

SPHERIC

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SPHERIC



Volume X, Number 4: Red, White & Blues

695 Park Avenue
Room 207TH
New York City 10021 •212•
712•4279

Spheric is all things except square.

Spheric is kinda happening, kinda now, kinda with it, kinda wow! Too didactic? We aim dialectic, not dyspeptic. Spheric is made from au natural fibers, as in naked - maybe sacred, as no one gets paid. Spheric is all booty and then some. Spheric is a SLAM! Jam - All power to the people. Much Love.

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!ShoutOutsFrom TheMouthOfMadness!

To all our families born and chosen; Much love to the whole SLAM! crew; under water love to the bhudda-fly gotz me high, Suzan; to Lechona, the ghost haunting my house; What's up Suheir? You getting there sister - we love you more than you know. Congrats on the publications. All readers must check out *Born Palestinian, Born Black and Drops of This Story*; Keep strong Mumia - our day will come; To the New Caucus: we await how New you will be; Joshua & Sky: good luck on the your union-may you be blessed; to the Sacred Circus and the LTB; to the Mahavishnu Orchestra and their delicious Apoco-lips Kissing; to Brother Bubble himself, Blan-Lo on the Down Low; Whattup Moon Boot Lover?; To Jack Travels: I'm always with you; RIP Biggie - thanks for watching out for my mama back on St. James and may we get some more Live In Peace and a little less Rest In Peace; Yah, you too Sabbie-giggle; Special whattup to Juel; to Mama Mitchell for letting Baby Mitchell stay up late; Much Love to Glen, Zo-E, She-moan, and Scratch - y'all crazy, man, crazy.

¿Qué Es America?

• editorial •



Red, White & Blues

The recent shooting death of a notorious B.I.G. from the hip of rap, Brooklyn, blew up a very particular American dream.

The Lyrical Spherical Commando Squad set out to re-examine a situation in which one small Biggy brushing his teeth some Saturday morning realized what it meant for him to be American — "Get Money."

Biggy's epiphany was the celluloid romp of one brother in his particular set of circumstances. Many Americas are moulded in the lives of immigrant cab-drivers in D.C., Jamestown descendants in Boston, sons of plantation slaves in Brooklyn - rapping about getting paid, laid and betrayed.

America is, after all, the land of slaves and slavemasters, cowboys and Indians, cops, robbers and Las Vegas Weddings. It can be as vicious as the use of atomic weapons and as blissed out as free love.

Spheric embraces the hopelessness of containing America in any border, from the color line to the Rio Grande. America's perfection lies only in its imperfection, in some of its people's fervor to redraw, rewrite, redefine America day by day.

Maybe America is the terrible tension of cash vs. liberty, of a historical utopianism vs. every ghetto wall. The American experience is, if we're allowed to shoot aphorisms, only its grand fractal.

America is a struggle — a tragic joy and a dark longing. As these pages unfold, the voices of America in a North Eastern pocket of its land, in a City University progressively chopped on by the administrators of this country — the struggle of the American experience comes alive. There is an element of hope in this phantasmagora that Biggy lamented in his first major release, "it was all a dream."



AMERIKA

A Coming of Rage



**America
Not Busy
Being Born
Is Busy Dying**

by Jed Brandt

In the aftermath of the Persian Gulf War, the city of Chicago threw a giant victory bash on Michigan Avenue, one of the city's main thoroughfares. Under star-spangled pendants, a million cheering faces saluted the returning troops.

Chants of "USA! USA!" boomed clear over the cemented prairie as brothers from the block stood next to off-duty cops. "USA! USA!" and on the corner, a nun stood holding a sign on which she had printed in small letters "people have died." She was crying. She had been covered in urine by an enthusiastic patriot. "USA! USA!"

After the crowds went home, there lives were no doubt the same as the day before. I no longer knew how to live. Maybe it's not clear, but in the joy and pride of my neighbors I saw only murder. I saw the generals and the politicians grinning like jackals over carrion and life kept going on, one day at a time. That the generals could plan and execute their war didn't surprise me, it was the love they were given for their wickedness that broke me.

The parade left me hyper sensitized to misery. Every time I left the house the simple farce of my stock-boy job and the arbitrariness of wealth filled in the pieces. *I live in Babylon.*

Maybe I didn't know how ugly the rest of the world could be. Maybe, as teachers and judges had explained with patience or not, I had taken my freedoms and usual lack of hunger for granted. But it was never clear, to me, that America is something to take pride in, something beautiful.

Pledges of allegiance and bills of rights never prepared me for what I saw just walking down streets which became borders dividing neighborhoods, cities, nations. These

divisions glowed garish, casting the vitality and strength of America in queer light.

The healthy became sick in my eyes. Suburbs were prisons in reverse and the mad flow of cash bought and sold the love of women like cars or tennis shoes. Nothing was spared. A nation that once fought for independence had now raided the world and troops dropped bombs painted with a flag of liberty.

I didn't leave home much, for it was there I found some peace in the love of a beautiful young woman. We were free in the simplicity of our private world. Our roommate played guitar and we would sing or dance around the living room drinking wine and

know it was time to go. Freedom can never be private.

I didn't know where I was to go, only it had to be somewhere I hadn't been, filled with people I didn't know and far enough away that I couldn't come running home to the private, familiar world that had not filled the hole in my gut.

A few friends had been out to Cali and raved beatific. I figured it was a better bet than Alabama, so I set to working my ass off and got up some money to hit the road.

The day before I left, an middle-aged man at work gifted me an old, leather-bound copy of Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*. I thought it was too 19th century for me, but the thought was kind and with book in hand I caught the Greyhound across the fat belly of North America.

Two years had passed since the end of the Gulf war, but tattered yellow ribbons still clung to some of the wooden telephone poles that measured the length of the endless cornfields between Chicago and the Pacific.

The Nebraska sky scared me. It was so big I could see the storm bouldering over the plains a hundred miles away. Flashes of lightning curled round the very edge of the earth.

The bus trip was over fifty hours and the conversation rarely got past asking where the farmer on the next seat was going. I reached into my bag and pulled out *Leaves of Grass*.

The night was hard black strobed by lightning. I clicked on the overhead light and read a poem called *A Woman Waits for Me*, not sleeping until the sun hinted into the pitch of night beyond city.

San Francisco doled out all the youthful decadence I needed. It's a little city wrapped in vineyards and redwood forests. "I didn't come here to party," I reminded myself. It was Whitman's *Leaves* that gave me pause.

I don't remember so many lines or stanzas, only that somewhere in his lyrical badlands I

A nation that once fought for independence had now raided the world and troops dropped bombs painted with a flag of liberty.

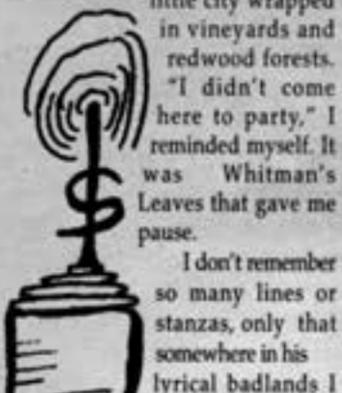
laughing at the rituals of the world.

We were, to use another man's words, a nation of two.

Chicago winters were brutal and spring felt like iron chains cut after a long bondage. One day, just as the season was changing, my lover and I went for a walk along Lake Michigan to take in the sweet air and watch the last chunks of ice melt off the cyan surface of the water.

"I've been thinking about you," she said sitting down on the concrete breakers which hem the lake. "You're happy in mind and heart, but here," she said gently placing her hand on my stomach, "here you are always sick."

Forever thankful for the love we shared, it was her clarity of sight that let me



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AMERIKA

Red, White & Burnt

Nothing Like a Hard Day's Work in Advertising

**Workers
of the World
Get High!**

By Fred Zabinski

One more bong hit and I'll be ready for work. I glance at the clock as I exhale. 7:15AM; right on schedule. I have my routine timed to the minute; it's how I manage to get to work on time and still get toasted in the morning. Shower, shave, eat breakfast, put on the outfit I got together last night, pack my bag, and conceal the evidence that I'm high.

A drop of chilled Visine makes each eye pearly white. Now for those dark circles under the eyes — the mark of the immoderate pothead. They darken as soon as you smoke, and it takes several days off the stuff to make them go away. However, they can be hidden with a cosmetic called concealer. The two things to mind are not to use too much, and to blend the edge of it into the rest of the face so it looks natural. I dab my little finger with saliva, and gently follow the curve of the eye socket.

This may seem like elaborate trickery, but these days one can't be too careful at work. The hippies of the sixties now hold management positions, and they recognize the signs of marijuana use.

Perfect. Totally natural looking. I have gotten so practiced at this ritual it takes me no more than a minute. I'm all ready to go and even have a few minutes to pick up a snack at the store by the subway.

I'm temping, doing graphics work at a cosmetics company. It's my second week, and I'm rather indifferent as to whether I stay there much longer or get assigned somewhere else. Most of the work is too easy to be interesting, and everybody watches the clock all day. By 4:00 or even 3:30 the other workers begin calling out the time every few minutes. "Fifty-five minutes to freedom!" "Ladies and gentleman, the time is now 4:30!"

On the other hand, they do give me the most challenging Photoshop work they have, and I always enjoy manipulating images, even when I'm just doing stupid stuff. Most importantly, the pay is good enough to make tedium palatable.

Riding the train I remember that Mel, the art director, had mentioned giving me a photo retouching project yesterday. "Have you ever retouched a face?" he asked me. "Sure," I said.

The truth is, my only such experience was at a student-run newspaper at my old college. They had me give Governor Pataki a black eye and stamp his forehead with the word "chump." My work was crude, but the lefties loved it, and I was sure that now, a year later, I could do a much better job, so I was ready to try anything Mel wanted to assign me.

He seemed doubtful of my ability, though, as he explained the task: the company had shot some "before" and "after" photos, and the difference between them needed to be exaggerated. I was a bit shocked at Mel's complete lack of embarrassment in asking me to help the company commit fraud; he spoke as if it were the most everyday kind of work. Not that it bothered my conscience any; all I was thinking was "at last, something I can sink my teeth into! Maybe I can get a portfolio piece out of it." But



Mel said it had better wait til tomorrow, as if he expected it to take hours.

The morning begins with several hours making corrections to the company's catalog, a project that began before I was assigned here and which shows no sign of ending any time soon. I print out all fifty pages and take them to Mel's office. "Thanks," he bleats from his chair, "I'll look them over and give them back to you."

"OK. Say, what about that retouching project you were telling

me about?"

"Oh yes. Let me find the pictures." He produces two color laser prints, close-ups of a model's eyes. "Do you know what concealer is?" he asks.

"Concealer? Uh, no," I answer, hardly believing my ears.

"Well, it's a cosmetic that covers up bags and dark circles under the eyes. Now, these photos are supposed to show the effect of our concealer. This is the 'before' and this is the 'after.' As you can see, the difference between them isn't dramatic enough."

"Yes, I see." Truth be told, I can hardly see any difference at all. This sure is some overpriced shit we're hawking. The model should have worn the brand I use, as long as the company's willing to misrepresent their merchandise. Smoking a doob before the shoot would have been a good idea, too.

"So you want me to darken the bags in the 'before' and lighten them in the 'after'?"

"Exactly. Do you think you can do it?"

"Mel, if ever there was a man for this job, it is I."

"Great. The files are on this SyQuest. Let me know when you have something ready."

Now, when I retouched that Pataki shot last year, I made the classic amateur Photoshopper's mistake, attacking the image directly with the painting tools.

Now, maybe a skilled painter or photo retoucher can get away with that, but if you need to be able to erase any of your brushstrokes, forget it. You may as well have drawn over a photo with indelible ink. The trick is to do your painting in a mask channel. The image remains untouched until you're ready to add your work

in the mask channel to it. It's rather like completing a pencil drawing and then inking it in.

Let's see just how long this takes me. I open the first image and tap the Q key to enter the Quick Mask Mode. Here, paint appears as translucent red over the full-color image. I begin to

By 4:00 or even 3:30 the other workers begin calling out the time every few minutes. "Fifty-five minutes to freedom!"

paint the area that needs darkening. I tap the 0 key to get full-strength paint, and with a hard-edged brush, define the edge between the eye and the lower lid. Next I use a soft-edged brush to paint the bottom of the area, where the bags blend into the rest of the face. I lower the paint intensity with the 5 key and further soften this edge.

It is a re-enactment of my morning ritual, guided by the same principles—not too much paint, blend it in to the rest of the face, so it looks natural, brush gently, following the curve of the eye socket.

With the Channels palette I hide the color image and view my painting by itself. It looks good except where the transition between the full-

go to page 7

WISE UP, KID!



SAYING "NO" WON'T GET YOU HIGH!

A message from Potheads Against Tyranny and Boredom.

Brothers Keep Me Up

by Suheir Hammad

is your skin still soft
here feel mine a shine
of survival

feel you left me
wet love dried on
thighs still
aching said you were
sore after the last
time are you still

you broke heart and
out i still light
candles for
your safe journey to
the corner pray your
flesh won't be too brown
today your beauty
too offensive

i fear for your life though
no longer in it
wrap a rainbow serpent
round you to keep
harm at arm's length
i charm gods to keep you
safe til revolution is
over

no longer lay beside me
and still keep me
up at night

is your skin still soft

not your fingers' long
strokes or tongue's
insistent
welcome keeping me up

the statistics
promises that you won't
live to see 30

how many incidents since
we last kissed

don't believe in this
world so i fight
so you'll live to
love free who you want
i know that's not
me so i don't call
don't write take your
space your love back
baby be safe in it
got you
i got your back even
as i watch my own from
the hurt left behind

are you soft still
those who would
kill you send my way
i'll tell them they
wrong you ain't no boy
you man
enough to get up every
morning despite a reality
created against you
man enough to resist to
fight man enough
to break
heart fully and without
looking back

i believe in love and
got my own back

writing this and you
don't care. you've moved
on and away.
still keep me up.

after us is gone
our temples bombed
people killed
i'll pray for strength and
whether or not i get it
rebuild a chapel strong
and for good to house
love and freedom
brick by brick blow
trumpets to herald
our new day

honey
even if we don't
your children and mine
will
know each other in
love in dignity

let them talk
about getting over you
getting over revolution

i believe in love
struggle by day and
sometimes lay
awake at night wondering
if you ever wonder if
my skin is
still soft

86-82296



Smoking Gun Still Smoking

from page 10

Jose Elique, your choice for CUNY Public Safety Director as well as his Deputy Martin Rodini. Since his arrival Jose Elique has never displayed qualities I felt necessary for such an important position. His dictatorial, abrasive, confrontational style, and use of profanity at directors meetings - where he often used fuck, and fucking in the presence of females I found offensive and very unprofessional. It demonstrated a lack of moral and ethical character...

"I decided to leave CUNY after attending the security directors' meeting in November 95. At that meeting Jose Elique and Martin Rodini - apparently still upset and smarting because [Acting] York President Thomas Minter had permitted Khalid Muhammad to speak at the college on November 6, 1995. They made the following proposal - which they indicated was intended to give you and them control of persons who would be permitted to speak on CUNY cam-

pus. They were working on a proposal that would attach a fee between \$5,500 to \$7,500 whenever the SAFE Team was dispatched to a campus (in response to a request of a college President). That to me was censorship, a violation of the Constitution of the US, and ran contrary to everything I believe in - justice, honesty and fairness. While at that meeting I came to the conclusion that although I may sometimes disagree with students, I will never let myself be a part of any such evil and illegal action as was proposed by Jose Elique and Martin Rodini..."

Burrows then described the events of Nov. 6 at York, including the agreement York College made with the SAFE Team three days before. According to Burrows, Elique and Rodini, whom Burrows calls "two of the most morally bankrupt persons I have met," violated that agreement:

"Minter informed both Jose Elique and Martin Rodini that he did not want any SAFE Team member to

bring their weapon onto the campus on Monday 11/06/95. As they were leaving the building, I heard Jose Elique comment to Martin Rodini that 'He is in for a surprise, and he better get used to guns on campus.' The rest is history, two SAFE Team members did bring weapons with them on Monday, 11/06/95"

After describing the events of Nov. 6, Burrows writes Elique and Rodini informed him he was fired from his position as Queens Borough Coordinator of CUNY Security:

"The reason they gave for removing me had nothing to do with my performance as Borough Coordinator. Their statement to me was 'You are not a team member, and you did not get involved as Timothy Hubbard did.' his reference was to City College Security Director and Manhattan borough Coordinator Timothy Hubbard who arrested a student who grabbed him by his collar during a demonstration that took place at City College. Apparently Jose Elique and Martin Rodini wanted a confrontation to take place [at York on Nov. 6]..."

In his concluding salvo Burrows

pointed out to Reynolds that CUNY Security's Pentagon spending habits, \$40 million a year, particularly obscene in this time of supposed austerity.

With the fiscal problems facing the university resulting in reduction of student services, retrenchment and loss of jobs by tenured faculty members you established the position of Lieutenant (Requiring only a GED) with the top salary of \$82,000 - more than a tenured professor with a Ph.D. earns."

The memo speaks for itself. Someone with an inside view of CUNY security operations confirms what students and faculty have figured all along. What CUNY Security is all about is squelching student activism and free speech.

Furthermore, that usurpation of rights includes a top-down violation of CUNY's own protocol; that only the President of each campus can decide when guns may be allowed on campus. But even that protocol is suspect as it puts in the hands of a single person, who on many campuses have long histories of anti-student actions, the ability to put thousands of people in danger.

As they were leaving the building, I heard Jose Elique comment that 'He is in for a surprise, and he better get used to guns on campus.' Two SAFE Team members did bring weapons with them on Monday.

Revolutionaries Like We

Roger Bonair-Agard

Until the philosophies
which hold one race inferior
and another...

...superior
is finally
and permanently
discredited
and abandoned
well everywhere is war...

You ask me for my passport - USA.
Penning me in
you're thinking will stop
your dim lit bulbs from blinking
but Revolutionaries Like We
come under cover of night
behind deception of flag
waving red white and blue
bleeding black all the while
McGuyver like
we style bombs from paper guns
and bobby pins
and for your sins
shoot poison darts
from spoken words
moving herds of the throng
not long

before we trample you with
unity
Your social Security does not stop
Revolutionaries Like We

Biggie smokes blunts - won't front
on the black

When you come up
from the back - will kick you
So we jail him while
addicts of heroin

remove the m
become heroes like...

Kurt Cobain

no pain now

Mainstream media
won't feed ya the facts,
won't push

him like

Tupac on the front page
on a public opinion stage

but
Revolutionaries like We
spread truth like fertilizer
watch anger grow abundant
like agile ninjas
deliver blows to the
Blue & White - we'll fight
your tax cuts for the rich
kidnap the one armed bitch
you give us for president
and the politicians so negligent
of inner-city blues; we'll use
them too for the struggle
to become
Revolutionaries Like We

... and until there's no longer
first class nor second class
citizens of any nation
Until the color of a man's skin
is of no more significance
than the color of his eyes...
and until the basic human rights
is equally guaranteed to all
without regard to race
we say war...

Staccato rhyme with Mulatto rhythm
you left us

No fools you cleft us to build
our villages

No fools, you won't commit no more
pillages, plunders

Your blunder was to leave us
alive at all

to become
Revolutionaries like - like we've
become too dumb

to hear
the screams but fear my
dreams - in heaven I see
gates of black manned by
Panther brothers who remember
the truth - who know that

vietnam spawned SWAT teams
to blow Black resistance to bits.
Your cruelty fits
the judgment you'll receive.
You'll believe
in Revolutionaries Like We

Searching turbans for terrorists
you missed home grown hat
And found you a Timothy McVeigh
too late
for so many

pretty... dead... white... babies...
The dog you drove out
has come back with rabies
so the next time we fight
we'll bite a hole the size of
Oklahoma and
terrorize with fear of a black nation.
White Christian salvation won't stop

Revolutionaries Like We

Like we'll become in a future
that wants us - only because
it can't deny us - in a future
where we'll live in Chicago
and Los Angeles!
and Detroit!!
and fuckin Brooklyn!!!
and fly to South America on
passports stamped USA

United States of Asia!
United South America!
United States of Africa!
and together

live

forever the revolution of
Revolutionaries Like We

9.24.1996

lyrics by Robert Nester Marley

America Is

mail order brides • prison poetics • stereo simulcast • road trips • commodity • free love • Spheric

SLAM!



• SPECIAL BULLETIN •

\$400 Tuition Increase? Budget Attack at CUNY! SLAM! Calls for Student Fightback!

While colleges were closed for winter break Governor George E. Pataki proposed a \$400 a year increase in tuition for CUNY and SUNY students, as well as cuts in the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) and other student aid. The proposals, if enacted, are likely to have a devastating effect on CUNY students. Before classes have even started on several CUNY campuses a broad range of student activists has already begun to organize opposition and resistance to the proposed tuition hike and aid cuts.

What the Cuts Will Mean

The Governor's proposal is only the latest round in what has been a long series of attacks on CUNY that have driven the costs of going to college beyond the means of an increasing number of students. In 1995, when tuition at CUNY was raised \$750 CUNY lost an estimated 6,500 students as a result.

Since CUNY primarily serves poor and working class New Yorkers it is unlikely that many of those students were able to find an affordable education elsewhere. Thousands of students were effectively thrown out of school because they could no longer afford an education at a university that twenty years earlier charged no tuition at all.

The proposed tuition hike and aid cuts will certainly put higher education beyond the reach of thousands more students.

For the 85,000 students who receive Pell

grants and the 72,000 that receive TAP awards the \$400 tuition hike will be supplemented cuts in their aid. Pataki is proposing a \$175 million cut in the TAP funds and changes in how TAP eligibility is determined and how awards are calculated. TAP was originally created when tuition was instituted at CUNY in 1977 to ensure that the poorest students would still have access to higher education.

For many students TAP covered all of their tuition. In 1995 the Governor successfully moved to lower the maximum award to 90 percent of tuition. This constituted an effective \$320 tuition hike for students receiving TAP. The Governor's proposals this year will have a similar effect. The Governor has also proposed that the money students receive from Pell be counted against them in determining their TAP awards.

The tuition hike and aid cuts aren't the only things forcing poor students out of school. Many CUNY students are also recipients of public assistance. The recent Federal workfare legislation mandates that many of these students must now perform workfare to receive their benefits. This requirement will make it effectively impossible for many of these students to stay in school.

In addition to the students who will be completely forced out of CUNY it is probable that thousands more will be forced to lengthen their stay at CUNY by attending part-time or dropping out a semester here or there to save money to finish school.

Many of those whose dreams of going to

college are not destroyed will see them deferred. And of course every single CUNY student will be made at least \$400 poorer every year. For those students the tuition hike will be paid in a missed meal here, a jumped turnstile there, or getting through a class without one or two of the assigned books.

On top of the tuition hike and aid cuts there is every reason to expect that CUNY Chancellor Wynetka Ann Reynolds will continue her assault on the general quality of CUNY. Chancellor Reynolds has responded to every single attempt to cut the CUNY budget in the same way.

First she carries out a highly publicized but largely ineffective lobbying effort denouncing the cuts. She also issues a bunch of press releases emphasizing how important it is that CUNY students register to vote. Then she turns around and uses the threat of cuts to declare a "financial exigency" in order to force through her plans for restructuring CUNY over the heads of the faculty governance bodies of the various CUNY colleges. Last year, when the cuts in fact did not pass the legislature, Reynolds used the threat of them to force the layoffs of about 150 CUNY faculty members and to hire roughly the same number of new security officers. She also sought to force through the elimination of various programs on different campuses, including the ethnic studies departments at City College.

Chancellor Reynolds has also used the various budget crises to force through a piecemeal dismantling of the SEEK program. The

SEEK program which guarantees remedial classes, tutoring and other services to students who have received inadequate college preparation from the New York City public schools, is the cornerstone of open admissions at CUNY — the policy that effectively opened CUNY to large numbers of Black and Latino students in the 1970s.

Students will also pay for the cuts in the form of shorter library hours, fewer classes, more crowded classrooms, fewer building repairs, outdated equipment and the countless other inconveniences that, taken together, dramatically degrade the quality of our education. Students who attended CUNY before previous budget cuts can testify to the significant effects of these sorts of changes.

It is impossible to predict all the social costs of the proposed tuition hike and aid cuts. But there is little doubt that they will continue the process of corroding the city's poorest and most oppressed communities.

For hundreds of thousands of people CUNY is currently their only possible ticket out of the poverty and misery of dead end jobs or no jobs at all. Snatching that hope from peoples hands will probably have different effects on different people. Some people will undoubtedly decide that this system has nothing to offer them and therefore dedicate their lives to fighting it. But many others are likely to

go to back

Just the Facts, SLAM!

What Exactly Do the CUNY Budget Cuts Mean?

The Executive Budget which Governor George Pataki proposed on January 14, 1997 calls for drastic cuts to higher education: a \$56.9 million cut to CUNY's operating budget, a \$175 million cut to TAP and a \$400-a-year tuition hike. According to the New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG), New York has experienced the nation's steepest increase in tuition for public colleges and universities. In a recently released study, "Opportunity Cost," NYPIRG examined four-year public colleges' tuition rates for full-time students in each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia over the past seven years. The study found that:

- New York State's average tuition and fees increased by a staggering 154.4% (the biggest increase in the nation), far steeper than the national average tuition increase (59.9%) and the general cost-of-living as measured by the Consumer Price Index (22.9%).

- New York State's average tuition cost of \$1,460 ranked 34th in the nation in academic year 1989 - 90. By 1995 - 96, New York State's tuition was \$3,714. The General Accounting Office — the research arm of the federal government — has stated that New York's tuition was 10th highest in the nation.

- Average tuition and fees as a proportion of median household income have grown from 4.64% to 11.25%.

"This report clearly documents that New York State leads the nation in jacking up the cost of attending college," said Michael O'Loughlin, NYPIRG's Higher Education Project Coordinator and co-author of the report. "The cost of public college tuition devours far

more of New Yorkers' family budgets than it did seven years ago. New York must follow Massachusetts' lead by cutting the cost of tuition."

According to the NYPIRG report "states have increasingly shifted the cost of paying for college from broad-based public support to the families of students." This has resulted in the most disadvantaged students dropping out of college. Until 1976 tuition at colleges within the City University system was free for New York State residents. The introduction of tuition has made it almost impossible for many New Yorkers to attend any of the CUNY colleges.

CUNY students who are very disappointed with the governor's plans for a tuition increase and financial aid cuts. According to many CUNY students, some of them will have to leave school while other students will have to go to school part-time.

"We're currently paying the tenth highest

tuition in the country. If this proposed tuition increase goes through, even more of us [students] may not be able to go to college," insisted Diana Fryda, a political science major at CUNY. "I cannot afford another tuition increase and financial aid cut."

"If we are tomorrow's leaders, we need the education to be so," said Sam Badillo, a CUNY Theater major.

"Who can afford higher tuition? These cuts that the governor proposes are simply outrageous," said Victoria Braxton, a History and Education major at CUNY. "What does he want us to do, get another job? I work quite a number of hours as it is."

According to the Hunter College Legislative Action Caucus (CLAC), "Hunter College students will lose \$11 million in TAP." In a preliminary analysis of Governor Pataki's executive budget, CLAC wrote: "The majority of

CUNY students are women with incomes below \$20,000 per year. Nearly 10% will be affected by the welfare reforms. Another 10% will be adversely affected by the reductions in TAP." They went on to say, "A tuition increase represents an additional financial burden that will force them to leave college, following the pattern set by the 1995 - 1996 tuition increase."

"The benefits that a university system like CUNY gives back to New York City and indeed New York State is tremendous," said Nicholas Duncly, a CUNY freshman. "It replenishes the work force with educated people. CUNY is a conduit for poor people in this state to move up the social ladder. So this continuous attack on CUNY is a horrible thing."

by Razel Remen



from front

be beaten down. Deprived of hope, people often take out their frustrations on themselves, their families or their communities.

Pataki's proposals will really be paid for in the uncounted incidents of drug dependency, domestic abuse, violent crime, and even suicide that result when people see no way out of the rotten life they have been offered by this system. The semester after the 1995 tuition hike and aid cuts workers in Student Services at Hunter College reported a dramatic increase in suicide calls from students. Those numbers obviously don't include the students who were unable to come to school that semester.

What is Behind the Cuts?

If the tuition hike and aid cuts are going to have such devastating consequences, students will be tempted to ask, why would anybody support them. Different explanations are usually offered. The first response is often that the Governor, the Senate and the Assembly must not know what the results of their actions will be.

On this basis students will often attempt to call, write or meet with their legislators to let them know what will happen if the cuts go through. But the legislators have all been through all of this before. They know what the effects of the cuts will be. They'll nod their heads sympathetically when we tell them our tales of woe. But that doesn't mean they really care. Like the Governor, they are beholden to much more powerful interests.

The first thing students need to know about the cuts is that they are not the only targets. The assault on education and other social services is not limited to New York City, to the State of New York or even to the United States. It is a global phenomenon. Political decisions in Albany, like political decisions around the world, are made in the interests of

a relatively small economic elite made up of the owners and executives of major corporations and financial institutions.

For the past twenty years that elite has been pushing a collection of economic policies that are known variously as neo-liberalism or structural adjustment. These are really just big words for a war on the poor. The social upheavals of the 1960s won major reforms for poor and oppressed people all around the world.

Open admissions to CUNY were just one part of a larger package of victories wrested by poor and working people from the economic elite. Those struggles and those gains put limits on what the economic elite could get away with and created further opportunities for us to challenge their power. Rolling back those gains has been the major project of the ruling elite since the early 1970s.

This process has been assisted by the rapid globalization of the economy and the development of new communications technologies. As a result of these developments it has become possible for corporations to move investments and jobs around the world at incredible speeds. This means that when people give them trouble in one place they can threaten to pick up stakes and move somewhere else where labor is cheaper or more compliant. The consequence of this is that they can effectively blackmail cities, regions, and whole countries into accepting budget cuts or

changes in social policies.

CUNY students have many potential allies: workers and welfare recipients in New York City, SUNY students, adjuncts and other faculty are obvious ones.

We are actually fighting the same enemy as auto workers in South Korea, students in Serbia, and the Zapatista rebels in Mexico. By making those links we educate ourselves about what we are up against and broaden the experiences we can draw on in finding ways to fight.

Students Get Busy

Student activists (and students who have never been active before) are already getting busy organizing against this latest attack on them. The New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG) has already begun tabling on CUNY campuses where they have chapters like Hunter. NYPIRG is working to educate students about the cuts in preparation for letter writing and lobbying efforts.

Recently, activists with the Student Liberation Action Movement (SLAM!) held a strategy conference at Brooklyn College. SLAM! is a coalition of campus-based groups across CUNY.

The conference was attended by activists from City College, John Jay, Hunter, BMCC, City Tech, Brooklyn College, the College of Staten Island, the Graduate Center and Queens College, organizers from the Boston-based Center for Campus Organizing, and individual activists

from Columbia, the New School and NYU who discussed plans for the upcoming semester as well as broader issues of concern to students. SLAM! is preparing a rally at City Hall to kick off a spring offensive. Bring friends and family.

Students are in a better position to beat back this latest attack on CUNY than they have been in years. They have in SLAM! an established working and democratic structure for a city-wide coalition. In the past precious time that could be spent organizing on the campuses has been consumed reinventing the wheel by building whole new coalitions every year.

SLAM! is made up of new activists as well as veterans of the 1995 and earlier budget cut fights. On several campuses independent activists took over student governments last year and inroads were made in the University Student Senate (USS) which in the past has obstructed the efforts of activists to build independent mass student demonstrations by demanding the inclusion of their favorite politicians among the speakers.

None of the organizations fighting the budget cuts have a calendar of events yet, but there is little doubt that the coming semester will be an active one and there will be plenty of opportunities for students to get active.

by Chris Day

Student Liberation Action Movement

Who Is SLAM! What Do They Want?

1 We are fighting for the right of all people to free quality higher education.

2 We are fighting for a University that serves the people. We want full and direct democratic control of the University by the University community of students, workers, and faculty. We call for the immediate transfer of control of the University from the Board of Trustees, which represents the interests of a tiny ruling elite, to a democratically elected University Council of students, workers, and faculty.

3 We are fighting for an education that aids us in our struggles for liberation and in the creation of a new society. We call for the democratic reorganization of the curriculum, methods of teaching, and the grading system.

4 We are fighting for unconditional freedom of political expression on campus; including free access to the campus by all members of the community and an end to all practices of University administration intended to suppress political activity.

5 We are fighting for the immediate cancellation of all bonds and other outstanding debts that drain money from the University to further profit the rich.

6 We are fighting for conditions of life that enable us to learn. These include free quality food, shelter, healthcare, childcare, transportation, tutoring, and remediation for all members of the University community.

7 We are fighting for an autonomous University. We insist on the immediate severing of all University ties with corporate, financial, governmental and military institutions that contribute to the maintenance of the existing oppressive social order.

8 We are fighting for an end to police terror on and off campus. We call for the police to be permanently banned from the University, for the dismantling of the SAFE unit, and for campus security to be placed under democratic control of the University community.

9 We are fighting for a truly democratic society in which all decisions are made by those who are effected by them, a society committed to meeting the basic needs of all people, and to protecting the planet we share.

10 We are fighting for an end to all forms of oppression and exploitation: to white supremacy and all forms of racism, to the oppression of women, to the repression of the full diversity of consensual human sexuality, and to the profit system and the rule of the rich.

**POWER
to the
PEOPLE**

S L A M !

SLAM! is a democratically organized student group open to individuals who are willing to work and believe in the above principles. For further information on getting down with the SLAM! crew, please call:

212•772•4261

Student Liberation Action Movement

LAS AMERICAS

Guerrillas Invite Themselves to Dinner

**Masked Rebels
Crash Dinner
Party of the
Rich and
Notorious**

by Sandra Barros

On December 17 of last semester, just as students at CUNY were cramming for finals and scrambling to complete research papers, some 3500 miles south of New York City, approximately 15-20 armed members of the Peruvian guerrilla organization, Tupac Amaru (Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Amaru), gave a whole new meaning to the phrase "crashing a party."

Disguised as cooks and waiters, they slipped easily into the home of the Japanese ambassador to Peru, Morihita Aoki, and took hostage an international array of 500 diplomats, politicians and business men who had gathered in Lima, Peru's capital, to celebrate Japanese Emperor Akihito's birthday.

Who are these masked party crashers? What do they want and why have they gone to such lengths to capture global attention? The news media has presented a distorted image of the MRTA which this article seeks to clarify.

In his first public address on the



Peruvian guerrillas have their cake and eat it too (photo-Newsweek)

takeover Fujimori vehemently affirmed that he maintained a "firm position of not giving in to blackmail from terrorists." In response to the question of economic disparity, Fuji-

mori said that he is "attacking poverty through several measures."

He also said that he expected that the economy will continue to improve and that poverty will drop

from 22 percent to 11 percent of the population by the year 2000. Fujimori also denounced what he referred to as "violence" as a means to address his country's problems. "We are not going to liberate those terrorist groups because of our law and because of national security" he said.

The U.S.-backed Peruvian government has had its hands full attempting to battle both the MRTA and the peasant based Communist Party of Peru/Sendero Luminoso since 1980. In the face of surprising rebel advances, the government has consistently responded with broad repression that ranks among the worst in the hemisphere.

The mainstream press has reported the sentiments of the Peruvian government. In its first report on the takeover, *Nightline* repeatedly referred to the guerrillas as terrorists endangering innocent lives in order to free their jailed comrades. ABC correspondent Juan Quinonez described Peru's jails as "hellholes where cold and hungry prisoners are kept in hoods twenty-four hours a day, anchored with a ball and chain." But he quickly added that "their crimes merit that kind of harsh treatment."

Quinonez's comments sharply contradict the commitment to human rights that the U.S. professes to uphold. Neither the *New York Times* nor the television news provided the MRTA an opportunity to explain its views.

Fujimori's claims regarding both economic conditions in Peru and the so called "terrorist" actions by the MRTA are both slanted and false, according to Harry Rodriguez, the chair of the Latin American and Caribbean Studies program of Hunter College. He explained that the growth

of the Peruvian economy has only benefited foreign investors.

"Increased privatization and technology has further concentrated capital in the hands of a very few while 13 million of Peru's citizens live in extreme poverty. For example in Lima, Peru's capital, people are forced to make their living as street vendors and street sweepers. These low-end workers have worked to take matters into their own hands and have formed milk distribution and child care co-ops. The mayor of Lima acted quickly to remove protesting street workers from the city center, dismissing them as loiterers and has taken over the co-ops in order to gain support for the government," Dr. Rodriguez said.

"The MRTA had no choice but to take over the Japanese Embassy. The people of Peru, including the members of the MRTA have no political space in which to address their grievances. The media only presents one side of the story and never makes the connection between social unrest and poverty. The MRTA had to take dramatic action," said Professor Rodriguez. "The news media won't report an accurate picture on how the government violently represses any form of mass protest."

Terrorism Schmerz

To understand the situation in Peru it is important to address the question of terrorism. In a January issue of *The Nation*, one editorial heavily criticized the repeated reference to the guerrillas as terrorists by the U.S. media since "not a single mention was made of the state terror-

CUNY

Good Cops Quit

**CUNY Security
memo is the
Smoking Gun
on SAFE Team**

by Rob Wallace

On November 6, 1995, CUNY Central's political police, the SAFE Team, arrived at York College out in Queens. There the special squad of CUNY Security officers set up a phalanx through which students wishing to enter their own campus had to pass and show their IDs.

The reason? Nation of Islam speaker Khalid Muhammad was invited by students to speak for Black Solidarity Day. York administrators claimed the student group that invited the controversial Muhammad had not filled out the proper forms.

(Later, to the administrator's embarrassment, the students proved with photocopies of the submitted

forms, that they in fact had.)

When Muhammad arrived, the SAFE Team barred his entrance. Muhammad and the students marched in protest around the perimeter of the campus until Acting York College President Thomas Minter relented and allowed the speech to take place.

In June of 1996, York College's Director of Security Winston Burrows resigned. The following are excerpts from a memo attached with his letter of resignation from York. The memo is dated July 4, 1996 and is addressed to CUNY Chancellor W. Ann Reynolds.

"After 17 1/2 years of service at York College I decided to resign effective June 30, 1996. I did so because I could not let myself become party to the illegal scheme put forth by City University Director of Public Safety Jose Elique and his Deputy Martin Rodini. At our November/95 security directors meeting they announced a plan designed to deny students and others their constitutional right of free speech...

"My reason for leaving is my dissatisfaction with the leadership of

go to page 6

**After 17 & a half
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illegal scheme
put forth by
City University
Director of
Public Safety
Jose Elique
and his deputy
Martin Rodini.**

**Disguised as
cooks and
waiters, they
slipped easily
into the home
of the Japanese
ambassador to
Peru and took
hostage an
international
array of 500
diplomats,
politicians and
business men.**

ism that has helped run up Peru's political death toll over the last decade to more than 30,000."

Also ignored by the news media are Fujimori's "auto-coup" of 1992 that shut down the Peruvian Congress, and no mention has been made of his "Decrees 25475 and 25659, which abolished due process, handed extraordinary power to the military, created faceless courts with hooded

go to next page



Anonymous Poster Found on Random American Streetcorner

from last page
judges and allowed them to dispatch hundreds (of Peruvian citizens) to those medieval style prisons on the mere suspicion of, yes, terrorism" *The Nation* reported.

Language is a powerful tool. Once someone is labeled a terrorist they are immediately dehumanized and their grievances are de-legitimized, whether or not their actions actually merit the definition. Over the '96 Christmas holiday, the mother of

jailed Tupac Amaru leader Victor Polay told the viewing audience of *Univision*, a Spanish language television station, that the jailed rebels are "not terrorist" but "advocates for Peru's impoverished masses."

In their second communiqué, posted on the web site of a European based support group *Arm the Spirit*, the MRTA asserted that the persons being detained in the Ambassador's home are being treated "in conformity with the standards of respect for human dignity that had always char-

acterized our organization." Upon seizing the Ambassador's home on December 17th, the MRTA quickly released the catering crew hired for the evening's festivities.

The Red Cross continues to have access to the compound in order to provide medical attention and food as well as serving as a source of information on the condition of the hostages. In an anecdote reported on December 30, 1996 by CNN, the rebels allowed a delivery of dog food for Japanese Amba-

sador Morihita Aoki's two German Shepherds.

It is important for CUNY students to regard these individuals as "human" explained Dr. Rodriguez. He also said there are similarities between the economic conditions effecting the people of Peru and those effecting CUNY students.

Increased privatization in Latin America, has caused mass unemployment, disease and abject poverty. While the conditions in Latin America are more severe, privatization is also

"creating a third world in this country," stated Dr. Rodriguez. Here the effects are evidenced by the cutbacks in welfare and education, as well as the proliferation in substandard housing and the attacks on immigrants.

Dr. Rodriguez also pointed out that because private corporations continue to transfer both blue and white collar jobs overseas where they can pay people substandard wages (as in the case of Peru) our CUNY diplomas will increasingly be worthless.

The MRTA's 4 Demands

1. The freeing of over 300 of its members currently being held in Peru's military prisons.
2. An end to the inhumane prison conditions to which the MRTA prisoners are subjected.
3. An end to the Neo-liberal economic policies that exploit the already impoverished people of Peru.
4. An end to the political repression that has worsened since the "auto-coup" of '92, in which Alberto Fujimori dissolved his opposition.

Blasphemy in Advertising

from page 4

strength paint and the fifty-percent paint is too sudden. I isolate this area with the Lasso tool and blur it with the Guassain Blur filter.

Looking good, looking good. Now back to the image. Another tap of the Q key and the area I've painted over is selected, surrounded by moving dotted lines. With the Levels command I darken the area, making the model look as stoned as I am. Very good, if I may say so myself. I open the second image and repeat the process for the "after" shot, this time moving the Levels the opposite way to lighten the bags until they disappear.

Looks perfect to me. I check the time: this has taken me all of twenty minutes to do. I go back to Mel's office.

"Would you like to check them on the screen before I print them out?" I ask.

"You've already done it?"

"Yeah," I answer, coolly enjoying his incredulity.

I lead him back to the production room, and with Command-Z keystrokes, put on a little "before and after" show myself, showing each image in its original form, then with my retouching, then back.

"That's amazing!" he exclaims. "Wait, I want Mary to see this!" I have never seen him excited before. He brings in first one marketing person, then another. They all coo "Incredible!" "So realistic!" and so on.

Much as I enjoy having my ego stroked, praise always leaves me at a loss for words.

"Ah, it's nothing," I say. "Just doing my job."

HEALTH

Who Cut the Cheese With rGBH?

Evil Dairy Honchos Engineer "Hormonized" Baby Milk

by Maris Ableson

The Dairy Coalition, in collaboration with rBGH manufacturers and the Food and Drug Administration, is poisoning our milk supply. In 1994, the FDA warned grocery stores not to label their milk cartons as free of recombinant Bovine Growth Hormone, a genetically engineered drug which is inserted into cows to make them produce 10-25% more milk than usual.

The FDA has asserted for the two and a half years since recombinant Bovine Growth Hormone (rBGH) was introduced to the market, that there is hardly any difference between milk from rBGH-injected cows and those that have not been injected.

However, American and European scientific studies show that milk



from injected cows contains much higher levels of IGF-1 (Insulin Growth Factor), which can be responsible for breast and colon cancer, premature growth stimulation in infants, juvenile diabetes, glucose intolerance and hyperension. rBGH is banned in Europe and Canada.

It's U.S. producers are now selling gobs of it to the southern hemisphere (Brazil, South Africa, Zimbabwe), and in the name of "economic fairness," the FDA has ruled that milk containing rBGH does not have to be labeled "rBGH-free."

Most dairy companies won't label their products. This presents a problem to consumers who do not believe that rBGH is harmless.

Where Did This Pus Come From?

How did rBGH get passed by the FDA? Well, the Clinton Administration has promised the biotechnology industry an open door for their new Frankenfoods, and because Congress has been pressuring the FDA to allow the biotech companies to do their own testing, to speed new drugs to market.

This is apparently with the understood result of experimenting on the American people because none of these drugs have undergone any long-term testing.

When rBGH's main producer, Monsanto, invested a billion dollars into biogenetics, the FDA did not do any long term health studies (as they did with pesticides when they came out, and now doctors find a great bit of their residues in cancer cells).

The FDA has not banned rBGH even though studies published in Cancer Research prove its link to cancer (June, 1995) and despite the fact that milk from treated cows has been

rejected by many consumers because of its very high pus count. The pus comes from a serious infection of the udder, called Mastitis. Cows with Mastitis have to be treated with large doses of antibiotics, which can also show up in the milk.

The FDA is now composed of Monsanto employees. Michael Taylor is the FDA official who signed the Federal Register notice warning grocery stores not to label their milk rBGH-free.

He was an FDA official until 1984, when he joined Monsanto's law firm. He worked for Monsanto for seven years and helped them get FDA approval of rBGH. Then, Taylor was returned to the FDA, where he acted as assistant commissioner for policy. He appointed a number of others from Monsanto to positions at the FDA, with Clinton's approval.

Cows Moo - Media Chickens Out

Over 800 dairy farms which used rBGH have made complaints to Monsanto or the FDA of having to kill cows made sick from their over-production of IGF-1, and of losing hundreds of dollars per farm.

Approximately 40% of the beef used to make hamburgers is ground up from old dairy cows. Meat from rBGH-treated cows could contain higher levels of IGF-1 and antibiotics.

Why hasn't this been in the big-time media? In 1991, a journalism professor at the Texas A & M Center for Biotechnology Policy and Ethics complained that Monsanto was tiving publicity, and that Monsanto had gotten good at manipulating the scientific press by withholding pieces of information.

When USA Today published an article on Epstein's finding that rBGH



injections can lead to cancer, the Dairy Coalition (a gang of giant dairy corporations) met with the USA Today editors and convinced them to publish a letter refuting Epstein's findings. The letter, signed by two dairy industry association executives asked the question "When will the media stop giving national prominence to unqualified activists who cry 'cancer'?"

The USA Today reporter who wrote the original article said, "In general, we've found it's become modus operandi for industry lobbyists to try and intimidate reporters from writing things that will reflect badly up on their industry."

What Now, Brown Cow?

Consumer advocates are on the verge of winning the fight against rBGH. More and more food companies are refusing to use the drug.

The Clinton Administration has promised the biotechnology industry an open door for their new Frankenfoods.

The problem is we still don't know who is using it, because of the labelling law. Here's a list of milk producers that do not use rBGH: Farmland (on strike, don't buy), Ronnybrook, Meadowbrook, Sunnydale, Horizon, and Beyer.

CONSPIRACY

What's Up With the New World Order?

Spheric Interview Challenges International Conspiracy

by Gustavo Espherico

Sitting around the Spheric office plotting to take over the world, we noticed some shadowy group had beat us to it. Spheric's industrious research staff scoured through the halls of knowledge seeking to unravel the spider's web of power.

Lucky for us we didn't have to look far. Hunter College's library was tossing out a bunch of old manifestos from the John Birch Society. This funky little outfit formed in the 1950's to expose the International Commu-

nist Conspiracy's attempt to take over America's mind by polluting our 'precious bodily fluids' with floridated water. They were not successful.

Each of their little pamphlets was crammed with footnotes referring to their other little pamphlets. The subjects ran from from "Eisenhower: Dupe of the Reds" to "It's Not Just the Jews: A Guide to Who's Who in the Shadow Government."

The book pinpointed an elusive group known as the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), whose world headquarters is coincidentally across the street from Hunter College.

Intrigued, I gave the CFR a call from Spheric.

"Hi, my name is Gustavo Espherico, and I go to Hunter College across the street. I have a book here that says you guys are an evil organization bent on taking over the world. Is that true?" After some buck-passing, I finally repeated the question to a lady up at public relations.

"We cannot comment on that,"

was her official answer. "Why not?" I queried. "Because we cannot comment on that."

This wasn't turning out to be much of an interview, so I ventured further.

"What part of the question can't you comment on? Are you an organization? Are you already controlling the world? Is this madness? Are you a human being?" I probed desperately.

"We cannot comment."

After explaining that the book accuses CFR of orchestrating both World Wars, Korea and Viet Nam, plus the "Gulf Conflict," Somalia, Bosnia, and so forth, resulting in hundreds of millions of deaths, I countered "these sound like pretty serious charges to me..."

"We cannot comment on that," the PR flack repeated for a final time, before thanking me for my interest and introducing me to the dial tone.

That's when I realized its the PHONE COMPANY that controls the world. Based on a true story.

from page 3

found how beautiful america could be. Not the Rockies rising out of the prairie, luscious, like a woman's hips; but the violence of continual birth, of no history. America hit me like a fist in the chest.

I found america, the only land I knew, in a book.

Just two years prior, after knowing what america was capable of, I renounced my citizenship without ever having been to another country. I could be from no other place, but was a foreigner in the land of my birth.

Whitman had no illusions about the nature of the beast, its slavery and genocide. He was an abolitionist and saw the human species not as mankind, but the union of man and woman. He saw cities as natural as canyons. He saw the light of god shine from working-man's hands.

The america he sang was more than just an index of atrocity. It was, and is, horrible and beautiful. It is, for good or ill, a becoming.

America is what can be. America



is a dream that is real. America is and has always been a battleground of dreams: slaves fighting slave masters, a colony turned empire, a libertarian police state.

I cannot renounce america because it is all I know. It is the poetry of the prisoner.

I know we will be free. Long live the revolution.

America Is

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Jackie OH MY GOD!

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For the simple price of your soul, you too can spend the best years of your life chained to a clock under florescent lighting and feel lucky to at least have a job.
Apply anywhere that is.

Zarathustra's Monkey
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APARTMENTS

What a FIND!

\$2,000/mnth E. Village-studio! E. 8th, b'twn Ave. D & C. "Chill" in this spacious "crib" (12' x 18' w/private sink!) in true tenement charm -- cold water with no pressure (think of the stories you'll tell), genuine heroin addicts for neighbors (à la Bohème) and authentically tyrannical landlord! Students welcome.

Fried & Gentrified

It looks Black, it smells Black, but honey, it ain't Black! New and improved housing in Harlem, after we get it and Washington Heights, we can just burn the bridges. Contact White Fight Realty.

Take the A Train

Live in relative comfort in a heated, pre-furnished railroad apartment that's part of New York's fastest growing housing tract. Views from Far Rockaway one minute to 242nd St. the next. Contact the Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

RENT!

Live life like the Broadway musical! Fresh off the bus from the midwest? Looking for the high times? **Boho Realty** seeks art students to pack in transitional neighborhoods! The city at your door and cafes soon to come! \$800 fee included in appointment.

Static Island!

Middle Class tract housing available in a New York away from New York. Low negro quotient. Mobsters and cops only, please.

squat, then rot

New York's high rents getting to ya? Then come on down to the L.E.S. and work your backside off for years fixing abandoned buildings so real estate tycoons can cash in after the mayor evicts you with the aid of New York's Finest.

HELP WANTED

Money for Nothing?

Interns are being accepted by one of America's top brokerage houses. Hours are long and the work is hard, but one day you too could sit back and let interns work for you!!! No experience necessary, only a bloodlust and egoism that lets us know your the right man for the job. Positions for women also available in the secretarial pool, big tits are a big plus!!

Why Work All the Time?

at the same boring job... **Big Daddy Temporary** is seeking desperately unemployed and overqualified recent college graduates on the go for the fast paced ride of a lifetime or a few weeks, whichever comes first. Work on a project to project bases for **FORTUNE 500** companies, who just downsized your parents. And for your parents, they too can now work on a project to project basis.

Will Work For Food? Of course you do.

COINTELPRO is Hiring!

~~Are you a militant who is into the lefty-punk hate the people and wing to be on the left the man? **Temporarily** up and you are in stock!~~

BIG \$\$\$\$\$\$.

For information contact the FBI.

Poets, Dancers, Artists

Positions available for you in food preparation and service, dishwashers, waiters, peons.

Career IN Science! No Exp. Necessary!!

Mt. Shenanigan Hospital Medical School is seeking relatively healthy destitutes for clinical trials on what happens when you eat nothing but Entenmann's baked goods. Also, testing the effects of decapitation on masculine sexual performance. Contact Dr. Mengle in Tuskegee.

Career in service awaits you under the golden arches. Land of opportunity.

We Pay Cause We Care!

Adjunct instructors in the sciences and humanities sought by the City University of New York. Masters degree required. \$1,200 per class and no benefits. Fabuliferous opportunity.

CUNY is seeking experienced law enforcement officers. Starting pay \$23,000/yr. w/ full benefits. Top salaries up to \$82,000/yr if you show enough enthusiasm. Apply directly to Jefe Elique, gangsta bitch for hire.

Children Are Better Seen and Not Heard

For \$39/day we'll take your bratty kids and teach them how to make wallets, tennis raquets, and microchips. Positions also available in the "Wood Owl Corps" where the tykes learn about the environment while cleaning needles out of Central Park.

Just Another Brother?

No experience? No "official" References? Join the team at 8-Ball Distribution. Starting salaries up to \$5,000/wk in sales, security, collection, distribution and management.

Head a Little Polish?

Corporate positions available for women and minorities polishing our glass ceiling.

Fly to a Banana Republic!

Exciting jobs in retail at the fashion plantation.

Go From Rags...to Rags

Break into the fashion industry in the tradition of Horatio Alger. Opportunity awaits in Sunset Park, Chinatown and the Fashion Avenue itself. **Work in the shops where you can sweat.**

You Could Be the Next **Merrile Day** or **Yanfly!** The Artist Currently Known as "The Artist Formerly Known as Prince" is seeking a new sidekick. Dynamic Mediocrity a+ call 772-4279

Attention Ladies! Money for college? Bills? Beautiful bodacious buxom? We take flat chicks too. Become an escort at **Party Girls Ltd.** After all, any job in America is some form of whoring, so why not get paid? **call 772-4279**

No Limits to Growth! Join the fasting growing industry in America. Corrections officers

desperately needed to corral burgeoning desperado population. Criminal element needed, too.

Immediate Opening at Bad Boy records. It's a big space to fill. call 212-772-4279

PERSONAL MATCHES

Desperately Seeking Anybody in this city of 10 million people I am so desperately alone that I will send this prayer to you. You must be decent and kind, Employed, without baggage. Honest and open to commitment. Be beautiful, but not vain. You must be the part of me I lack. Race unimportant. Gender unimportant. I just need another soul to live. New York can be brutal.

Strapping Ivory Buck seeking Submissive Oriental Geisha studied in the "ways of the east" and doesn't talk back and knows how to treat a man and isn't difficult like lazy spoiled feminazis, Sushi rolling a plus. A little English a +. Too much English a minus

ARE YOU LOOKING AT ME?

SWM professional driver living on the edge, politically active, avid marksman seeking SWF professional blonde for pie and movie dates.

Cave dweller sought for platonic relationship. Your coffee, my cigarettes. No existentialists please.

Nature seeking nurture for romantic false dichotomies in the park and possible fr.

This Baby's Got Back

But I need a daddy, as in sugar - so if you are a CEO type and generous and relatively clean - I need your special kind of attention.

Hot to Trot

Young bored distantes is seeking other young bored distantes who dress like workers, talk like workers, but don't know how to tip. **ISO members only.**

Are you my lucky 77

Amateur father seeking a lucky 7th baby by a special 7th girl. Sorry I can't give you my home number, but page me at 800-717-1450

I'LL BE YOUR MIRROR:Self-objectification at no cost.

Single White Prophet

guitar player, gun enthusiast seeking wide-eyed Mary type who doesn't mind sharing for a divine evening of procreation, crossword solving and battling the ATF.

BREAD & CIRCUSES

Red Baron in the 7th? Packers over Falcons by 5?

Don't lose your money to amateurs, lose to a real bookie. Call Tony "No-Chin" Bozzbody at 212-772-4279 We're organized.

Ever Wonder How Actors Get Discovered? IT'S IN THE STARD!

Your favorite 70's sitcom characters are waiting to be your astral companions. Rog, Rerun, Florida, J.J. and Isaac from the *Love Boat* will give you advice about how you will get money, get laid, get healthy, get happy. We know you're not, so if taking your money helps: We're here for you! Call now and get a free reading by Master Guru Dick Van Patton!

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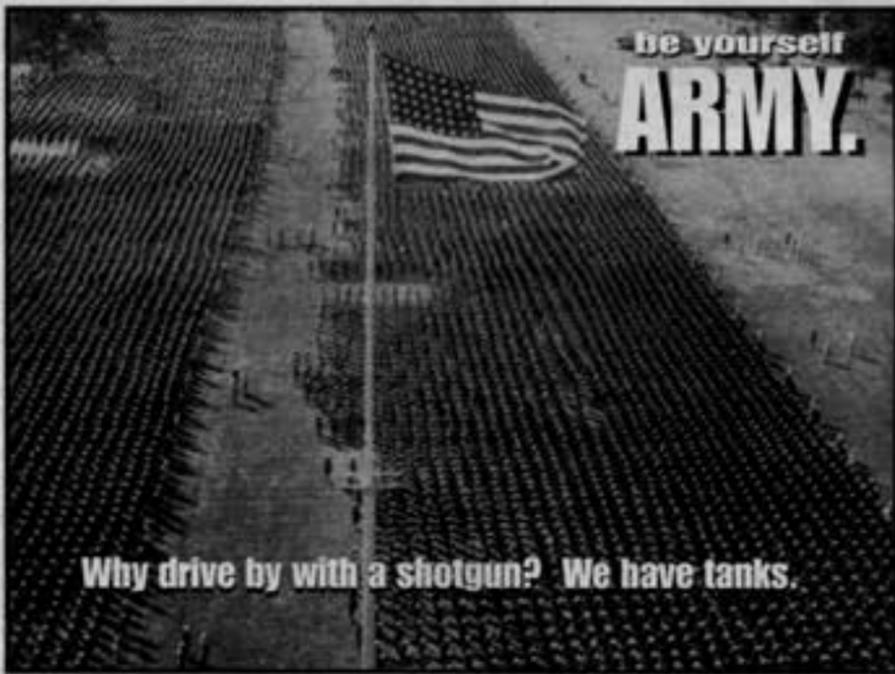
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Attention Ladies! Lonely?

Then Cut Your Pieces to Fit! Why Work It Off When You Can Cut It Off?

used parts available for Transplant

The Flesh Factory 772-4279



AMERIKA

We Didn't Cross the Border- The Border Crossed Us

One Man's
Jailbreak
to the
"Promised"
Land

I By Luis
as told to Joel
come from a low-class family
in a low-class neighborhood
on the west side of Morelia,
in the state of Michoacan in
Mexico. Most of the families living
there are poor. Many of them have
come to the cities from rural villages,
looking for a better life and instead
they find misery, exploitation, police
brutality- all that kind of shit.

Most of friends in my neighbor-
hood were involved in cheap drugs,
not like cocaine in the US. Cocaine is
too expensive in Mexico. We got high
on industrial glue; it's the cheapest
drug in Mexico.

So I got started in gangs, sniffing
glue and smoking *grifa* (marijuana). I
was fifteen years old. One day, I was
wearing a backpack with marijuana
in it. The cops caught me; I was under
the influence of glue. They took my
grifa and took me to jail. Because my
family had no money, I had to stay
there. I spent eighteen days in a 12 x
12 room with fifteen to eighteen other
people. There were no showers and
the toilet was broken, so there was a
lot of shit all over. The place stunk
real bad. That place was hell.

Jailbreak

Two guys had been thrown in
jail at the same time I was. They
were older than me and they were
involved in heavy stuff, not like us
teenage gangsters. They looked
around the cell and said, "Well, this
jail is a piece of cake. We've got to get
out of here."

They took a piece of metal from
a ceiling light fixture and used it with
a piece of blanket to break the pad-
lock of the back door of the jail cell.

On the other side of the door
there was a small sidewalk that led to
a wall. With the same piece of metal
they made a hole in the wall.

When these two guys escaped, I
decided to escape with them. At first,
they only planned to escape them-
selves. However, by the time the job
was done, we were six! Many in the
cell stayed because they were afraid.
You see, if you escape and you are
caught by the *policia judicial*, they will
kill you. So more than half of the peo-
ple stayed.

Once we went through the hole
in the wall, we ran across a parking
lot and jumped a big fence at the end
of the lot. On the other side of the
fence was a lumber yard. We went
into the lumber yard, and then
jumped another fence and into a nurs-
ery. The six of us split up in different
directions, but the two guys who
broke us out of jail came with me
because they weren't from my home-
town and they didn't know the city.
They didn't know where to run, so I



the blast/albini

told them to follow me.

We went to my mother's house.
At first my mother was happy. When
I knocked on the door she said "Who
is it?" and I said "It's me, mom, Luis."
She said, "Oh, that's great, you're
free," and I said "No mom, I escaped
from jail. I'm not free!" She got real
sad because if I was in trouble before,
no I was in *real* trouble.

It was Christmas and she had
cooked a bunch of tamales, so she put
some in a plastic bag and gave me
some money. Me and the two guys
walked as far away as possible from
my mother's place. We were afraid
the cops would go to my house.

I walked with them to the bus
station. I gave my money to the two
guys. I told them, "I have friends here
and I have places to stay, but you
don't. Take this money and go." When
I gave them the money, it was a very
emotional moment. They looked at
me and said, "You know what, Luis,
we'll never forget this. Maybe we'll
never see each other again, but we'll

**"If the cops
come here, we
are ready for
them." He held
a flashlight in
one hand and
a shotgun in
the other.**

never forget what you did." So they
gave me a hug and we said good-bye,
and I never saw them again.

I know a lot of people in my city,
so I walked to a friend's house and I
told him, "You know what, I just
escaped from jail," he said. "Oh Shit,
that's cool! Fuck the police!" I stayed
with him for one day.

Two days later, I went back to

visit my mother. I came there at night
and I watched the house from a block
away for a few minutes to see if there
were any suspicious cars around.

When I was sure there were no
cops, I went to my mother's house.
My mom said, "Luis what happened?
I thought you had left town." I
replied, "No, I just came here for a
shower and to get something to eat."
"Why are you so stupid? The cops
were here today looking for you! Seven
judiciales in a truck and a car, in my
house looking for you!"

They didn't ask my mother about
me in a nice manner. They cursed at
her. My mom said, "I don't know
where my son is. Last I knew he was
behind bars. You tell me where he is."

Hideout

My mom and my grandma told
me I had to go. My grandma gave me
some money and I took a cab to the
city limits. I waited there for a bus
and took it to my father's house far
way in the mountains.

I arrived at around two or three
in the morning. The house had no
electricity in those days, and when I
got there it was very dark. My uncle
Ismael's dogs started barking at me.

My uncle said, "Who is it?" I
said, "It's me Luis, José's son." He
turned on his flashlight and said,
"Welcome. What happened? You are
in trouble, I know." "Yes, uncle."
"What kind of trouble?" "Well, I
escaped from jail." He laughed real
hard. "That's cool, that's cool. If the
cops come here, we are ready for
them." He held a flashlight in one
hand and a shotgun in the other.

I spent New Year's Eve with my
relatives. One of my cousins, Elijo,
told me, "I went to your mother's
house. The cops were at your house;
they are looking for you, and you
know how the *policia judicial* are. So
listen, in a few days I'm going back
to the US. Do you want to come with
me, or do you want to stay in the village?"

It's a very small village. There is

no bus, no electricity, no nothing. (It's
a cool place, though.) He said, "I
have to go back to Morelia. If you
want to come to the US with me, I will
tell your mother and your grandma."
I said, "Okay, I will go with you."

Elijo went to the city and when
he returned to my uncle's place, he
brought 16,000 pesos with him, which
was about \$750 in 1982. My aunt, two
cousins and I took a bus back to
Morelia. We went to the city dis-
guised as *campesinos* (farmers), and
hats and sandals! we couldn't go
looking like city boys.

My mother and father were
waiting for us at the bus station. For
the first time in many years, my father
talked to me. Up until then my father
and I didn't have a good relationship
because I was a crazy guy and he
wanted me to go to school. Every
father's dream is to have his sons
graduate and be somebody, and I was
somebody- a gangster.

He told me "You know what,
Luis? You are in trouble, and now you
are a man. You are a kid no more. So
take care of yourself and don't get
involved in any more trouble." I said
okay. And my mother, well, you know
how mothers are, she was crying. She
said, "Luis, take care of yourself, and
pray"-she's Catholic, you know- "Pray
to the Virgen Guadalupe and remember
us." So I left my home town.

Crossing the Border

From Morelia we traveled to
Loredo, Mexico. We spent a day there,
in a cheap stinky hotel with roaches
and mice. The next day a woman in
her mid-40s took us to the shore of the
Rio Bravo (Rio Grande).

There were also other groups of
people waiting to cross. It was dark,
but we heard their voices whispering,
"Hey, don't make any sound, *la migra*
[US immigration police] is on the oth-
er side. And don't smoke!"

We stayed there until after dark.
Then, two coyotes (smugglers) came
with an inflatable raft, but it didn't

**Governor Pete
Wilson, he talks
a lot of shit
about us. I
would really
like to see this
guy in the field
picking tomatoes.**

have any air in it. We all had to help
them inflate it with our mouths! Then
they said, "Okay, you and you and you
in the front, and you and you and you
in the back," and they give us our posi-
tions. There were ten of us in that raft.

I was afraid, because the river
current was so strong, and there were
whirlpools in parts of the river, and if
we got caught in one of those, we
would die. So I was a little afraid, but
at the same time I was excited. "Oh
shit," I thought, "So this is Rio Bravo
and the US is on the other side!"

The two coyotes took us to the
US side and they went back to Mexi-
co to bring more people over. Another
guy was waiting for us on the Ameri-
can side.

We walked to a house, where a
truck was waiting for us. It was a
pickup truck with a tarp on the back.
We laid down in the back and they
covered us up. We rode like that all
the way to Houston, which was about
a five hour drive. It was raining and
we got wet because there were holes
in the tarp. I was tired, but on January
6, 1982, at around 8:00 AM, we were
in Houston.

The coyotes dropped us off in
Houston, where we paid them. It cost
\$350 for each of us. Nowadays to go
from Laredo, Mexico to Houston it
costs \$500. I was happy because it
was another culture, there were a lot

go to next page

SPHERIC SPEAKS



No, I'm not an American. I'm one of the 22 million black people who are the victims of Americanism. One of the 22 million black people who are the victims of democracy, nothing but disguised hypocrisy. So, I'm not standing here speaking to you as an American, or a

patriot, or a flag-saluter, or a flag-waver - no, not I. I'm speaking as a victim of this American system. And I see America through the eyes of the victim. I don't see any American dream; I see an American nightmare.

Malcolm X

**never submit to the man
always submit to spheric**

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