derek Koleny of the Office of International Affairs and Kusung Dapön Mark Thorpe.

Atmosphere & Interactions

Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche has been very, very busy from morning to night. People are coming in and asking for blessings in a steady stream. The monastery is actually quite a busy place. It reminds one of the fact that Trungpa Rinpoche said in Born in Tibet that he had to move to Dorje Khyung Dzong, a couple of hundred yards up the valley -- and at 1500 feet higher elevation straight up -- to escape the busyness of the monastery.

The throne ceremony held on Saturday the 16th was really quite magnificent and significant. According to Sangye Khandro (trans-

lator who is part of the Shambhala traveling party), it was a kind of ceremony that would be done only under extremely rare circumstances. At the height of the ceremony, the Trungpa Tulku and all of the Surmang lamas each made offerings to the Sakyong. Then, they made a specific request and supplication to the Sakyong. Having requested him to remain in this world to continue to benefit beings, they requested that Sakyong Mipham Rinpoche be the throne holder, lineage holder, and the leader of the Surmang monasteries. In the days following, they have already begun to discuss various issues with the Sakyong concerning the present activities and the future of the monasteries.

The Usurper of the Trungpa Lineage -- Sakyong Mipham

Sangye Khandro, as the handmaiden of this miscarriage of justice, and all of the other people who have pulled the wool over the eyes of the Twelfth Tulku have, of course, done us all a big favor. Clearly they do not believe a word of this reincarnation stuff.

We are now free to admit that Chogyi Sengay is not a supernatural incarnation, because he would fry them with his little finger and disembowel them as vow breakers, lineage betrayers, usurpers, conspirators. He is just another Tibetan boy with a brain and good looks, connected with the Derge royal family, conscripted to play a role written by wizened old men. But eventually, if he suffers no accidents, he will meet some old students, other than Sangye Khandro, who know the truth and will tell him. It will seem a bitter irony then for him, and the moreso because he will have no ability to disbelieve in his own identity as the Twelfth Trungpa, and no means to wrest from the Sakyong the empire that should have been his. I'll have a book to recommend for him at that time – The Count of Monte Cristo. He might find it a clearer guide than the sutras and tantras they're trying to stuff his head with now, softening it up so he will accept the inevitable – the Eleventh Trungpa was the last.



Chogyam, The Eleventh
Trungpa Tulku, with His
American Regent, Osal Tenzin,
aka Thomas F. Rich



The Twelfth
Trungpa Tulku

Trungpa XI had the instincts and the skills of a Chakravartin, a Universal Lord. It was his clear intention to plant his Vajradhatu flag in the soil of America, and to rule under that banner forever from his Rocky Mountain home. He failed at the outset, but that may not be his fault. Death has a way of taking matters out of our hands, and treachery always finds willing tools where there's a fortune to be made. In this case, the villains have left their prints all over the crime scene, but they will never be brought to justice, any more than Osal Tenzin was. It's all just that Tibetan stuff, anyway.

K. Sherab

To read a hyperlinked article that contains factual support for the statements made in this article, please visit www.ashlandfreepress.com.

The Stadium Plot

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still move my jaw when I talk, so I was afraid to call where anyone could see me. They're knockin' people around like flies. I'm really scared, just trying to stay quiet. My dad's not taking my calls."

"He's what?" questioned Mandy.

"Not taking my calls ..." answered Lexi. She explained, "He told me he couldn't risk being associated with me if I insisted on going against him. I didn't think he meant it."

"Hey Lexi," said Joe, "do me a favor and turn on the video on your phone."

"Oh, I look like shit," responded Lexi.

Joe sounded exasperated: "Christ, Lexi, I won't be seeing you, I'll be seeing what you're seeing. Have you ever used the video feature?" said Joe.

"Well, duh, why would I buy it?" answered Lexi.

Joe winced. Only Lexi could make you feel stupid when you were trying to help her, so he just asked the next dumb thing. "Have you got plenty of battery time?"

"Plenty. Here, I'm turning on video." Answered Lexi.

Lexi activated the lens that displayed as an apparent gemstone on the stylish buckle, and Joe saw a toilet stall door on his phone. He ported Lexi's video stream to his phone's uplink. The toilet stall door tilted as Lexi shifted her torso. Some scrawlings on the metal stall door squirmed a little from transmission lag.

Lexi and hundreds of other unfortunates were locked into the Rattlers stadium as it morphed into a pit of orgiastic brutality and the long-pent up hunger for homicide at last slaked itself in streams of gore. As the carnage continued on, Lexi served as a human recorder. We hear her cries, her stifled agony, witnessing the horror that she knew it was her task to record, and which we share through her sacrifice. Using all the cunning at her command, she lingered long at the periphery of the evolving massacre, trying, successfully for a time, to elude her own inevitable death by torture at the hands of Reese's zealous prosecutors. The transmission of Lexi's record over the net has been compared repeatedly to the network-television release of the infamous Rodney King tape. It is like comparing a hand-grenade to a nuclear blast.

The towers in Phoenix still gleam, and Joe still works among them. Sometimes when he is striding among the towers, trying to make it all straight and perfect, he looks out across the desert horizon. The tears begin to fall as he remembered the concluding scene of Lexi's transmission, recording the faces of the precise violators of the young witness's own person. The images were damning evidence at the successful trial of Reese and Starr

for war crimes and ironically, violation of SACRED anti-terror provisions.

At trial, the prosecution proved that the Dallas nuking had been masterminded by Reese with Starr's agreement, in order to resolve various problems involving toxic waste, urban blight, and unemployment in a single plan pursuant to which Reese and Starr came first to own downtown Dallas, then to destroy it, then to collect government bailout funds for its destruction under the Real Estate Owner's Recovery From Terrorism Act. As for the death of Gee-Dubya in the bombing, that turned out to be a shameless exploitation of Gee's last big load of political capital, because military hospital records proved Gee had died ten years before. The stalemated forever war in the Middle East mysteriously sputtered out after the jailing of Reese and Starr, as the arms trade seemed to stall. Surprisingly and spontaneously, peace broke out all over the world.

While the jury was unanimous in recommending death under the SACRED anti-terror provisions for the two convicted traitors, Chief Justice Roberts and the other eight Supreme Court justices unanimously agreed it would excessively deter worthy persons from seeking high office if the chief executive and chief law enforcement officer were held to answer with their lives for what were, essentially, misguided attempts to perform their official duties pursuant to law. The Court therefore reversed the death sentences on the grounds that SACRED was void.

A couple of years later, they demolished Rattler stadium. Couldn't get anyone to go there anymore. *Charles Carreon*

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Iggy Pop at Little Stevie's Underground Garage Festival

Randall's Island, New York -- August 14, 2004

The venue at Randall's Island couldn't have been a more perfect setting for the legendary activity that would take place there. While Hurricane Charley was ripping its way through Florida, we rocked the day away under the gray skies that threatened rain at any moment, but only released a few drops by the time the day was done. The bands were nothing short of fantastic. Nearly every single one was incredible.

Bo Diddley blew us away. The Romantics blew us away. The Dictators, the Fuzztones, the Raveonettes, the New York Dolls, the Strokes! Oh my god. It was overwhelmingly euphoric. And those are only some of the amazing bands that played. We drank a few beers and enjoyed hanging out on the grass when we weren't up in the thick of the crowd in front of the stage rocking our bodies this way and that. There were sixty go-go dancers that rotated the stage in groups of ten (I think). Something about them all shaking and shimmying in their multi-colored sequins and fishnets put the mood in the crowd to dance.

The bands, the bands...what a beautiful thing they were. I felt so lucky to be standing there the entire time that even after hours of standing and sitting and dancing and drinking and hollering and clapping and whistling and screaming, I never wanted it to stop. By the time the Strokes played, we were only a few feet from the front. They were phenomenal.

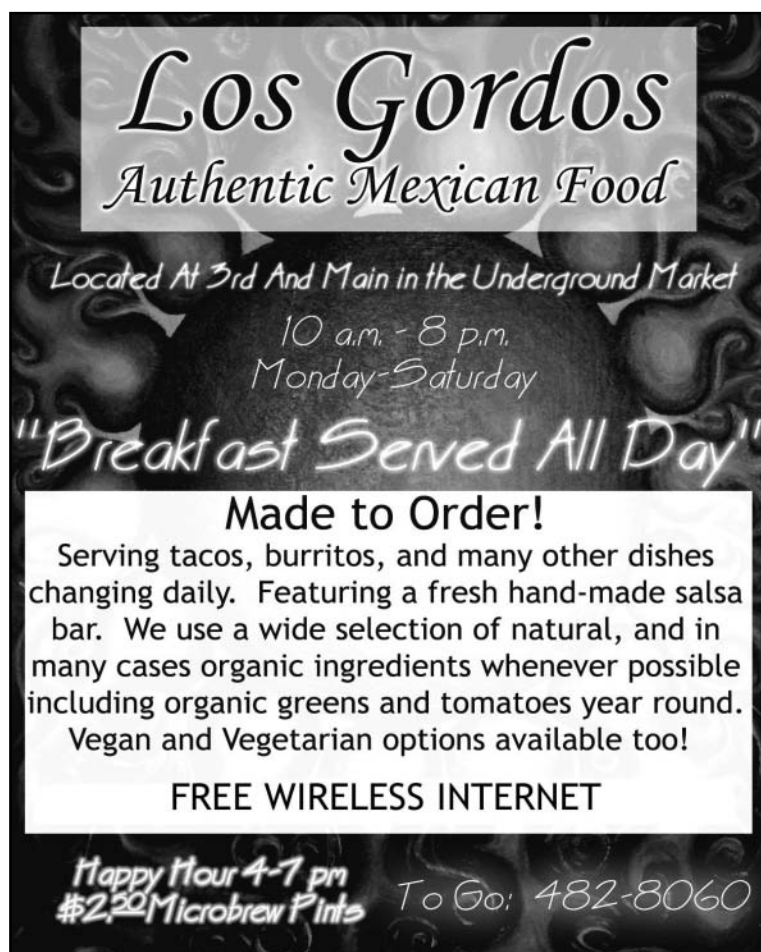
By the time Iggy finally came on, the last, the headlining, the wildly anticipated Iggy and the Stooges, everyone was so full of energy and excitement that the crowd could barely contain itself. My friends and I were right at the front of stage left. And then the band came out and fucking rocked us. I mean rocked us like no one else could. Iggy filled the space that no one else could fill, with all the incredible talent and presence of the other bands, he had the aura and demeanor that no one else could match. He had the allegiance of the audience that no one else could command. He is totally unique. We'd seen all these other beautiful performers throughout the day, heard these great songs, amazing classics, and witnessed all the energy they had to offer. It was spectacular. Nearly each and every one of them. They made us dance, scream, smile wide happy smiles, and brought the supreme gift of great music to all of us. But when Iggy came on, you understood something else. You understood how a crowd could stand for an entire day, waiting for him with such profound anticipation. Why people would travel thousands of miles to watch him. (I know a girl who came from Los Angeles to New York for this show). His presence is raw power. That compact body, a map of taut skin and lean muscle... That swagger that looks like a result of scoliosis or one leg being ever so slightly longer than the other... Barefoot, looking like a god in tight, hip hugging blue jeans and not a thing else, his body a sculpture of total perfection, his limbs contorting, posing, strutting to express his true, primal nature, he tells us the truth and we can't get enough. Can't get enough of hearing him and watching him. His energy grabbed every single person in that crowd... and we went absolutely wild for him. He came right up to our side of the stage and I do believe we made eye contact a of couple times. He is so much WITH the crowd. He doesn't project boundaries or try to separate himself mentally, he seems to try and merge with his audience with all of this insane intensity and physical exertion. And people respond to him, they devour the lyrics that he belts out, absorbing him like a religion. He dove into the crowd soon after entering his first song. There was no doubt that he would be caught and held by his fans, and you knew that

every hand that reached up to support him was not just holding him up, but possessed by desire, vying for a little piece of what is inside him.

At one point people were trying to climb over the barrier to the security walkway in between the stage and the crowd and Iggy shouted, "let them in!!! LET THEM IN! Let them on the stage! Come on! Let them in!!!!" People were struck with fervor and just started pushing, grabbing, tumbling over one another to get over the barrier. We felt the crowd pushing at our backs, people eager to accept Iggy's invitation, eager to get a little closer to this idol. Kathleen and I made the mutual decision to climb over the barrier and join the rest of the maniacs at the stage directly in front of Iggy. It was chaos. I thought there might be a riot and it would be all Iggy's fault. But it didn't turn into a riot. Iggy had about twenty five or more people up on the stage with him, dancing their hearts out, and everyone else trying to get up there too, but eventually, order was restored. Though not before we got to stand up on a ledge for about fifteen minutes with an amazing view of the entire crowd, my own body frenetically charged, jerking and gyrating in spite of its aches and pains. I didn't really care if the discs in my spine started detonating one by one, we were dancing the night away with Iggy as our saint, bringing the natural ecstasy of energy and music, and the virtue of abandoning rules and responsibility for just a little while, into all of our lives. During his show, the rain began to fall. There wasn't anything bothersome about it. This storm was coming and this man was rocking and this crowd was on its feet, these people were wearing their love for this music, for Iggy, and they got love back. They got a spectacle of truth and beauty and artistic aggression, reality as presented by Iggy and the Stooges...and a great, great time.

And then it was over. And we took our tired bodies home to rest. Another incredible memory to store away and enjoy for the lifetime to come.

Maria Carreon



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TWO AUTUMNAL POEMS

By Michael Wear

SCYTHE OF WAX

One Day ...
Outside an open window
I viewed your eyes beteared,
And coral lips betrembled ...
As autumn leaves fell like rain.
Ah, the pearly tears,
Upon your cheeks did roll,
Jewels rich in Ransom,
For the golden face ...
Of your Lover yet to Be.
Like ...
The flower in your vase,
Or Buds of Passion ...
Your Tender Heart set free;
Stiff the price of Beauty,
Paid the Lord of Time ...
To stay his Scythe its Thirst,
Or Antique Pen its Line.
Ah...
But to mine Loving-eye,
You will forever Be ...
The fountainhead of Youth,
And Lordly Time will find,
He's cheated of his fee,
For this, Eye-of-Love ...
Weaves its own Tapestry.

FORGETORY

In the Fall Fluttering leaves,
Like Old Habits dropping,
From solitary trees ...
Bony branches like the finger
Of an Old man pointing.
Winter only Looks like death,
Beneath the bark is green,
Waiting for another Spring
To drop some other habit,
Of Snowfilled landscapes ...
Musing of warm breezes,
And treed birds singing,
Housebuilding among New leaves.
'Tis Memory that Weaves,
New Nests and Old songs,
And Forgetory ...
That Drops old habits,
Like a cloudless sky.

Local Rock Band "Turned Up Missing"

Recently showing up for a performance in full 80's glam attire complete with fake mustaches, spandex, and long hair wigs, amidst a smoke machine filling the stage, "Turned Up Missing" strives to keep a level of interaction and surprise that is rare in a small town scene. Punching out a hard edge 'emo' sound yet with a constant taste for humor, the live show has a loose choreography that is playful and satisfying, each step telling a new part of the story – the crowd becoming a part of the show as they are inevitably sucked into the game.

TUM started out two years ago as a three-piece band with Brothers Rafe as lead singer and bass player, Ben Tejada-Ingram on guitar, and Andy Orso on drums and backup vocals. The band developed further during the summer of 2005, when Chase Danielle the band's new bass player, updated the bass lines, and lead singer Rafe filled out the sound with a second guitar. Many of the songs got reworked and the result has been a much richer and complex sound, a metamorphosis that is working in their favor. TUM recently won spots opening for several popular touring bands, including Daphne Loves Derby, This Providence, and Sherwood. They're getting ready to release an EP, and with the makings of a summer tour beckoning, they have a lot to look forward to.

Although TUM may not have struck the ear of the bar-going crowd, since they prefer to play all-ages shows, just about everybody who hears a live set takes interest quick. Ashland-based, they're popular beyond the limits of the Ashland scene, and are currently the region's most requested local band on the valley's rock station "97 The Rogue", and the band's reach seems to be on a steady upward climb.

TUM's rising popularity is fueling the group's ambition to complete a current, professionally-produced EP that will step out of the demo-realm and give the band top-shelf material to shop around. "This is the CD which is hopefully gonna get us somewhere." says Chase Danielle, the bright-eyed, enthusiastic bassman who easily articulates his aspirations for TUM's future. The EP, with 3 previously-unreleased songs and a newly remade version of their classic 'Splinter', will be the product of months of weekend excursions to a Central Point studio to work with a producer who has a wide catalog of past releases, and a gold record to his name.

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A "Beyond Clarity" Production

A Letter To The French Minister of Culture

Dear Monsiuer de Vabres:

This letter is addressed to you in your capacity as the Minister of French Culture. I see that you have recently visited New Orleans to encourage the victims of Hurricane Katrina, and that you have many encouraging words for the people rebuilding their lives in the wake of the hurricane.

It is a sad fact that many of the people displaced from the Gulf Coast of the United States do not face good prospects of returning to livable homes any time in the near future. Accordingly, many American communities are asking how they can assist these people who have been cast out of their homes to remake their lives in a new place.

Here in the City of Ashland, Oregon, we are by and large very fortunate in having relative abundance in our lifestyle and a rich cultural environment. The City has the University of Southern Oregon and is growing the humanities and liberal arts faculties. The City is also blessed with a traditional English-style theatre where Shakespeare, and the works of other great dramatists like Moliere, and the works of modern playwrights, are produced before large audiences. The City is known for having good restaurants, pleasant accommodations, and a wholesome climate. Ashland has also been an enclave for writers and artists, noted for its political tolerance and liberality, since the latter part of the nineteenth century.

As people from New Orleans, in particular, seek other places to live in the United States, those people who are artists, writers, musicians, teachers and chefs will need to find fertile fields in which to ply their efforts. It is not every community in the United States that can extend a welcoming hand to those who seek a diverse cultural environment. Ashland, however, can rise to that occasion.

Accordingly, the purpose of this letter is to establish connections with the Republic of France, and your Ministry, in order to direct French cultural and economic resources to the Ashland area to benefit people from Louisiana who are seeking a new home in a city that can welcome them and give them scope to practice their arts and skills. Among other things that we would propose would

Help get KSKQ on the air by New Year's Eve

KSKQ is hosting a Benefit Concert, featuring performances by local songwriter Patrick Dodd. Admission is \$10 per person or free with purchase of a new \$35 membership.

Date & Time: November 26, 2005, 7:30 pm

Location: The Mobius (281 4th Street, Ashland)

The concert will also feature gourmet desserts by Dessert First. All ages are welcome. All proceeds from the event will go to KSKQ.

For more information, please call 482-3999, or contact KSKQ: KSKQ 94.9 LPFM Community Radio
258 A Street, Suite 14, Ashland, Oregon 97520

be the establishment of a Sister City program through Southern Oregon University with the City of Orleans, which according to my brief research, appears to be a mountain town surrounded by orchards and vineyards. This description fits Ashland as well.

As international relations become frayed by governments acting on agendas inimical to the welfare of their own citizens, individuals must extend themselves beyond their national boundaries and reach out to the citizens of other nations to build understanding. I would like to thank the French people for the generosity they showed to our nation in its revolutionary days, and for the beautiful gift of the Statue of Liberty, with its inspiring promise to receive the poor and suffering people from every place in the world, here to enfold them in the protecting arms of freedom. I would personally reassure the French people that many US citizens maintain a deep love for the principles that bound our peoples together in revolt against tyranny, and seek to reestablish that bond.

I respectfully request a reply from your Ministry to establish fraternal relations between the citizens of Ashland, Oregon and the French people, to initiate cultural exchange, and to develop a French-influenced culture zone in the City of Ashland for the relocation of Louisiana residents displaced by Hurricane Katrina.

Sincerely,

Tara Lyn Carreon

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MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD



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Turned Up Missing

The boys are already locking down plans for the CD release show to take place in December. Referring to how the current evolution of TUM's sound has garnered new respect from listeners familiar with their previous style, Rafe enthused about the impending release: "We could not be more excited for people to hear this, because it's not what people are expecting ...it's way better." Refusing to play out until the release, and with ample time to scheme, TUM plans to let the public endure a sense of wait and anticipation that will surely make the event go off all the more. From the sound check to the encore, this release party will be one to remember, so stay tuned to this column, and we'll make sure you're there when this small-town band kisses the small time goodbye.

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Shelters For Freedom Worldwide Formed

On November 17, 2005, Charles Carreon, Jim Cannon, Asha Claire Deliverance and Teresa Van Olphen reunited inside one of the original early-model domes for a brief chat about the old days and the future of dome-making. Jim Cannon reminisced about how he had derived the dome frame from looking at playground geodesics that he often saw as a single, homeless dad in Southern California. Jim created the first canvas-covered geodesic tent by primitive sewing methods that kept the rain out, but lacked style. Asha brought her sewing skills to bear on the project, tightened up the skin, and developed the famous yoni-door, during pregnancy. Teresa, aka

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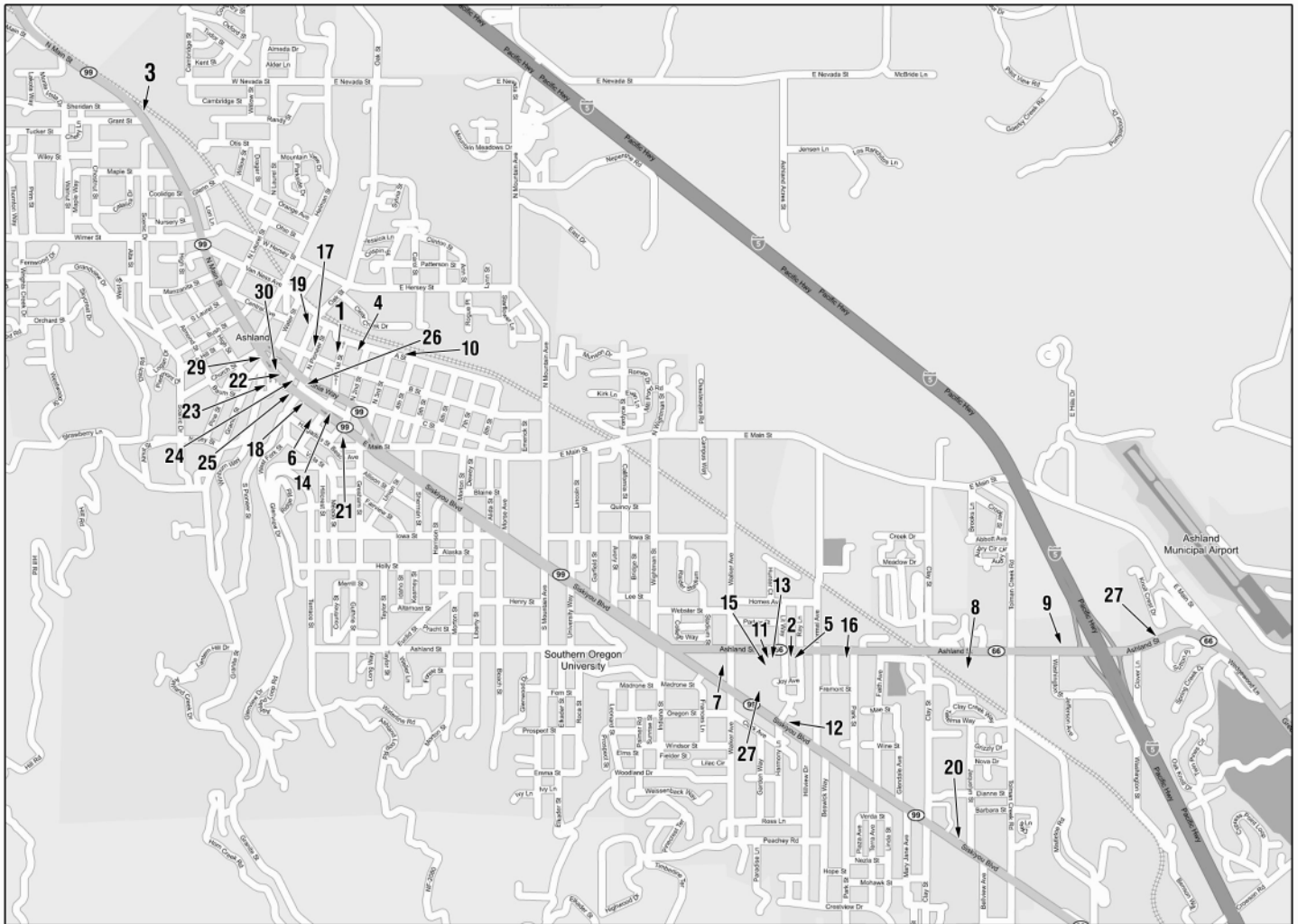
East Side, West Side: Ashland Free Press is all around the town

Thanks to the generosity of Ashland Free Press supporter Roger Benson, a California reader, the Ashland Free Press has been able to deploy its copper-topped distribution racks in a number of locations throughout the city of Ashland, which has demonstrated a gracious and open attitude toward free speech by giving Ashland Free Press the same rights to distribute in the public forum as are accorded to such august media outlets as the Oregonian, USA Today, and the Real Estate Trader. Each box is prominently marked with the new AFP logo, which proudly announces that this publication is independent and locally owned. And, we might add here, we intend to stay that way.

The AFP mission is to inform Ashlanders about important facts, events, and ideas that do not receive exposure from existing media outlets. Our goal is first to inform readers about things they won't learn elsewhere, and to provide local businesses and professionals with a public forum for advertising to thoughtful people who are interested in broadening their intellectual and cultural horizons.

To participate in the AFP as a contributor or advertiser, please call us at 866-825-3834, or go directly to www.myafp.com to use our super-simple system for uploading text and graphics and communicating with the editorial and advertising staff.

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| 9. The Wild Goose
2365 ASHLAND ST | 19. Video Explorer
320 OAK ST | 29. Brother's Restaurant
95 N MAIN ST |
| 10. Office of Jennifer A. Fletcher
325 A ST | 20. Senior Housing Bus Stop
2301 SISKIYOU BLVD | 30. Entrance to Main Street Shops
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Shelters for Freedom Worldwide Formed

Continued from page 28

Tree, remembers writing up the first financial records for the dome business on a single sheet of paper. Charles remembered when Jim and his wife Jan moved to Colestine Valley back in the early eighties, to which Jim responded that Charles' urgings to "move to Ashland" sunk in deep, and they settled in town for several years with their two children, Jairus and Moonblossom, bringing along Asha and her expanding family. The first incarnation of the business was Unicorn Domes, which has now evolved into Pacific Domes, with a large facility on Hersey Street that ships domes worldwide. Recently, in response to the huge need for instant shelter due to massive earth changes and the attendant human disasters, Asha has joined with Tree, Dr. Jerry Lehrberger, Chris Dekker of EarthDance, and Charles to form the independent non-profit entity Shelters For Freedom Worldwide. SFFW is developing plans to obtain canvas domes from Pacific Domes at rock-bottom prices, and will partner with shippers and non-profits in disaster zones to put shelters on the ground for people in emergency zones.

AFP Donates Katrina Issue Ad Revenues To Plenty International, A Grassroots Nonprofit

The Iroquois taught the English settlers to plant a fish along with their corn to get a better a crop. That was apparently a new idea to your average Briton fond of fish and chips, but horticulturists say the Indians had the right idea, and in that spirit of starting a project with a donation, the Ashland Free Press decided to dedicate all of the ad revenues from its "Katrina Issue" to a worthy nonprofit helping Louisiana disaster victims. Thanks to our wonderful advertisers, we raised \$1,320 in ad revenues, and it's time to write the check. After some research, we decided to donate the money to Plenty International, a 501(c)(3) corporation based in Summertown, Tennessee. We were aided in our selection of Plenty as the recipient of the donated funds by Dr. Robin Rose, the local physician, who has been to Louisiana and worked with Plenty helping the Houma tribe to recover from the loss and destruction of homes by flooding. Plenty posted a report on its work with the Houma community on November 5, 2005 on its website at http://www.plenty.org/katrina/Katrina_up117.html. Plenty's report on its own activities indicates that it is picking up where mainstream aid agencies like the Red Cross are leaving off, and pursuing community-powered projects to improve the long-term health, housing, and life-skills of the Houma. Plenty appears to be a very professional, lean operation that is volunteer-driven, and focused on concrete aid-delivery activities. On November 30th, Plenty will be networking with other grass roots aid organizations at a newly-constructed volunteers camp near Slidell, Louisiana. Other organizations that have been working on the ground since the disaster will also attend the summit, including Veterans for Peace, Common Ground, United Peace Relief, Food Not Bombs, and the United Houma Nation. Plenty accepts donations online via credit card, and if you want to volunteer, it looks like they'll find a job for you. Check out their website at www.plenty.org.

Album Reviews



FUGA by RICCI RUCKER

May 17, 2005: Alpha Pup Records

Fuga is first and foremost a jazz album, "which features the turntable as the focus instrument, using 20 musicians to lay down the music."

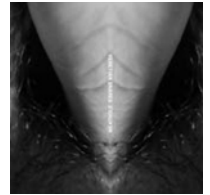
Boldly going where turntablism has never gone before, Fuga is a true original. One listen will

surely confirm that Ricci Rucker is miles ahead of the typical scratch DJ.

MEATHOLE by VENETIAN SNARES

September 20, 2005: Planet Mu

This is my favorite album right now. A ferocious techno assault, accentuated with baroque sounding chamber music, and one well placed sample from Silence Of The Lambs. As you might guess by the title, this is not church music.



CRYING OVER PROS FOR NO REASON by EDIT

May 25, 2004: Planet Mu

Glitchy, jungle beats, melodic loops, samples of dogs barking. All the songs have a mood about them, a sort of melancholy ambience that I like. I fell asleep listening to this and dreamed I was playing video poker in a cave with a bunch of old people. I highly recommend this one to


musical listeners of all tastes.

J. Carreon



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Do you know what to do if the police officer asks if you have been drinking?

Call today for your free driver's rights card.

You Drink. You Drive. You Lose...Another Government Lie?

It is legal to drive a car after drinking alcohol. That said, you may be arrested anyway because of the factual distortions and omissions taught to our local police by mandatory training and testing on the written materials provided by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). When truth and science gets in the way of the agenda of Mothers Against Drunk Driving, NHTSA yields. MADD definition of drunk driving is driving after drinking any amount of alcohol...period. In essence, this is what our police are instructed to believe, and why you will probably be arrested if you admit to drinking alcohol...even though you are fine! To that extent you do lose, but you shouldn't.

DUI is considered by some to be the witch-hunt of the new millennium. If you thought that the public had been riled up against citizens accused of being communists during the McCarthy era... think about what the governments "public service announcements" have done to strip us of the presumption of innocence in DUI cases? You Drink. You Drive. You Go To Jail! If You Drink And Drive You Will Lose More Than Your License! You Drink. You Drive. You Lose! These

government paid for, MADD endorsed, advertisements are pure scare tactics and have an insidious, subconscious effect on potential jurors. This increased hysteria and the "dumbing down" of the definition of what is an "impaired" driver to include responsible social drinkers has logical yet absurd ramifications. Based on the current police officer (MADD endorsed) definition of the term "impaired", some people (logically) are asking why it isn't a crime to drive while fatigued, or ill, or old, or on the cell phone, or with screaming children in the car, or animals in the car, or eating, or drinking,, or smoking, or taking allergy medication, or taking prescribed medications even when you doctor says it is O.K. to drive, or speeding... because each one of those driving factors cause the same if not more "impairment" than the social drink. Should those folk go to jail? THINK IT OVER. Do we have to drive with the precision and coordination of Air Force fighter pilots on pure, military grade, methamphetamines in order to be deemed "safe" drivers by law enforcement?

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