



"God Hates Fags - Counter Protest"



SEVERAL ACTIVISTS FROM THE DIRECT ACTION ANTI-AUTHORITARIANS (DAAA) Collective in Modesto first heard about the Westboro Church coming to Tracey last week and were shocked. After calling numerous organizers with groups like PFLAG and Marriage Equality, we headed up to Tracey unsure of what to expect from a group of people that flew out from Arkansas to target a high school that they have deemed a "sodomite whorehouse" for simply allowing a legal school group, the Gay Straight Alliance, to exist on campus.

The turn out for support of the Gay Straight Alliance was good, with about 250 people (according to media/activists) showing up at Tracey High School to counter-protest. Many of them held colorful signs, some sporting "We All Deserve the Freedom to Marry" sitckers. We helped to create a presence of acceptance against the attack on human rights, sporting our own pink bandanas and holding a large "Destroy Homophobia" banner.

The "God Hates Fags" crowd, however, did not create as impressive of a display. Only about 13 church members even came out, showing up at around 3PM as opposed to their press release that had stated a presence from 9AM. Even then, they only stayed for about 20 minutes. While out there, they held their dumb signs and dragged an American flag limply on the ground, so, by the end of the day, just about every segment of American society was probably ready to rumble with these idiots for some reason or other.

After the demonstration had died down, we followed a group of people to a nearby park where food was being served and more people were gathering. Chanting "Viva viva GSA, homophobes just go away!" and "Our lives, our choice", we made the walk to the park as fun as possible. According to some of our group members who showed up later in the day, the part of the protest that actually involved the Westboro Church members was rather uneventful when compared to the strong presence that the GSA supporters created throughout the day.

We would say that the counter-homophobia action was a success in the fact that the gay rights/liberation community was mobilized around an issue, and hopefully this organization can be used for future actions. However, it must be stated that the school did not want the GSA to even counter-protest, and in the future we have to start going after the school administration as well. When the school made that decision, in effect they were basically saying that they would rather have the gay bashers come and protest the school than let parents of little Johnny who was graduating that day come out and see that there are actually gay people in Tracey.

Homophobia on all fronts must be confronted, not just when it flies in from Arkansas and holds stupid signs.

"Protest Against KFC"

KENTUCKY FRIED CHICKEN HAS RECEIVED A LOT OF ATTENTION LATELY, AND NONE OF it has been positive. With a whole lot of help from PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment for Animals), the general public is beginning to wake up to the facts of animal abuse for the chickens that end up in Col. Sanders' bucket.

The lives of KFC's 850 million annually slaughtered chickens are cut down to an appalling two months out of a natural life span of ten years, but that is far from the worst of their maltreatment. These chickens are abused for the entirety of their dramatically shortened lives and through their grotesque deaths as well. Each chicken is resigned to live in crowded cages with their personal space being about the size of a piece of paper. The warehouses in which they are stored often have no natural lighting and reek of ammonia from accumulated waste. "Breeder" chickens have their beaks sliced off and the males have plastic sticks interted through their nasal cavity to keep their heads from squeezing through cage bars. Their toes, spurs, and combs are also chopped off. "Broiler" chickens are bred and drugged to grow fat as quickly as possible (about six or seven times their natural development) and often cripple under the unnatural weight of their own bodies if not dying first from smothered lungs and/or hearts. It is so bad on one chicken "farm" that an average of 300 chickens die each day due to horrible conditions. Undercover investigations and various insider whistleblowers have given first-hand accounts of chickens being crushed to death by heavy objects, bashed in the head, stepped on, kicked, and having legs and wings carelessly broken and joints dislocated through mishandling.

The recent spotlight on KFC's horrific practices began in April, 2001, when PETA recognized the extreme conditions of KFC's chickens and attempted to work with KFC to improve the life and death of those slaughtered for the fast food chain. In May, 2001, KFC's parent company Yum! Brands assured PETA that it would "raise the bar" on animal welfare. After several negotiations and no change in KFC's inhumane practices, PETA called for an international boycott. In July, 2003, PETA filed in the California Supreme Court accusing KFC of false advertising on their Web site, telephone hotline, and in various news releases in an effort to make themselves look better in light of their exposure. In September of that year, KFC responded by changing their overt lies but not any of their abusive practices. In February, 2005, KFC agreed to meet with PETA again to discuss a possible

compromise. PETA temporarily called off their campaign against KFC and met with heads of KFC for a discussion that spanned six weeks. At the end, KFC refused to comply with even one of PETA's demands for basic animal welfare, resulting in the declaration of an all-out "month of action" against KFC and a renewed vigor for the fight.

Due to the extreme conditions of KFC's chickens and the refusal of KFC to change any of these practices, people around the world have joined in the international boycott against KFC. Demonstrations and education on this subject have flourished worldwide and have included weekly protests at the KFC headquarters in Louisville, Kentucky; the arrest of Chrissie Hynde of the Pretenders and PETA President Ingrid Newkirk while protesting a KFC restaurant in Paris; and the dousing of Yum! Brands' CEO David Novak with fake blood and chicken feathers by an unidentified activist in Germany. Local protesters have joined the fight as well.

Activists with the Modesto based collective Direct Action Anti-Authoritarians (DAAA) protested with animal liberation activists

outside and inside of two KFC (Kentuck Fried Chicken) stores on Saturday, May 28th. Our anarchist collective was not there to only protest the horrible slaughter and mass killings of millions and millions of animals, but also to raise the issue of the service industry being largely anti-union and the environmental devastation of fast food companies like KFC.

Under the banner of "Unions of Workers, Freedom for Chickens", around 8-10 collective activists chanted and held signs. Chalk outlines of chickens were drawn, as well as messages of "Animal Liberation", "Service Industry Workers Unionize Now! <http://www.iww.org>", "KFC Tortures Chickens", etc. The collective also chanted and "marched" through two KFC establishments, handing out flyers that stated solidarity with workers and emphasized their need for unionizing efforts (as many looked on, smiled, and took our flyers), and also calling for KFC to end it's barbaric practices of slaughtering and raising chickens.

For text of outreach flyer passed out, go here: <http://www.indybay.org/news/2005/05/1744684.php>

STOP THE REAL ECO-TERRORISM: Global Warming: A Weapon of Mass Destruction

JEFF "FREE" LUERS HAS JUST FILED HIS APPEAL IN HOPES OF REDUCING HIS 23 YEAR SENTENCE. AS AMERICANS FILL THEIR GAS TANKS WITH THE BLOOD OF IRAQI CHILDREN, CONSIDER THE URGENCY of the message Free and Critter were sending when they torched 3 SUV's at a deserted car dealership. Global warming is a weapon of mass destruction because of the indiscriminate impact it will have on billions of human and non-human lives. One need not endorse arson to recognize that the threat to our stability and health must be confronted, both in terms of massive human rights disasters and the irreversible and accelerating damage to the earth's life support systems. Though Free and Critter, both former tree sitters, acted to expose these greater harms, Free is not allowed to claim the necessity defense in court. His 23-year sentence is the result of a politically motivated prosecution that grossly inflated the risk factor, in all likelihood to further justify a bloated counter-terrorism budget.

Meanwhile, the public asleep at the wheel (of their Hummers and SUV's) fails to grasp the implications of our addiction to fossil fuels. As Phil Berrigan, who burned draft files with napalm once observed, "The bystanders,... who stay home,... can't be charged with taking part in any evil act; they watch as evil proceeds. They create the norm, define what is common. When a whole population takes on the status of bystander, the victims are without allies. ...Indifference grows lethal.... where is the outcry?"

Taking his marching orders from Exxon, Bush ignores the global climate change treaty, subsidizes SUV's, installs a pipeline in Afghanistan after bombing several thousand civilians, and supports ethnic cleansing in Palestine; yet no court has called Bush an "eco-terrorist" or "domestic terrorist." Never mind the 1.5 million dead Iraqis. (The only numbers good Americans seem interested in is the cheap rates at the gas pumps.)

As politicians offer hollow speeches on the Titanic, Free and Critter sacrificed their freedom to turn the ship around. In this case the icebergs are actually melting as a result of the hottest temperatures in recorded history. Goodbye baby seals, polar bears and penguins. While Free has been labeled as "eco-terrorist," (a term originating in timber industry p.r agencies) and sentenced to more years than he has been alive, what court will dare hold to Bush accountable for self-serving acts of extreme violence to the planet and the people on t? Is the law not supposed to protect public safety?

Big corporations and the Bush regime have armies of lawyers to protect them from accountability, but Free does not. Please remind State Attorney General Hardy Myers that Free placed no one at risk, and request that Jeff Luer's sentence be reduced to 5 years including time served. See FREEFREENOW.ORG to support Free's costly appeal.

In Solidarity,
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