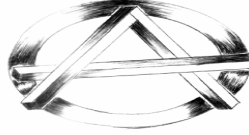


A N A R C H I S T W E E K L Y A G E R E V I E W



An Anarchist Society is a voluntary non-hierarchical society based on the creation of social and political structures which allow all people equal decision making power and equal access to society's wealth.

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'Anarchist World This Week' Radio Program on the net <http://www.3cr.org.au>

....."COMMUNALISATION - The Transfer of Power & Wealth"

from the Hands of the Private Sector & the State, Into the Hands of the Community".....

Number 794

30th June - 6th July 2008

**"WE SWEAR BY THE SOUTHERN CROSS TO STAND TRULY BY EACH OTHER
& FIGHT TO DEFEND OUR RIGHTS & LIBERTIES" - EUREKA REBELLION OATH 1854**

LINKING UP THE DOTS

In 1894 Frances Knorr was hung in the Old Melbourne Goal after the bodies of three babies in her care were discovered in a Brunswick backyard. Baby farming was a common practice in Melbourne after the shine had rubbed off the Marvellous Melbourne of the 1880's. In the midst of a depression, in an era when social security benefits didn't exist, single and married working women were forced to put their babies and small children into the care of strangers for months, sometimes years, for a fee. Baby farming was a response to the social situation poor women around Australia found themselves in. The public reaction to the baby farming scandal set in motion a train of events which resulted in the building of public hospitals specifically for women and children, the move to introduce social security benefits to help the poor and the extension of the orphanage system.

The community response that forced governments to change the social circumstances that forced the poor to use baby farmers, not the hanging of Frances Knorr, resulted in the odious practice of baby farming fading out.

Turning the clock forward 114 years little seems to have changed. Social conditions have a great bearing on the rates of childhood neglect and abuse that seem to be much more prevalent than a few decades ago. Criminalising poverty and mental illness may make us feel better but it won't have a significant impact on rates of childhood neglect and abuse. The "economic miracle" that has occurred as a result of deregulation, privatisation of healthcare, education and the commonwealth employment services, Workchoices and legally sanctioned tax minimisation schemes for more wealthy and asset rich Australians, has occurred at the expense of the 40% of Australians who survive on social security benefits and the fastest growing sector of the Australian workforce, the working poor, mainly part time retail manufacturing and process workers.

In such a climate something has to give. Normally this involves people turning on those closest to them. Punitive social security measures and legal sanctions may keep the story of neglect and abuse

off the front pages but it won't solve it. It can only be solved if urgent steps are taken to provide the infrastructure services and financial support that is necessary to tackle the problems that have recently been so dramatically raised in the community. This can only be done if legislation is passed at both the state and federal level that ensures everyone, not just pay as you earn taxpayers, pay their fair share of tax.

PULL THE MIDDLE LEG (Apologies to Jake the Peg)

One of the most cynical political moves I've ever seen is the opposition and the reactionary media's attempts to use the plight of old age pensioners to bolster their political fortunes. Old age pensioners find themselves in the current deplorable situation as a direct response to the Howard government's economic initiatives. The Howard government had no interest in the welfare of old age pensioners, all they were interested in was creating the political, social and economic climate that promoted the idea that the elderly should fund their own retirement. All the legislative changes they made during their eleven years in office were directed at improving the lives of self-funded retirees. They had absolutely no interest in looking after the interests of old age pensioners.

What they forgot was that most workers with less than a thousand dollars take home weekly pay never had any chance of accumulating enough superannuation to become self-funded retirees. The Howard government took old age pensioners for granted using the spectre of the country being overrun by refugees and destroyed by terrorists to keep them on side. Even during the last election the Howard government succeeded in maintaining the majority of old aged pensioners support although it never lifted a finger to ensure their living standards kept pace with the rest of the community. Privatised health care, privatised nursing home care, the weakening of the pharmaceutical benefit scheme were their gifts to old age pensioners.

To blame the current plight of old age pensioners on the Rudd government is both dishonest and a cynical self-serving ploy to bolster the opposition's political fortunes. They have no intention of helping old age pensioners, as far as

they're concerned they're a bunch of losers. The conservative media and the opposition's new found love affair with old age pensioners is nothing more than a cynical political ploy to use their very real problems to push their discredited privatisation agenda.

ABOUT TIME

The Rudd Labor government's decision to increase the threshold for compulsory private insurance from 50,000 to 100,000 dollars is a welcome relief for Australians on relatively low incomes who were being penalised for not taking out private health insurance. It is ironical the Howard government, a government that was committed to free choice and private enterprise, forced Australians who earned more than 50,000 dollars a year to take out private health insurance or pay a 2.5% Medicare levy instead of the normal 1.25% levy. The threshold was introduced for one purpose and one purpose alone, to expand the role of the private health sector at the expense of the public health sector.

When you add the 40% subsidy paid by the taxpayer for the 40% of the population who have taken out private health insurance, it is obvious that the private health care sector cannot stand on its own two feet, without massive public support. It makes no sense to have a private health sector that is subsidised from the public purse and a public sector that is starved of funds, equipment and staff.

Private health funds should either stand on their own two feet or get out of the private health care delivery system. Those Australians who decide to take out private health insurance should pay the full market price for the privilege of using private health care facilities. Why should the public subsidise the private sector when a perfectly good public health service provides universal care to all Australians irrespective of their income. Increasing the threshold to take out private insurance from 50,000 to 100,000 dollars will decrease the amount of money the Federal government needs to find to pay 40% of the insurance health costs of those 40% of Australians who are privately insured. These savings could be pumped back into a poorly funded and staffed public health care sector to publicly fund the public care of those Australians who

decide to let their private health insurance go. Using public funds to prop up inefficient private health insurance funds does not do the private funds clients and the community as a whole, any favours. Increasing the threshold people have to reach before they are forced to take out private health insurance, gives people the freedom to decide whether they will continue to use the private health care sector or they will begin to use the public health sector.

MORE GARBAGE

The media is agog with stories about Gippsland sending Rudd a message. Gippsland, a National Party seat for the last 86 years, has been held by the National Party despite a Liberal challenger. The Greens and an independent picked up 11.00% of the vote. Unfortunately the Gippsland by-election sent a message to no one. The Tweedle Dum and Tweedle Dee charade that passes for democracy won hands down in Gippsland. Just seven months after the Federal election, a by-election had to be held because the sitting National Party member, Peter McGauran, had better things to do with his life than represent the people of Gippsland who had recently re-elected him to Federal parliament.

Instead of showing their displeasure with the way McGauran snubbed them, the electors of Gippsland dutifully elected another National Party candidate. The difference between elections in Zimbabwe and Gippsland is that everybody knows the elections in Zimbabwe are a farce. In Gippsland the electors trotted out to give the party that snubbed them, the opportunity to represent them for the next 2 and a half years because they believe in parliamentary democracy. Parliamentary politics in Australia has been a very predictable sport over the past century.

Governments and oppositions seem to have interchangeable policies. Electors do their duty and vote for one of the major parties. Little changes, life goes on, that small section of society that owns the means of production, distribution and exchange continues to dominate parliamentary activity because we allow them to dominate the political, social and cultural agenda, believing that parliamentary elections are the pinnacle of human achievement.

The chances of reform, let alone radical egalitarian change, remains still born while Australians equate democracy with parliamentary elections. As radical activists we will continue to be marginalised and shunned while the majority of people believe giving a representative a signed blank cheque to make decisions for them, for the next three to four years has something to do with democracy – rule of the people, by the people for the people.

I WENT

I went to Matabeleland in Zimbabwe in 1990 a few years after a North Korean

trained battalion of Zanu-PF soldiers massacred their former political allies. The land was poor, people lived a hand to mouth existence in villages scattered across some of the least productive land in Zimbabwe. Over 90% of the richest agricultural land was still in the hands of white farmers. A decade after independence little had changed for the majority of black Zimbabweans despite Zanu-PF and President Magabe exercising almost absolute power in the country.

Twenty years later much of the land held by white farmers has been distributed to Zanu-PF party members. The bulk of the population continues to lead a hand to mouth existence surviving on some of the most inhospitable land in the country. The colour of the oppressor is now black and continues to use the rhetoric of liberation to exploit their own people. Nearly four million people have fled the country leaving a population of less than nine million to cope with a regime that has no hesitation in using all the power it is able to muster to maintain its grip on power in a country where 80% of people have no jobs and land is held in the hands of senior armed forces officers.

Nearly thirty years after independence it is hard for most people to understand how a successful national liberation struggle has ended so badly. The seeds of the current crisis lay in the way the national liberation struggle was carried out. Although Zanu-PF swept all before them winning over 90% of parliamentary seats in free and fair elections, Zanu-PF always saw themselves as the leaders of an old fashioned one party state. Zanu-PF only adopted parliamentary elections once the white regime had been overthrown because of external pressure from outside governments. Zanu-PF and President Magabe intended all along to use the state apparatus to promote the interests of party members before the interests of the people.

Although western governments have attempted to use the critical situation inside Zimbabwe to push their own agenda, the bulk of real resistance to the military dictatorship led by Magabe has come from ordinary Zimbabweans who are sick and tired of being exploited by the very same people who promised them so much 28 years ago and have delivered so little today.

ANARCHIST QUESTION AND ANSWER

Q. Would political parties exist in an anarchist society?

A. There is no significant role in an anarchist society for political parties. Why would anybody in an anarchist community put their faith in a political party when they have the power to make decisions. Very few people would want to give power to a representative when they have the power to directly make decisions. That doesn't mean that people are not interested in politics, what it means is that people are not interested in political parties representing their interests.

An anarchist society is a politically focused society that's focused on dealing with issues not dealing with the

machinations of political parties that tackle issues on their behalf. That does not mean there are not political organisations in an anarchist society, there will be many active political organisations, some will focus on specific issues, others will focus on the mechanisms which are used to make decisions, how decisions are implemented and the institutions and organisations that have been created to carry out those decisions. The life blood of an anarchist community is discussion and participation in the affairs of the community. The formation of political parties within an anarchist society is an indication that the processes that are being used to make decisions and the institutions that have been created to carry out those decisions, are not working.

The formation of political parties would act as a wake up call to the community that what they have taken for granted for so long could disappear if people continued not to participate in the decision making processes that determined how an anarchist society would function. The formation of political parties, especially those drawing significant community support in an anarchist society, would act as an urgent wake up call to the community that direct democratic principles can only be upheld if people continue to freely participate in the life of the communities they live and work in.

ACTION BOX

JOINING UP THE DOTS

Anarchists are revolutionaries, they want to change the position of the bricks and mortars that make up society because they believe a new coat of paint may make us feel better, but it doesn't change the reasons why the same issues crop up over and over again. As activists we are faced with a plethora of issues. So many issues, so little time. We have two options we can throw ourselves into every issue we are faced with – it must be Tuesday I need to go to a meeting about what's happening to the local secondary college, or we can pick and choose the issues we become involved in because they have revolutionary potential.

I wonder if you, like I, have noticed that the more pressure citizens and workers are able to exert on government and workplaces, the greater the number of reforms that are granted. In a pre-revolutionary period those in power attempt to maintain their power by granting reforms and using force to intimidate opponents. When I look at an issue I ask myself the following questions:

1. Will it extend the freedoms we currently enjoy?
2. Will it improve the lives of the people involved?
3. Does it directly challenge the power of those who currently exercise power?
4. Do the organisations that have developed to pursue the issue use direct democratic processes to make decisions?
5. Are the organisations that have been established dominated by political parties and organisations that are using the issue to recruit new members?
6. Will involvement in a particular issue increase my confidence as an activist or will petty infighting about who will lead the organisation, eat away at my confidence?

We need to join the dots if we want radical egalitarian change. Throwing ourselves into every issue that arises is a recipe for disillusionment. If I had a dollar for every activist I've seen involved in issue orientated struggle who had fallen by the wayside during the past forty years of political, social and community struggle I've been involved in, I would have retired a decade ago. Pick and choose what issues you become involved in. You will have more chances of making a real difference by carefully picking and choosing the issues you devote your energy to than by throwing yourself into every reformist struggle you come into contact with.

AUSTRALIAN RADICAL HISTORY

THE EUREKA SERIES 2008 NO. 8 THE ROLE SLY-GROG PLAYED IN THE EUREKA REBELLION

Alcohol played a significant part in creating the climate that led to the Eureka Rebellion. It was declared illegal to take any alcohol into the diggings. The bullock drays that

were used to carry goods into the goldfields were also used to smuggle alcohol into the goldfields. If alcohol was found in a diggers tent, all his goods were confiscated and the tent was burnt down to the ground. If alcohol was found in a dray or cart, all the goods were impounded by the police. Any building or tent that was used to illegally sell alcohol on the diggings was also burnt down. The police were able to augment their meagre wages by collecting bribes from sly-grog merchants or by keeping goods for themselves that were impounded from the diggers. The more corrupt elements within the police force impounded miners goods irrespective of whether or not they found alcohol in a digger's tent. Fines that were taken from the diggers also made their way into the police's pockets. Many of the police on the goldfields were believed to be state protected thieves.

In May 1853 in Castlemaine, a police party led by a trooper named Christian, confiscated goods and burnt down tents in Castlemaine despite no alcohol being found on the diggings. Every digger was at the mercy of the Castlemaine police. The diggers assembled outside the local Magistrates office who fearing a riot, released the tent keeper who was arrested and sentenced the informer who instigated the raid to five years imprisonment. The diggers victory encouraged other miners to physically confront the police. Three months later diggers from Bendigo, Heathcote and McIvor presented Hotham with a petition signed by over 23,000 diggers protesting about corrupt police methods on the goldfields.

The collection of bribes from sly-grog merchants on the goldfields and the impounding of goods from merchants who did not have any alcohol on their premises angered the diggers as much as the way the license fee was collected on the diggings. In Castlemaine the diggers formed a Diggers Protection Society to maintain order on the goldfields as the police worked hand in glove with criminal elements in Castlemaine to line their own pockets.

On the night of 2nd December 1854, the Eureka Stockade site was overrun with alcohol which seemed to have appeared from nowhere. Conscious that the diggers would be able to put up a good fight if the Eureka Stockade site was attacked, the Gold Commissioner secretly organised for the Eureka Stockade to be flooded with alcohol to ensure the diggers, many of whom became drunk on the free booze, wouldn't be able to put up much of a fight to protect the Stockade if they were drunk.

NEXT WEEK : The Significance of the "Red Ribbon Rebellion".

BOOK REVIEW

'REBELLIOUS SPIRIT'
Maria Occhipinti and the Ragusa Anti-Draft Revolt of 1945
Edited by Paul Sharkey and Anna Key
ISBN 13: 9781873605592
Publisher Kate Sharpley Library 2008

This is another of the Kate Sharpley Library's fascinating little self contained vignettes that delves into the lives of anarchists who have been deleted from the historical records. Ragusa in South East Sicily has a long history of anarchist activity. The monthly Sicilia Libertaria continues to be published in Ragusa thirty two years after it was launched.

Rebellious Spirit is made up of a collection of articles that have appeared in Sicilia Libertaria over the years that

have brought the history of the Sicilian anarchist movement to the attention of a wider audience. The booklet begins with an article in 1945 "When the Sicilian People Declared "War On War". When the call went out in December 1944 for every male born between 1914 to 1924 to be drafted into the reorganised Italian army after the fall of Mussolini, Sicilians refused to be drafted – of the 74,000 called up, only 14,000 reported for induction, things came to a head in Ragusa. Maria Occhipinti a pregnant 23 year old used her body to block the progress of an army truck filled with draft dodgers who had been arrested by the army. In the ensuing confusion most got away. The entire city took up arms and set up barricades on the outskirts of town, in the ensuing revolt over 20 police and citizens of Ragusa died from gunshot wounds. In September 2006 a rotunda in Ragusa was renamed Maria Occhipinti to honour those involved in the 1945 revolt. The people of Ragusa were familiar with fascist violence. Twenty four years previously, on the 9th April 1921, fascists opened fire into a crowd that had gathered in Ragusa's city centre to hear the socialist orator Vincenzo Vacirca, three were killed and over thirty were wounded.

The pamphlet ends with an article titled "The Life of an Anarchist Franco Leggio", which appeared in Sicilia Libertaria in January 2007. Franco Leggio, a Ragusan identity, devoted his long life to anarchism. Born in 1921 he died in 2006 packing more into his 85 years on this planet than most people. This 24 page pamphlet gives a glimpse into the lives of activists who dared to declare "war on war" in Sicily in 1945. The one minor criticism I have of the pamphlet is that it could have done with a more vigorous editorial pruning.

If you want to get hold of the Kate Sharpley Library's latest offering, contact them at

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PERSONAL OBSERVATION

Lateral thinking, thinking outside the box, stretching the envelope are terms that are used to describe processes that allow people to think beyond the limited social, cultural and economic parameters that dominate their thinking. For a country that prides itself on innovation, there is precious little innovative thinking in Australia. The same ideas dominate debate, the same tired old clichés pass as informed comment.

The paradox of living in a society where we can communicate with anybody, anywhere is how the number of things we actually talk about have diminished. I can't believe that as a country we can devote time, money and resources to discuss the dysfunctional antics of a host of so called celebs, while we can't have a decent discussion about the increasing levels of child abuse in the country. We have all the time in the world to discuss the antics of the parasites that make up the British "Royal" family, but can't seem to get around to discussing climate change.

We can have a lively discussion about the government decreasing the excise on petrol but no discussion about the major structural changes that need to be made to deal with the petrol crisis and climate change. Are we apathetic? Of course not!! The problem goes far far deeper than apathy. Information, news, discussion has become just another commodity. Discussion has been hijacked by that small section of the community that

exercises real power in society. In an era of conformity, diversion and consumption lateral thinking is a curse.

"Living in the moment" the battle cry of the consume, defecate and die society has spared us the burden of thinking about the past and planning for the future. Who needs lateral thinking, who wants to stretch the envelope when every second of our waking life is spent savouring the here and now.

**STOP PRESS
IF ONLY**

If only you and I were minor "celebrities" we could sell our "pathetic" story to one of the commercial television stations or radio networks who will then re-package it as "news". Just in case you think that I'm making this up, over the past few weeks a few minor, very minor, "celebs" have pulled off a little bit of a coup. Roberta Williams, gangland killer Carl Williams's ex-squeeze, has made a mint out of pandering to the television networks. Zarah Garde Wilson, described in the tabloid press as a "gangland" lawyer, managed to sell her story for 90,000 dollars to Channel 7's Today Tonight. Not to be outdone, Channel Nine's A Current Affair paid the former staffer of Belinda Neale (the Federal Labor politician who is in the midst of a police investigation into allegations about false statutory declarations) 30,000 dollars for her tearful performance.

Her interview was picked up by the ABC as well as other commercial networks and the countries largest newspapers and run without any mention being made that she was paid for her exclusive interview. I've got no problem with people making a buck out of the corporate media, but I do have a problem with programs like A Current Affair and Today Tonight claiming tax deductions for paying these minor "celebs".

A good way of stamping out this behaviour and putting some credibility back into the news, especially the garbage that passes as news on commercial television, is to force the media corporations concerned to run a one minute add before and after the paid interview letting viewers know how much the station paid for the interview. Any payment made by any news outlet to run a story should also attract a 1000% tax on the payment made. This would force commercial television stations to think seriously before forking out cash for an interview. I'm sure they'd think twice about cheque book journalism if they had to pay the Federal government a million dollars in tax for a 100,000 dollar interview.

Joseph TOSCANO /
 Libertarian Workers For A Self-Managed Society.

**POEM – Stephen Roberts
MONEY BINGER**

Best
 to invest
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 Form a crest
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 (your wealth, equity)
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 Permit profiteering to excess
 Pretty certain of success
 Tops, all-round, boundless



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BULLETIN OF THE KATE SHARPLEY LIBRARY No.54 JUNE 08 ISSN 1475-0309, BM Hurricane, London, WC1N 3XX, UK Web: www.katesharpleylibrary.net
 FREEDOM Vol 69 No.10 7th JUNE 08, 846 Whitechapel High St, London E170X, ENGLAND, Tel/Fax: 020 7247 9249, Web: www.freedompres.org.uk
 ROJO Y NEGRO No.214, JUNE 08, CGT - Publicacion Mensual Anarcho Sindicalista, Sagunto 15, 10 Madrid 28010, SPAIN, Tel: 91 447 05 72 Email: envios@rojoynegro.info Web: www.rojoynegro.info
 TIERRA Y LIBERTAD No.239 JUNE 08, Periodico Anarquista, Apartado 7.056 de Madrid, 28080 SPAIN, Web: www.nodo50.org/tierraylibertad Email: tierraylibertad@nodo50.org

** SIGN THE SEDITION CHARTER - www.seditioncharter.org **
 ** JOIN DIRECT DEMOCRACY NOT PARLIAMENTARY RULE - www.rulebythepeople.org **
 ** JOIN US RECLAIM THE RADICAL SPIRIT OF THE EUREKA REBELLION 4am – 4pm WEDNESDAY 3RD DEC 2008. EUREKA PARK (Cnr STAWELL & EUREKA ST. BALLARAT) **

****URGENT* *URGENT****

DEBT ELIMINATION APPEAL

****URGENT* *URGENT****

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VIGIL

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CITY SQUARE
(Cnr Collins and Elizabeth St Melbourne)

◆ 11:30am - 12:30pm WEDNESDAY 16th JULY 2008
HIGH COURT OF AUSTRALIA
(Corner LaTrobe and William St Melbourne)

Tel 0404 423 989 PO Box 5035 Alphington 3078 Melbourne

www.referendumpeoplepowernow.com info@referendumpeoplepowernow.com

ALL WELCOME - We encourage you to come and join us on these vigils

**ANARCHIST MEDIA INSTITUTE
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NOMINATIONS 2008**

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NOMINATION CLOSE - 31st OCTOBER 2008

Send in one nomination or as many as you like. Send us the following information:

* The name of the person nominated

* A few sentences outlining why they should receive the award

* A contact address for the nominee (We need to contact them if they wish to receive the award)

* The person you nominate can be a public figure or somebody only known to a few people.

SEND YOUR NOMINATIONS ASAP TO

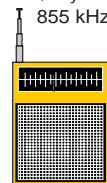
EUREKA AUSTRALIA DAY MEDAL, P.O. BOX 20, PARKVILLE 3052, VIC, AUSTRALIA or email your nomination to anarchistage@yahoo.com

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CITIZENS INITIATED REFERENDUMS - The people having the power to initiate constitutional change through referendums

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www.rulebythepeople.org

We Currently Have 122 Paid Up Members

*** **DIRECT DEMOCRACY NOT PARLIAMENTARY RULE** ***

Written and Authorised by Dr. Joseph TOSCANO
Level 1 / 21 Smith Street, Fitzroy, Melbourne, AUSTRALIA
P.O. Box 5035, Alphington 3078, Melbourne AUSTRALIA

WRITE TO AKIN SARI TODAY!

AKIN SARI, c/- Barwon Prison,

Locked Bag 7, Lara 3212, Victoria, AUSTRALIA

Akin Sari a 29 yr old Turkish political refugee who was granted political asylum in Australia has been sentenced to 2 years & 4 months imprisonment for offences related to his involvement in the G20 protests in Melbourne in November 2006. Akin has already spent 7 months in prison awaiting trial & sentencing. He has been set a minimum 14 months sentence. Akin will have to serve the maximum sentence of 2 years & 4 months if he fails to obtain parole in October 2008.

ANARCHIST MEDIA INSTITUTE OBSCENITY OF THE WEEK

Has been awarded to the Australian people, media and government at the local, state and federal level for thinking the personal, social and community problems caused by poverty can be addressed by criminalising poverty.

THOUGHT OF THE WEEK

"The problems caused by poverty cannot be addressed by criminalising the poor, they can only be addressed by eradicating poverty."
- Joseph TOSCANO - JULY 2008

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