

LOVE AND RAGE

A REVOLUTIONARY
ANARCHIST NEWSPAPER

EZLN

\$1

Mumia Oklahoma



VOLUME 6, NUMBER 4

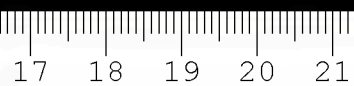
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Free Mumia—By Any Means Necessary

"True justice requires more than a stay of execution—it requires a complete dismissal of this clearly political persecution! It requires more: it requires the committed mobilization of our communities to resist a system that is more repressive than South Africa's—to abolish this racist death penalty! It requires freedom—for all MOVE political prisoners, and all political prisoners of whatever persuasion! Now! It requires a continuing revolution—to beat back the forces of the neo-apartheid state. Organize! Mobilize!"

—Mumia Abu-Jamal, July 12, 1995

BY THE LOVE AND RAGE
PRISON ABOLITION WORKING GROUP

Mumia Abu-Jamal is an articulate revolutionary journalist. He is also a political prisoner sitting on Pennsylvania's death row with the clock ticking. Unless something drastic happens, the state of Pennsylvania will put him to death at 10:00 p.m. on August 17, 1995. Our work is cut out for us—we need to build a movement to make something drastic happen to prevent the execution. The question is—what do we need to make happen? What can we do that will cause the state to reconsider its options and spare Mumia's life?

We believe that the people most affected by an issue should be the ones to decide.

Therefore, in this campaign, we think it's important to take guidance from Mumia himself, from the MOVE Organization, and from Concerned Friends & Family of Mumia Abu-Jamal. Mumia, and spokespeople for the MOVE Organization are always clear that we need to build a movement not just to free Mumia, but to destroy this whole authoritarian system.

As anarchists, we don't trust or rely on the state to bring justice. We believe that the legal process is highly political, which Mumia's case itself demonstrates. This is not to say that no justice can be won in the courts for Mumia. We believe the current legal effort for a new trial is very important and should be supported. The legal campaign can actually help build public opinion against the "criminal justice" system, by bringing to light the kinds of dirty,

(Continued to page 11)

Don't Miss the Prison Working Group's Other Draft Statement on Mumia on page 17



Mumia Abu-Jamal

The Zapatistas Speak Out: Ask for an International Dialogue

June of 1995

TO THE PEOPLES OF MEXICO;
TO THE PEOPLES AND
GOVERNMENTS OF THE WORLD;
TO THE NATIONAL AND
INTERNATIONAL PRESS;

BROTHERS [and Sisters],

A year ago in the month of June of 1994, we responded NO to the government proposal for the signing of a fake peace. A year ago, the supreme government after responding to our demands for democracy, liberty and justice for all Mexicanos, with a stack of papers, with the offering of "generous" alms and with the arrogance which took the country to the worst crisis in its history, received the dignified voice of the Zapatistas, the "NO" which indicated we were not willing to exchange our dignity for money and promises.

A year ago the Zapatista Army of National Liberation took the initiative of speaking to the Mexican Nation to demand a national dialogue with all the people, groups and organizations who found common cause in the struggle for democracy, liberty and justice.

Acknowledging that a great social force had manifested itself in the beginning of

the year 1994, first to stop the war and next to propel a dialogue, the EZLN acknowledges the power and voice of that social force, civil and peaceful, and called it to dialogue in order to seek and raise a banner, the national banner, and to struggle together for a transition to democracy in Mexico. This call we made in our "SECOND DECLARATION OF THE LACANDON JUNGLE" and we called this first encounter of the national dialogue: "THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION"

Two months later, the aspirations of ample sectors of the country to achieve the peaceful transition to democracy led to the birth, on the 8th of August of 1994 and in rebel territory against the bad government, of the NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION.

In the Convention different organized efforts converged, citizens' groups, intellectuals and honest artists, political organizations of the center and the left, and a great number of citizens without a party. We recognized one another before a common enemy, the State-Party system, and in the call of the faceless men and women of the EZLN, and agreed on the demand for democracy, liberty and justice for all Mexicanos. We agreed, but we did not unite. The lack of a program and a plan of common action, allowed the electoral horizon to be converted in an obstacle for the

development of the NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION.

The dialogue among different forces was and has been difficult. There have been many obstacles and points of stagnation. But the fundamental platform of the NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION continues to be viable; the peaceful civil struggle against the party system of the State.

Once the electoral fraud of August 21st was past and the ceremony of neoliberalism continued in our country on December 1 of 1994, the economy burst in crisis, the treacherous war masked in legality continued, as did the obsessive government resis-

tance to a democratic opening and a profound reform of the State, and the shameful sale of national sovereignty and the repressive blows to the popular movements.

In the city and in the Mexican countryside, the popular demands found the same response: lies, jail, death.

Contrary to what was expected and desired by the bad government, the post-electoral miasma was overcome, and to each new blow, the democratic forces responded with rapidity, creativity and decisiveness.

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Exploding the American Empire

An Interpretation of the Oklahoma City Bombing

BY ADAM SABRA

Societies receive the terrorists they deserve. Despite the efforts of governments all over the world to portray terrorism as the work of a few diseased fanatics, the phenomenon of political violence against innocent civilians has become too common and too universal to be so easily dismissed. The campaigns of violence and counter-violence can no longer be treated as marginal events that occur against the backdrop of national party and international politics.

Indeed, the fact that so many Americans were surprised by what happened in Oklahoma City is itself a phenomenon that requires explanation. The cries of "How could it happen here?" sounded a distinctly jarring note to the citizens of almost every other country in the world. After all, America has long been known as a violent society, so why were people so surprised?

Looking more closely at the media reaction to the bombing, as well as that of the Clinton administration, one discovers that what really jarred many Americans is that the prime suspect looked just like them: white, male, middle class, from Middle America. If he had been Black, Arab, or Muslim, (i.e. a member of a group usually assumed to be at war with the federal government) no one would have blinked an eyelid. If he had turned out to be Hispanic, female, and/or gay, the increasingly right-wing "mainstream" of American politics would have gleefully pointed the finger at "liberal" social policies, and called for the poor and minorities to be treated as the "criminals" that they are. As it was, Clinton used the fear inspired by the bombing to try to push through new powers for the domestic security apparatus and declared a total trade embargo on Iran.

These last two points might seem unconnected. One lies in the field of domestic

civil rights, the other in foreign policy. In fact, as I will attempt to demonstrate, there is a firm connection between the current rightward shift in domestic policy and increased American militarism abroad. I will begin by briefly outlining the domestic situation before moving on to its foreign policy parallels.

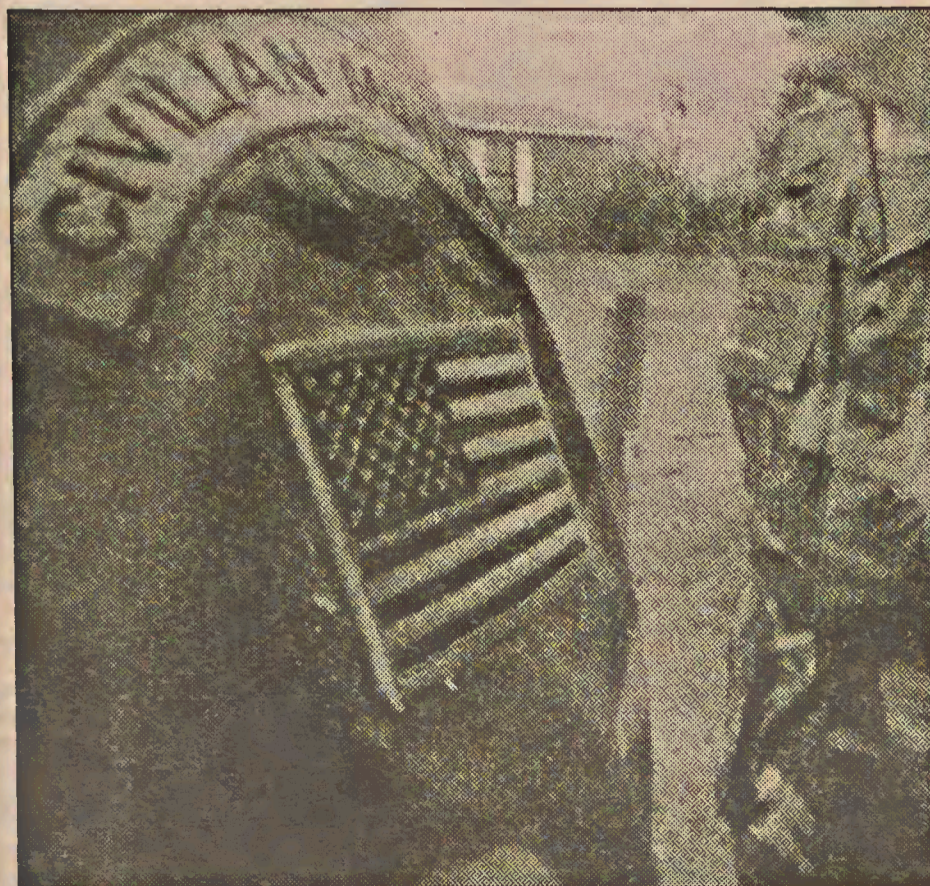
THE RISE OF THE RIGHT

In the Jan./Feb. 1995 issue of *Love and Rage*, Chris Day outlined the consequences of the Republican landslide in the congressional elections. Since I am largely in agreement with what he said, I won't go over everything he said. Suffice it to say that we are witnessing a major shift, in the US and world-wide, towards the rise of right-wing mass movements. The "left" has either suffered the well-deserved fate of Stalinism, or else shifted increasingly rightward. This point is particularly obvious in the case of the evolution of the Democratic party.

Long known as the party of white supremacy, the Democrats built a solid constituency based on giving white workers a slightly bigger piece of the pie. Blacks have generally had nowhere to go in "mainstream" politics, since attempts at self-determination were brutally squashed by both parties. With the reluctant adoption of a civil-rights program (with all of its now obvious limitations) by the Democrats, Black votes generally chose to support them as the lesser of two evils. But, as Day has pointed out, this alliance is no more.

The Democratic Party has now been captured by a group of conservative technocrats. Any pretense to left-wing views has been dropped. The Democrats are now a party of the moderate right, complete with

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Citizens Militas or US Military: The difference...

Love and Rage is the English-language newspaper of the Love and Rage Revolutionary Anarchist Federation, an organization made up of groups and individuals in Canada, Mexico and the US who share a set of common politics and who work on common political projects. Love and Rage is produced by a Production Group in New York City. The Production Group is made up of volunteers and one full-time staff person. Love and Rage is one of the many projects of the Federation, which also produces the Spanish-language *Amor y Rabia* in Mexico City, and publishes an internal discussion bulletin in New York City, in addition to supporting various actions and campaigns.

Major decisions and overall policies of the Federation are set by an annual conference, or between conferences by the Federation Council.

Ongoing debates and discussions within the Federation as well as timely information can be found in the monthly *Federation Bulletin*, produced in New York City.

The Federation is not a closed circle of friends. You can join the Federation and participate fully in the decision-making process. Any individual who is in general agreement with the stated politics of the Federation, who supports the projects of the Federation, is vouched for by two members of the Federation, and who pays the \$25 communications fee to cover the costs of receiving the Federation publications, may be a member of the Federation. The communications fee will be waived on request. Even if you do not wish to be a member of the Federation you may participate in Federation projects. Please contact us.

Amor y Rabia
Apdo. 11-351/ CP 06101
México, D.F.
MEXICO

Anti-Fascist Working Group
PO Box 10491 Livernois Station
Detroit, MI 48210
(313) 730-3517
email: TW0812@aol.com

Federation Office
PO Box 25412
Albuquerque, NM 87125
email: bright@thales.nmia.com

Love and Rage Newspaper,
Mexican Solidarity Working Group
and *Federation Bulletin*
PO Box 853 Stuyvesant Station
New York, NY 10009
(718) 834-9077
email: lnr@nyxfer.blythe.org

Prison Abolition Working Group
PO Box 77432
Washington, DC 20013
(202) 728-3899
email: ms272c@gwuvvm.gwu.edu

Production Group: Audrey, Carolyn, Heidi,
MattB., Molly, Rachel M., Suzy.

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Boring Disclaimer

Yo, the stuff we print does not necessarily represent the opinions of the Federation or of any member of the Federation. We print lots of things for lots of reasons. Sometimes we print articles we don't agree with, because we believe that they are interesting or provocative. Got it?

Editorial Policy

We encourage you to submit material for publication. Shorter articles are more likely to be printed. 1750 words, a full newspaper page, is a long article. Submissions may be edited. Please include a phone number and address or internet email address so the PG can consult you on editing. Articles not printed may be sent to our internal bulletin unless otherwise noted. All letters will be considered for publication unless there is a request that they not be published. Letters will not be edited.

About Our Politics

The Love and Rage Revolutionary Anarchist Federation is in the process of developing a statement of our common politics. A set of Working Papers encompassing the debate on the content of this statement is available for \$5 from the Federation Office. The following introduction to our old Political Statement gives an idea of where we are coming from:

Love and Rage is a bi-monthly anarchist newspaper intended to foster revolutionary anti-authoritarian activism in North America and build a more effective and better-organized anarchist movement. We will provide coverage of social struggles, world events, anarchist actions, and cultures of resistance. We will support the struggles of oppressed peoples around the world for control over their own lives. Anarchy offers the broadest possible critique of domination, making possible a framework for unity in all struggles for liberation. We seek to understand the systems we live under for ourselves and reject any pre-packaged ideology. Anarchism is a living body of theory and practice connected directly to the lived experiences of oppressed people fighting for their own liberation. We anticipate the radical and on-going revision of our ideas as a necessary part of any revolutionary process.

Viva Zapata!

Introduction

OK, we're a little excited. This is the largest issue of Love and Rage ever (28 pages), and it's packed with good stuff. This issue has analysis of the Unabomber and the Oklahoma bombing, an article about strategies for saving Mumia Abu-Jamal, an update on the NYC squat evictions, and an article about the struggle over how to fight for reproductive freedom. It has two pages of news and reviews about

the Black Panthers, analysis and explanation of Human Life International, and an investigation of the demise of DC's Beehive Infoshop and the consequences for infoshops everywhere.

We also have extensive coverage of the EZLN's international consultation—an unprecedented request for the people of Mexico and the international solidarity community to help the EZLN decide what their political future should be—a review of *First World: Ha! Ha! Ha!*, an interview with Bill Sales, and a debate about nationalism on the letters page. And, of course, more news about prisoners' struggles, acts of

revolt and rebellion from around the world, and more news about what's going on than you can shake a stick at.

We're sorry that personnel changes in the production group delayed the paper for several weeks, and hope that the contents make it worth the wait.

Look for an analysis of World Systems Theories, an interview with British anarchist band Chumbawamba, an analysis of the Omnibus Counter-Terrorism act, an investigation of the UN in Bosnia, information about the Michigan Militia, and much more, in the next issue.

The Production Group

Is the Unabomber an Anarchist?

BY WAYNE PRICE

The "Unabomber" claims to be an anarchist. For 17 years, the person who has been called the Unabomber has been attacking people with bombs, without making an explanation. The bomb targets have included some rich and powerful individuals, such as the April killing of a lobbyist for a logging association. But the main targets have been college professors (of genetics and computer science) and owners of computer stores. "Unintended" injuries have happened to others, including students, a secretary, and passengers on an airplane. In six bombings, there have been three deaths and 22 injuries.

Now he has written a letter declaring his politics to be "anarchist and radical environmentalist." (Although the Unabomber claims to be "the terrorist group FC," I use "he," since the evidence suggests one person and the politics suggests a male.) The Oklahoma bombing by a few fascists is widely seen as reflecting the political culture of a broader far-right movement. The question is sure to be raised: Should the bombings by this "anarchist" similarly be seen as reflecting the politics of the anarchist and radical environmental movements? My answer: No, and Maybe.

To be sure, the Unabomber (or "FC") was bombing for years before raising the anarchist banner. However, his aim was anti-technological from the first. Whether or not they originally inspired him, there is no reason to doubt that he has come to agree with anarchist ecological views. His opinions are close enough to certain widespread views within the anti-authoritarian movement to be worth discussing.

HIS ANARCHIST VISION

His letter to the *New York Times* (4/26/95) states, "We call ourselves anarchist because we would like, ideally, to break down all society into very small, completely autonomous units." It is true that anarchists have generally been decentralists, because participatory democracy is only possible in human-scale communities where people can meet face-to-face. This may include villages, factory councils, city neighborhoods, social clubs, or whatever. However, many anarchists have also advocated for a federation from the bottom-up, so that local groups are in a network of voluntary associations covering regions, continents, and the world.

His vision includes complete destruction of the "industrial-technological system" worldwide. Again, most anarchists today do not regard the current development of industrial technology as "progressive" or even "neutral," as do Marxists and liberals. Capitalism and the state have developed this technology for their own purposes of exploitation, profit and war. A new society will not be able to simply use these machines just as they are.

However there is a dispute within the anti-authoritarian/ecological movement. Some believe that a new society should use technological knowledge to create a new type of industry, bountiful but non-exploitative and ecological. Others advocate going back to pre-industrial society, to medieval technology, or hunting and gathering.

Like the Unabomber, these people seem to forget that pre-industrial society was often highly oppressive, including monarchism, mass slavery, feudalism, war, and the oppression of women before class society even developed. In any case, pre-industrial society evolved into industrial society; out of that came this. Just as industrial machinery is not automatically liberatory, neither is the absence of industrial technology automatically liberatory.

HIS STRATEGY

The Unabomber admits to having no strategy for anarchism. "We don't see any clear road

to this goal, so we leave it for the indefinite future." Instead, "our more immediate goal, which we think may be attainable during the next several decades, is the destruction of the worldwide industrial system."

There are many other anarchists who have no idea how anarchism might come. And neither I nor anyone else has a crystal ball or a fully worked-out analysis. But it is possible to begin to work toward a modern analysis and strategy for an anarchist revolution. This requires developing both our theory and our activity. We need to analyze the social system (using tools from various sources such as feminism, classical Marxism, historical anarchism, ecological theory, etc.). We need to look for the weaknesses in the system, the nature of the developing crisis, the social forces likely to struggle. Especially, we need to participate in the popular struggles, in dialogue with other viewpoints. We need to develop an organization that can help us do these things without tying us down.

Instead, the Unabomber proposes to blow up individuals. In a letter to one of his victims, he wrote, "If there were no computer scientists, three would be no progress in computer science." Clearly he thinks of the enemy as individuals rather than a social system—a social system that can create computer scientists faster than he can kill them. Similarly he blames the technology, not the society which requires it.

He also hopes to "propagate anti-industrial ideas" by his bombing. But bombs (or assassination or kidnapping), when not a close part of a popular struggle, are seen by most people as one more evil of the social system, not as part of the solution. If anything, it leads people to support the establishment against those who seem to want pointless destruction.

He is trying to spread ideas by a book. If it is published and publicized by the media, he promises to stop bombing people, and only target buildings in the future. As if the rulers care about the deaths of professors or computer-store owners!

VIOLENCE

Like most people, I am not a pacifist. The existence of widespread police brutality and the growth of the fascist "militias" show that popular movements will have to defend themselves. The state will never allow a non-violent, democratic revolution.

However, the use of violence exacts a price. It makes revolutionaries less sensitive, less morally keen, less like people of the new world. Violence is only justifiable in a revolutionary situation or in defense of a popular struggle (for example, the Black Panther Party at its height). When revolutionaries, isolated from most people, set out to strike at even the most vicious oppressors, the results are invariably bad. Bystanders get injured, the revolutionaries become more isolated from the people, they get killed or jailed, and the state gets a popular excuse for greater repression.

As a general rule, I would give political and legal support to such revolutionaries when arrested by the state, despite my disagreements. In the case of the Unabomber, he is a murderer dragging noble ideas through the mud.

HIS AUTHORITARIANISM

Anarchism has a popular image of bomb-throwing, based on a real trend in anarchist history. But there are other historical trends in anarchism, including organizing mass labor struggles (anarcho-syndicalist, the IWW), mass military forces (Makhno, Durruti), and even a pacifist trend (Tolstoy, Goodman). There is nothing inevitably "terrorist" about anarchism.

In our time most, "terrorism" has been carried out by Marxist-Leninists, nationalists, and other statists, not anarchists. (Of

course, such violence has always been small potatoes compared to the massive terror used by the military and police forces of the states.) For example, the Weatherpeople of the '60s were admirers of Stalin and Charles Manson.

This sort of small group "terrorism" is inevitably authoritarian. The Unabomber, who admits to having no strategy for popular struggle, seeks to overthrow industrial society virtually single-handedly. He will force people to live in non-industrial, totally decentralized society? What if they do not want to live in such a society? And they do not; the vast majority support the existing system, more or less. Rather than trying to persuade them, he intends to blow up their society.

Anarchists are against the vanguardism of the Leninists but they are often unclear



Can the Unabomber blow up a social relationship without too much "collateral damage"?

about just what vanguardism is. Many think that they avoid vanguardism by being against the self-organization of anarchists. In my opinion, vanguardism is not the belief that a small group may be right and the majority wrong. Few believe in revolutionary anarchist while the vast majority supports statist capitalism; we have every right to organize ourselves to try to persuade the majority of our viewpoint, always acknowledging that we have much to learn from others.

No, vanguardism is the belief that the correct minority has the right to impose its views on the majority. When the minority seeks to rule over the people, to act for them, to be political in their place, then it is vanguardist and authoritarian, no matter how "anti-authoritarian" is its ideology—as is the case of the Unabomber.

THE UNABOMBER AND ANARCHISM

To return to the original question: are the Unabomber's murders connected to the politics of anarchism? First, I answer "No." His views have nothing in common with my views on anarchism. And even the most misguided anarchist bomb-throwers and assassins of the past would not have killed professors and students.

But I also say "Maybe." His views are similar to those of many anarchists: the lack of interest in developing a strategy for popular revolution; the belief that the enemy is industrial technology; not building an organization; not participating in popular struggles, but acting as an elite above the people; the worship of violence, abstracted from popular struggle; a willingness to impose their views on the people, even while denouncing as vanguardist those who try to persuade people. Perhaps I could add: an ambiguity about democracy, seeing anarchism as for freedom versus democracy, rather than as the most extreme form of democracy. All these concepts are reflected in the Unabomber's letters and actions and are also held by various trends within the anti-authoritarian movements.

No doubt the Unabomber will be used as an excuse for denouncing anarchism. The movement would be wise to prepare by having open discussion about him and his methods.★

BY LAURA FROM BAY AREA
COALITION FOR OUR REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

When Operation Rescue (OR) wants to get arrested on federal charges for blockading a clinic, and "pro-choice" people not only let them blockade, but actively prevent other clinic defenders from stopping them—the women's movement has a real problem, and they call themselves the leaders of the mainstream women's movement—The Fund for the Feminist Majority.

On Memorial Day weekend, 23 Operation Rescuers and Missionaries for the Pre-Born blockaded a clinic in North Hollywood, Calif. for two hours. They were treated with kid gloves, gently arrested, charged with misdemeanor failure to disperse, and released, in spite of the fact that many of them were on probation. Two BACORR (Bay Area Coalition for Our Reproductive Rights) clinic defenders (myself and Lilly) were arrested within 15 minutes of arriving at the clinic for chanting. We were brutalized and ended up with the same charges as OR.

LIBERAL COLLABORATION

OR had announced the hit months ahead of time, initially targeting New York City, but changed their venue when they realized the level of resistance and lack of support they would find there. The plan was to get arrested and charged with violating the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances (FACE) law in order to challenge its constitutionality through a Supreme Court case.

Since the Brookline Massacre, OR has been struggling to paste a face of non-violence onto their movement. The checks haven't been pouring in, so what do a bunch of misogynist used-car salesmen and thugish wanna-be cops do? Yessireee get yer Supreme Court case right here, get a lawyer to argue about freedom of religion and the liberal persecution of Christians in America, squeeze a few crocodile tears for those poor, prayerful protesters whose rights are violated when they "peacefully" harass women and blockade clinics, and whammo—the anti-abortion discourse of women and doctors as murderers gets further play in the mainstream press.

Similar to the double-speak of US troops as "peacekeepers," OR's self-described

"non-violence" is a discourse intended to legitimate a violent political campaign. Not only does this language attempt to veil OR's connections to assassins and clinic bombers, it also sanctions the daily indignities women are subjected to by anti-abortion protesters—the verbal abuse and harassment at clinics is justifiable for the sake of saving "babies" and ending the "violence of abortion." Maybe, goes the logic, a few more people will turn their heads away when they see "good Christians" verbally harassing women going into clinics because at least the Christians aren't shooting anybody.

OR wasn't the only group invested in OR getting charged with FACE. The Fund for the Feminist Majority was as determined as OR to let the anti's blockade a clinic and take arrests. The Fund had put in a lot of resources into the Clinton election and into lobbying for FACE. Rather than see this pre-announced clinic assault as an opportunity to build pro-choice people's abilities to defend clinics and resist the Christian Right, the Fund saw this as an opportunity to legitimate their electoral work by "letting the police do the right thing," and go for a test case of FACE. This was no about-face (so to speak) for the Fund; they consistently discourage active clinic defense around the country, and, while using the language of defending clinics, have organized pro-choice people who show up to keep the clinic open into sign-waving, chanting "counter-protesters." (See *Love and Rage* vol. 6 no. 2 for Carolyn's excellent overview of the role clinic defense has played nationally).

BACORR and plenty of other radical reproductive-rights activists around the country have been clear that reliance on FACE, or any other law, does not ensure reproductive health access for women. Just compare the government's response to the

Oklahoma bombing to the hundreds of "unsolved" clinic bombings over the past 10 years. As for FACE, a crew of Missionaries for the Pre-Born who locked themselves to a clinic in Milwaukee, Wis., and were charged under FACE, have already been let off the hook.

Laws don't stop anti-woman violence, and this one certainly hasn't made a difference. FACE was passed with the compromise that demonstrators at a church can be charged for the same violations as anti's at a clinic—it is a tool of social control that can be used against pro-choice people fighting for women's freedom. The orientation of organizations towards this law, and their clinic defense tactics, exposes ultimately our different goals—are we fighting for women's freedom? Or are we fighting for the status quo?

WHAT HAPPENED IN LOS ANGELES

Fight Back Network members from BACORR, Refuse & Resist Minneapolis, and Love and Rage went to LA May 25th-28th to try to keep the clinics open and to blast OR's efforts to define themselves in the media as non-violent-peaceful-baby-lovin'-Christians. BACORR had been in touch with WAC LA (Women's Action Coalition) and a Southern California NOW (National Organization for Women) chapter that welcomed our support and involvement.

The day prior to the hit, OR did a media "prey-her" event at a Riverside clinic. We

(Continued to page 24)



Pigs on horses

Photo: Inmaculate

NY Squats Seized, Retaken, and Seized

BY DAVE LAWRENCE

On May 30th a police task force consisting of hundreds of riot police, Emergency Service Units, a helicopter, and an armored personnel carrier raided the squatted buildings on East 13th Street in New York City.

The buildings, squatted for over a decade, are targeted for development by a corrupt non-profit housing group with close ties to the district's City Councilmember. The project would build 41 units of "low income" housing, unaffordable to most neighborhood residents including the current occupants.

After seven months of conflict in the courts, the battlefield shifted to the streets when police moved to enforce vacate orders issued on phony safety issues. Two buildings, 541 and 545 East 13th Street, and the ground floor of a third building, 539, controlled by the East 13th Street Home-steaders Coalition, were evicted.

The vacate orders were proved to be a sham during three days of hearings in State Supreme Court. The city appealed the decision, and although the Appellate Division did not overturn the lower court's findings, it reinstated the city's "statutory stay," which allows the city to ignore a ruling while an appeal is pending. The "statutory stay" provided the city with a loophole big enough to drive a tank through.

Squatters learned late on May 25 that the city had a green light to move against the buildings. All intelligence sources indicated a 5:00 a.m. raid on Tuesday. By Monday the scene on 13th Street was hectic. Children and the elderly were evacuated and some residents staying for the siege packed up possessions. All day vehicles lined the block bringing materials for fortification and moving out refugees and personal belongings. Arc welders ran late into the night, barricading windows, doors and gates.

By 2:30 in the morning squatters became restless. Two hundred people had gathered

for an overnight vigil, defense and protest. Squatters welded themselves into their homes. People outside began to construct street barricades using debris, major appliances, and an abandoned car flipped upside down. Gasoline was poured over the barricades somewhat prematurely, arousing the interest of passing police patrols. Squatters randomly fired off bottle rockets and exploded M-80s in defiance of the threat looming against them.

Police commanders arrived earlier than they had planned to observe the scene. Not having expected the type of response being flaunted by the squatters, they delayed their attack until shortly past 9:00 a.m. Police moved in against the buildings and the street simultaneously.

Emergency Service Units armed with 9mm sub-machine-guns advanced over the rooftops. Police positioned snipers on surrounding buildings. The 50 people remaining behind barricades retreated slowly, offering measured resistance to the advancing riot police and tank-like armored personnel carrier.

Police made their way into the buildings, cutting through fortifications as they descended fire escapes and broke through window barricades. They then went apartment by apartment breaking in doors. A resident of 545 taunted police from the rooftop shouting "bad cop, no doughnut" before police were finally able to gain access to the roof, where they arrested him at gunpoint. It was past noon by the time police had

removed the last occupant of 541. Thirty-one people were arrested during the assault.

On June 3rd, 200 demonstrators chanting "tanks, no thanks, we'll burn your fuckin' banks," marched to the site of the evictions wheeling a plywood and cardboard mock-up of the armored personnel carrier used by police. As the march reached the corner of 13th Street the handful of police stationed there to guard the buildings scrambled unsuccessfully to block the demonstrators. Police barricades were knocked over and the scaffolding erected in front of 541 was damaged when a support post was pulled out. Police began spraying mace at demonstrators and made five arrests. Charges included felony riot and incitement to riot. One of those arrested was seriously injured. The demonstrators then marched through the neighborhood and concluded with a speak-out at Tompkins Square Park.

On the evening of July 4th, using what the *New York Times* described as "tactics befitting commandos," 541 East 13th Street was reoccupied. Police stationed there were taken by surprise as the "commandos" unfurled banners from the roof and smashed the flood lights installed by the city.

As police reinforcements arrived they attacked people on the street and were pelted with bottles and M-80s. Two police helicopters hovered above. One helicopter was hit by a flare fired from a rooftop. Meanwhile, hundreds of people clashed with police along Avenue B and in Tompkins Square. The front doors to the yuppie condo Cristadora building were smashed and riot police were hit with dozens of bottles. Many community residents joined in the resistance, throwing objects from windows and firing fireworks at police. When police finally recaptured 541, three hours later, it was empty. Police then proceeded to break into 539, where they made arrests. Police forced their way into many neighboring buildings, threatening and brutalizing dozens of community residents.

Currently, the city is barred from beginning any construction at the site. A police-state presence on the block has been maintained since the May 30th evictions. Squatters vow not only to continue the struggle to defend the remaining buildings but to reclaim those lost. The legal case is still being heard in State Supreme Court. ★



June 3 - "Revenge of the 13th Street Squatters"

Photo: Barbara Lee

Panther on the Prowl:

A Review of "Panther"

THE DECLINE OF THE PANTHERS



Lil' Bobby Hutton policing the pigs.

BY MATTHEW QUEST

Recognition of the revolutionary dynamic of Black nationalism and the promotion of a program to mobilize and organize the Black community around its nationalistic demands are the touchstone of revolutionary action in the Black community. Is exploring all of this too much to ask of a film?

I FEARED THE WORST

Most fictionalized historical documentaries have in general the following characteristics: poor chronological arrangement; the creation of characters and occurrence of which there are no historical record; selective highlighting and omission from the historical record; and speculative political implications and judgements at the discretion of the authors.

Spike Lee's "Malcolm X" reduced Malcolm's story to a militant after-school special. Juvenile delinquent, through discipline and education, becomes the most militant spokesman of his race. One leaves with the impression that you too can become a threat to the government by converting to Islam, "the true Black man's religion," not once but twice, as well as by perfecting your technique of "Mau-Mauing" The White Man. An explanation of Malcolm's actual program to organize and mobilize the Black community, his changing attitudes regarding whites, and his statements connecting racism with capitalism are left out. Likewise, his disclosure that in 1960 and 1961 he had been instructed by Elijah Muhammad, leader of The Nation of Islam, to facilitate alliances with the KKK and the American Nazi Party is omitted, as well as Malcolm's personal associations, before and after he left the NOI with Fidel Castro and Che Guevara. All I know is that after he came back from Mecca, Spike snuffed him out quicker than Louis Farrakhan could "create the climate" for his death.

When I sat down to watch "Panther," I was just hoping that the Digable Planets' prediction on their first album wouldn't come true: that in the retro, Black popular culture flava', the Black Panther Party would be reduced to a cartoon.

Isaac Hayes can have his own "900" number without distorting the value of his "revolutionary program." M.C. Hammer a pimp? Why not? The Jackson 5 would have dreads? OK, but first they'd have to start bald like Isaac Hayes. However, if Huey Newton was reduced to "Baby Huey," an oversized duck who doesn't know his own strength and conveniently slips on a banana peel to impose his whole weight on Porky Pig in a cop costume, that would be intolerable. Thankfully I was pleasantly surprised by "Panther." It was no "Malcolm X."

"PANTHER" PRETTY FAITHFUL

The basic history is left intact by the film. The Black Panther Party (BPP) was started in 1966 by Huey Newton and Bobby Seale, who were students at Merritt College in Oakland, Calif. Eldridge Cleaver, who lived

in San Francisco, joined shortly after. During the initial period they operated chiefly as a self-defense group in the Bay Area, protesting police brutality and supporting the right of Blacks to bear arms. It was during this period that they developed their 10-point program, centered around Black control of the Black community.

This program was a good beginning toward the development of the kind of broader revolutionary program that, if carried out through mass struggles for community control of the schools, police, and other institutions of the Black community, could have led to a big step forward for the Black liberation struggle. The logic of such a struggle would have been a mass Black political movement independent of the Republican and Democratic parties. The potential for such mass organization was shown in 1968, when the Panthers rapidly expanded on a national scale, recruiting thousands of members and setting up dozens of chapters.

Mario and Melvin Van Peebles weave selected highlights of documentary footage with fictionalized depictions of the implementation of concrete strategies and tactics of liberation that could conceivably be implemented by audience members.

Mao, Marx and Fanon are among the authors of books the Panthers are shown reading in the film. Fliers are passed out on the street. Fundraising for accumulation of firearms and prisoner support work is shown through sales of the party paper, Mao's "Little Red Book", and hosting community gatherings. Their social programs, such as the breakfast program and the Panther school, are depicted. Their armed intervention in instances of police brutality is portrayed. The contradictions in the conditions African-Americans face in the US are portrayed through the eyes of a Black Vietnam veteran back from the on-going war. Belief in God and non-violent philosophy are questioned. Capitalism is critiqued.

CREATIVE OMISSIONS

The filmmakers carefully avoid criticizing the Panther Party's political contemporaries who are still alive and active today. There is no mention of Angela Davis (now a prominent member of the Committees of Correspondence, the recent "youth" split from the Communist Party USA) or George Jackson and the Soledad Brother case. There is no mention of Ron "Maulana" Karenga's United Slaves organization, members of which assassinated BPP members on the UCLA campus during their fight to control the newly implemented Black studies program in Jan. 1969. Karenga, the creator of the African-American holiday Kwanzaa, is a key figure in what is known as Afrocentrism today. Also absent is a depiction of Bobby Seale bound and gagged at the Chicago 7 trial (8, including him). No visits by Huey to Cuba or China are depicted. Neither are the later campaign for the Democratic ticket by Bobby Seale and Elaine Brown, for mayor of Oakland and city council respectively, depicted.

Women are marginalized in the movie

"Panther," save for one flash of recruits who explain to Bobby Seale and others that they want equality as members of the party. This is contrasted to the clear subordination of women in the cultural nationalist organization referred to as the "Punk" Panthers, which relegated women to being servants to the men. But except for the uneasy moment when Seale welcomes the recruits to the BPP with a smile, that's all the women's liberation the movie has to offer. This is the scene that is paraded through the music video "Freedom," a sound-track song performed by a cross-section of female hip-hop all-stars.

While machismo was rampant in this film, overt homophobia (and homosexuality) were non-existent. There is no mention of Huey Newton's noble but inadequate attempt at leadership on the question, nor Eldridge Cleaver's wretched perspective on such matters (read what Eldridge says about James Baldwin in Soul on Ice).

An omission that obscures the history is the portrayal of Eldridge Cleaver as responsible for Lil' Bobby Hutton's death at the hands of the police. Eldridge and Bobby Seale are shown as having a debate about the strategy of "picking up the gun." Later, Eldridge advocates an offensive attack against the police in retaliation for their constant persecution.



Panthers serving the people

Historically, this occurred during the week of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The two separate accounts of the incident written by Cleaver himself prove inconclusive. The Panthers were clearly in disarray as to whether or not to attack the police, both in the film and in reality.

Historically, Lil' Bobby was killed the night before a planned outdoor barbecue that had been much maligned by the authorities. The film fuses together a small ambush of some police cars a couple nights earlier, which in fact went off without any difficulty, with the ambush of Cleaver, Hutton, and others the night before the barbecue.

Cleaver is portrayed largely as an outsider who could capture the attention of the rank and file with chants of "Fuck Ronald Reagan" the then governor of California. Cleaver was no more of an ego-maniac than Huey Newton, and the two are sometimes cast as leaders of the major split in the BPP between "ultra-leftism" and "reformism." Despite the effort at labeling them, Newton's early confrontational dealings with the police and later cozy dealings with the Democratic Party, combined with Cleaver's presidential candidacy on the ticket of the Peace and Freedom Party, prove they could easily change labels.

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Anarcho-Pantherista

BY ASHANTI OMOWALI

In the Black Panther Party, when someone said, "Power to the People!" the response would be "ALL Power to the People!" After many years of political imprisonment, employing the easy-to-use Malcolm-Eldridge Educational Supercharger, that call/response would take on more anarchistic meaning. This is about my experience in the now as an anarchist (a baby one) within a generally hierarchical Panther formation.

It was just this year, Jan. 1995, that I decided to publicly identify myself as anarchist. In playing around I came up with a term to identify me fully: @narcho-pantherista (thinking about the word Sandinista, ha!). Though, just in fun, I decided to keep it. It's me. Silly, anarchistic, for real.

As a politically active teen in the '60s, making it through that magnificent and turbulent time, I was ready when me and my Comrade (Jihad Abdul Mumit, now a POW in Lewisburg Stalag, Penn.) were first attracted to that image of Huey and Bobby, Black-bereted, black-jacketed, black on down to the boots. And strapped! Panthers. Yeah, let's check them out.

Our nationalist and rebel politics began to evolve into something more revolutionary and focused. We learned ideology, organization, preparation, comradeship, daring. Once I began to get the picture, I was convinced: Panther revolution, lumpen-proletariat, urban guerrilla warfare, Serve the People survival programs, *Wretched of the Earth*, "L'il Red Book," Panther sistas in leading functions, Victory...

In short, the Panthers helped me into "the process of becoming," as to what a revolutionary dedicated to freedom, freedom, and more freedom was all about. One must never stop learning and growing and working for the People.

My 12+ years on the Malcolm-Eldridge Supercharger led me, in prison, to further my learning and understanding of so many things: Wilhelm Reich and the Frankfurt School of psychology, various schools of radical feminist thought and critique, and Paulo Freire's methodology of community education and empowerment. And James Boggs kept me grounded in the power of the Black underclass in Babylon. In all, I was not only learning some heavy shit, but I was being challenged to give up certain old ways, beliefs, and mind-sets that were backwards and anti-revolutionary.

At some point, while in the Marion stalag, a Panther and a stone-cold Sicilian revolutionary threw some anarchist literature on me. Got to tell the truth though, my Marxist-Leninist-Maoist teachings had already biased me against the shit. So I was quite reluctant to really check it out. But it helped that I loved them Brothers. Funny thing is, when you locked down in segregation for months and done read every mutha-fuckin' thing else, you get bored. After a while, you'll pick up and read toilet paper! What happened was that I did read the shit and regardless of what my Marxist-Leninist-Maoist authorities had said against it, this anarchism was raising some good points.

As I relaxed my mind-set, I learned more. Combined with the insights of the more progressive and radical psychologies and feminist critiques, things that I had experienced in the past and my understanding of movement history began to look different. Structure, sexism, authoritarian peer pressure against individuality, spontaneity, creativity and love. Come to find out that this

guy named Bakunin had some valid criticisms of the god Marx, and Kropotkin was deep in Lenin's shit and Marxist revolution wasn't the only way to go.

Years before (before my kapture in '74), another Panther, Frankie Ziths had given me a mimeographed thing on the anarchist Makhno and his forces and their foul treatment by the Bolsheviks. Couldn't handle it then, but now 15 years later I read it again and again. Frankie was like that—very, very critical thinker. No respecter of titles. Practice counts. My Comrade passed before I could say thanks.

Anarchism came to mean the same long-range objective held by my revolutionary nationalist movement and the general radical movement as far as evolving or creating a communist society. The anarchist differed in terms of *how* to do it. Anarchism said, "Let's promote the People's self-directing and self-governing capacities now." Don't need no authoritarian political parties acting like parental control-freaks. People got brains. Remember, that's where we come from. "Have Faith in the People, Have Faith in the Party," say the Marxist-Leninist-Maoists. No! "Have Faith in the People" and let it stand. If any individual or group got something to offer from their experiences, expertise or "higher" learnings, then let the relationship to the People in struggle be one of facilitation, and not this arrogant leadership.

Mind-set from the old school is a mutha-fucka. There are times when new knowledge can be so powerful that the learner experiences a sense of being overwhelmed. How do I convey all this so that it can be of help to others individually and organizationally. My concern? We gotta win. But only the People's full participation can bring true victory. And the People are real individual human beings, like me—with brains, desires, fears, angers, dreams, etc. Before coming out of prison in '85 I made a personal vow to never ignore this. I was coming out bringing my learnings in psychology, feminism, and anarchism. They were now a part of me.

The Black Panther Collective was formed about a year ago as a result of people in the slave quarters seeing the Black Panther newspaper. Many expressed an interest in the activities of the Black Panther Newspaper Committee, a formation of former members of the BPP. These mainly young brothas and sistas expressed a desire to wanna work Revolution in their respective slave quarters and do it in the spirit of the Panther as they understood it. So, BPNC/NY decided to call up them numbers and set the process going. I am proud to say that most of the ones who first stepped forward are still with the process. They're baaad and are revolutionaries after our own hearts, as indicated by the fact that we fight all the time (because they got minds of their own!). They wanted two things from us: (1) to be involved in community work, including political prisoner work, and (2) P.E., political education, including BP history and style of practice. We were more than happy to provide both. But this was, and still is, no easy process, because they demanded Leadership! Anarchism has taught me to pay particular attention to this concept and its political dangers to individuality, spontaneity, creativity, and the overall health and welfare of the Revolution for a truly free society.

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The Continuing Appeal of Anti-Imperialism

[Settlers: Mythology of the White Proletariat, J. Sakai, Morning Star Press, 178 pp., \$8.95, \$4.00 for prisoners, from: Cooperative Distribution Services, Box 77542, National Capitol Station, Washington, DC 20013]

BY KUWASI BALAGOON

Great works measure up, inspire higher standards of intellectual and moral honesty, and, when appreciated for what they are, serve as a guide for those among us who intend a transformation of reality. *Settlers, the Mythology of the White Proletariat* caused quite a stir in the anti-imperialist white left and among nationalists of the Third World nations within the confines of the US empire as well as anarchists and Moslems of this hemisphere. In short, among all of us who are ready and willing to smash or dismantle the empire, for whatever reasons, and whatever reasoning. This is in spite of the fact that it is a Marxist work, because it isn't out of the stale, sterile, mechanical mode of the vulgar sap-rap that has carried that label.

Its historical recounting of the sequence of horrors perpetrated against non-white people, from the beginning of Babylon to the recent past, has not been discounted publicly, to my knowledge, by anyone, including the cheap-shot artist who offered an underhanded review of it in the Fifth Estate called "The Continuing Appeal of Nationalism." [Editor's Note: This review was written by the late Freddy Perlman, and is also available as a pamphlet.] *Mythology* should serve as a reminder (to anyone who needs one), of the genocidal tendencies of the empire, the traitorous interplay between settler-capitalist, settler-nondescript, and colonial flunkies. The flaws and short-comings of the IWW, which marked the highest point of revolutionary conscientiousness among whites here, the fraud carried on by the Communist Party USA, and assorted other

persistent offenders of common sense and common decency. To my amazement, a couple of white anti-imperialists I know had started the book without finishing, complaining that it was old hat, but I've heard nothing particularly new from them and I suggest that they take special note of detail, and I'll remind them that this work is so accurate as to be able to serve as files on people who will say anything to support a position that doesn't support real action.

Not being one to take figures verbatim without cross-checking, and believing that class struggle or war within the white oppressor nation would be a prerequisite for complete victory of the captive New African, Mexicano, Native and Puerto Rican nations, I decided to cross-check with the most authoritative work available to me and perhaps anyone, *The Rich and the Super Rich* by Ferdinand Lundberg. This was necessary, I felt, in order to get a clear picture of the material conditions of white folks. This in order to investigate white Americans' interest in revolution. Professor Lundberg used two graphs to illustrate his point: "Most Americans—citizens of the wealthiest, most powerful and most ideal-swathed country in the world—by a very wide margin own nothing more than their twin household goods, a few glittering gadgets such as automobiles and television sets (usually purchased on installment plans, many at second hand) and the clothes on their backs. A horde, if not a majority, of Americans live in shacks, cabins, hovels, shanties, hand-me-down Victorian eyesores, rickety tenements and flaky apartment buildings..."

The second and third tables help us to make things out a bit clearer; it shows that 25.8% of households had less than \$1,000 to their collective names and the third showing us that 28% of all consumer units had a net under or less than \$100. With 11% with a deficit and 5% holding at zero,

(Continued to page 25)



In the service of imperialism

The Oklahoma City Bombing

BY TOM BURGHARDT,
BAY AREA COALITION FOR
OUR REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

The political context for the bombing of the Oklahoma City federal building, can be deciphered through a careful reading of key Christian Patriot texts. The bombing is almost a textbook case of what Aryan Nations/KKK leader, Louis Beam has termed "leaderless resistance" or "phantom cell" doctrine.

LEADERLESS RESISTANCE

Leaderless resistance is a paramilitary strategy that will immunize the leadership from prosecution on the one hand, while allowing the cell an unlimited operational range on the other hand.

According to Wisconsin's Free Militia, a paramilitary organization with ties to anti-

least as far as this essay is concerned) all members of phantom cells or individuals will tend to react to objective events in the same way through usual tactics of resistance. Organs of information distribution such as newspapers, leaflets, computers, etc., which are widely available to all, keep each person informed of events, allowing for a planned response that will take many variations. No one need issue an order to anyone." (Beam, op. cit.)

ANTI-ABORTION TERRORISM

To a lesser degree and on a smaller scale, factions within the direct action anti-abortion movement have systematically applied Louis Beam's "leaderless resistance" or "phantom cell" doctrine for a number of years. The relative successes of their pursuit of terrorism as a means of effecting political

Leaderless Resistance

nature of fascist organizations have resolved this contradiction in a number of unique ways. For example, international and domestic fascist groupings utilize legal, above-ground organizing in combination with illegal, underground terrorist cells that attack opponents, and sharpen contradictions within class society.

The relationship between the terrorist Combat 18 group to the British National Party (BNP) is instructive in this regard. On the one hand, the BNP functions like any other political party; it distributes propaganda, recruits prospective members, and organizes around sharply-focused campaigns such as opposition to immigration. Combat 18, the BNP's loosely-affiliated terrorist front, attacks opponents, repeated attempts to infiltrate and break up Leftist marches, compiles data on vocal opponents and organizations, physically attacking their opponents on the street, in their homes, etc.

Leaderless resistance is but one of a constellation of methodologies used by fascism to achieve political goals. While we can say that the majority of adherents of Christian Patriot groups would oppose the Oklahoma City bombing, the net effect of terror, sharpen the social/political contradictions within capitalist society and strengthen the call for authoritarian, State solutions (i.e. political repression) on all fronts.

GROWING FASCISM

As a political methodology, a fascist "strategy of tension" relies on the psychological effects of terror to magnify the localized effects of severe loss of life so that, like a stone hurled into a pool of water, shock-waves ripple from the epicenter of the attack to the furthest reaches of the State.

While Christian Patriots and other far-right forces in the U. S. are a minute proportion of the population, the underpinnings of Patriot ideology has struck a receptive cord among millions of Americans.

The ideological fervor of thousands of "state citizens" and "freemen," and their willingness to resort to violence to achieve their political goals, spring from the same sources as the white supremacist and neo-Nazi movements throughout North America: race hatred, anti-Semitism, violent xenophobia, and their desire to create a (white) fundamentalist "Christian Republic" in the United States.

The same can be said of the demonizing rhetoric freely disseminated by "mainstream" politicians in both capitalist parties. This does not mean that the Republican Party's "Contract With America," is a "fascist" document. It does mean, however, that the draconian solutions it proposes in terms



Timothy McVeigh

armed racists, queerbashers, anti-Semites, advocates of "state citizenship," "Wise Use" movement attacks on environmental activists and the demonizing rhetoric of the far-right's paranoid conspiracism. Though these so-called "fringe elements" have been identified as potential, and actual, sources of terrorist violence, these warnings have largely gone unheeded, even within Socialist and leftist circles.

As long as the victims themselves were "marginal" in the eyes of "mainstream media" and terrorist industry "experts," domestic right-wing terror could easily be consigned to the back pages; a quick plunge down Orwell's memory hole would do the rest.

THE RIGHT'S SELF-FULFILLING PROPHECY

Apparently, the self-fulfilling prophecies of the Christian Patriots and their phantom war against the capitalist "New World Order" have come to pass, with terrifying and tragic results. What will follow, is anyone's guess.

The massacre in Oklahoma City, however, did not emerge from a political vacuum. The Christian Patriot movement in general, and individual Militia units in particular, have circulated training manuals that rely almost exclusively on leaderless resistance.

Three years ago, in the aftermath of the Ruby Ridge stand-off in 1992 [a stand-off between federal agents and white supremacist Randy Weaver, during which Weaver's son and wife were shot and killed by the feds], a hastily convened meeting of the emerging Patriot movement was held in Colorado. Sponsored by Christian Identity leader, Rev. Pete Peters, and his "Scriptures for America" organization, the conclave sought to formulate a strategy to combat the "New World Order." Many observers point to this meeting as a key factor leading to the subsequent rise of the armed Militia Movement.

According to the ("Special Report on the



The Future of America is in their hands

abortion leader, Rev. Matthew Trehwella, the founder of Missionaries to the Preborn, and a National Committee member of Howard Phillips' United States Taxpayers Party, the cell structure is the most efficacious method for carrying out operations.

"We use the term 'cell,' because a cell is the basic building block in any living organism. Just as all life, growth, and reproduction is based on living cells, all Militia 'life' is centered around its cells. The identities of cell members are known only within the cell and by their immediate superior. All basic training is done within a cell. All codes, passwords, and telephone networks are determined and held in confidence within the cell. All fortified positions are determined, prepared and concealed by the cell. All combat orders are executed by the cell as the cell sees fit within its own context. So the Free Militia IS its cells." (emphasis in original, "Field Manual Section 1," op. cit., p. 78)

The cell structure of the Free Militia is further diversified so as to ensure specialization of function in combination with tight security precautions. These four-fold differentiations within the organization are: 1. Command, 2. Combat, 3. Support, and 4. Communiqué cells.

To facilitate their efficient capacity as an urban or rural fighting team, "Combat cells provide the patrolling and fighting capability of the Free Militia. Each cell consists of about eight able-bodied 'minutemen' with its own leader, communications, rendezvous points, staging areas and standing orders. They execute the orders of their command cells and do all their own training within the combat cell itself. They are the 'arms' of the Free Militia." (ibid., p. 80)

Regarding the "phantom cell" type organization and any potential response by paramilitary activists, Louis Beam writes:

"Since the entire purpose of Leaderless Resistance is to defeat state tyranny (at

change has come at a price, however. As anti-abortion violence has increased, the political fall-out for the movement has led to a steep, precipitous decline in public support and the mobilization of their constituents.

In other words, while the dialectics of terrorist praxis will increase the visibility of "the cause" in the public's mind, it also sharpens the inherent contradictions as well as factional disputes within the movement's support base. This process is underway within the direct action anti-abortion movement. I would hazard a guess and say that a similar process will take place within the broader Christian Patriot and Militia movement as a result of Wednesday's bomb attack.

However, it should be noted that the "Army of God" and anti-abortion groups allied with Christian Patriot militias and political parties are far less concerned with winning support or creating mass organizations than they are with destroying women's access to reproductive health-care. Anti-abortion terrorism in this case, is a tactic tied to a broader strategy of diminishing reproductive health-care to the vanishing point.

In this respect, anti-abortion recourse to terrorism as a tactical modality for waging low-intensity warfare, has been successful. Why is this the case?

As the pool of abortion providers begin to shrink due to escalating terror, those who continue to work in the field are subject to increasing levels of psychological and actual violence. Inevitably, the pressures and stresses have led some abortion providers to throw in the towel. Abortion remains "legal"; however, women find it increasingly difficult to obtain. Terror in the case of anti-abortion violence is sharply-focused on an immediate goal.

FASCIST POLITICS AND TERRORISM

While this presents far-right political parties with obvious problems, the dual-tier



Kalamazoo, Michigan, May 1995

of the role of the State and civil society, calls for rapid privatization in all social spheres save one – the State's immense repressive police and military apparatus.

Left and Progressive researchers have pointed to the severe danger posed by the convergence of anti-abortion extremists,

Meeting Held in Estes Park, Colorado, October 23, 24, 25 1992 During the Killing of Vickie and Samuel Weaver By The United States Government," more than 160 leaders of the Christian Identity and

(Continued to page 8)

Oklahoma: Home-Grown Hate

(Continued from page 1)

policies of free trade (for American goods anyway), reduction or abolition of welfare, bigger prisons, and an infatuation with judicial murder as a solution for America's social problems. That leaves the Republicans, especially the wing represented by figures such as Newt Gingrich and Pete Wilson, as the legal wing of a massive far-right surge in American politics.

The Oklahoma City bombing served to highlight these new political facts quite clearly. Immediately after the bombing, word was put out that foreigners, most likely Muslims, were responsible for the act. Clinton encouraged this interpretation by referring to the blast as "an attack on America." In some parts of the US, racist mobs harassed immigrants of Middle Eastern origin. In one case, a woman of Arab origin, whose house was surrounded by an angry mob, had a miscarriage due to fright. Immediately, both parties seized the opportunity created by the hysteria to demand more stringent measures against "subversive" groups, a code phrase for cracking down on immigrant groups, especially those persons associated with groups that oppose US policy in the Middle East.

eroded. Indeed, the process has moved on to the white-collar sector. Increasingly large numbers of young white-collar workers are finding themselves in temporary employment, in employment with little chance of promotion, and unemployed.

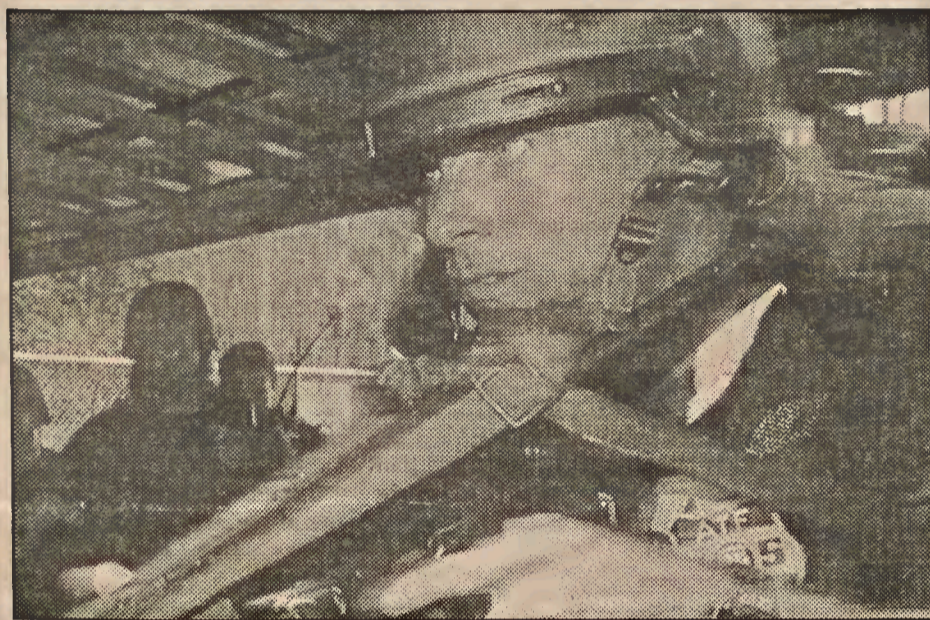
Thus, as the government moves to protect capital, and demolish the gains made by blue-collar and white-collar labor, the would-be leaders of the mass movements on the right provide scapegoats to divert attention from the sleight of hand. Fear of immigrants, Blacks, and others, feeds the growth of this disease. Anti-abortion attitudes and religious fundamentalism are other common ingredients. Often the poor are told that their lack of work discipline is to blame for the US's fall from glory.

NEO-IMPERIALISM

But this development of right-wing demagoguery is not limited to domestic policy. Indeed, as the anti-Arab and anti-Muslim rants that filled the airways after the bombing indicate, the new right has a big part to play in neo-imperialism. The honeymoon of the end of the Cold War is long since over. Clearly, many of America's policy makers have concluded that since they rep-



Angry white men at Waco



"Consolidating Neo-colonialism: the ATF disciplines angry white men."

Of course, it turned out in the end that no immigrant was responsible for the explosion. In fact, the culprits appear to have come from the ranks of the white right. Here we come to the other aspect of the current shift in American politics. While the government is doing everything it can to protect US capital, using such tactics as threatening a trade war with Japan, the privileges that were enjoyed by the white, generally male workers are being swiftly

resent the world's only super-power, they should be able to impose their will on the rest of the world with impunity.

One case that exposes the arrogance and hypocrisy of this position came up at the recent conference to extend the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty for good. The US took a hard line on Iran's apparent attempts to obtain nuclear materials, but backed Israel's right not only to possess nuclear weapons, but to not even place its

installations under international inspection. The US even prevented an Arab attempt to have Israel mentioned at all in the proceedings.

At the time, the US administration continues to brand everyone who opposes its Middle East policies as "terrorists." After the Oklahoma City bombing, much was made of the possibility of nuclear terrorism, possibly sponsored by foreign powers. The connection was supposed to be clear: US hegemony requires suppression of foreign opponents, not only abroad, but also at home. More and more, American and European academics have begun to produce works linking immigration and terrorism, especially of Middle Eastern origin. To give but one example, Arab immigrants in France are often accused of constituting a breeding ground for terrorism in Europe, despite the fact that it is the far right that terrorizes the immigrants, and not vice-versa. After Oklahoma City, the first connection made by most of the media was with the World Trade Center bombing, itself an event whose circumstances are highly murky. The bigotry of the right's mass propaganda is backed up by pseudo-scholarship, such as Harvard professor Samuel Huntington's well known article about the "clash of civilizations." According to this version of the current political conjuncture, enlightened Western civilization is threatened by the competitive power of Confucian and Islamic civilizations. Thus the future lies in civilizational conflict, not class conflict.

It should be noted that the past five years has seen an increasingly obvious tendency on the part of the US to enforce its will by direct application of force, i.e. neo-colonialism. Unlike much of what is commonly called neo-colonialism, however, this policy actually means the establishment of occupation forces or outposts in foreign countries, especially the Middle East. The most obvious example of this is Iraq, which was not only humbled during the Gulf War, but is still under occupation. Other US bases are now being established and reinforced throughout the region, especially in the Gulf countries.

The pursuit of a policy of direct colonialism raises several questions. For one, one wonders how long the other major powers of the world, such as Germany and Japan, will continue to sit back and watch the US extend its influence. As economic competition between these states grows more intense, the temptation to secure their own interests abroad may increase, leading to multi-lateral international competition for influence, and even outright control of markets and resources in smaller and poorer countries. It is not impossible that we are witnessing the rebirth of imperialism.

In addition, the aggressive military policy of the US has ramifications for domestic politics. To some degree, domestic constituencies influence these policy decisions in the first place. In the case of the Middle East, for example, the importance of the Jewish vote and of Jewish campaign con-

tributions for the upcoming presidential elections have played an important role in the US's formation of policies vis-à-vis Iran and Israel which are not popular even with the US's European allies.

Furthermore, militarism abroad feeds the right wing at home. If the anti-Muslim attitudes expressed after the bombing do not drive this point home, one can always cite the fact that the prime suspect in the bombing is a veteran of the Gulf War. For him, the connection between America's hegemony abroad and the mission of the right at home was more than clear.

ANTI-IMPERIALISM

Those of us who make up the revolutionary left must face up to certain facts. For one, there is one, and only one, mass movement in the US today, and it is virulently right wing. Furthermore, foreign allies on the left are few and far between today. The collapse suffered by the American left is merely part of a worldwide shift in political formations that the right has engineered with remarkable success. This means that there is no point waiting for revolution to break out elsewhere. While a few cases, such as Mexico, seem more promising, ultimately the central position occupied by American capital and the American state means that the struggle at home will inevitably turn into an international struggle. So long as American capital's fortress remains unbreached, other revolutionary movements will remain prisoners of the overwhelming force the US commands.

The relationship between militarism and domestic oppression should now be clear. This relationship applies not only to the Middle East, but also to Latin America. If, as some have predicted, Mexico has a "long, hot summer," the current anti-immigrant drive in the southwest of the US will probably be joined by increasing calls to intervene in Mexico's affairs. As the peso crisis revealed, US economic stability is now closely entwined with the Mexican economic and political regime.

The recognition of the enormity of these problems leads one to realize that the inherited politics of civil rights and anti-racism are not enough. The problem is not limited to groups of hooded Klansmen and neo-nazi skinheads, it is far more pervasive than that. The Oklahoma City bombers did not come out of the "mainstream" of the right-wing movement. But the orgy of hatred and repression that followed in the wake of the bombing should make us realize that the enemy has set up camp in our factories, offices, and in the organs of the state. They have many means available to them that are far more politically effective than a fertilizer bomb. The resort to terrorism reveals the weakness of the most extreme wing of the right, but this shouldn't fool us. The agenda of the right continues to rule the day. Oklahoma City was just the beginning.★

We Shut 'em Down: Nazis Routed in St. Paul

BY JOEL

A neo-nazi skinhead concert scheduled to take place on May 20 in St. Paul was cancelled after the combined efforts of Anti-Racist Action (ARA), various independent activists, and community members of West St. Paul forced the police to cancel the show.

TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALLGAME

Members of ARA were tipped off about the show in mid-March and began organizing against it immediately. Because nazis know the public will shut their shows down if they know about them, they have to keep the address of the gig a secret until the day of the show.

They discreetly distributed fliers telling fellow white supremacists to meet at Mounds Park in St. Paul between noon and 6:00 P.M. to pick up tickets and a map to the hall where the gig would take place.

Anti-racist activists got a hold of the flier, obtained a permit to use the park, and held an anti-racist picnic all day in order to occupy the place where the gig organizers wanted to hand out their maps. When carloads of nazis showed up from all over the Midwest, thinking they would get a map

and tickets to their rally, they were met by a crowd of 100 anti-racists led by a "baseball team" who quickly disinvited from the park any nazis who showed up. Not one nazi got out of their car the whole day. There were no fights, and despite hoards of cops, no arrests, either.

A BEAUTIFUL DAY IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

But the fun had just begun. Three days before the gig, members of Anti-Racist Action got a tip that the show was going to happen at Smith Avenue Hall in West St. Paul. Members immediately met with the owner and confirmed that the nazis had indeed booked the hall (they lied and told the owner they were having a birthday party). We urged the owner to cancel the gig. Although somewhat sympathetic, he refused to cancel the show, citing legal and financial obligations.

So we hit the streets the next day. Members of ARA went to the community surrounding the hall, fliering homes and cars and knocking on doors, talking to anyone who was home. We let people

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Oklahoma City Bombing

(Continued from page 6)

Christian Right movements came together to denounce the murders at Ruby Ridge. Peters' "Special Report," published Beam's "Leaderless Resistance" text in its entirety.

Key racist and Patriot leaders who attended the summit included anti-Semite, Red Beckman; Aryan Nations leader, Louis Beam; Aryan Nations founder, Richard Butler; Larry Pratt of Gun Owners of America; Christian Patriot leader, Frank Isabell; New Mexico Identity figure, Earl Jones; and Charles A. Weisman, a racist publisher and author whose book, "America: Free, White and Christian," is a source for much of the Patriot movement's racist theories of "state citizenship."

Other key figures involved in the rise of the Militia Movement who have been central players in the Pete Peters/Christian Patriot network, include retired Lt. Col. James "Bo" Gritz and retired Phoenix Police officer, Jack McLamb.

Gritz has gone on since the Estes Park meeting to create what he terms "Specially Prepared Individuals for Key Events" training seminars or SPIKE teams. Gritz, who denies that he is a racist, was the Populist Party candidate for President in 1992.

The Populist Party was a political vehicle for the far-right that was founded by anti-Semitic publisher, Willis Carto, the director of the Liberty Lobby. "The Spotlight," the Liberty Lobby's flagship publication regularly features reports on the Militia Movement as well as "exposes" on the capitalist "New World Order."

Jack McLamb is the director of an outfit called Police Against the New World Order (PATNWO). McLamb is a far-rightist and author of "Operation Vampire Killer 2000," a book filled with crack-pot conspiracism and paranoia. However, the "mission" of McLamb's organization is the active recruitment of police and military personnel to far-right groups and organizations. McLamb calls on police and the military to aid the efforts of Christian Patriots. (for further background on McLamb see, "Patriot Games: Jack McLamb & Citizen Militias, 1994, Coalition for Human Dignity, Portland, OR)

The fiery apocalypse visited on the Branch Davidians by the FBI and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms in Waco, Texas on April 19, 1993, only fueled the paranoid conspiracism of the far-right and further accelerated the rise of the Militia Movement. According to published reports, the bombing of the Oklahoma City federal building was meant as a retaliatory strike by a Christian Patriot militia cell for the destruction of the Branch Davidians.

There is no justification on any level whatsoever, for the hideous truck bombing in Oklahoma City. However, the paranoid conspiracism of an armed militia cell allegedly connected to the Michigan Militia, was fueled in part, by the criminal handling of the Branch Davidian stand-off in Waco. Failure to analyze the political, and what one can only term mythological, underpinnings of Patriot ideology, will only lead to confusion as to their motives. While their terrorist act is reprehensible, it was hardly the work of

"crazed" individuals. These were people who were trained, organized and motivated to carry out a monstrous act of political revenge.

THE MILITIA MOVEMENT

The origins of the contemporary Christian Patriot and Militia Movement is racist and fascist to the core. The fascistic political views of Peters, Beckman, Gritz, Beam, the Trochmann's and McLamb are also key ideological components of "mainstream" Militia groups.

The Michigan Militia was founded in April 1994. The key figures in the organization are Rev. Norman Olsen, a Baptist minister, abortion foe and ex-military man and "intelligence specialist," Mark Koernke. According to reports, the Michigan Militia is the largest and best organized faction in the country. It is claimed that approximately 12,000 people are members of the Michigan Militia.

Koernke's broadcasts originate from Nashville, Tennessee and are carried by shortwave radio station, WWCR. The "Intelligence Report" is transmitted daily. Transcripts appear regularly on the Internet; posted by John DiNardo's "The People's Spellbreaker" can be found on the following Usenet newsgroups: <alt.conspiracy>, <talk.politics.guns>, <misc.survivalism> and <alt.politics.usa.constitution>. The content is a standard mix of far-right conspiracy theories, reports of ubiquitous sightings of "black helicopters," and other sundry items of interest to Christian Patriots.

Koernke travels around the country, appearing at "Preparedness Expos," and has been a key popularizer of the Militia Movement. The Michigan Militia, however, is hardly the "mainstream" group that Norman Olsen would have us believe.

When asked by reporters whether McVeigh or Terry Lynn Nichols, who surrendered to federal authorities Friday in Herington, Kansas, or his brother, James Douglas Nichols, had any involvement with the Michigan Militia, Commander Olsen said: "Not that we know of." Olsen also denied that the Michigan Militia had anything to do with the Oklahoma bombing: "We denounce the entire incident as an act of barbarity. It's totally alien to everything we believe. We are totally defensive. We do not engage in terrorism. We do not believe in answering the tyrant brutality with more brutality." (Robert D. McFadden, "Links in Blast: Armed Militia And a Key Date," *New York Times*, Saturday, April 22, 1995, p. 1)

Last year however, three members of the Michigan Militia were arrested in Fowlerville, 25 miles east of Lansing, Michigan's capital, after their car was found to contain "700 rounds of ammunition, loaded rifles, night-vision goggles and other military-type gear." (David Willman, Richard A. Serrano, Ralph Frammolino, Paul Feldman and Eric Lichtblau, "Facing the Fear of an Enemy From Within," *Los Angeles Times*, Saturday, April 22, 1995, p. 1)

While the three Michigan Militia members failed to appear for their arraignment, "30 to 40" uniformed militia members did show up in court. According to Fowlerville chief of police, Gary Krause, the militiamen taunted police with threats of future violence. (Willman, et. al., *ibid.*, p. A18)

MOM AND APPLE PIE

Another faction within the Christian Patriot network with close ties to Olsen and Koernke, is the Militia of Montana (MOM). "Taking Aim," MOM's newsletter printed the following announcement on the significance of April 19: "1. April 19, 1775: Lexington burned; 2. April 19, 1943: Warsaw burned; 3. April 19, 1992: The fed's attempted to raid Randy Weaver, but had their plans thwarted when concerned citizens arrived on the scene with supplies for the Weaver family totally unaware of what was to take place; 4. April 19, 1993: The Branch Davidians burned; 5. April 19, 1995: Richard Snell will be executed." (Robert D. McFadden, op. cit., p. 8)

white supremacist compound on at least four or five occasions.

LEADERLESS RESISTANCE, COORDINATED ACTION

If indeed Timothy McVeigh is connected to the Michigan Militia or any other far-right paramilitary outfit, the nature of these organizations contain within their essential structure, the plausible deniability necessary to protect leadership cadres from prosecution.

In this respect, Rev. Norman Olsen's denial of involvement in the murderous bombing of the Oklahoma City federal building may indeed be an accurate. Leaderless resistance doctrine not only seeks to immunize paramilitary leaders



The Unnamed Alliance

Richard Snell was a white supremacist member of the terrorist group, The Order, executed in Arkansas recently. Snell had murdered a black police officer and a Jewish businessman a decade ago. MOM's newsletter said Snell would be executed "unless we act now!!!" While the article did not call for violence to free Snell, the Trochmann family are hardly strangers to the most extreme factions of the white supremacist movement.

The Weaver shooting was the spark that led to the formation of the Militia of Montana. According to reports, in September 1992, John Trochmann helped found the United Citizens for Justice; a support group for Randy Weaver. Another steering committee member was Chris Temple, a regular writer for the racist newspaper, "Jubilee," the flagship publication of the Christian Identity movement published in California. (Daniel Junas, "Angry White Guys With Guns: The Rise of the Militias," "Covert Action Quarterly," Washington, D.C., Spring 1995, Number 52, p. 23)

While the Trochmann's deny that they're white supremacists, in 1990, MOM commander, John Trochmann was a featured speaker at Richard Butler's Aryan Nations compound in Hayden Lake, Idaho. Trochmann has admitted traveling to the

from prosecution, but forge clandestine relationships among cadres "who know what to do" when the time is ripe.

Will the fall-out from this heinous act of terror lead to the unraveling and destruction of the Christian Patriot and white supremacist militia movement, or will "true believers" react to the situation through "a planned response that will take many variations"?

One fact is certain—tens of thousands of "angry white guys" have taken it upon themselves to restore "the Crown Rights of King Jesus," by any means necessary.

Bay Area Coalition for Our Reproductive Rights
750 La Playa #730
San Francisco, CA 94121
Office: (415) 252-0750 Fax: (415) 431-6523
E-mail: <tburghardt@igc.apc.org>

For Further Information:

Robert Crawford, S.L. Gardner, Jonathan Mozzochi, R.L. Taylor, "The Northwest Imperative: Documenting A Decade of Hate," 1994, Coalition For Human Dignity, Portland, Oregon; Michael Novick, "Front Man For Fascism: 'Bo' Gritz and the Racist Populist Party," 1993, People Against Racist Terror (PART), P.O. Box 1990, Burbank, CA 91507

Shut 'em Down

(Continued from page 7)

know that a violent Nazi skinhead gang was planning on having a concert to recruit youth into their movement in their neighborhood. Naturally, the vast majority of people were very upset. We asked them to call the club owner and their city councilmen to ask them to cancel the show. Both numbers were flooded with hundreds of calls the next day. It was also obvious that many people wanted to take the streets and actively demonstrate against the nazis, so we called for a demonstration on the night of the concert.

We arrived at the hall at 7:00 to find over 200 angry community members already there. By the time 30 meek nazi skinheads entered the club to set up their equipment, almost 400 activists and neighbors were jeering them, yelling "no room

for nazis in our neighborhood!" After a couple hours, the mayor of St. Paul came (along with about 75 riot cops) and told the police to shut the show down. The nazis were hustled into a police paddy wagon and escaped through a back alley (but not before neighborhood folks chased the wagon and threw rocks at it!).

WE SHUT 'EM DOWN!

But it wasn't the cops who shut the show down, it was the demonstrators—community members, ARA, punks, anarchists, socialists, anti-racist skinheads, youth, whites, people of color, queers, etc.—who shut the show down. The mayor realized he'd have to do something or else he'd have one very angry constituency to face. People were already up in arms that the police were escorting nazis into the club and

keeping community members away from it, and at the amount of money wasted to pay for police overtime to protect a violent gang of white supremacists.

Although there were a few tensions between activists from Minneapolis and community residents, overall we worked together well. Many people thanked ARA for coming, saying that if it weren't for us they never would have known about the concert and the threat to their community.

WHO WERE THOSE NAZIS?

The show was organized by St. Paul's own Bound for Glory, one of the biggest nazi bands in the country. Also scheduled to play were two white power bands from Wisconsin and one from Germany. Last month, Bound for Glory played at a celebration for Adolph Hitler's birthday in Idaho, where militia members, Klansmen, and nazi skinheads mingled. It is the politics of bands like Bound for Glory that led to the Oklahoma City bombing, and we were having none of that in our city.

THIS IS NOT ABOUT FREE SPEECH

Contrary to what some people think, nazi gigs are not simply expressions of unpopular ideas and opinions that people are obligated to respect, if not agree with. White supremacists use these gigs as a place to recruit alienated white youth into their movement of racist violence and hatred.

This is a fact; white supremacists use the veil of free speech to conceal it. But we aren't fooled. We believe it is the responsibility of all those who care about peace and justice to exercise THEIR right to speak out against nazi organizing, and to act to stop it when possible.

Apparently, the neighborhood agreed with us. All in all, the day was a complete success. Many nazis from around the country couldn't get maps to the show, and only the bands and their roadies managed to enter the hall before the gig got cancelled. There was no violence and only two minor arrests (both released that evening).

This was a total victory for anti-racist forces in the Twin Cities.

THERE'S NO ROOM FOR NAZIS IN ANY NEIGHBORHOOD! FIGHT RACISM!

Human Life International -Your Name's a Lie!!!

BY KARL SMALL

Human Life International, a right-wing Roman Catholic organization that claims to be the largest anti-abortion group in the world, received a rough welcome in Montréal this April. Over a thousand supporters of the group were in town for its 14th World Conference on "Love, Life and the Family"; they were there to network, socialize, and listen to right-wing leaders in the battle against homosexuality, contraception, religious tolerance, and, of course, abortion. HLI's officials have been noted for their anti-Semitism, Islamaphobia, and intransigent approach to various issues associated with human sexuality.

Anarchists in Montréal found out about HLI's conference and the group's links to the far-right the same way others in this city did, when a local entertainment newspaper published a pretty good article about

choice legislation in Ireland and the Philippines. Nevertheless, HLI remains an essentially American organization, with most of its branches being in the United States, with its central headquarters in Front Royal, Virginia. As one part of its "movement building" strategy, HLI holds annual international conferences that regularly bring together homophobic, anti-abortion and other activists from the right-wing of the political spectrum. The 1995 Montréal conference is a good example of HLI's ability to tie the different issues together. Over forty "pro-life leaders" gave workshops on Catholic doctrine, the battle against sex education, abortion, and the scourge of feminism. There was a workshop about "AIDS: The Unnecessary Epidemic" by Dr. Stanley Monteith, an associate of the John Birch Society who believes that there is a conspiracy of gay activists and "sub-

cal tendency, HLI is part of a network of religious organizations well funded by certain millionaires and corporations (such as Coors and Domino's Pizza) and tied in to the military-industrial complex. (For instance, members of the Catholic right were important players within the World Anti-Communist League.)

ROUGHEST RECEPTION EVER

Other than us protesters, HLI had two major disadvantages in Montréal. The first was the mainstream media: alerted by Jewish organizations like the Canadian Jewish Congress and B'nai B'rith Canada, local journalists forced HLI to answer charges of misogyny and racism long before their conference actually began. Secondly, as an American, reactionary, religious organization, HLI was on unfriendly ground in Québec. This

tives around the world.) Such an approach helped to further discredit the organization in the eyes of most Montrealers.

So it wasn't such a surprise to see a large crowd come to protest outside of HLI's opening Mass on April 19th. Over 4,000 people came out to demonstrate, many of them having traveled from Ottawa, Sherbrooke, and Toronto. There was a strong youth and queer presence at this protest, many anarchists and communists, as well as lots of people who hadn't ever attended a demonstration before. As the HLI members filed out of Notre Dame Basilica for a candlelight march to their hotel, the crowd surged towards the police barricades, and several people started throwing bottles, picket signs, and fruit. Once the HLIers had walked safely to their hotel, under the protection of Montréal's riot police the whole way, the demonstrators were allowed to follow. There, at the hotel, there was a lot of pushing and shoving, and quite a few people got smashed with police batons. A few punks managed to trash a police van, an act that was expanded both in the local media and in anarchist gossip circles to the level of a "riot." Later in the evening, several dozen demonstrators were shoved and chased for an hour through the streets of downtown Montréal, and a half-dozen people were arrested.

As they left town several days later, Father Marx stated that his group had never before received such a rough reception. In terms of mass mobilization and education, the Ad Hoc Coalition had succeeded. Not only was there visible opposition to HLI, but through the local media the group's far-right agenda was properly exposed. However, the credit cannot all go to the Montréal feminist/left scenes. We were lucky that Planned Parenthood International had researched HLI for over a year, and was willing to share their information with us. And as has already been mentioned, HLI picked the wrong city to target if they wanted to drum up local support for their cause. Provincialism and a liberal popular culture conspired to set people against the group. Even when they did try to appeal to Québécois nationalism, by lamenting the low birthrate amongst "pure" French Canadians for instance, they made these statements in English.

NOT QUITE GETTING IT RIGHT

Just because the Ad Hoc Coalition's goal of showing public opposition to HLI was accomplished, doesn't mean that the process was without flaws, nor that it should have represented the limits of what the local left would carry out. The active opposition to HLI was limited by a strong desire to keep everything centered around the issue of women's reproductive rights.

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Photo: Carolyn

Queers vs HLI

them way back in December. By February an Ad Hoc Coalition against Human Life International had been set up, largely at the initiative of local feminist and leftist organizations. Not only did this coalition organize demonstrations against HLI, but some of us found ourselves learning a lot about the Catholic right in North America, too. One result of this process is the urge to pass on what was learnt, something I started trying to do with an article in the April/May issue of Love and Rage about Human Life International's racist and homophobic agenda. In this article I'll try to deepen the analysis a bit, and also describe exactly what went down in Montréal. In the process, perhaps a rough description of the Québec religious right can be made; although this may not be of practical use to anti-fascists living elsewhere in North America, it is useful to acknowledge and understand the way in which political movements are not homogenous, but evolve differently in different communities and "nations."

UNITE THE RIGHT

As was discussed in my previous article, HLI is an international organization whose claim to fame lies more in its ability to bring together various right-wing social movements than in its ability to mobilize thousands of people to take to the streets. Its publications are translated into several languages, and are available in 56 countries. It has the ability to "zap" a particular country at a crucial moment, and hence claims partial credit for defeating pro-

versive elements" to spread HIV and thus weaken America. Father Winfrid Pietrik, an official with the Christliche Mittel political party in Germany, was scheduled to speak on "The Moslem Threat to the World," a talk that was eventually canceled due to the bad publicity it attracted. Randall Terry, founder of Operation Rescue and an official in the pro-militia US Taxpayers Party, spoke at the conference's closing banquet, where he announced his plans to run for President, and asked conference-goers for contributions.

While HLI's speakers talked about a wide range of issues, they all approached these from a similar perspective, and came to similar conclusions. According to this strand of the right, what is commonly referred to as "the modern world" is one big disaster. Catholic rightists generally trace the origins of this disaster back to the French Revolution, known for its slogan "brotherhood, equality, liberty" and radical secularism. The "spread" of homosexuality, godlessness, sexual permissiveness, contraception, and abortion is often described as symptoms and evidence of the modern world's decay. Whatever front they may be working on, HLI's leaders and allies are anything but superficial, single-issue busy-bodies.

Despite its anti-modern approach, this is no simple throwback to the Middle Ages. From its very inception, the entire religious right has been firmly grounded in the high-tech realities of the late twentieth century. HLI was first based in the offices of the Free Congress Foundation, and over the years has developed ties to various other new right organizations. As a part of this politi-

Canadian province was itself ruled by an unholy alliance of almost fascist clergy and demagogic politicians, a period which is referred to as "the great darkness." The end of this period in the 1960s coincided with the rise of a progressive nationalist movement which, buoyed by a nascent French Québécois business class, completely rearranged the province's class structure and gave it the reputation of being one of the most laid back places in Canada. This new Québec business class was urban, modern and, most of all, technocratic in nature, so it is not surprising that the society that fifty years previously saw its duty as being to spread Pope-worship throughout North America came to "lose its Catholic soul," to quote HLI's Father Marx.

HLI kept hitting all the wrong buttons. In response to charges of anti-Semitism, the organization got over forty right-wing Jews to sign an advertisement placed in the Montréal Gazette, protesting that such accusations were "preposterous." If any of the signatories were from Canada, they certainly aren't very prominent, and their message was completely out of synch with the Canadian Jewish community. The cultural chasm in political style was further evidenced when HLI held a press conference and paraded a couple of Jewish supporters who accused B'nai B'rith of supporting the pornography and, indirectly, drug industries, and who defended HLI's Father Paul Marx, stating that everything he says about Jews is true. (Marx has repeatedly accused Jews of leading a "holocaust" against unborn babies, and of being responsible for the spread of sex education and contracep-



"Tuesday we bomb the Clinic and on..."

Human Life???

(Continued from page 9)

There was a strong desire on the part of many organizers that only women be authorized to make public statements, lead the demonstration in chants, or address the crowd. The poster advertising the April 19th demonstration included a third of a page of text describing HLI's politics; only one sentence dealt with the issues of racism and homophobia. At a public information night about HLI, not one gay man was invited to speak. Indeed, if the representative from B'nai B'rith had not made a point of bringing up HLI's homophobia, it would hardly have been mentioned.

This all points to a misunderstanding on the part of many activists about the religious-right, anti-abortion movement. Despite

were some Canadian delegates who should be introduced. Donald DeMarco, a Catholic philosopher from Ontario, spoke on "The Eclipse of Fatherhood." DeMarco believes that the time may not be right for killing abortionists, yet maintains that it is "possible as an individual before God" to do such things. Another speaker was Father Alphonse deValk, the editor of Catholic Insight, a right-wing magazine from Toronto, and a longtime Canadian advisor to HLI. DeValk is known for his calls for a politicized clergy, and for his accusation that Ontario Premier Bob Rae is a pawn of Jewish intellectuals. Workshops were also given by Jim Hughes and Gilles Grondin of Campaign Life Canada (CLC) and its provincial affiliate, Campagne Québec-Vie. Over the past several years, the Campaign Life



Punx vs HLI

their hoopla about being relatively apolitical yet moral citizens united in opposition to the mass murder of unborn children, most key activists and ideologues in the anti-choice movement have a political agenda that goes far beyond any one issue. One section of the right-wing is clearly gambling that opposition to abortion is the correct vehicle to bring their politics to power. Although the movement's leaders are genuinely opposed to abortion, they are more than willing to shift the focus of their politics to other issues if this proves expedient. Furthermore, were they to completely roll back women's rights, they would nevertheless continue politicking until several other groups had been "put in their place" too.

Not all local activists understood this, and so the Ad Hoc Coalition paid too little attention to doing making alliances with local Jewish, Moslem, and queer communities. Luckily, Jewish and queer activists picked up some of this slack, producing their own posters and pamphlets exposing HLI's menace. Queers organized a separate demonstration against HLI's homophobic agenda on April 22, the night Randall Terry addressed the conference's closing banquet. About 400 people attended this demonstration, bringing attention to Terry's belief that gays and lesbians should be put to death.

THE CANADIAN RIGHT

While the majority of delegates to HLI's Montréal lovefest were Americans, there

Coalition has published several articles by members of Canada's fascist movement in the pages of its newspaper, The Interim. Another CLC leader who spoke was Louis DiRocco, who also happens to be the former leader of Ontario's Family Coalition Party, a "pro-life, pro-family" fringe-right grouping.

Despite HLI's failure to set up a Montréal beachhead, one cannot ignore the existence of a far-right Catholic milieu in Québec. This was brought home by the surprise speech by Maurice Prevost, a councilor with the local Montréal Catholic School Commission (MCSC), at the conference. I should mention that there are a Catholic and a Protestant school board in Montréal, and these run most of the city's public schools. Parents send their children to a school less on the basis of religion than on the basis of language, the Catholic commission being primarily French and the Protestant commission being mainly English. As such, the Catholic School Commission is the most important public school board on the island of Montréal.

Prevost is a commissioner with the Regroupement Scolaire Confessionnel (RSC), a conservative religious party which controlled the MCSC until last November, when it was forced to enter into a coalition with a splinter party in order to stave off the more popular and progressive Mouvement pour une Ecole Ouverte. (It should be noted that less than 40% of eligible voters came out on election day.) As the party in control of the MCSC for over ten years, the RSC is respon-

sible for the fact that there is still a specifically Catholic school board, as well as for its 46% drop-out rate. The RSC has repeatedly dabbled in xenophobia and racism during its reign. For instance, in 1990 its chairman, Michel Pallascio, suggested to the provincial government that it favor immigrants with "Judeo-Christian values." In 1988, it fired a Chilean-born employee because of his Spanish accent. The next year, it sent parents a questionnaire that asked whether immigrant children should be forced to go to separate schools. In 1990 the board considered a proposal to punish youth and children who spoke languages other than French on school grounds. Following last November's school board elections, it was revealed that one of the RSC's candidates was also a member of the Mouvement pour une immigration restreinte et francophone (Movement for restricted and French immigration)—a small racist organization; although this candidate was not elected, Pallascio nevertheless saw fit to defend him, explaining that he did not care if some of his members views were not "politically correct."

Prevost, on the other hand, was elected to the MCSC last November, and his views are also anything but "politically correct." Originally scheduled to discuss a high school within his district, the school commissioner interspersed his speech with xenophobic and queer-baiting remarks. Expounding on a well-worn theme of HLI supporters, Prevost said that "People are adopting from other countries, so our own blood and our own religion are being aborted... Let's not be afraid of words: we can truly speak of a holocaust in Québec... We are at the doors of hell."

In subsequent articles in *Voir*, Montréal's French-language entertainment newspaper, Prevost was also revealed as being the treasurer of the Centre d'information nationale Robert Rumilly (CINRR). This far-right discussion group is named after a famous Québec historian and reactionary, who played an important role in getting Nazi collaborators from Vichy France into Québec after World War II. The CINRR holds "breakfast lectures" at the Wandlyn Inn in Montréal's East End, where you can go to listen to luminaries such as Jean-Claude Dupuis, a key member of another openly fascist group, the Cercle Jeune Nation. Not surprisingly, the CINRR's secretary is pastor Achille Larouche, a fascist cleric from Québec's Eastern Townships area who has also worked closely with the Cercle Jeune Nation over the past ten years.

Cercle Jeune Nation, the CINRR, and various groups of Achille Larouche's make up the pro-fascist Catholic right in Québec. Although they do occasionally work with far-right groups in English-speaking North America, this numerically small section of the fascist movement looks more towards France for ideological and spiritual guidance. In an ironic twist, several members of Jeune Nation claim to have been inspired by the Groupe de Recherches et Etudes sur la Civilization Europeenne, an anti-Christian, pro-pagan, highbrow, fascist movement in Europe. At the same time, the group is very close to Lefebvrist Catholic tendency. These true believers follow the example of Marcel Lefebvre, a French bishop who broke with the Vatican, viewing it as having been taken over by heretics and traitors ever since the famous Vatican II reforms. Jeune Nation likes to see itself as the intellectual powerhouse of the Québécois far-right, and tries to maintain



HLI makes us hot!

HLInfo

HLI does not lie dormant between its annual world conferences. In fact, it holds workshops across the United States every few weeks. That is, when its leaders are not flying around the world pushing their repressive agenda. In early June HLI held an Eastern European regional conference in Kiev, the capital of Ukraine.

- Aug. 5-10
Brasilia, Brazil
Latin American Leadership Training Conference
- Aug. 17-22
Yaounde, Cameroon
North African Regional Conference
- Aug. 24-27
Auckland, New Zealand
National Pro-Life/Family Conference
- Aug. 31-Sept. 2
Harare, Zimbabwe
South African Regional Conference
- Sept. 15-17
Dallas, Texas
Pro-Life/Family Weekend Conference
- Oct. 20-22
Lafayette, Louisiana
Pro-Life/Family Weekend Conference
- Oct. 25-29
Manila, Philippines
Far Eastern Regional Conference
- Nov. 10-12
Birmingham, Alabama
Pro-Life/Family Weekend Conference
- Nov. 10-12
Calgary, Alberta
Pro-Life/Family Weekend Conference
- Jan. 12-14, 1996
Madras, India
Asian Regional Conference
- Apr. 10-14, 1996
Cincinnati, Ohio
15th World Conference on Love, Life, & the Family

If you want more information on HLI, feel free to phone them. Luckily, you don't have to pay long distance charges, as they have a toll free number! So dial (from a pay phone, of course) 1-800-549-5433, and listen to the good news! Or, if you want to get in touch with us anti-HLI folks, you can write:

Anti-HLI Group
2035 Boul. St. Laurent
Montréal, Québec
H2X 2T3 Canada

friendly ties with other "patriotic French-Canadian" organizations. The group recently endured a split: two founding members went off to found a more politically-oriented and less religiously stringent fascist group.

This religious section of the Québec far right would probably be much closer to HLI if it were not for its extreme xenophobia and distrust of all things

(Continued to page 11)

Human Life

(Continued from page 10)

American. This said, it has some contact with fascists in English-speaking America. For example, Gilles Grondin, a veteran of the Montréal fascist milieu and a founding member of Jeune Nation, has written two booklets for Citizens for Foreign Aid Reform (C-FAR), a Toronto-based, suit-and-tie fascist group that was close to the World Anti-Communist League during the 1980s. Grondin's writings deal with the threats posed to Québec by Vietnamese communists and other immigrants. Tellingly, this "patriotic French-Canadian" had no difficulty working with a group like C-FAR, which is an important ally of the anti-French racists in the Alliance for the Preservation of English in Canada, a constant source of anti-Québec propaganda.

What differentiates the Catholic hard right from the rest of the right-wing is its intellectual obsession with various historic Church documents, an opposition to modernism, and a paranoia about Masonic conspiracies which frequently belies an intense anti-Semitism. These Catholic fascists make common cause with "pro-life" groups like Human Life International. For instance, the only person who wrote a letter to the editor in defense of Prevost's views was Louis Lecompte, a past president

of Montréal Pro-Life who had recently announced that he was going to set up a program to "cure" homosexuality in Montréal. Also, the newspaper of Campagne Québec Vie has published conspiratorial "exposés" about Freemasons and other "secret forces" out to destroy the Catholic Church. It has also advertised events having little to do with the question of fetal life, for instance the 1991 tour of Québec by Arnaud de Lassus and Admiral Michel Berger, two leaders of the French far right. This tour, significantly enough, was organized by the CINRR with the help of Jeune Nation.

The Catholic right is not limited to Québec. In fact, the most putrid stall inside HLI's literature room belonged to an Ontario bookstore, The Angelus Books of Barrie. At this stall I managed to pick up a copy of the Baron de Lassus' book *Connaissance Elementaire de la Franc-Maconnerie* (Elementary Knowledge about Freemasonry), where I read about how Freemasonry is really synonymous with Judaism. The Angelus's catalog says that it also distributes Jeune Nation's magazine, as well as publications from the Canadian League of Rights, a clearing-house for conspiratorial, Holocaust-revisionist, and anti-communist reading materials. The Angelus stall was manned by John Cotter, the author of several books which have been distributed and published by groups like the League of Rights, Women United For the Faith, and Citizens for Foreign Aid Reform.



Furher Pat: founder and chair of HLI

EXPOSING ALLIANCES

This article is not meant to be a thorough exposé of the Catholic hard right in Québec. However, by showing the links between the local anti-abortion people, local fascists, and the Human Life International apparatus, I

hope to have provided examples of the kind of alliances that religious fanaticism and fascism can create. It is increasingly clear that anti-fascism demands that we not limit ourselves to Nazi skinheads, but rather start dealing with these more respectable, yet equally evil, proponents of fascism. ★

Means of Saving Mumia

(Continued from page 1)

underhanded tricks that were used to put Mumia on death row in the first place.

But on its own, the legal campaign would be doomed to fail, as it did the first time around. What gives the legal campaign half a chance is a militant mass movement in the streets demanding what seems to be the impossible—that Mumia not just get a new trial in the amerikkkan courts, but that Mumia should be freed immediately and unconditionally. We think that state authority is illegitimate—especially the authority of the white supremacist US government over the colonized Black community. We agree with the Black Panther platform that called for release of all Black people held in US pris-

ons, since the US government should have no jurisdiction over them in the first place.

Love & Rage members, and many other anarchists, have been involved in the campaign to free Mumia Abu-Jamal for years. And since the death warrant was signed in June, we have been even more heavily involved in building local coalitions in many cities, including Minneapolis, New York, DC, Milwaukee, Bay Area, Lansing, State College, and others.

We build these local coalitions because we want to help build a mass movement that goes beyond the control of any single organization. We seek to build a non-sectarian, democratic, and multinational movement. The local coalitions which have arisen to free Mumia usually include people with a variety of revolutionary and pro-

gressive perspectives and programs. We think this is a good thing. Our vision of revolution is a pluralist one, in which many organizations and people combine our efforts to topple the system. The Free Mumia coalitions give us a glimpse at the problems and possibilities of a revolutionary pluralist movement.

Within the mass movement, we work for a direct action strategy. While mass educational work, the legal campaign, and peaceful protests are all crucial, we believe the power we have to affect this situation lies in direct action, or "uncivil" disobedience. We believe that the Pennsylvania state authorities do their best to act in their own political interests, to preserve and expand their power and control. Clearly they see it in their interests to execute Mumia Abu-Jamal. We have to make it more in their interests to NOT kill Mumia Abu-Jamal. This will only happen if the result of killing Mumia is a loss of political power and social control. In other words, if people see the execution of Mumia as so illegitimate and unfair (like the beating of Rodney King) that it creates the possibility of urban uprisings or at least organized creative actions and uncivil disobedience and protests.

In that regard, we were involved with and very supportive of the torchlight march in San Francisco where 300 people were arrested, the protest in Minneapolis where 11 people were arrested, as well as many smaller actions like banner hangings, street theaters, town meetings, and marches.

We feel this is the directions things need to go—a rapid yet patient escalation of tactics. The patient work of coalition-building, education, mass outreach, and peaceful protests must all be done. Within that context, we support taking things to the next level in every city.

Some people criticize a direct action strategy, saying it will just make us look like fanatical supporters of a cop killer, which they say plays into the hands of the state.

They might argue that instead, we should present a "respectable" image and only focus on the demand for a new trial, working to get it through peaceful means. This could bring in more liberals and high-profile people, which will win us more support and get Mumia off death row.

We don't think we should let the state limit how we struggle. In fact raising the stakes is the very thing that will cause more liberals to speak out. The torchlight march in San Francisco shows this clearly—before that, not many people there even knew who Mumia Abu-Jamal was. Afterward, everyone who watches or listens to the news there at least knew about him, and Mumia support meetings grew dramatically.

Similarly, the targeting of the National Association of Black Journalists for not supporting Mumia has caused their president to support Mumia in a Washington Post editorial.

Two recent protests at Judge Sabo's house (including 11 arrests) clearly irked him and caused him to act even more irrationally in the court, further discrediting himself and the prosecution's case. This

has caused even the Philadelphia Daily News to call for Sabo to be removed from the case, and the Inquirer to harshly criticize Sabo's conduct. And the news coverage of Mumia in Philadelphia seemed to change for the better after the Daily News and Inquirer were the targets of protests on June 5. Direct action & confrontation, in an escalating context, will not alienate liberals, but will alert more people to the issue and cause more moderates to speak out, while also foreshadowing the possibility of broader social unrest.

By advocating direct action, we understand that this will lead to run-ins with the police. We need to prepare for that. So far, all the people arrested in Mumia support demos have been released fairly quickly. We need to be ready to support all who put themselves on the line for Mumia. This is especially true in the prisons. As the execution date approaches, the possibility of uprisings and other disturbances in the prisons increases. We need to remember that the killing of George Jackson by the prison system in the 1970s led to mass protests inside the prisons, and was a leading factor in the huge Attica uprising in 1971. Our movement needs to be ready to support those on the outside who protest for Mumia, as well as those in prison who may rise up. The repression inside will be much greater, and we must work to expose and stop such repression, and support the prisoners who protest, if it does occur.

A direct action strategy must include mass outreach, especially among oppressed and alienated youth. We need to reach out broadly and boldly, saying "if Mumia dies, fire in the skies." We should be at every hip hop concert and youth cultural event with information on Mumia Abu-Jamal. While we can't "organize" a spontaneous uprising, we should lay the educational foundations and open up the possibilities for people to react in a way they find appropriate.

In the work we do supporting Mumia, we should emphasize the issues of police brutality, and the prison system in general. We should make connections with local anti-police brutality coalitions, and local prison reform and prisoner support groups. The relationships we build in these coalitions create the possibility of ongoing coalitions against police brutality & prisons. We need to consciously strive to create those connections so that we come out of this movement stronger than when we started.

[This statement was written by members of the Prison Abolition Working Group, which is a project of the Love & Rage Revolutionary Anarchist Federation. We work for the creation of a new society without prisons. We work toward that today by supporting political prisoners and prisoners of war, and educating the public about the inherent brutality of prisons. For more information, or if you'd like to get involved, contact the Love and Rage Prison Abolition Working Group, PO Box 77432, Washington, DC 20013.

See the Prison Working Group's other draft statement on page 17.]



Photo: Shi Wing

On the move for Mumia in Brooklyn, NY, July 22

Live from Death Row . . .

BY W. SCHWEITZER

Despite several attempts to suppress it, Mumia Abu-Jamal's book *Live from Death Row*, has finally appeared. First, the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) and the Pennsylvania prison department tried to prevent any publisher from considering it. When this was unsuccessful, they tried to seize the \$30,000 advance that publisher Addison-Wesley gave to Mumia for work on the book. And when this was unsuccessful, the FOP moved to pressure local school boards, especially Pennsylvania, to boycott the publisher's textbooks.

It was another act of censorship, this time successful, which got the idea of the book rolling in the first place. Two years ago Mumia had contracted with National Public Radio's (NPR) "All Things Considered" to do monthly commentaries from Pennsylvania's death row. However, when the FOP found out, it went into hysteria. Sen. Bob Dole threatened to revoke NPR's funding, and on May 15 last year NPR canceled the commentaries. Many now appear in the book.

Why the fuss? In the first place, there is the reason that Mumia is on death row: He was convicted of killing a cop. No matter that the trial in Philadelphia was a railroad job. And no matter that his appeal extended the railroad to the Pacific Coast. This has been documented elsewhere.

Before his trial, Mumia was a Philadelphia radio journalist known as the "Voice of the Voiceless." He was a former Black Panther who took on the stuffed shirts of the Philadelphia corporate world and exposed the racism and brutality of the Philadelphia Police Department and its commissioner, ex-mayor and lie-detector flunky Frank Rizzo.

So naturally the Philadelphia FOP would like to see Mumia dead. This is by the way, the same Fraternal Order of Police that had as two of its top officers men who were convicted this spring of embezzling money from their own organization.

It is also the same Fraternal Order of Police whose national office would like to believe that an officer's life is more precious than other people's. Accordingly, the national FOP every year organizes a memorial service for all police officers slain in the line of duty, such as Daniel Faulkner, whom Mumia is accused of shooting. It was at this memorial service this year in Washington that a large number of cops showed how

little they thought even of their fellow cops, let alone civilians, by going on a two-day drunken binge and brawl.

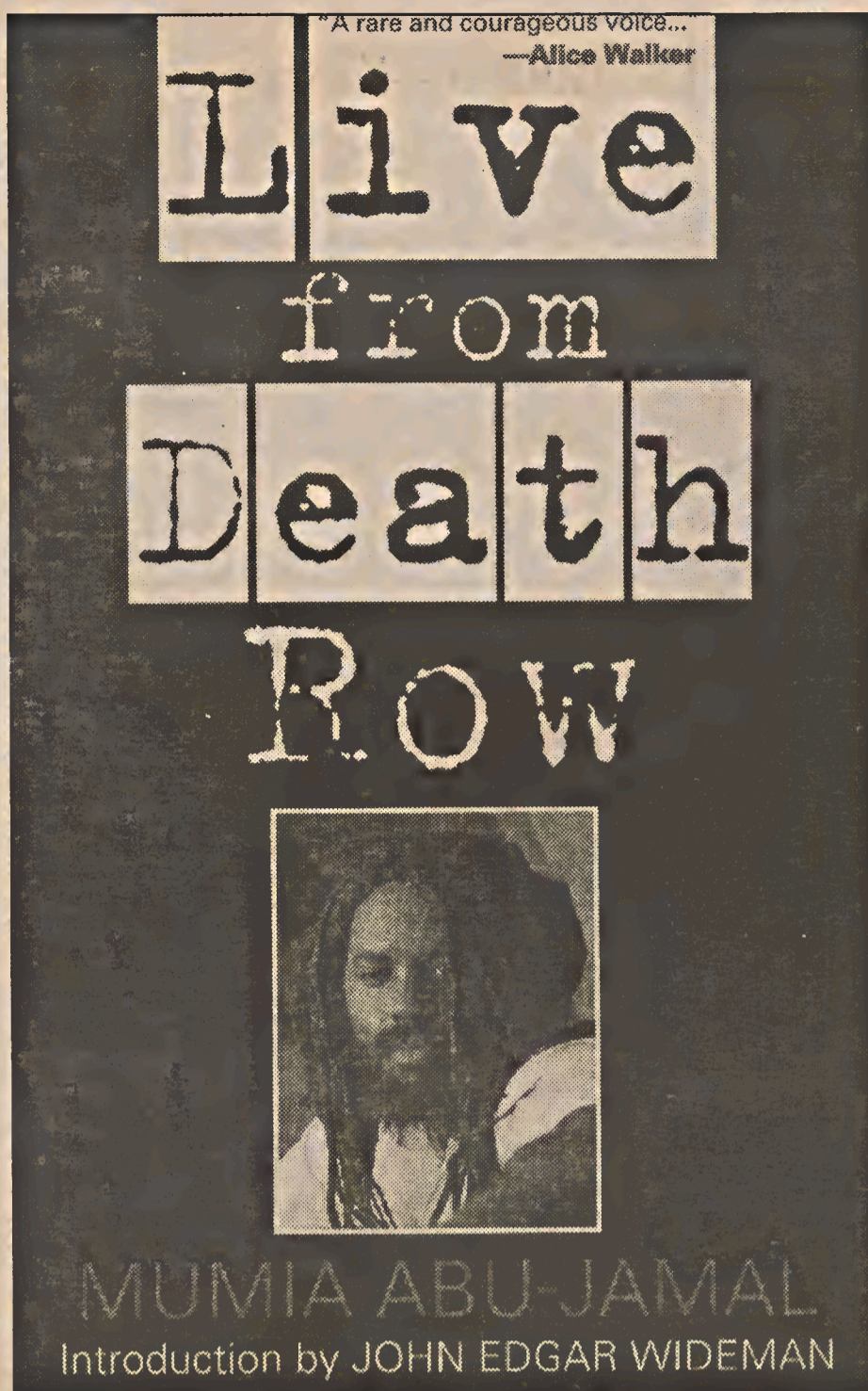
Second, while on death row, Mumia has continued to expose the racism and brutality of the entire criminal justice (!) system. Much of the book is devoted to that. Again and again he goes back to the case of *McCleskey v. Kemp* (1987). In that case the Supreme Court admitted that volumes of statistical evidence on the racism of the death penalty in Georgia were valid, but consciously ignored it in upholding the death sentence on *McCleskey*. As Justice Powell argued: "*McCleskey's* claim, taken to its logical conclusion, throws into serious question the principles that underlie our entire criminal justice system."

"Precisely," responds Mumia. Mumia draws the parallel between *McCleskey* and the infamous *Dred Scott* decision of 1857. The racism has not changed. What the Supreme Court judicially established 140 years ago—that Black people are inferior and have no rights—is defended in *McCleskey* because to change it would throw "into serious question the principles that underlie our entire criminal justice system."

Mumia opens the chapter with a quotation from Dostoyevsky: "The degree of civilization can be judged by entering the prisons." Mumia elaborates with several stories of prisoners being beaten for minor infractions, and always for general intimidation. But such beatings don't occur every day, or even every week. They are the visible bloom of the mold, the body of which run through the day-to-day rot of the whole system. Every day there is the lockdown, the two-hour-a-day (or less) exercise in an oversized dog cage, the absence of contact with loved ones, the lack of (or deliberate withholding of) educational opportunities, the incompetent or malfasant medical care, etc. etc. If the system doesn't physically bash one's body, it surely is designed to corrode slowly into rust particles, one's spirit and will to live.

And this penitential rot is a growth industry in the US. The USA incarcerates a higher proportion of its people than any other industrial country in the world. The California prison system, for one, grew 500% in the last 20 years to become the largest in the world. And Black people, who make up 11% of the population, account for 40% of the prisoners on US death rows.

The situation reminds this writer of a visit several years ago to the memorial, at



Dachau, of another rotten society. Dachau was one of the first Nazi concentration camps, and the text in the museum there today describes in some detail how the camp grew to immense proportions, and how many people made prosperous careers out of it, while millions of prisoners were brutal-

ized, "experimented" upon and murdered.

For a large segment of the US population, especially the Black segment, the reality that was Dachau is not too far from home. Mumia's book, the title of which affirms his will to live despite being locked in a US Dachau, exposes this reality. ★

ANARCHIST BLACK CROSS

Liberate Mark Cook

BY ED MEAD

I am going to write a little bit about my imprisonment, and in doing so I hope to express to you the twisted logic that enables me to be out here in minimum custody (on the streets) while Mark Cook is still in prison today.

When I first went to prison I was put in the hole in the penitentiary at Walla Walla, Wash. From that incarceration grew a group of resisters who became known as the Walla Walla Brothers. That resistance culminated in an institution-wide work strike that lasted for 47 days. Of the 14 demands presented to the administration, first on the list was a rectification of the brutal conditions and treatment of prisoners in the segregation unit.

The strike at Walla Walla was a major news story in 1977, with television and newspaper coverage every day. In all of that daily coverage by the bourgeois media, however, not once did a prisoner or even someone representing the prisoners get a single inch of print space, or a second of air time on the Seattle television stations. Then, on the 43rd day of the strike, the George Jackson Brigade placed bombs in safety deposit boxes in two Rainier bank branches located in the affluent Bellevue community. The Brigade issued a communiqué that pointed out the interlocking directorship between the Rainier Bank and the Seattle Times, it unmasked the biased coverage of the Seattle Times and other media outlets, explained how they presented only the

state's point of view of this struggle, and the Brigade promised to continue bombing Rainier Banks until such time as the Seattle Times at least made a pretense of evenhandedness in its coverage of the struggle at Walla Walla. Within days of the adoption of a new perspective by the news media, the public's sympathies had changed. This was because the Seattle Times finally interviewed a prisoner. The statewide change in consciousness was so drastic that it quickly resulted in the firing of Harold Bradley, the boss of Washington's Department of Corrections, as well as Walla Walla's warden, B.J. Rhay. Lesser figures, like the associate warden of custody, were transferred to different prisons within the state. And the Walla Walla Brothers were released to the prison's general population, where they went on to organize Men Against Sexism and other work on the inside. The strike at Walla Walla was the longest in state history. The winning of that struggle represents the application of armed struggle at its best. We are not about that form of liberalism any more.

There were other struggles at Walla Walla, and much trouble, too. The end result of it was that I was placed in the hole with several comrades in connection with an armed escape attempt. From within the segregation unit my friends and I tried to escape again, and we were waging constant battles with our captors. During one such battle guards shoved a riot baton up Carl Harp's ass, causing a 5/8 -inch tear in the wall of his rectum. No guard was ever charged, although some

lost their jobs for a little while before they were put back to work in the segregation unit and elsewhere within the prison.

The prison administration was quite anxious to get rid of my friends and me. Some years later, through documents obtained through the Freedom of Information Act, I learned why I am out of prison today. The state contacted the federal government about sending me and some of their other troublesome prisoners to the US Prison at Marion, Ill. As it happened, however, the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals, the Court that has jurisdiction over Marion Prison, in a case involving a Hawaiian state prisoner, had just held that the feds are not in the rent-a-prison business for the states, and that they can no longer accept state prisoners from other jurisdictions. The feds told Washington prison officials how to circumvent this ruling. They said if you write the US Attorney and ask him to get the federal court to run Mead's federal and state time together, concurrently, then they could ship me to Marion as a federal prisoner. That's what they did. The federal appeals court ruling was soon overturned, but in that small window of time my sentencing structure had changed. Within five months, while taking part in a hunger strike by all segregation prisoners at Marion, I was given back to the custody of the state of Washington. From Marion I went to various other state prisons in other states, and ultimately back to Washington. In Washington I stayed at the prison in Morn, where I served the next 10 years.

While I was in exile I filed a Motion to Correct an illegal sentence in Seattle's fed-

eral court. I successfully contended that my 30 year sentence for bank robbery was illegal because the court cannot give me consecutive terms for armed bank robbery (25 years) and being armed during the commission of a federal felony (five years). While my federal time was cut from 30 to 25 years, the Federal Bureau of Prisons was not informed of this fact. Thus they always told the state that my federal release date was five years longer than it actually was. In April 1993 the state parole board gave me the two-year administrative review all long-timers receive. As always, they had unceremoniously continued my case for another two years, meaning the soonest I would have a parole hearing, not even a parole hearing but another administrative review, was in April 1995. I did not have a defense committee, but I did have a circle of good friends. I filed a clemency petition and these friends wrote letters on my behalf. My attorney said word about my case, about why I was in prison for so long, got to the governor and he suggested that the board review my case. Whatever the reason, I was promptly given an unscheduled and unrequested in-person parole hearing and released to my federal detainee. The state thought I had that extra five years to serve with the feds.

Upon arriving at a federal prison I presented the applicable officials with a certified copy of the court order cutting my sentence by five years, and after every effort to drag the process out, the feds released me a little over a year ago. I was given a plane ticket and some shabby

(Continued to page 21)

Enough's Enough—Kieran Update

BY JOEL OF THE ANTI-FASCIST DEFENSE COMMITTEE

Ever heard of the right to "a fair and speedy trial"? Well, the state of Minnesota hasn't. Nineteen months after being falsely charged for assaulting a neo-Nazi skinhead, Minneapolis anti-racist activist Kieran Frazier Knutson is still waiting for a chance to tell his story to a jury.

It all started way back on Oct. 22, 1993, at an anti-racist demonstration at the



University of Minnesota. Kieran was working security when two known Northern Hammer Nazi skinheads, Daniel Simmer and Amy Forman, showed up. Kieran and others approached Simmer and Forman, but before the Nazi couple could be asked to leave, Simmer pulled something shiny out of his pocket and lunged at Kieran. Kieran, thinking it was a knife, thwacked Simmer with a flashlight, and a fight broke out. Simmer got the short end of the stick.

At the rally, university police arrested Simmer and seized his shiny object, which turned out to be a pair of brass knuckles. The cops immediately let Simmer go, and six weeks later Kieran found out he was charged with two counts of felony assault. He faces up to 10 years in prison and \$20,000 in fines if convicted.

THE STATE IS AFTER OUR RIGHTS (AGAIN)

This story is yet another outrageous, enraging, but all-too-normal case of the state taking sides with Nazis, right? Well, yes, but there's a twist. This time, state prosecutors aren't just after Kieran; they're also out to establish a legal precedent that would make the media act as an arm of the state. Prosecutors want to force the university newspaper to give up photos they took of the demonstration and to make a reporter testify against Kieran.

At press time, the courts ruled that the newspaper has to turn over the photos and that the reporter has to testify. If the rul-

ings are upheld, this is a serious blow to any notion of an independent press: a precedent would be established whereby the media would have to turn over whatever materials prosecutors want. Basically, the press would be forced to collect evidence for the state.

Fortunately, the student paper is fighting the state every step of the way. However, after each court ruling (six so far) there has been an appeal, and after each appeal we went to court to support Kieran, only to find the trial had been delayed yet again. Because of the appeals over evidence, Kieran's trial has been delayed eight times so far. A bit ridiculous, isn't it?

WE HATE COURTROOMS

But why should an innocent person have to go to trial at all? The charges are completely bogus: Kieran hit the Nazi, but he clearly acted in self-defense. Because of the injustice of this prosecution, because the state is pursuing the case to infringe on whatever is left of a "free press," and because this kind of injustice happens every day, anti-racists all over have been fighting back.

The prosecutor's office has been swamped with letters and phone calls from all over the world demanding that the charges against Kieran be dropped. Locally, we have held several successful demonstrations in support of Kieran. At our last demo, we occupied County Attorney Mike Freeman's office for over an hour until he agreed to meet with us.

Of course, the state has invested so much time and money prosecuting Kieran (plus we have embarrassed them so much!) that they probably won't drop the charges at this point, but we can sure make them sorry they

didn't! The closer each new trial date gets, the more pressure we need to put on them.

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT KIERAN

Kieran's next trial date is August 14. Here are some things you can do:

Write or call the prosecutor and demand that all charges against Kieran Frazier Knutson be dropped immediately! Send one copy of your letter to the AFDC and one to:

Mike Freeman
C2000 Hennepin Cty Gov't Ctr
300 S. 6th St.
Minneapolis, MN 55415
612-348-5550
612-348-5505

Pack the courtroom on Aug. 14. We pack the courtroom for every trial date. If you live in Minneapolis or will be visiting here around then, go to the Hennepin County Government Center fountain (address above) at 9:00 a.m. on the 14th. People will be there to direct you to the proper courtroom.

Write to the AFDC for more information. Kieran is a committed activist. Some day, we may find ourselves in the same position he is in. For the good of the anti-racist movement, it is vital that we show our support for him in whatever way we can.

**FIGHTING RACISM IS NOT A CRIME!
DROP THE CHARGES AGAINST
KIERAN FRAZIER KNUTSON!**

Anti-Fascist Defense Committee
PO Box 7075
Minneapolis, MN 55407
jolson@polisci.umn.edu

New ABC Fed Forms

BY BRAD SIGAL

On May 6-7, there was a conference organized by three ABC collectives—Claustrophobia ABC from DC, Nightcrawlers ABC from NY, and New Jersey ABC. The conference was hosted by Claustrophobia ABC in DC, and was also attended by members of Baltimore ABC, 4th World ABC from New Jersey, and other anarchist prison activists from Pennsylvania and New York.

The purpose of the conference was to solidify a new regional ABC federation that had informally begun with the three sponsoring collectives in Dec. 1994. We left the conference with unforeseen results, well beyond what we had initially set out to achieve.

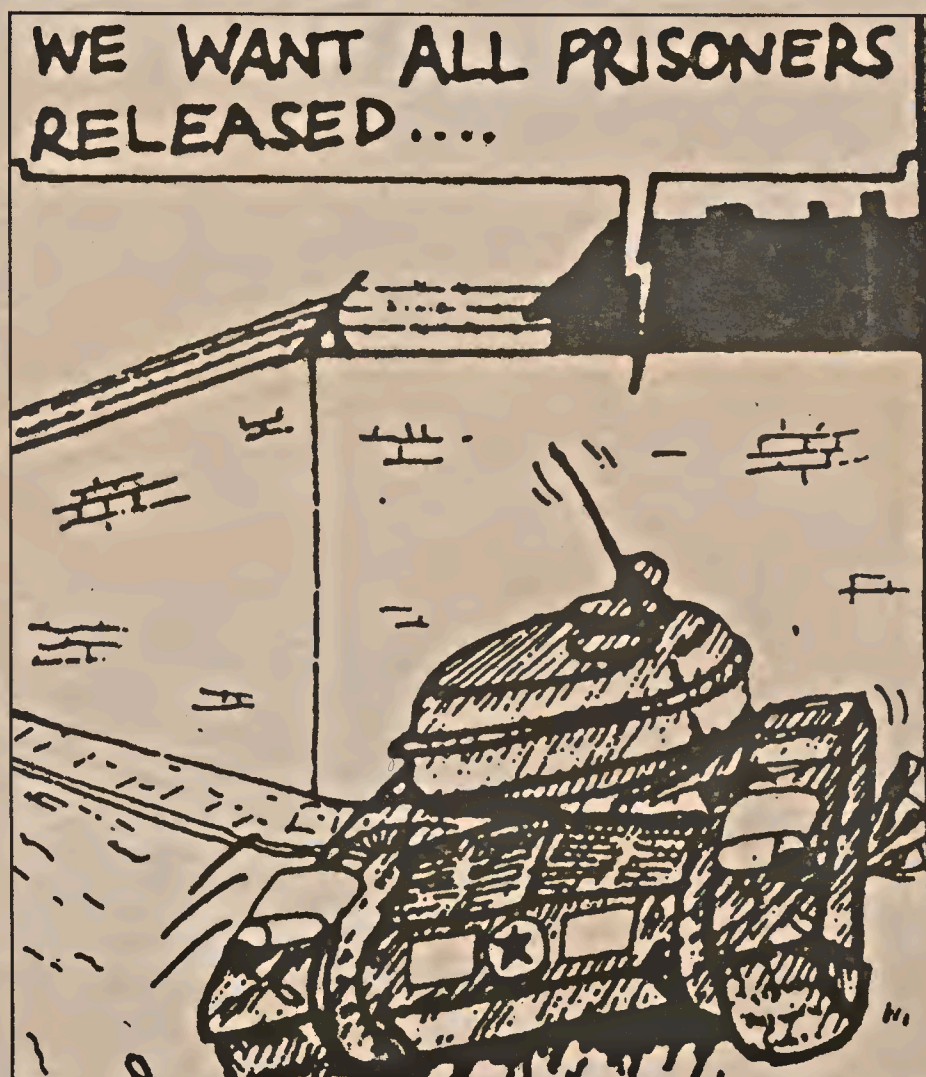
We decided against forming a regional federation, instead opening it up to any ABC groups in North America who agree with our federation's politics and criteria for membership. Instead of basing our membership on a particular region, we united on common political activities and a structure to accomplish it. There are ABC groups in our region who will not participate in this federation because of differences of opinion about the politics and structure of such an ABC federation. So in actuality this federation would not include all the groups from our region anyway, such as Brooklyn ABC or 4th World ABC.

A Discussion Bulletin was produced about a month prior to the conference, which included 2 proposals for how to build ABC. One proposed by Nightcrawlers was fairly

general, proposing that we be thorough in outreach and follow-through to people who show interest in ABC, and proposing a regional speaking tour. The other proposal, from NJ ABC and Ojore Lutalo (a New Afrikan Anarchist Prisoner of War), was a detailed structure proposal for a new federation. This is the proposal that we ended up mostly talking about, and it is what we adopted, with a few minor changes.

The PAC / Lutalo proposal was controversial within all the other groups before the conference. At least some members of each group had strong reservations with it. But after discussion all day Sunday around the proposal, everyone there agreed to adopt the proposal, with only a few minor changes. The proposed structure reflected a lot of thought about how to deal with many of the problems facing ABC groups, and it seemed that most of the concerns people had with the proposal were more about how things were said or about potential dangers, not concerns about what the actual proposal said.

The proposal seems clearly designed to "draw a line" of demarcation between ABC groups who are able to make a long-term commitment to revolutionary politics and action, versus groups that don't last very long or are inconsistent. It also caters to a very specific definition of what constitutes "revolutionary politics," which put off some people. The way the proposal was presented in the discussion bulletin included vague attacks on some other ABC groups, which



also probably caused some of the initial skepticism toward the proposal. But once we all got to talk through it face-to-face, it became clear that we had the unity needed to start the new ABC Federation.

The new federation is organized like this: ABC groups will be organized in a two-tier system. Branch Groups will be those groups who have been together consistently for a year, who file regular reports to the ABC Bulletin, who contribute money monthly to the War Chest (a fund to provide financial assistance for political prisoners and POWs), and who agree to function according to Lorenzo Komboa Ervin's 15-point and Lutalo's 4-point programs regarding prisoner support work. Support Groups consist of new groups or those groups who, for whatever reason, cannot meet the criteria to become a Branch Group.

Prisoners are also structured into the new federation. A five-member Committee of Prisoners, consisting of political prisoners or POWs, will offer guidance and direction for the ABC Federation. Members of this Committee will have one-year terms. As of the conference the membership of the Committee had not been finalized, although Ojore Lutalo and Sundiata Acoli have volunteered to be on it. Prisoners who are not POWs or political prisoners who want to be

part of the ABC can form "Prisoner Solidarity Committees" which support and work with the activities of the federation, but don't necessarily have to be anarchist. We also left open the possibility that organizations or collectives of prisoners can become Branch Groups if they meet the same requirements as groups on the outside.

Since the conference, Baltimore ABC and Brew City Anti-Authoritarian Collective have decided to become Support Groups in the new federation. It still remains to be seen how other ABC groups will decide to relate to this new federation. Those of us who have joined the federation believe it will help to create consistency, reliability, and increased effectiveness among ABCs, qualities most ABC groups have been notoriously lacking in the past.

To get a copy of the ABC Federation's Bimonthly Discussion Bulletin:

NJ ABC
PO Box 8532
Paterson, NJ 07508-8532

For the notes from the ABC Conference:

Baltimore ABC
PO Box 22203
Baltimore, MD 21203-4203

Anarchist Black Cross and Other Prison Abolition Groups

ABC Baltimore
PO Box 19245
Baltimore, MD 21213

ABC Minneapolis
PO Box 7075
Minneapolis, MN 55407

BCAC
PO Box 93312
Milwaukee, WI 53203

Brooklyn ABC
PO Box 365
Canal St. Station
New York, NY 10013

Claustrophobia ABC
PO Box 77432
Washington, DC 20013
email: ms272c@gwuvm.gwu.edu
(202) 728-3899

Mark Cook Freedom Committee
PO Box 85763
Seattle, WA 98145-2763
email: guawk@eskimo.com

Bronx ABC
PO Box 1034
Mott Haven Station
Bronx, NY 10454

Paterson Anarchist Collective/NJ ABC
PO Box 8532
Paterson, NJ 07508

Pelican Bay Information Project
2489 Mission St. #28
San Francisco, CA 94110

Prison News Service
Box 5052 Station A
Toronto, Ont.
M5W 1W4

EZLN Calls for Unprecedented International Consultation

(Continued from page 1)

New forms of organization have developed since then; Popular fronts, coordinators, civil associations, citizen's committees, organizational alliances.

Nevertheless, the different initiatives are limited, and waste away in the horizon which produces them. For each blow an organized response develops, for each organized response, the system prepares another blow.

We think that an initiative with a national character is lacking which UNITES and MAKES COHESIVE all the organizational forms which have been until now diffuse. We believed, we pointed out in our "THIRD DECLARATION OF THE LACANDON JUNGLE, a NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENT was necessary which would unite all the forces, all the citizens and organizations which struggle against the State party system.

A movement which finds a unifying point among all the democratic forces. A movement which develops a common program of struggle.

A movement which proposes a national plan of action, of struggle for democracy, liberty and justice for all Mexicans and for the defense of national sovereignty.

The discussion about the characteristics of this great national opposition movement postponed its creation. The National Democratic Convention, called to head this ample opposition front, gave in to discussion about whether the front should be based on class or should be broad-based. As though these concepts were mutually exclusive, as though the formation of an ample multi-class movement impeded the generation of a class movement, the NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION avoided making a decision in this regard.

The economic and repressive blows of February, March, and April, the widespread popular discontent, the lack of organizational alternatives and the awakening of the workers in the republic, made it clear that it was an error to have postponed the call which, days later, the people of Mexico awaited.

Nevertheless, new actors and new organizational forms began to point anew to the urgency and necessity of an initiative the nature of which could be a Movement for National Liberation.

Today we think it continues to be necessary to form this ample opposition front to the politics of the government.

Today we find ourselves at the beginning of a new effort at a dialogue with the supreme government. Today we renew our demands for democracy, liberty and justice for all Mexicans.

Today we offer, as we did 18 months ago our blood, our voice so that all may speak, our cry so that all may cry, our demands so

that all may demand.

Today we demand Everything for Everyone!

Today we demand a national dialogue between those who are opposed to the democratic change and those who struggle to make it a reality. Between the government, on one side, and all the democratic forces on the other.

National dialogue in order to dialogue with the government.

We Zapatistas see this as necessary. We do not want to make decisions without listening to all those who have helped us so much in the search for a peace with justice and dignity. We cannot do what the bad government does, that is, make decisions without asking those who, supposedly, support them.

Brothers [and Sisters];

We have demonstrated before, every time that war seemed to engulf our lands, that we know how to listen. Today we want to demonstrate anew and re-orient our path.

That is why we are directing ourselves to the people of Mexico, to the Democratic National Convention, to the different independent social organizations, to the political parties of opposition, to the citizens' organizations, to the non-governmental organizations, to the unions, to the students, to the squatters, to the workers of the fields and the cities, to the indigenous Mexicans, to the housewives, to the intellectuals and artists, to the religious community, to the elderly, to the women, to the men and the children. And we are also calling upon those solidarity committees in the international community, to our brothers and sisters of North America, of Europe, of Asia of South America.

We call upon everyone, legal and clandestine, armed and peaceful, civil and military, to all those who struggle, in all forms, on all levels and in all parts for democracy, liberty and justice in the world.

For us, for the Zapatistas, the voice of civil society is important. The voice of all of you has value and power for the Zapatistas. We want to hear your word and know your thoughts in order to continue ahead.

We are directing ourselves to all our brothers in order to propose a national and international consultation [plebiscite] which will give direction to all of us in order to find the steps we should take and the direction we should follow in this historic moment. We therefore propose the organization of a GREAT NATIONAL CONSULTATION [plebiscite] to address the following questions:

1. Do you agree that the principal demands of the Mexican people are: land, housing, jobs, food, health, educa-

tion, culture, information, independence, democracy, liberty, justice and peace?

2. Should the different democratizing forces unite in a broad-based opposition front to struggle for the 13 principal demands?

3. Should a profound political reform be made in terms which guarantee: equity, citizen participation, including the non-partisan and non-governmental, respect for the vote, reliable voter registration of all the national political, regional, and local forces?

4. Should the EZLN be converted to a new and independent political force?

5. Should the EZLN unite with other forces and organizations and form a new political organization?

We make an urgent call to those different groups who make up the Democratic National Convention to suspend their internal purges and take into their hands the organization and realization of this large national consultation.

We call upon the National Convention of Workers to organize the consultation in unions, labor centers and workers' organizations.

We call upon the National Convention of Indigenous Peoples to organize the consultation in the indigenous and peasant communities of the nation, and in the independent organizations of indigenous people and peasants.

We call upon the National Student Convention to organize the consultation in the middle and upper educational centers of the country.

We call upon the National Women's Convention to organize a consultation in the



There are five questions to be answered "YES", "NO", or "I DON'T KNOW". These are five questions which we need answered in order to continue ahead.

Brothers [and Sisters]:

We make a respectful request to the brothers of the NATIONAL CIVIC ALLIANCE to contribute to this peaceful and civic effort in the struggle for democracy, providing their experience in the organization of such citizen consultations.

independent organizations of women, in the neighborhoods and with the housewives.

We call upon the National convention of Artists to organize a consultation among cultural workers and to collaborate, with their labor and production, with the realization of this consultation in all the country.

We call upon the solidarity organizations which sympathize with the just cause of the EZLN in the United States, Spain, Italy, France, Germany, Greece, Japan, Chile, Holland, Sweden, Norway, England, Argentina, Venezuela, Switzerland, Belgium, Austria and Russia, and in all the world to organize this consultation in their respective countries.

Brothers [and Sisters];

This is our word. We ask that we organize ourselves in order to ask, that we organize ourselves in order to respond, that we organize ourselves in order to act. We propose that the consultation announce its results by August 8th of 1995 at the latest, first anniversary of the beginning of the national dialogue for a transition to democracy.

The EZLN confirms, with this proposal for a great citizen consultation, its commitment to "command by obeying". It gives a demonstration of its seriousness and its true commitment in the search for a political solution to the war, and calls to a new national dialogue among the democratic forces of the country.

Democracy!
Liberty!
Justice!

From the mountains of the Mexican Southeast, [signatures] Comandante Tacho, Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos, Comandante David

Clandestine Indigenous Revolutionary Committee- General Command of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation-Mexico

NY Committee for Democracy in Mexico Explanation of the EZLN's Five Questions

[This article was originally a leaflet produced by the NY Committee for Democracy in Mexico. This leaflet gives an excellent, concise explanation of the recent EZLN request for feedback from the people of Mexico and the international solidarity community concerning the political future of the Zapatistas. Please also see pages 14 and 15 of this issue for more information and important recent EZLN communiqués.]

BY THE NY COMMITTEE
FOR DEMOCRACY IN MEXICO

The Zapatistas are calling for an impartial consultation with the international community and have proposed five questions to guide the discussion. They state, "... (W)e do not want people to respond with what we want them to respond... We want the people to respond with what they think and we want to know the real results... " Emphasizing that "all social classes" be represented, the EZLN specifically invites unions, students, squatters, workers, journalists, Indigenous people, housewives, intellectuals, artists, clergy, elderly, men, women, and children. However, they stress, "We do not want a survey. Not because we do not

think it would have value, but because (this) is not about a market study to 'offer' a new political 'product,' but rather (this) is about a dialogue."

ABOUT THE FIVE QUESTIONS

These five questions are not specific to the crisis in Mexico. According to the EZLN, "it would be good for all democratic forces... to know the answers to these questions." It is important to keep this international context in mind.

(1) "Do you agree with the principal demands for: land, housing, jobs, health, education, culture, information, independence, democracy, liberty, justice and peace?"

The Zapatistas consider these demands basic human needs and the question "refers to the need for a new social pact." Further, the EZLN argues that if these demands reflect the will of the majority of the Mexican people, "then the economic direction of the country should be redefined" such that a "fundamental objective (is) the

satisfaction of these needs." Do you agree? Why or why not? What would such a change in Mexico imply for the US and the rest of the world? Are these demands universal? Are they comprehensive? What should be added/deleted?

(2) "Should the different democratizing forces unite in a broad-based opposition front to struggle for the 13 principal demands?"

The Zapatistas have repeatedly mentioned the need for a collaboration, stating "We are nothing if we go alone, we are everything if we walk together with others who are dignified." Yet they have also asserted that this type of collaborative effort might occur in "a more open space, under a much larger flag... If someone raises that flag, we would go there... " Do you agree with the need to form a broad-based movement? Why or why not? If you agree, how could it be formed? Does agreement on the 13 points provide a sufficient basis? If not, what would? Do you see

(Continued to page 21)

Zapatista Army for National Liberation
Mexico
June 20, 1995

To: National Democratic Convention
National Council of Representatives From:
Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos
CCRI-CG of the EZLN
Mountains of Southeastern Mexico
Mexico

Brothers (and Sisters):

By this means I am writing to inform you of our proposal for organizing and promoting the National Plebiscite. Attached to this is the letter we sent to the National Civic Alliance, explaining to them our idea about the consultation. We are waiting for their response. I will not repeat the arguments and explanation of the "organizational chart" for this part of the national dialogue. I ask you to review them and send us your response with regard to whether or not you accept this form of participation for the National Democratic Convention.

According to our proposal, the CND would be responsible for the organization of the International Consultation and the promotion and dissemination of the National Consultation. The organization of the National Consultation would be the responsibility of the National Civic Alliance.

As you will see when you read the attached letter, in the organization of the International Consultation, 10 members of the CND proposed by the EZLN would participate. These are the names of the people we propose for organizing the International Consultation:

Amado Avendano Figueroa
Rosario Ibarra de Piedra
Jose Alvarez Icaza
Ofelia Medina
Flora Guerrero
David Villarreal
Guillermo Briseno
Carlota Botey
Patria Jimenez
Paulina Fernandez C.

To respond to this and to what you stated justifiably in your letter dated June 9, 1995, I am going to try to explain what we are thinking of, and what we hope for with this consultation.

First and foremost, it is an effort to be true to the words.

Zapatismo has insisted in the concept of "leading by obeying" as one of the points of a new democratic culture. We are an armed and clandestine organization, that is true. That we are an organization that has declared war on the federal government, is also true. But we are an organization that is in dialogue with the government, which is to say, that we are seeking that words, not arms, resolve our just demands. We are an organization protected by the decree of law on March 6, 1995, and because of that, and while the process of dialogue and negotiation lasts and new conditions are agreed upon, we are a legal organization recognized by the government's authorities. We are, then, an organization that is willing to seek and follow roads, other than war, to democratic change.

As you know, since January 12, 1994, we have not carried out any violent action against the government. The delegates of

the federal government to the dialogue in San Andres Sacamch'en de los Pobres accuse us of trying to buy time, that we do not have a "will to dialogue". But buying time for what? Since January 1, 1994 the country has suffered not just a few crises (for example those of the assassinations of public figures, and the economy) and many moments ripe for "destabilization" have been created.

However, our EZLN has not carried out even one action in these times to take advantage of them. We have not lacked for opportunities or "times" to take advantage of. What we have been missing are the serious proposals for solving the fundamental causes of our uprising. And what we are looking for is a just and dignified solution, not a check or a paved road.

Our struggle is political. This we have been teaching everyone, including ourselves. For this reason we do not seek with this consultation an endorsement of war, just as we did not seek it in August 1994 when the National Democratic Convention was formed.

I believe that our brief and intense public life, since January 1994, has demonstrated that we are willing to seek, even at the risk of our own lives, the political rather than the military solution. For us the "political solution" is synonymous with "peace with justice and dignity". We do not expect a political solution from the government. For them, the "political solution" is equal to surrender, to defeat, to humiliation; this is the reason for the overbearing and arrogant attitude of the government's delegates. They are not interested in resolving the conflict, but instead in winning it. We are interested in resolving it, and we know that the solutions will not come from the government or from our ranks. They will come, we think, from the same place that have come: the cease fire in January 1994, the dialogue in San Cristobal, the National Democratic Convention, the humanitarian aid, the support in search of a dignified peace, the clamor to detain the treason of February 1995, the peace camps, the national and international observers, the dialogue in San Andres. The origin of all of these happenings, so large and so quickly done, is what many are disdaining, looking at with skepticism or disillusion: the civil society that struggles for democracy.

In disagreement with not just a few political analysts and politicians, as well as some intellectuals and artists, we continue watching with hope and interest this civil movement, that has no defined face or clear political project yet has a capacity for indignation and imaginative responses that surpass the great personages of politics.

We have not received, from this civil movement, applause or help for continuing the war. We have received, from them and no one else, an opportunity. An opportunity that has always been denied to thousands of men and women because they are indigenous and don't speak the same way, and have a different culture, and are not "productive", and are at the bottom of the statistics of death and misery. Life is worth so little in these lands, that death is valued even less, and it was cheaper to die...than to live.

EZLN Clarifies Consultation

We have received an opportunity, the opportunity to speak and be heard. Now we learn that this opportunity is real, and we are willing to use it, and use it always so that we don't lose it again. We learned to speak and this is what we have come to say:

We are Mexicans and we have a national proposal. We propose to struggle for, and achieve, democracy, liberty and justice for all the men and women of this country.

We came to say, also, that we are human beings and we have a global proposal. We propose a new international order based and ruled by democracy, liberty and justice.

But the surprise is not that a movement that is mostly indigenous recover its national and international nature. In addition to being indigenous, the EZLN is principally illiterate and poor.

But this does not invalidate our national and international proposal. It is already known by everyone what the technocratic culture has done, as a post-doctorate from a foreign country, with this country: it has

ourselves to you so that you can help us ask the people of Mexico and have them respond. These means are also in others' hands who use them in other ways..What has caused us to come to you is... your history. We have "read" in it your ethics. Now I know that "ethics" has many meanings, and that it is, most of the times, something not used in "the new world" that is imposed on us. But for us it signifies "honesty", something not very common in these days and in these lands. There is, in addition, other elements that are more important to this work than the computers: impartiality and credibility. "Legitimacy" I would normally say, but it is a word that the Mexican political system has turned into illegitimacy. With these questions we want to learn what is real. We do not want a reality for our liking and convenience. We know that from you will come real results, even if they do not make us happy.

And now that we are talking about the questions, what consultation do we want?



brought misery, crimes, inability to govern, uncertainty, and some immense desires, in the gut and the heart, for everything to change. What is surprising is that our voice has found other ears, different from ours, and who do not try to make our words go away or adulterate them. We have found ears that listen to us and make our words their own. This is the surprise for everyone, including us.

We learned, with this war, to speak and be listened to. But we did not learn to listen. This we already knew. To learn to listen is, at least for the indigenous of southern Mexico, to learn to live. Now we want to use these rights and responsibilities, the rights to speak and be heard, and the responsibility to listen to what others are saying. They say that this is a "dialogue": to speak and listen...to find our differences, but also, and this is the most difficult, what makes us the same.

Old Man Antonio taught that questions serve for walking, for moving forward. With the example of Ik'al and Votan, Old Man Antonio demonstrated that asking and responding is walking and arriving...at another question and another response. Now we are following this road, we are asking...and we are awaiting responses.

For this reason we say that the best demonstration of our will to achieve a political solution, which is to say a peace with dignity, is our calling for this National Consultation. We are not making a call for war. We are asking...to walk. To participate in this consultation is to collaborate in the political solution to the war, it is to participate in a just and dignified peace, that I believe, we deserve.

I understand that you have asked why an invitation was made to the National Civic Alliance, and in what way we are asking for them to participate in the consultation.

True, you have the technical means, the knowledge and the methods (which you have already proved) so that our questions get out to all of the country and so that they will be responded to by many, thousands, for dozens of thousands, for hundreds of thousands, for millions if there is a favorable wind. But it is not because of the technical means, the knowledge, and the methods that we are encouraged to direct

or even broader, what do we hope for with this consultation? The answers will not be as easy as "yes" or "no", but I will try to make them concrete.

FIRST. The consultation that we want should be impartial, which is to say, we do not want people to respond with what we want them to respond, we do not want the results to be what is most convenient for us. We want the people to respond with what they think and we want to know the real results of this consultation.

We want a national consultation, one that includes all social classes and is done throughout the national territory. We want to ask, the greatest number of people possible, and to know what they think and hope for.

SECOND. We want it to have credibility. This does not come from the result or from the quantity consulted. It comes from the seriousness and professionalism of its organization, direction, methods and impartiality.

THIRD. We do not want a survey. Not because we do not think it would have value, but because it is not about a market study to "offer" a new political "product", but rather, is about a dialogue.

FOURTH. The questions are definitive in what they want to find out, but not in their formation. They can be amplified, reduced,

(Continued to page 23)



Don't Miss the
Late-Breaking
News about the
EZLN's
Consultation Being
Extended (page 25)

First World—Ha, Ha, Ha

BY HARRY CLEAVER

As the crises of Mexican society deepen, and reverberate throughout the world, the importance of understanding their nature grows. Mexico is not just Mexico. The political struggles that have undermined its authoritarian political structure and contributed to the collapse of its speculative economy must be recognized as explosions that are cracking the New World Order as a whole. The recent decision by the leadership of the Group of Seven industrial countries to find ways of containing such crises and preventing their circulation throughout the world capitalist system demonstrates how clearly the managers of the global work machine grasp this about the centrality of social struggles in Mexico. For those of us interested in wrecking that machine, understanding those struggles and why and how their power is being felt so widely has become an urgent necessity. To reach such understanding we must listen to the voices of those in rebellion and to those who are responding to them.

The Zapatista uprising in the southern Mexican state of Chiapas—which has restored hope to many and Revolution to political discourse—has been both the result and a producer of a multiplicity of voices joined in a complex conversation. As the best known Zapatista spokesman, Subcommander Marcos, has insisted, his voice gives Spanish shape to a conversation among campesinos that has been carried on in many indigenous tongues for over 10 years, in some ways for over 500 years. At the same time, the words of the Zapatistas have provoked a great many others to begin new conversations about many issues, both old and new. The proclamations, communiqués and letters from the mountains of southeastern Mexico have generated a whole new world of impassioned conversation, throughout not only Mexico but in much of the rest of the world. Speeches, collective discussions, articles, reports and books have been, and continue to be, produced in reaction to Zapatista ideas and actions. It is fitting, therefore, for at least one of those books—*FIRST WORLD, HA HA HA!*—to present a cross-section of the voices now joined in this complex encounter.

Elaine Katzenberger has assembled an interesting and stimulating collection of voices from Mexico and the United States, of those in revolt and those reacting to the revolt. The book was conceived, she writes in her introduction, "as a way to translate, broadcast, and amplify the sense of possibility that was created by the uprising." Listened to as moments of an ever wider and ever more multi-sided conversation, the voices in the book should contribute to that amplification by giving their listeners a sense of the complexity and breadth of the discussion. There are a LOT of people involved in this discussion.

While the book is by no means comprehensive, it does allow us to hear many of the passions engaged and issues at stake. For those who have not yet listened in, the book will provide a sense of what is being said. For those who have already joined in the dialogue, they are likely to hear some new voices—especially those from Mexican

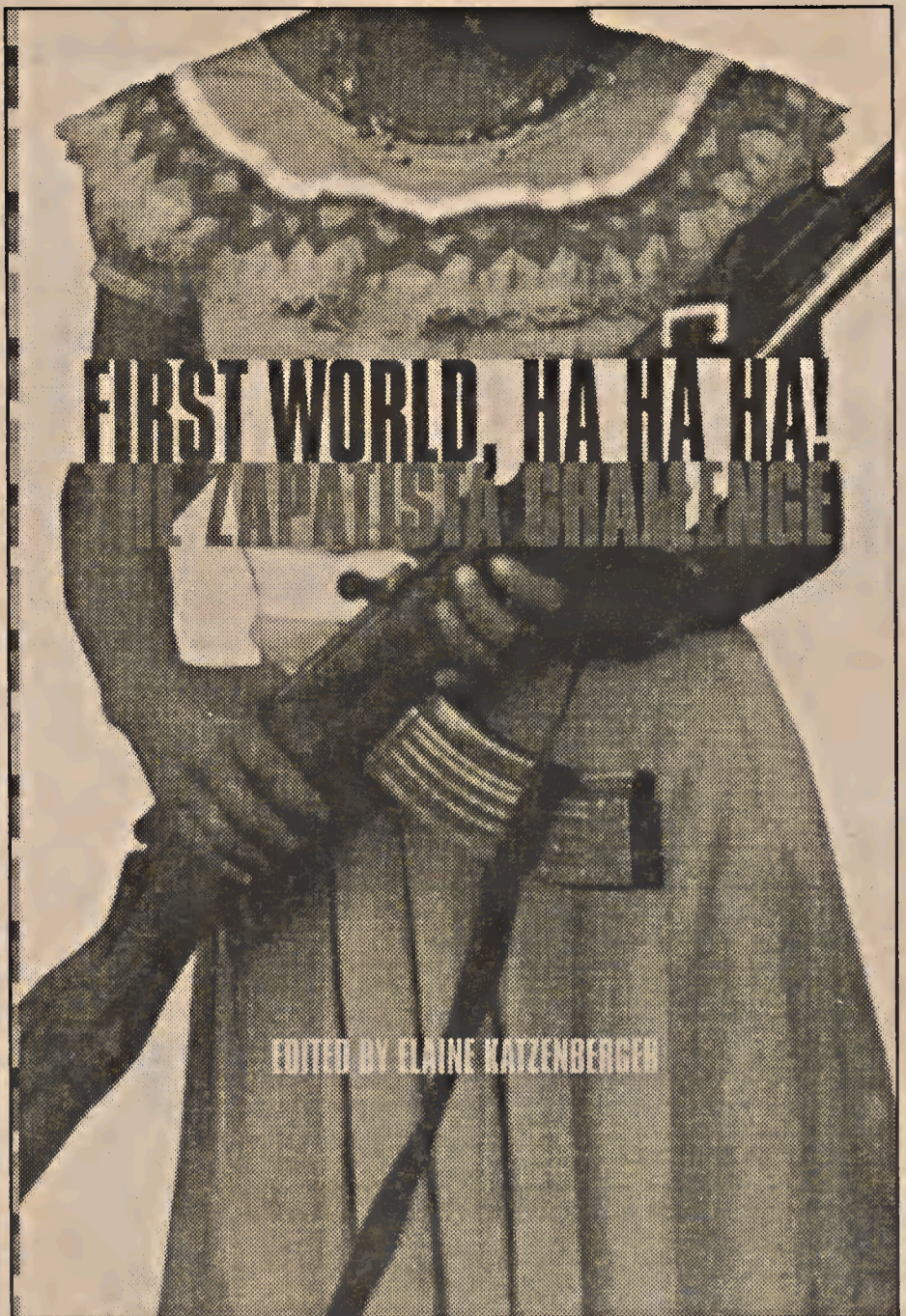
writers and poets—that will complement the Zapatista materials already available in translation (*Voices Of Fire; Zapatistas! Documents Of The New Mexican Revolution; and Shadows Of Tender Fury*) and the only book-length analytical response produced so far (*BASTA!*).

The most familiar of the material in the book is that from the Zapatistas themselves—precisely because at least three collections have been published in English. After a brief introduction and three brief descriptions of the revolt itself, recounted by those who were there at the time, Katzenberger offers the reader a series of interviews that reproduce the voices of over a dozen Zapatistas. Some of these are well-known figures, such as Subcommander Marcos and Commander Ramona. Others are much less well known but often no less interesting in their stories and personalities.

Medea Benjamin's interview with Marcos is a useful addition to previously translated interviews. One of the co-founders of Global Exchange, an NGO dedicated to grass-roots development, that has sponsored several trips by international observers to Chiapas, Benjamin probes Marcos on both the nature of the Zapatista struggle and on his ideas of how those in the US can support the EZLN's efforts in Mexico. Marcos's account of the struggle speaks to a number of familiar issues, such as the aim of opening space for democracy rather than seizing power, the importance of women in the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) and the organization's support for women's struggles for political participation and control over their own lives and bodies. Asked about the best thing that activists in the United States could do in supporting the Zapatistas, Marcos answered "it is so important for the American people to be aware of what's going on, and to pressure their government to stop supporting the corrupt Mexican government. It's important for the American people to make sure that if another round of violence breaks out, their government will not intervene."

With respect to the very central issue of land reform and the reconquest of stolen territory by the indigenous (and campesinos more generally), Marcos makes clear that EZLN demands go beyond "land to the tiller" or a return to traditional methods (slash and burn) to the modernization of agriculture. As a later essay in the book, by Peter Rosset, who draws on George Collier's field research, suggests, this attention to modernization reflects the changes that have taken place in Chiapas over the last decades as wealthier peasants and landowners have begun to use a variety of new techniques to raise the productivity of the land. "If we had tractors, fertilizers, good seeds, technical assistance," Marcos says, "this land would produce eight to sixteen times what it produces now." The reappropriation of land, in other words, must be accompanied by access to what is necessary to make it more productive.

Unfortunately, neither Benjamin nor Marcos broach the controversial issues surrounding the use of "modern" technologies, not least of which are environmental ones. We know from other statements that the Zapatistas ARE concerned with such issues,



but no such discussion appears in this interview.

Another issue concerning land reform that Marcos does mention, but which is not developed as much as one might like, is that of how reappropriated land might be allocated and managed. When Marcos says "we need to have collective farms" alarm bells may go off in the minds of many readers who will associate such a term with the horrors of Soviet-style, state-capitalist agrarian policies. Few today can associate the term "collective farms" with anything other than exploitation and the "collecting" of a surplus. Yet Marcos' comments do NOT spell out any such vision. His comments appear in response to a question about the landless—thus collective farms as an alternative to handing out too little arable land to too many landless—and there is no role for the state in his "collective farms." "We think the big farms should be given over to production collectives that would use some of their produce for their own subsistence and sell the rest." Thus, the vision would seem to be more akin to traditional arrangements where the land is held and worked in common than to any kind of state imposed "collectivist" regime.

However, the comment about "selling the rest" suggests that the Zapatista discussions have not yet invented alternatives to

the market as a means of wider distribution and sharing.

Marcos' comments are complemented in the book by those of Antonio Hernandez Cruz, a Tojolabal Indian and leader of the State Indigenous and Campesino Council of Chiapas (CIOAC). Besides speaking about his arrest and torture by the military, he also speaks about the need to redistribute land, especially the good, productive lands stolen from the Indians by the landlords.

He discusses the need to reverse the reform of Article 27 of the Constitution, which legally abolished communal land ownership. But at the same time, he discusses these things in terms of indigenous rights: the need for land is the need for the basis of indigenous community and its cultures. "We have been advancing in the attempt to establish a comprehensive plan for indigenous people's rights. We need constitutional reform where a whole new chapter establishes various articles that speak of Indian people's concrete rights." Such efforts, supported by the Zapatistas, who are overwhelmingly indigenous, have provoked a new self-consciousness and pride among many indigenous communities, of themselves and their traditions.

The voices in the book that speak of the key role of women's struggles in Chiapas and within the EZLN are varied. There is Marcos', of course, and the "Revolutionary Women's Law"—drafted by women in the EZLN and accepted by its leadership. There is also a brief overview by the well known Mexican woman writer Elena Poniatowska. These voices emphasize both the heavy burden of toil imposed on women by a capitalist exploitation that includes family patriarchy and the new struggles of women against that burden.

Fresher, however, are the lesser known voices of several Chiapaneca women—both within and without the EZLN.

There is the Tzeltal Indian Isidora, for instance, who recounts her struggle to join the Zapatistas at the age of 13—which sounds very young but is often the age of marriage and childbearing for indigenous girls in Chiapas. Twice she ran away from home and sought out the EZLN, only to be returned home by them, and was beaten by her family. Finally, respecting her tenacity and courage, the Zapatistas called a village meeting to discuss the situation and to ask for the community's authorization for her to join them. In view of her determination, the community agreed.

Then there is Maria, 22 years old and another Tzeltal Indian, who joined the EZLN, learned Spanish and other skills, met

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Albuquerque, NM 87125
bright@thales.nmia.com

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PO Box 57069
Jackson Station
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her husband-to-be in the Zapatista Army, and then left it when they were married and decided to have a baby (which is not permitted within the army proper).

There are also Natalia and Soledad who live in San Cristobal and who are members of JPAS JOLOVILETIK the largest women's artisanal cooperative in Chiapas. These women, who are interviewed by Yolanda Castro, are not members of the EZLN but have clearly been influenced by it and are very much involved in the discussions it has provoked, especially about women's rights. Their comments display not only an acute consciousness of the injustices of traditional racial discrimination and patriarchy, but also firm agreement with the 10 points of the Revolutionary Women's Law adopted by the Zapatistas.

When Yolanda Castro came to Austin a few months back, to talk about the cooperative and the struggles of its women, she showed a film in which the women in the organization were involved in extensive and detailed discussions, not only about the Revolutionary Law but also about the reform of the Mexican constitution. The law has triggered a new critical feminist awareness of the two-sided character of those "traditions" supposedly protected by the Constitution. While indigenous leaders like Antonio Hernandez Cruz tend to speak in gender-neutral terms about "indigenous rights" the women in JPAS JOLOVILETIK, Castro related, took a large piece of paper, drew a line down the middle and proceeded to discuss and sort out "traditions" into two categories: those worthy of being preserved and those which needed to be discarded or changed. One tradition in Chiapas which is under attack by women is the one whereby only men have the right to own land. Just as the indigenous community needs land to found its autonomy, so too are women demanding the material basis of their own. Such are the kinds of discussions among women that have been provoked by the Zapatista uprising and are forcing the revolutionary process beyond such traditional issues as land tenure and native rights.

Interspersed among such native voices are those of several commentators who attempt to interpret and situate the struggles in Chiapas within a wider context.

Noam Chomsky, for example, sees the Zapatista rebellion and the other struggles it has set in motion as revolts against the "free-trade," neo-liberal strategies of global capitalism, against NAFTA, against GATT and against the efforts of multinational corporations to pit workers of one area against those of another.

Native American intellectual Ward Churchill, for his part, after discussing the long history of Mayan rebellion, locates the Zapatista revolt as an integral part of a much wider (hemispheric and global) uprising of indigenous people. "The EZLN should be viewed", he writes, "through its deliber-

ate internal alignment with the spirit of the 1630 Mayan revolt, as joining—conceptually and emotionally—the much broader historical stream of indigenous resistance in the Americas . . . the Zapatista phenomenon is as much an extension of the resistance of Powhatan or Pontiac to British imperialism as it is of the example of Tupac Amaru or Ajuricaba . . . the list goes on and on." Churchill cites an article by Bernard Neitschmann in CULTURAL SURVIVAL QUARTERLY (1988) that cataloged some 125 of the world's "hot wars" and found that "fully 85 percent were being waged by specific indigenous peoples, or amalgamations of indigenous peoples." "In other words," Churchill concludes, "the Zapatistas—and the INDIGENISMO they incarnate—represent the revitalization of revolutionary potential in America."

The Mexican intellectual, Antonio Garcia de Leon, who has written extensively on Chiapas and the history of social struggles in Mexico, takes the EZLN's "zapatismo" as a point of departure to discuss its relationship to their forerunner Emiliano Zapata, and more profoundly to the recurrent rebirth of hope and struggle after periods of repression and exploitation. His evocation of this eternal return of new energy for both negation (of oppression) and affirmation (of new ways of being) is a celebration of "the collective dream, the most powerful imagining of MEXICO PROFUNDO [deep Mexico]." His voice resonates with some of the most important feelings liberated in the world by the Zapatista uprising: those of renewed hope and renewed imagination for breaking free of the generalized capitalist assault on the workers and peasants of the entire world that has wrecked so much havoc over the last two decades. It doesn't remind us how that assault came as a response to a previous cycle of struggle, but it does give a sense of the new energy that has been loosed across the face of the globe.

Despite the general focus of such commentators on what is new and interesting about the Zapatistas and the bottom-up struggles in Mexico, there are a few voices still engaged in old debates. Ronnie Burke, while tracing the history of Mexico's influence on revolutionaries, would have us believe that "recent events confirm that Mexico's revolutionary character is very much in keeping with Trotsky's formulations" and proceeds to quote Trotsky that "the complete and genuine solution of their [the colonial and semi-colonial countries] tasks, democratic and national emancipation, is conceivable only through the dictatorship of the proletariat . . ." Perhaps the persistence of such thinking explains why Ward Churchill takes time to renew his attacks on orthodox Marxism (which includes Trotskyism) and why Mongo Sanchez Lira and Rogelio Villareal bother to berate Leftists North and South (includ-

ing the PRD, those who support it and even the National Autonomous University Student Council).

More interesting is Iain Boal's discussion of the similarities and differences between the Zapatistas and the Luddites within the context of a celebration of the work of Marxist historian Edward Thompson, one of the founders of contemporary bottom-up history. The parallels between the Luddites and the Zapatistas are in the similarities between the resistance in Chiapas (and Mexico more generally) and that of the British people to the onslaught of industrialization. In both cases peasants have fought against the enclosure of their lands and their forced induction into the industrial labor army.

FIRST WORLD, HA HA HA! is illuminated with the work of American and Mexican photographers and poets. The photographs made in Chiapas allow us to SEE the kind of people to whose voices we are listening, and a little bit of their world. Some are wearing ski masks, which draw our attention to their eyes and to what they are doing. Others are not: children and adults, in contemplation and at work. Some add depth to the voices—like David Muang's striking photograph of four women bent almost double, carrying heavy loads across a vast open landscape, an image that dramatizes the arduous toil against which the women of Chiapas are now speaking out. Or the cover photograph of the book itself, a photograph by Nunez Pliego of a woman holding an AK-47. In the photograph there is only her colorful indigenous dress, her brown arms and the central presence of the gun which, like the woman herself, is too big to fit on the cover and disappears off of it in both

directions. Some photos evoke the cosmology of the indigenous, their sense of place within the whole of nature. Others are self-reflective, like the photographs of political murals and of other photographs—such as that of Emiliano Zapata in the hands of a contemporary demonstrator—both of which remind us that the power of images has developed alongside the power of words in this revolutionary struggle for a new world.

The poems chosen for this collection express many of the same feelings and yearnings as the other voices, only in different ways. For those whose eyelids grow heavy when faced with long paragraphs of dense prose, they offer other, more aesthetically appealing, access points for coming to grips with the realities of the struggle in Chiapas. While Chiapaneco poets Juan Banuelos and Elva Macias respectively grieve for the tortured and assassinated and celebrate the warriors birthed by the jungle, Mexican City poet Alberto Blanco stretches the newly rediscovered concept of tribe forward and outward, away from exclusivity toward a world "where everyone, all and always has their sacred place."

These are some of the voices, some of their preoccupations and tonalities, that abound in this book. You can start listening anywhere, there is no linear sequence. You can wander amidst this sector of Babel, following your intellectual or poetic ear where ever it leads. But if you let your listening be attentive you will soon discover that it is not enough to listen, you must also speak. You must add your voice to the tumult that is sorting itself out, your ideas to the conversations, your energy to the struggles. ★

Direct Action to Save Mumia

BY BRONWYN

The Love and Rage Federation has been present for some time in the struggle to save and free Mumia Abu-Jamal. Love and Rage local collectives and individual members are presently working in coalitions in cities across the country in the midst of this crisis to save Mumia's life. It is crucial to come together to stop his execution set for August 17, 1995. This also comes at a time when the US government has intensified the war upon its people.

Mumia was targeted by the US government's counterinsurgency (COINTELPRO) war on Liberation Movements such as the Black Panther Party and FMLN. These were genuine liberation movements fighting against an imperialist government. Mumia was targeted by the government, as well, for aligning himself with and speaking out on behalf of the MOVE organization. MOVE is a grassroots activist group in Philadelphia that fights state oppression, racism, police brutality and capitalist imperialism. MOVE was also attacked COINTELPRO style with members including children being bombed and burnt to death in what is known as the Mother's Day Massacre, May 13, 1985.

The Love and Rage Federation struggles to abolish the state and therefore opposes and fights any form of state murder by any facet of this government. The death penalty is a weapon that this government is using in its systematic genocide of Black, poor white, Latino, and Native American peoples. This is their most overt form of state murder. It is being used hand-in-hand with the covert Drug war that pumps poison into poor communities and then allows the state to murder

or incarcerate the people for possessing them. This government's new crimes legislation gives the state 52 new ways in which it can apply an overt death sentence. This capitalist-imperialist government has also built a booming prison economy in which the ruling class beneficiaries of the government profit from the mass incarceration of the people. Prisons are another weapon in the government's genocidal plan. The Love and Rage Federation struggles toward prison abolition and creating a society free of prisons with socio-communal forms of handling social dysfunction.

Mumia Abu-Jamal has become, over his 13 years on death row, a symbol for this genocidal war on the people by the racist, terroristic imperialist US government.

We say along with the Zapatistas, ENOUGH IS ENOUGH! We will have no more of this government's war at home. We support direct action as a means to saving the life of Mumia Abu-Jamal. This means any type of direct action that will send a message to this government about what political price it will have to pay for taking Mumia's life. We encourage non-sectarian, anti-authoritarian, non-hierarchical and democratic processes in organizing to save him. We also support any type of autonomous organizing directed at saving Mumia's life as long as it does not discredit the larger movement.

JOIN US IN THE STREETS FOR MUMIA!
SAY ENOUGH IS ENOUGH TO GENOCIDE!
MUMIA MUST LIVE! MUMIA MUST BE FREE!

[This article is one of two draft statements by the Love and Rage Prison Abolition Working Group. See the group's other draft statement starting on page 1.]

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The following books and pamphlets are available from Love and Rage at the listed prices:

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by Sundiata Acoli \$3

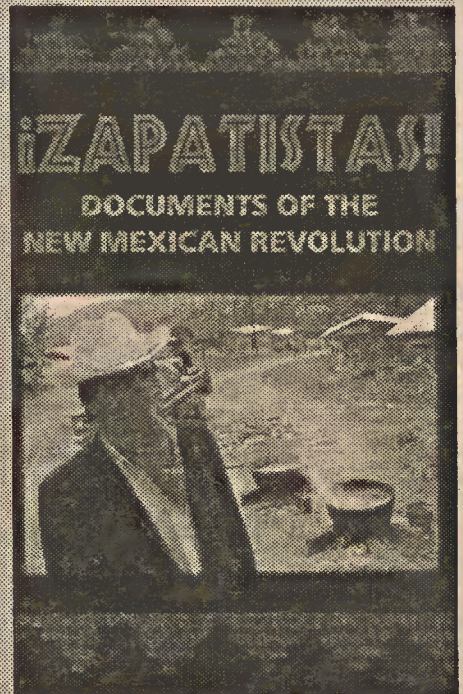
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Demise of the Beehive Collective: Infoshops

BY BRAD SIGAL

In April, 1995 the Beehive Community Space & Infoshop in Washington, DC shut its doors. The Beehive Autonomous Collective, which started and operated the infoshop, had started meeting in July 1993, and opened the infoshop in October, 1993. This article will analyze some of what happened at Beehive and attempt to draw some lessons that might be useful for the Infoshop movement and the anarchist movement in general. I was involved with Beehive for the entire life span of the group. In this article I am only speaking for myself as one member of the project.

WHAT IS AN INFOSHOP?

An infoshop is a space where people involved with radical movements and countercultures can trade information, meet and network with other people & groups, and hold meetings and/or events. They often house "free schools" and educational workshops. Infoshops have existed in Europe for decades. The Spanish revolutionary infoshops of the 1930s, and the current European infoshops provided some of the inspiration for the newer North American infoshops.

THE NORTH AMERICAN INFOSHOP MOVEMENT

While a few bookstores/infoshops existed in the 1980s, the current wave of infoshops basically started in the aftermath of the Gulf War in 1991. Their growth seems to have in some ways been a direct response to frustrations some anarchists felt trying to organize a movement against the Gulf War without any institutions to draw upon or sustain day-to-day activism in our communities. The Long Haul infoshop in the Bay Area and the Emma Center in Minneapolis served as inspirations and models for some of the other infoshops. The more punk music oriented spaces like Epicenter in San Francisco and Reconstruction Records in New York were also inspirations for some people.

ORIGINS OF BEEHIVE & DRAWING LESSONS

Like many of today's infoshops, Beehive's origins are in the punk-rock counterculture. It developed out of the contradictions facing the DC punk community in 1993. Many people in the DC punk scene had been politically active since the mid-1980s, and many of the more popular DC punk bands

had political lyrics and had played many benefit concerts during that time. While the benefit concerts have continued, by 1993 the tendency toward activism in the punk scene was fading. A few of us who had been involved in punk-oriented activist groups, such as Positive Force, Riot Grrrl and Food Not Bombs, were feeling more isolated from the rest of the punk scene. We came together out of the experiences we had in these other groups, in a mostly unarticulated attempt to move beyond the confines of the "punk scene" to become more involved with and relevant to other DC communities. Others who hadn't been previously involved in DC punk/political groups also got involved, attracted to the concept of either a "free space," a record store or a hangout space.

LITTLE PARTICIPATION FROM LOCAL COMMUNITY

One of the most noticeable things about Beehive's beginning was that almost all of the people who got involved were not from DC—and even further, many people had just recently moved to DC. Only a few people who were ever involved with Beehive actually grew up in the DC area or had lived here more than a couple of years. This helped produce a larger problem—none of the people in the collective were from the particular neighborhood where we opened our infoshop, and we never succeeded in attracting neighborhood residents to the project.

When Beehive was starting out, the fact that so many people were from out of town was refreshing, as it strengthened the waning "political" tendency in the DC punk scene. But in retrospect it was a weakness which caused a continual shortsightedness, and contributed to the group's end.

This "transient" tendency isn't surprising considering the social base Beehive came out of. The punk scene is generally young, politically inexperienced and has very high turnover. There is a strong commitment to individual and/or spontaneous acts of creativity (bands, fanzines, fashion, etc.) but a non-committal or skeptical attitude toward organized movements or organizations. To start a community-based organization such as an infoshop, however, requires long-term thinking and commitment. This basic tension—between the attention span and commitment level of our social base, and the commitment necessary to do what we said we wanted to do—was a problem in Beehive from beginning to end.

DOMINANCE OF PUNK-ROCK CULTURE

The fact that Beehive came out of the punk-rock community isn't inherently bad by any means. But we need to recognize the limitations of the punk scene, and how those limitations make a community organizing project very difficult, if not impossible.

At Beehive we also experienced the strange tendency for punk to dominate all that it comes in contact with. While Beehive was started by punks, some non-punk anarchists and other activists were attracted to it at first. But none of the non-punk activists stayed involved, and it wasn't until the last few months of the group that a few more non-punk anarchists got involved. While the non-punks who left had their individual reasons for leaving the group, I think in most cases it was partly related to the dominance of punk in the group.

Since the visible activities happening at Beehive were punk-related, more middle-class punks continued to be attracted to the project, mostly from outside of DC. So we were continually treading water, always saying we wanted to "get beyond" the punk community and interact with and involve people from the neighborhood around us, but continually attracting more and more punks (with varying degrees of commitment to community organizing). This further strengthened the association of Beehive with the punk scene, and made it increasingly more difficult to attract other communities to the project.

The answer to this question is not easy, as punk has probably done more than anything else in the last 20 years to popularize anarchism and to articulate the anti-authoritarianism of alienated white youth. Punk culture should exist, and thrive, in radical spaces, but it shouldn't dominate.

There is an underlying strain of arrogance and elitism to much of punk culture, a belief that "the masses are asses" or that everyone else is just stupid and conforms to society's expectations. Also the fact that punks tend to come from white, middle-class backgrounds means that many punks have more resources and money at their disposal to develop their projects than do people from more working-class countercultures. This factor makes it easy for punk to unintentionally dominate a space—many punks receive "hidden" support from parents and middle-class jobs, which allow more punk bands to buy nicer equipment, put out their own records, tour more easily, etc.

GENTRIFICATION

When we started looking for a building to move our community space into, we were immediately confronted with the high cost of rent in DC. The cheapest rent we were able to find—somewhat near a subway station and somewhat near where some of us lived—was in a neighborhood that is in the process of gentrification.

Gentrification is the process by which a working-class or poor urban neighborhood starts to become desirable to middle-class or yuppie people ("gentry") from outside of that neighborhood. One of the main desirable factors is the cheap rent. Once middle-class people move in, they start to make "improvements," demand more police presence to protect their property, and businesses start to appear to cater to their middle-class and yuppie tastes. As the neighborhood becomes more "desirable" for people with more money, property values start to rise, and the original poor or working-class residents of the neighborhood can't keep up with the rising costs and have to move out. It is a process of colonization on a smaller level.

Some of us repeatedly raised the issue of gentrification in the group while we were deciding where to locate our infoshop. We were conscious of our role as outsiders to the U Street neighborhood we were considering, and we were weary of the "revitalization" going on a few blocks down the street. The U Street & 14th Street corridors were burned out in April 1968 in the urban uprisings after Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated.

Until the early 90s, the commercial corridors remained partly vacant while surrounding neighborhoods suffered from the violence and decay that has wreaked havoc on inner cities over the past 30 years.

Around when we were looking at the neighborhood, a group of new "hip" businesses had joined together to market the concept of "The New U," which was used in

ads in citywide papers to try to attract outsiders to come shop the new U Street businesses. The "New U" businesses down the street hit a nerve with us because many of them were started by people from our community—punks and alternative types. Since they were from our community, we wanted to differentiate from them, but in reality we didn't really know how.

We didn't want to contribute to the gentrification process, although none of us had a clear idea of how to oppose it. We agreed that we would try to be different than the stores of "The New U" down the street. We would be different because we would try to serve needs of people who lived in the neighborhood (through free clothing, free food, and free daycare programs, for example) rather than trying to bring in yuppies from outside with money. We knew we would make mistakes, but we didn't see ourselves as contributing to gentrification as long as we were actively struggling against it politically.

Gentrification turned out to be one of the two major divisive issues in Beehive, and it seems to be that way at most infoshops around the US.

INTERNAL GROUP DYNAMICS: RACE, CLASS & GENDER

Other than gentrification, it was internal group dynamics centering on race, class and gender that were the most pressing and most divisive issues that Beehive faced. This also seems to mirror the experience of other infoshops around the US. We had a series of internal conflicts which escalated in intensity, until May 1994 when two members and two non-members of the group confronted the rest of the group in a very abrasive way for what they saw as sexism, classism and racism in the way the group operated. Those of us involved in Beehive learned a lot from these internal struggles. It forced us to confront many of our personal motivations and approaches, to try to figure out which of our actions come out of our genuinely progressive aspirations, and which come from our culturally brainwashed upbringing in a white-supremacist, patriarchal, and capitalist society.

Unfortunately, some who supported Beehive but weren't directly involved seemed turned off or intimidated by the perceived hostile infighting. This further isolated us from the community that we originally emerged from.

More importantly, I think these internal struggles happened in a way that was disconnected to any practice of trying to change oppressive institutions in society, and without seeing that our mistakes were not just due to our individual shortcomings, but were being replicated by many other groups at the same time. Although it wasn't easy to see at the time, the struggles over internal dynamics in the group escalated precisely when it had become clear that Beehive wasn't accomplishing the political goals that we claimed to aspire to. The free daycare never happened. A proposal for a community organizing project was passed but then never acted on. Anti-gentrification discussion and efforts had been pushed into the background. Other activist groups weren't using Beehive as a meeting space or resource center. The lending library was falling apart.

This wasn't because we didn't care about these things anymore. We just hadn't realized how much work it would take just to maintain and staff the infoshop, let alone actually using it as a base from which to launch activist projects. Once we had rented a building and moved in, it took all our energy (and then some!) to just staff and open the infoshop three days a week (we would have liked to have been open every day). Repairs to the building were never made. Bureaucratic paperwork with the government to make our infoshop "legal" was never filled out—partly because we decided not to, but even if we had wanted to we just weren't organized enough to handle it.

Among the people who were consistently involved with the group, many of us traveled for weeks or months at a time and our involvement varied accordingly. Core people moved away from DC at a few key moments in the group's history. There was never a clear sense that people would be around very long. This "come and go" situation among core members and the high turnover among others made it impossible to progress on internal group dynamics.

For example, at a meeting one week, a woman would confront the group about



Bee Hive Advert

Ain't the Revolution

sexism, and we would agree to spend the next meeting discussing the situation in depth. Then at the next meeting there would only be a few people there who were at the previous meeting. Everyone else there missed "the incident" and had no idea what was happening or why it was suddenly so urgent to spend the whole meeting talking about our sexism. The discussions on internal dynamics would mostly consist of uncomfortable silence. The people who brought the issue up in the first place would say what they thought, and there would be some hesitant discussion, but real group dialogue on these issues almost never happened. We just weren't able to handle it as a group.

Transience makes it impossible to deal with internal dynamics. To get anywhere on such issues, I think a group needs to have a somewhat stable membership who can work out interpersonal dynamics over time, and the group also needs to be actively struggling to bring about change outside of itself. Otherwise, dealing with internal dynamics becomes all-consuming, and becomes more like group therapy than struggling to change the society we live in. (This is not to degrade therapy for those who want or need it to deal with life in a fucked up society; it is just to say that political organizing and therapy are different things, and we should be clear which one we want to be doing at what times.)

Some people attracted to counter-institutions, like many other political projects, like this act in oppressive ways (intentionally or not) and take up more than their share of the group's time in dealing with their personal problems or idiosyncrasies. I don't think we should be afraid of criticizing or "alienating" people who are detracting from the focus of the group or making others feel uncomfortable. I think we need to commit ourselves to finding ways to deal seriously with oppressive aspects of our group dynamics in a way that encourages people to speak, grow, and learn to become better activists through experience and comradely criticism.

space for other people to "do their own thing." While this is a good thing to do, it does not differ fundamentally from the mission of a public library, for example. And I would argue in the current context, at least in DC, it is not the most valuable use of our energies in building a revolutionary anti-authoritarian movement.

While our statement took some political stands (against capitalism, racism, sexism, heterosexism), we did not have a political focus of our own to fight against those things. By coming out against those things politically while having no program to work against them, we were setting ourselves up to be torn apart by struggles over those oppressions in the internal dynamics of the group—and that's what happened. This shows why it is important to have an agreed upon purpose for the group, as well as an attempt to create a strategy to realize those goals.

Having no agreed upon purpose creates one set of problems that will probably lead to misunderstandings and frustration, factionalism, and people leaving the group confused or frustrated about what the group is supposed to be doing. Having a unified purpose but no strategy creates another similar set of problems, which will also often cause people to become frustrated and look to each others' individual shortcomings for the source of the problem, rather than trying to create a strategy to have an effect on the world around us. Most infoshops seem to be stuck in one or the other of these problems; Beehive was usually somewhere in between.

THE UNSTATED (DIS)IDEOLOGY OF INFOSHOPS

While Beehive's political statement avoided articulating a specific strategy or focus, we were still following an unspoken strategy. The failure to articulate a strategy doesn't mean that you don't have one, it just means that you haven't consciously worked through it as a group. I think most infoshops try to take the easy way out of developing and implementing a strategy to reach

tutions whether we fight them or not. So without a means to directly confront them, our counter-institutions will be crushed when they are perceived as enough of a threat to the status quo.

However, in the current political context without strong mass movements, the greater danger to counter-institutions is being co-opted into a harmless "alternative" without revolutionary content. We can see

as gentrification.

At the same time, every infoshop I know of has experienced severe internal problems, with serious factional fights and with many people leaving infoshops frustrated, angry, or burnt out. The factional fights and splits have escalated to vandalism or threats of violence at places like Emma Center in Minneapolis, Beehive in DC, and Epicenter in San Francisco.

bee (bē) n. 1. Any of various winged, usu. stinging insects that gather nectar and pollen from flowers and in some species produce honey. 2. A gathering where people work together or compete. —*idiom.* a bee in (one's) bonnet. An idea that fills most of one's thoughts. [*< OE bæa.*]

this in many food co-ops that started in the co-op upsurge of the early 1970s which are now catering increasingly to a yuppie clientele and adopting more of a capitalist approach. I think this shows that counter-institutions are not inherently revolutionary—they can go in many directions.

COUNTER-INSTITUTIONS AS A FOUNDATION FOR REVOLUTIONARY GROWTH?

A more developed analysis sees infoshops not as inherently revolutionary but as one part of a revolutionary strategy. As Jacinto from Chicago's Autonomous Zone Infoshop wrote in the first issue of *(dis)connection*, "the revolution is not in the formation of these counter-institutions, but in the revolutionary potential of the collectives which can use the resources provided by liberated spaces." Jacinto argues that building sustainable radical counter-institutions now will provide a launching pad for all sorts of radical projects and collectives. This strategy makes sense—it sees the need for building ongoing institutions to sustain radical activism, and it also sees the limitations of those counter-institutions by themselves. This strategy says that the missing ingredient—the reason there are not more radical projects and collectives—is that there is not a base of support, information, and resources for such projects to develop. According to this strategy, if we build infoshops as that base, then the amount of activist projects in our communities should grow.

This was the unstated strategy that I was pursuing through Beehive, and I think it's the unstated strategy of a lot of people who are involved in infoshops. While this strategy sounds good, it did not work in practice for us, and I don't see much evidence of it working elsewhere. One possibility is that Beehive did not survive long enough to "bear fruit" in the form of new projects and collectives. But as it was, our whole group was drained just keeping the Beehive infoshop afloat and staffed from week to week. The anarchist and radical communities are just too small in DC to sustain an anarchist infoshop and to also develop other projects. Rather than building the basis for further growth of radical projects, my experience is that infoshops will burn out the core group of activists and thus prevent them from developing or contributing to new projects.

WHERE TO FROM HERE: REVOLUTIONARY PLURALISM & INFOSHOPS AS A PART OF A REVOLUTIONARY STRATEGY

This is the situation we find ourselves in—in North America in 1995 we are trying to build a revolutionary anti-authoritarian movement on almost no solid foundation. Many young anarchists realize that we need ongoing institutions to sustain our work during the high points and low points of mass movements. Over the past few years, many of us have tried to build local infoshops and community centers to fulfill that function.

At best, the results have been mixed. Most of the infoshop collectives have attracted new people to anarchist politics, and have given anarchists an ongoing project to work on that at least has the potential to deal with the issues faced by oppressed and alienated people in our daily lives. Some of the infoshops have improved the reputation of anarchists in their cities by having a visible example of their politics, while a couple have also taken militant direct action on neighborhood issues such

While much of the initial point of starting infoshops was to create a stable, ongoing presence in a particular city or community, some infoshops which opened with lofty expectations are already closed, such as Croatan in Baltimore and Beehive in DC. Other infoshops which are still open have already had to move once or twice, like Chicago's A-Zone. And of all the infoshops I'm familiar with, I can't think of any that have helped facilitate the starting of new projects or collectives except as hostile splits from the infoshop collective! Other projects that have developed probably would have formed anyway without the existence of the infoshops.

In cities where active anarchist projects and collectives already exist, it might make sense to set up an infoshop. But generally infoshops haven't been very successful at supporting and helping develop new projects. I think this is because of a lack of open discussion about our politics, vision, and strategy. While skills-sharing is crucial to helping disempowered and alienated people take control over our lives, I think the "missing ingredient" in the lack of new anarchist projects is our lack of a political vision for the future, and our lack of developing realistic strategies to move toward that vision. Can we really consider infoshops a cornerstone of a revolutionary movement if we can't have a discussion about anything deeper than what color to paint the room without causing a major split in the collective?

To deal with these questions, I think we need to take a step back from the specific political projects, such as infoshops, that we've chosen to work on. I don't mean to say that we should abandon such projects, but that they are bound to fail unless we simultaneously take a step back and build stable, ongoing political collectives, organizations, or other forums as a political infrastructure for our movement. The focus of such organizations should be specifically to develop political vision and strategy, and then work to implement that strategy. These can be local, regional, national or international groupings. Love and Rage is one example of such a group, but there are many such organizations with varying visions and strategies that will be part of any revolutionary movement. This is what I think of when I think of "revolutionary pluralism."

Infoshops may be one aspect of a political strategy that such political groupings could develop. But infoshops aren't a strategy in themselves, and are failing as a shortcut for working through our political differences and coming up with coherent visions and strategies to realize an anarchist future. I don't think that it's a mistake to work on infoshops, and I wouldn't say that the two years working on Beehive were a waste of time, as long as we are willing to admit our shortcomings and honestly sum up that experience to learn from it an move forward. This article is my attempt to do that, and my view is that it's time to work on other projects instead of starting another infoshop. ★

[(dis)connection is "a networking journal for radical collectives and counter-institutions." Two issues have come out so far. For copies contact A-Zone, 2045 W. North Ave, Chicago, IL 60622.]

bsigal@capaccess.org * pobox 18672 wash dc 20036 * 202-728-3899 * contact me for info on: claustrophobia abc * beehive collective * love & rage anti-prison working group *

hive (hīv) n. 1. A natural or artificial structure for housing bees, esp. honeybees. 2. A colony of bees living in a hive. 3. A place crowded with busy people. [*< OE hȳf.*] —*hive v.*

NO UNIFYING VISION, NO CLEAR GOALS, NO STRATEGY

The other missing link in dealing with internal dynamics is a clear sense of vision in the group. If everyone involved is clear about the purpose of the group (i.e. if the purpose and goals are worked out at the beginning, and clarified into a written statement) then the group can always refer back to that to see if its outward activities and internal dynamics are actually helping to fulfill those goals or not. But with Beehive, and I think at many other infoshops too, we never truly had political agreement on what our goals or purpose were.

We did have a statement of purpose, but it was crafted in a carefully vague way to basically allow for anything and avoid making choices about a specific course of action. We defined Beehive as, "an all volunteer collective promoting communication through books, records, 'zines, performance, meetings, and social/political networking. In our attempt to break the cycle of an historically classist, sexist, racist, heterosexist and authoritarian social system, we feel it is imperative to oppose capitalist oppression. It has denied us self-realization and free association. Beehive intends to bridge the ever increasing gap between privilege and underdevelopment by providing access to space and information at low cost or free. We will: be organic, radical, wild, and revolutionary; creative and critical locally and internationally."

When you take away what we are abstractly for & against, that leaves only promoting communication and providing a

our stated ideals, by stating our purpose simply as sharing information and providing a space for people to use. This creates a big gap between our stated goals (against capitalism, racism, sexism, heterosexism) and our actual activities (educational and logistical support work). We had revolutionary ideas but little strategy to work toward realizing them.

COUNTER-INSTITUTIONS AS "THE REVOLUTION"?

As you can probably tell by now, I don't see infoshops or counter-institutions as "the answer" or "the strategy" for building a revolutionary anarchist movement. I do, however, think that they can be an important part of a strategy, if there is a mass movement to support and sustain them. Some people (though probably not many in the anarchist infoshop movement) do see counter-institutions as "the revolution." Their strategy basically says that through creating non-profit cooperatives (food co-ops, free medical clinics, housing co-ops, etc.) we will set examples of a different type of society and serve the needs of our communities, which others will then copy. The counter-institutions will continue to gain power and will be able to serve the needs of the people, making the current power structures irrelevant without having to struggle directly against them.

What this strategy leaves out is that the institutions in power now have an interest in staying in power, and will fight to preserve and expand their power. They will struggle directly against our counter-insti-

Black Power, Student Power

An Interview with Black Radical Activist Bill Sales

BY MEG STAR

During the 1960s Bill Sales was a radical student activist. His experiences show how the Black student movement was shaped by the overall Black liberation movement, and how Black students in turn helped shape the white student movement.

It is interesting to compare Bill's version of the early stages of SDS (Students for a Democratic Society) and the Columbia Strike (an important occupation of buildings at New York City's Columbia University by Black and white students in 1968) with more mainstream and white-centered accounts of the same period. His stories also bring to life the incredible radical diversity and power of the Black Liberation movement. Readers interested in learning more should read Bill's latest book, *From Civil Rights to Black Liberation: Malcolm X and the Organization of Afro-American Unity* (South End Press, Boston, 1994).

U OF PENN AND THE NAACP

Meg Star: How did you become an activist as a student?

Bill Sales: "I was involved with the student chapter of the NAACP at the University of Pennsylvania in 1962. I had first come in contact with the movement on that campus through some people who were members of RAM. [The Revolutionary Action movement was a semi-clandestine organization that, beginning in 1963, attempted to combine mass direct action with the tactics of self-defense to push the movement towards revolutionary politics.] Two members in particular were friends of mine: Max Stanford [Muhammed Ahmed] and Stanley Davis. I knew Max from high school, and Stanley was a student at Penn before we became active. We all ran track together, believe it or not."

In 1962 the Penn Chapter of the NAACP invited Malcolm X to speak on campus, and they picketed Democratic Party Headquarters in Philadelphia to support Robert Williams. Williams had been the president of the NAACP in Monroe County, NC until 1959, when he called for armed defense in the face of growing KKK violence. During the next several years James Farmer, the Rev. Leon Sullivan, and many other Civil Rights leaders also spoke on campus.

BS: "Then I went to the march on Washington and was very impressed by all the goings on. I wanted to come back and assume the leadership of the NAACP on campus; I wasn't satis-

fied with its level of activism."

In the meantime, during the summer of '63, CORE [The Congress of Racial Equality was a direct-action-oriented civil-rights group that emphasized community based actions in Northern cities.] and the NAACP were confronting de facto segregation of construction sites in Philadelphia. Bill's two radical friends were arrested after being beaten by the police at one site. U of Penn was undergoing major renovation, so the students confronted the university's own hiring practices.

"Now all during the four years at Penn I was being exposed to different ideological currents, both in the Civil Rights Movement and in what came to be the New Left. I didn't have the slightest idea that that was what it was at the time. In my senior year, protesting segregation, I came in close contact with CORE and the NAACP. I can put it this way: I developed a greater appreciation for CORE and an utter disdain for the NAACP."

BLACK STUDENTS ORGANIZE

When Bill graduated from Penn he went to Columbia University to do graduate work. He arrived in the fall of 1964, the fall after African-American students organized on campus.

"A year after I left Penn Bob Brand, a white student from the NAACP, got in touch with me. He asked my permission to convert that chapter into an SDS chapter because at that point the only people left were white students who were very much interested in the anti-war situation. Many of those guys who became important in SDS got their first exposure in civil rights activity."

Bill arrived at Columbia in 1964, the same semester that the Students Afro-American Society was founded. In the mid-'60s campuses that for centuries had been lily-white were opening the doors to Black students for the first time. Columbia, Harvard and Yale were a little ahead of the majority of campuses.

"A whole lot of debate was going on about identity, about who we were as Black students, and what was our responsibility to the movement."

The numbers of Black students were increasing every semester and the class base of the students accepted by the college was becoming more working class, which affected the level of militance.

"There was a basis for effective group action. People sensed that potential, and also, no Black person at this time could get away without defining their lives at least in part in terms of the struggle that was going on in the larger society."

While Bill studied Swahili and met African leaders in the internationalist community around Columbia, he also reunited with Max Stanford.

"Max had been working with Malcolm in the OAAU period [the Organization of Afro-American Unity] and I ran into him shortly after Malcolm was assassinated. Max helped me get oriented to the scene in NY."

"GYM" CROW & EARLY ALLIANCES

In '68 the off-campus and on-campus movements were to come together. Columbia University had admitted Black students while continuing to be a smug and racist institution, completely out of touch with the neighboring Harlem community. The university occupies a small area of land, one side of which is a cliff overlooking the public Morningside Park, which is used primarily by the Harlem community. Columbia worked out an arrangement through its shady Board of Trustees' ruling-class connections to lease public land for the site of a new gym. Originally the gym was intended to be in Morningside Park, and to be completely closed to community residents. When the community objected to that Columbia started construction of two gyms: a large one for Columbia students and a smaller one for the community residents. Protesting the "Jim Crow Gym" brought together many different insurgent communities.

Already alliances between SDS and the African American students organization had developed through two experiences. By 1967 the university had allowed the student athletes to be developed into a right-wing firing squad that attacked SDS demonstrations.

"So one day Black students went out there. We had our own beef with these cats because they were racists. So we joined in to help the SDS guys because those people just didn't know how to fight. Not that they weren't game, they just didn't know what to do in that kind of situation. So we went out and knocked heads with these jocks."

CORE was trying to organize a union among the mostly African-American and Latino workers on campus. Black students

and some of SDS became involved.

"Ted Gold, one of the activists that got blown up in the townhouse [a member of Weatherman who was killed during an explosion at a safe house in NY on March 6, 1970], was very active in that. We all knew Gold long before we knew Rudd and those cats. The hell with them! They were off on some trip, but we knew the folks that were down. They were down long before it was fashionable to be down."

"One of the things that really got to me about Rudd was how you write a book confessing all the things you did were wrong. That's bullshit! It wasn't wrong just because you lost and it didn't work. There's a difference between winning and losing and being wrong."

Alliances off-campus were also very important to the Black students. In '67 there was a Black Power Conference in Maryland that had a special meeting for student activists.

"There were no more than 10 or 15 people in the place, but the following spring we were all involved in building takeovers on our different campuses. Herman Ferguson [an important Black activist and political prisoner, Ferguson was involved both in the Republic of New Afrika and the OAAU] was there that day; he was already on the lam."

Bill became involved in an underground student group called "cadre." The members were at different campuses. They took karate, studied, and made contact with various groups in Harlem.

MS: Why were you clandestine?

BS: "This was an era when people got shot. H. Rap Brown was already underground. Some of the people we worked with were underground. It wasn't as if we were planning to blow things up. But we felt that what we were doing was objectively revolutionary. And you just didn't run around in a public organization. We assigned ourselves public organizations on campus to be in."

THE COLUMBIA STRIKE

In April and May of 1968 Columbia University exploded into the famous strike and blockade. During those months over 1,000 students occupied four buildings on campus, fought the police, and held a dean hostage (briefly).

The role of the Black students in these events has been somewhat eclipsed in popular accounts. After describing the alliances on campus and off-campus that had been developed over the previous years, Bill described the day the decision was made to occupy the first building.

"1968 in some ways appeared to be spontaneous. On the day the takeover occurred none of us had planned a takeover."

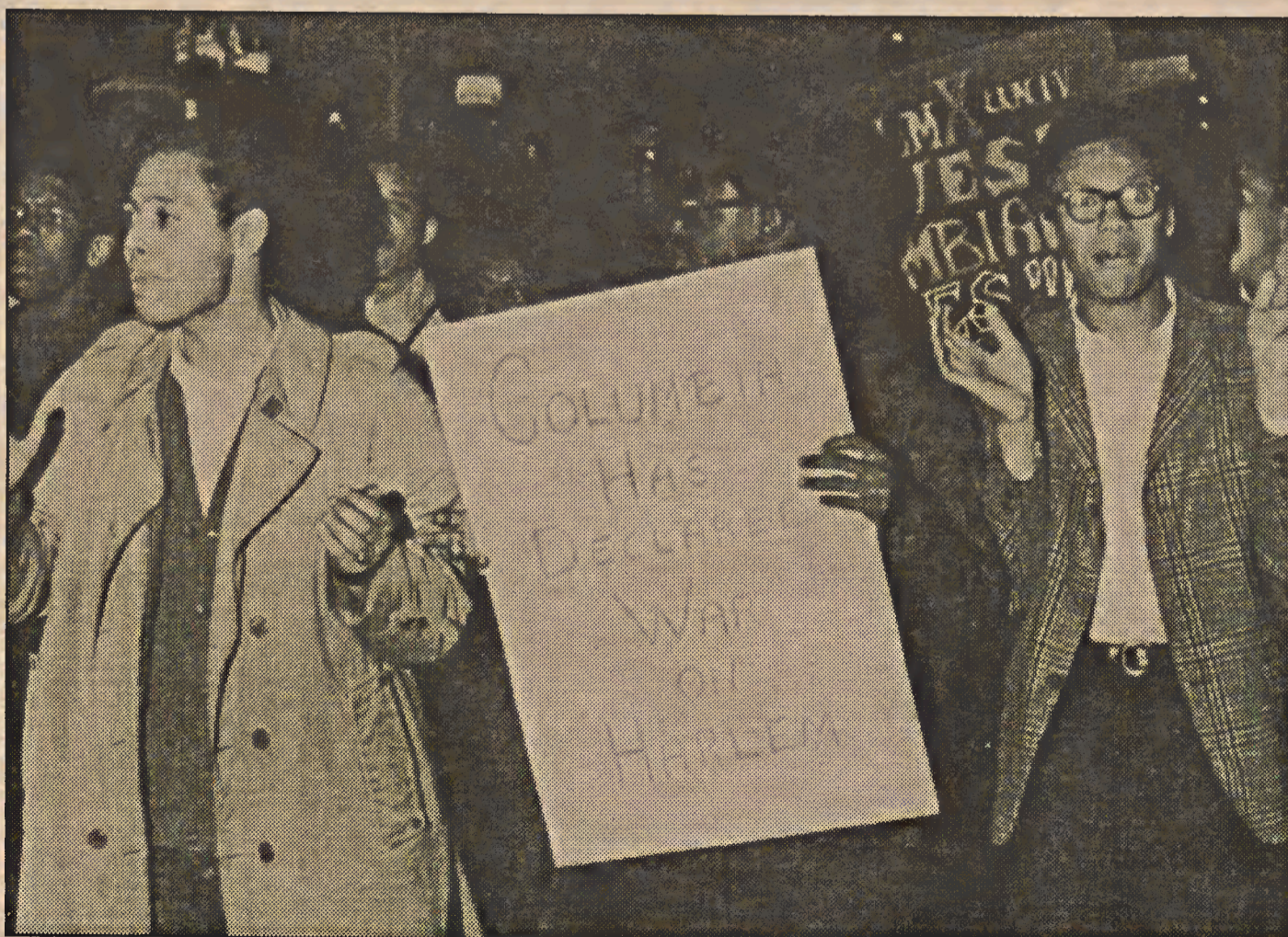
Bill and his friends went down to an SDS demonstration at the sundial [a central location on the main part of the Columbia campus] to fight the jocks and to support the new president of the Afro-American Students Organization who was speaking.

"When I got there I swear there were 5,000 people. It was a total shocker. I expected 200 people or so—the usual demonstration. The jocks were completely neutralized. The demonstration started by trying to take some demands into the president of Columbia University, but he closed his office building. The Black students wanted to storm the building, but Rudd said no. Someone in Progressive Labor said: 'Let's charge the gym site.' So we all ran down."

Community activists and campus activists had recently been arrested demonstrating at the site.

"We ran down 1,000 strong and all hell broke loose. It's the first and only time I ever got into actual combat with the police. We should have all been dead but there was a sergeant who pulled his forces back. At that time I was trying to break this cop's thumb because I said "If he gets his gun out I'm a dead person."

I had only jumped him because one of his associates had started hitting one of our guys and then one of CADRE punched him out. This guy was facing me so I



Bill Sales (right) and unidentified activist at Columbia.

Black Power, Student Power

grabbed his wrist and twisted him around. I didn't want to fight this cat and he didn't want to fight me. I said I can take this guy; he's scared of me. He'll shoot me out of fear if he gets his gun out. People don't realize how things escalate. Lethal confrontations that nobody means to happen—people were all fighting, and this sergeant comes down and tells his men to back off and leave us alone. He recognized that it was Harlem and if they grabbed a bunch of Black students all hell would break loose."

Bill stressed how many different people had their own organizations then and were prepared for confrontation. The Black women on campus, repulsed by the sexism of the African-American students group, had their own organization with their own community contacts.

"They didn't want to get everything through the guys. That meant that independently they had come to the same decisions we had come to, and they had a structure for functioning. When the shit hit the fan they weren't tailing behind the men."

After the confrontation at the gym site SDS and the Black students occupied the first building. While SDS leaders remained ambiguous about the decisions to occupy buildings for several days, the Black Students were firm from the beginning and influenced the actions of the rest of the campus.

THE MOVEMENT TODAY?

When asked about the Black movement today Bill said:

"There is no Black movement today. There are a number of different people who are struggling as organizations or individuals, but a movement would imply a consensus on some very basic demands; a clear understand-

ing of who the enemy is and some notion of what the future would look like. We don't have that yet. I hope we're building to it..

MS: Is there anything you'd like to say about white solidarity?

BS: "I think there are some obvious errors that white leftists have made that they don't need to make again! The arrogance and paternalism in relationship to the Black movement—to assume that you know

what's right for everyone because you have a revolutionary analysis of society, etc., etc. To see a certain kind of division of labor—you provide the intellectual muscle and the troops come from various Third World communities—that's disastrous.

A second thing that we really want is to build up a left inside of white working-class communities. We need to develop another pole in the communities that have been conceded to the fascists. That has been very difficult to do and very dangerous. That's why it's not done much! It's actually easier for a white person to work in communities of color. Once they know you're for real, people aren't hostile to you, whereas in the

white communities you can get murdered!

A third point is not to get manipulated by feelings of guilt. There are a whole lot of opportunists in the Black and Latino communities who'll try to manipulate you because you are white. You have to stand up for what you believe in.

And then of course it's important to study hard, be humble, and really listen. I know that as a 52-year-old one of the really frustrating things is trying to pass on your knowledge to the generation coming behind, because they think they know more than you already. But without an open mind you can screw up and repeat past mistakes."★



The Columbia Strike

Mark Cook

(Continued from page 12)

clothing. After 18 years I was "free." In an written article in the *Seattle Post Intelligencer* shortly after the feds let me go, the parole board boss was quoted as saying that my release was a "mistake," that they thought I had several more years of imprisonment to serve.

The board was wrong. I was not released early. My release came 10 years too late. I should have been released, and could have been released safely, back in 1983 rather than 1993. That's one of the problems with corrections today, they don't know when it is time to release someone. They don't even care. And that's what makes the experience such a destructive one, to you as well as to us.

I am out here today not because I deserve it, but because I was a troublemaker. In contrast to my case, Mark Cook has maintained a good record in prison. He was active in the struggle for prisoner rights, and filed prosecuted litigation in behalf of the labor and safety rights of prisoners, especially those working in the prison's industrial area. But unlike me, in the earlier years of my confinement, he did not do his prison work violently. At Walla Walla I was busted having three home-made hand grenades, a pistol, and 80 round of ammunition. So I am now on the outside. And Mark is in prison. Yet I am the more culpable, both while inside the walls and out here in minimum custody before my imprisonment.

So why is Mark still in prison? Just how much should a person serve for committing crimes such as those allegedly committed by Mark Cook and his comrades? There are three things that need to be looked at: Firstly, you should look at the amount of time served by darlings of the right wing who are convicted of political crimes. Secondly, the amount of time served by social prisoners convicted of the same type of crime Mark was convicted of, that being two counts of first-degree assault. And thirdly, the amount of time served by others in the Brigade for committing the same range of crimes. On the first point, the amount of time right-wing terrorists are sentenced to, you can take it from me that they receive relative pats on the back of the hand in relation to the time given to left-wing political offenders. The pro-capitalist

Cuban who blew up a Cuban airliner that killed 76 people received something like three years in a US prison. As for the issue of social prisoners, according to the Washington state department of statistics, the average amount of time served in this state for first-degree assault, and I averaged the annual figures over a 10 year period, is 57.1 months, that's under five years. Mark is serving his nineteenth year, more than most first-degree murderers, who on average serve a little over 17 years. And thirdly, we expect political prisoners on the left to serve more time than social prisoners for the same crime, just as we expect to be treated more harshly than right-wing offenders. Mark is also serving more time than his white counterparts in the Brigade. We are free. Janine Burtram is free. Rita Bo Brown is free. Threse Coupez is free. I am free. Yet Mark Cook, the only Black man arrested in connection with Brigade actions, remains in prison.

Mark would like people to ask three pertinent questions of state parole and clemency officials in Washington. These are: (1) Why haven't Mark Cook's federal and state terms run concurrently, like Ed Mead's sentence? (2) Why hasn't the Washington state parole board (ISRB) used its discretion under the Sentence Reform Act's RCW 9.94A.400(3) to run Mark Cook's state and federal time concurrently? And (3), if Ed Mead had two consecutive life terms and Mark Cook had two concurrent life terms, then why must Mark serve more time than Ed did?

We of the Mark Cook Freedom Committee are not seeking a break for Mark Cook. That point was passed many, many years ago. What we are asking for is simple justice—something that is long past due. To get justice from this state's apparatus of repression will require the involvement of a lot of people. One very important person is the lawyer who will be doing Mark's clemency petition. The governor had a hand in my release, I believe, and so he should have a hand in Mark's. But the process of getting an attorney to file and prosecute a clemency petition is a costly one. We could use your support. Please give what you can toward the legal expenses involved in Mark's petition for clemency. Send contributions and requests for more information to:

Mark Cook Freedom Committee
P.O. Box 85763
Seattle, WA
98145-2763 USA

NY Committee on Consultation

(Continued from page 14)

the EZLN movement as local, national, or international?

(3) "Should a profound political reform be made in terms which guarantee: equity, citizenship participation (including the non-partisan and non-governmental), respect for the vote, reliable voter registration of all the national political, regional, and local forces?"

According to the Zapatistas, this question is about the necessary pre-conditions for peaceful political struggle. The lack of (these) conditions . . . obliges citizens to take up the clandestine and illegal struggle, or skepticism and apathy." Is this applicable to the US? While the EZLN acknowledges, "The electoral struggle is not the

According to the Zapatistas, "The fourth and fifth questions are mutually exclusive. To say 'no' to both means that one is saying 'no' to the question of whether the EZLN should make itself a political force . . . (To say) 'yes,' then one still has to ask whether it should be done alone . . . or should it unite with other forces in Mexico . . . We are not asking if we should be incorporate ourselves into one of the existing political forces . . . because we do not feel represented by any of the existing ones." Further, "(W)e are not asking if we should disarm or not . . . Nor are we asking if we should become a political party, as (this) is only one of the many forms that a political force can take. Until now the EZLN has only called for organizing and struggle for democracy, liberty and justice. But as it is clandestine and armed, the EZLN has not organized. We are not a political force. We are a moral force or a catalyst of new organizing forms . . . Our opinion is lis-

Until now the EZLN has only *called* for organizing and struggle for democracy, liberty and justice... perhaps, the time has arrived for the word "organizing" to be Zapatista as well.

whole of the political struggle," and "Electoral reform does not signify political reform," the Zapatistas have stated that "a fair and free electoral system is necessary for a transition to democracy." Do you agree? Some changes have been made in the Mexican electoral system, but the EZLN continues to call for the destruction of the system of the party-State, a revolution and not reform." This is because the PRI party has ruled Mexico for over 60 years and is accused of maintaining its power through electoral fraud. Can reform and revolution be pursued simultaneously or are they mutually exclusive? What about the US electoral system? Are these issues relevant? Why or why not?

(4) "Should the EZLN be converted into a new independent political force?"

(5) "Should the EZLN unite with other forces and organizations to form a new political organization?"

tened to by many people, and perhaps, followed. But it is not translated into organization. Perhaps our role is only to point out the scarcities and open space for discussion and new participation. Perhaps that is all our historic role is to be. Or perhaps, the time has arrived for the Zapatista word not only to move people or create consciousness; perhaps, the time has arrived for the word 'organizing' to be Zapatista as well. This is what we are asking."

NY Committee for
Democracy in Mexico
PO Box 200413
Newark, NJ 07102
(212) 592-9074
mblack@panix.com

[The New York Committee for Democracy in Mexico is a member of the National Commission for Democracy in Mexico and has been designated by the EZLN to coordinate and promote US efforts for democracy, social justice and liberty in Mexico.]

Political Refugees Smash Prison

BY WENDY

The uprising of imprisoned immigrants that happened early on Father's Day at a private Elizabeth, NJ prison, was a natural reaction to deplorable, overcrowded conditions. The immigrants, many of them refugees, arrived seeking political asylum from dozens of different countries; little did they know they were about to embark on an American nightmare. They were taken to a private prison located in a former warehouse near the industrial section of Newark, NJ, where they were separated by sex—families broken apart. They were subjected to abuse by guards, served food that was cold and unnutritious, denied access to phones and attorneys, and held for months without any recourse. The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) was forced to investigate abuses because of protests by NJ Rep. Robert Menendez, detainees, and their attorneys.

The uprising at the Evans Street complex was a desperate act to force attention to the immigrants' plight—a grand tribute to the human spirit. The hundreds of prisoners easily overtook the three guards by throwing blankets over their heads. They allowed other workers to leave, then went to work destroying a building which has no positive purpose. Windows were broken, rooms flooded with water from sprinklers and broken pipes. Walls, toilets, beds, files,

everything in sight smashed to bits! They built a 9-foot barricade out of tables, chairs and other furniture. Cops realized it was too late to negotiate when a bunch of rocks were hurled at them and a portable phone that was sent in for negotiations was quickly smashed.

The immigrants held the Evans Street building for several hours before a final stand that ended in a Mace attack by the cops and about 300 prisoners handcuffed and bussed to county and federal jails in NJ, NY and Penn.

The recent anti-immigration fervor is in part caused by the World Trade Center bombing backlash against Arab political asylum cases. There are many conservatives who want to stop all immigration and make it exceedingly difficult to get political asylum status. US treatment of Cubans and Haitians in detention prison camps has drawn international attention to human-rights abuses. This, coupled with support of brutal dictatorships by diplomatic or economic aid, has led to the criminalization of political refugees, all under the pretenses of freedom and democracy. The Mexican border INS are becoming increasingly more brutal, but we don't hear about Mexican political repression in the mainstream media. As the US builds more prisons and allows profit from prison labor, privately owned prisons such as this

one in Elizabeth, operated by the Esmor Corp. of Melville, NY, are becoming big business. We can see the first indications of the increased brutality of these privately owned prisons.

We need an organized prison abolition movement that goes beyond the Anarchist Black Cross work of the past. We need to

be able to respond to situations immediately, as well as have contacts with groups all over North America and internationally. This movement is in the beginning stages; clearly there is a need to reach out to the families and organizations who are fighting the growth of these inhumane prisons, which detain people indefinitely. ★



NOTES OF REVOLT

BY SUZY MARTIN

On April 25 a diverse group of activists successfully shut down four major New York City bridges. Traffic was blocked, during rush hour, from 15 minutes to an hour at each location. The locations were divided between 4 groups: ACT-UP and neighborhood groups protesting Medicaid Cuts and hospital closings; CUNY (City University of New York) students and public school teachers protesting budget cuts in public education; and groups opposed to police brutality and racist and homophobic violence (including the Committee Against Anti-Asian Violence, the Congress for Puerto Rican Rights, and families of those killed by police). 185 people were arrested.

This action was significant both because of its effectiveness in disrupting the functioning of the city and because it united in practice activists from a broad range of communities. Using the focused, media-savvy civil disobedience technique that ACT-UP perfected, the action got the city's attention. This successful cooperation between different radical, grassroots groups has been an inspiration to many New Yorkers who have been hoping for a new, radical mass movement to emerge.

The simultaneous demonstrations were held the day before Mayor Giuliani presented his budget for New York City. The budget includes, among other cuts in social services, deep cuts to CUNY health care, and establishes a 90-day limit for the receipt of Home Relief money. The protests were coordinated to emphasize the fact that these cuts will be hurting many of the same

United Front Builds, then Shuts Down Bridges

people—homeless people with AIDS, for example. In the past, activists have often been divided, as one group may prevent certain budget cuts while other social services are cut deeper to compensate.

The planners of the action sought to break out of this pattern of division. It took a lot of work and months of secret, invitation-only meetings to build the coalition. Many of the groups involved in the action have identity-based politics that have nurtured a distrust for other groups. But organizing for Apr. 25th, each of the groups having its own site and demands had enough autonomy to build a sense of trust among groups. They didn't have to resolve all of their differences to work together.

Each of the four site-groups in turn was made up of a coalition of groups uniting around one basic issue. Activists from the Coalition for the Homeless organized homeless people, shelter residents, formerly homeless people, college students and law students to block the Brooklyn Bridge. Members of the Zulu Nation, a Black and Latino street organization, the Committee Against Anti-Asian Violence, and Asian Lesbians of the East Coast worked together with families of teenagers killed by the police to block the Manhattan Bridge. This coalition work, based on a consciousness of

racism, sexism, and homophobia within the movement—a consciousness raised by identity politics—is more inclusive than the practice of the movements of the '60s, when issues raised by subordinated groups were often ignored.

The secrecy maintained during the months of planning helped make the protest effective. It was well organized and caught the police off guard. It went beyond the acceptable forms of protest in New York City—authorities were outraged that activists did not notify the police before the civil disobedience.

Before the protest, activists planned to carry their solidarity into jail. That solidarity was tested when the authorities decided to put most of the activists through the system—which meant at least another 24 hours in jail.

In the women's holding cell, about half of the jobs and housing group—each of whom was given a summons and told to leave—refused to go until everyone was let out. The group was not large enough to coerce the police into letting everyone go. But the symbolic gesture of solidarity meant something to CUNY students who have been targeted for their movements militancy and recent media success.

Most of the people involved in the Apr. 25th protest were not new activists, but there was a new sense of energy. CUNY students jumped over barriers and ran out into highway traffic. A woman who lives in a shelter refused to move as a cop tried to drag her out of a jail cell and defeat her act of solidarity. The sense of hope that inspired these acts did not just come from a possibility of defeating the budget cuts, but from the new sense of unity achieved in organizing this action. This unity was not the result of abstract calls for unity that exists when one group subordinates its interests to another. It was unity built in practice on the basis of respect for the actual diversity and differences of experience among the groups involved. Rather than rejecting or denouncing the limitations of identity politics, Apr. 25th drew from their strengths to transcend their weaknesses. Apr. 25th represented the potential such diverse grassroots groups have for building an actual radical mass movement when we work together. ★

Didn't Get Prison News Service #51?

Unfortunately, there was a major screw-up with the mailing of that issue (May-June 1995). The mailing list preparation is done by an outside company, but they work with the list and information we send them. Due to some simple human error probably my own, the prisoner numbers were left off the mailing labels. Needless to say this meant that many of them were not delivered. This really depresses us since it means that many of our subscribers are not going to see this issue. It is also going to cost us a lot of money since we'll end up paying for them to be returned. And we don't have very many copies left to mail out a second time since we already reduced the number of copies printed because our printing costs are rising so much. This is the first time such a screw-up happened and it will certainly be the last time. Please pass the word around to other prisoners who are wondering what happened. Our next issue will be out in September. Our commitment remains. But we have to eat this loss of money and copies. Our apologies and regrets.

Thanks.
Jim Campbell

ACT-UP/SF Storms GOP

Fifteen members of ACT-UP/San Francisco stormed the San Francisco office of the Republican Party, trashing the offices and demanding the immediate reauthorization of funding for a national AIDS Commissioner.

ACT-UP hung Jessie Helms in effigy (too bad he wasn't around to do it in person), painted blood-red hand prints on the walls, and poured red paint into expensive computer equipment. A member of ACT-UP who participated in the action was quoted as saying: "At first [the staff] thought it was going to be a brief, comical action and didn't call the police...until they saw that the paint was not water-soluble."

Another member of ACT-UP summed up the action this way: "It is the moral and ethical duty of San Francisco to set the tone for the left." ★



EZLN Consultation

(Continued from page 15)

written in another form, but we need to know the answers to these questions. We think that not only for us, but for all the democratic forces, it would be good to know the answers to these questions.

The first of these questions refers to the need for a new social pact based on 13 points: housing, land, work, food, health, education, independence, culture, information, democracy, liberty, justice and peace. If these 13 demands are the principal ones for the majority of the Mexican people, then the economic direction of the country should be redefined, and have as a fundamental objective the satisfaction of these needs.



The second question refers to the need to unite the oppositional forces in a common program of struggle. We have already written what we think about this, but what do the people of Mexico think?

The third is about the need for one of the necessary and justified conditions in the peaceful political struggle. The lack of conditions for a political struggle obliges citizens to take up the clandestine and illegal struggle, or skepticism and apathy. The electoral struggle is not the whole of the political struggle. Electoral reform does not signify political reform.

This last thing signifies the destruction of the system of the party-State, a revolution and not a reform. But a fair and free electoral system is necessary for the transition to democracy.

The fourth and fifth questions are mutually exclusive. To say no to both means that one is saying "no" to the question of whether the EZLN should make itself a political force. If the answer is "yes", then one still has to ask whether it should be done alone, which is to say, as a new and independent political force; or should it unite with other forces in Mexico, and together, form a new political force. We are not asking if we should incorporate ourselves into one of the existing political forces. On the one hand, for this to occur, one would suppose that we would have to take on the appearance of the organization that we plan to incorporate ourselves into. On the other hand, we are following this road precisely because we do not feel represented by any of the existing ones.

Perhaps questions four and five are the ones about which there are the most doubts. We will try to continue trying to clarify them by various means. For now, I only want to say that we are not asking if we should disarm or not. We have been clear that laying down our weapons is not open for discussion. Nor are we asking if we should become a political party, as the "party" is only one of the many forms that a political force can take.

Until now the EZLN has only called for organizing and struggle for democracy, liberty and justice. But as it is clandestine and armed, the EZLN has not organized. We are not a political force.

We are a moral force or a catalyst of new organizing forms, but our force is not organized politically. Our opinion is listened to by many people, and perhaps, followed. But it is not translated into organization. Perhaps our role is only to point out the scarcities and open a space for discussion and new participation. Perhaps that is all our historic role is to be.

Or perhaps, the time has arrived for the Zapatista word not only to move people or create consciousness; perhaps, the time has arrived for the word "organizing" to be Zapatista as well. This is what we are asking.

There could have been more questions about other themes, this form of national dialogue is not exclusive.

Fifth. It is also about a proposal for participation. From a consultation that is not limited to "yes" or "no" for one or more of the questions, but rather involves broad sectors of citizens in its organization and implementation.

Sixth. It is a call to unity in two ways: to organize and to struggle.

Seventh. It is setting a precedent: an organization consults the citizenry about its next steps and future actions.

Eighth. It is about having criteria, the broadest possible, for making a decision that could be definitive for us. If the government's position in the dialogue improves and a just and dignified agreement is reached, the problem for the EZLN will continue: What should be done? Continue struggling through other means? Disappear?

Ninth. It is not a propaganda action. It is a referendum about our demands (the 13 points), about our call for the opposition to unite (a broad oppositional front), about our principal political demand (profound political reform). It is a crucial question: What are we going to do? How are we going to do it? Should we become a political force? Alone or with others?

Tenth. The dates are flexible, but it should be taken into account that we need to know the answers in order to guide our process in the dialogue with the government.

Well these are some answers...that bring us to new questions.

But now I want to explain to you...

PROPOSAL FOR ORGANIZING THE NATIONAL PLEBISCITE

FIRST. The work of promoting the consultation and that of organizing it should be separated. This is because we need for the consultation to be conducted with impartiality, autonomy, objectivity and credibility. The brothers and sisters of Civic Alliance have earned respect in Mexico and outside of the country for its seriousness, professionalism and neutrality. Its commitment to a new peace and a transition to democracy is beyond a doubt. They have the experience and the infrastructure. In the end, they have the technique, the methodology and the moral authority to give a national consulta-



tion credibility. For this reason we are asking that the National Civic Alliance be the one that makes up the National Organizing Commission for the Consultation.

This means that the Civic Alliance would be in charge of, with full autonomy and independence, the organization of the consultation. The "organizational chart" and form of working in the states and municipalities of the Republic will be determined by the National Civic Alliance based on their criteria.

SECOND. Nevertheless, the EZLN conceived of this consultation not as a simple exchange of questions and answers. We think that the consultation should be part of a great national dialogue that looks for new forms for conducting it and coming to concrete results. The consultation is part of the process of initiatives for meeting, holding a dialogue and coming to agreement among different forces and citizens. It is part of the effort of the National Democratic Convention, of the Dialogue of the Civil Society, of the citizens movement, of all the initiatives of the civic society who struggle for democracy, liberty and justice.

The EZLN recognizes the National Democratic Convention as an organizing force of the civic and peaceful struggle for democracy, liberty and justice. The spirit

that made it possible for thousands of Mexicans to travel from all of the states of the Republic to Chiapas and for the formation of the CND in August 1995, has here a new opportunity to show that we have the maturity to organize ourselves.

For this reason we are asking the National Democratic Convention to make up the National Promotional Commission of the Consultation. This means that the CND would be in charge of, in agreement with its structure and methods of work, the promotion of the consultation, of its distribution, propaganda, and the explanation of the goals and nature of the consultation.

This National Promotional Commission of the Consultation would be made up of representatives of the State Conventions and that of the Federal District, and those of the Sectoral Conventions (women, students, workers, indigenous, campesinos and cultural workers).

It would have a Directing Committee made up of 10 members of the National Council of Representatives of the CND as proposed by the EZLN and representatives of the EZLN.

The organizing form of the CND for this work of the consultation would be the following:

a) The National Promotional Commission of the Consultation would be made up of two representatives from each one of the State Conventions and that of the Federal District, and two from each one of the Sectoral Conventions.

b) The Directing Committee would be made up of 10 members of the CND proposed by the EZLN and representing the different currents within the CND. Five of the ten will make up the General Council of the National Consultation.

c) The EZLN will make the corresponding convocation and will establish the protocol for installing, carrying out and evaluating the said National Consultation.

d) In each state in the Republic and in the Federal District a Promotional State Commission will be established, organized in accordance with the National Promotional Commission.

e) The State Conventions and that of the Federal District will make the corresponding convocation and will establish the protocol for installing, carrying out and evaluating the State

Commissions.

f) In each municipality of the country a Promotional Commission will be established, following the form of the State Commissions. The State Commissions and that of the Federal District will be responsible for this activity.

g) The Sectoral Conventions will also work according to the territory where they have representation, with the goal of broadening the consultations and representation.

h) At all times there will be a commitment to maintaining a tight coordination among all the levels and a constant and timely flow of information.

THIRD. It is necessary to remember that this is a consultation of the EZLN. It is not a consultation of the CND or of the Alliance or of a political party or a business. For this reason we ask that the EZLN participate in the planning and the organizing of the consultation.

FOURTH. It is an effort, then, to establish a relation among these three parts: the one who asked for the consultation (the

EZLN), the one who is promoting and distributing it (the CND) and the one who is organizing it (the Civic Alliance). For this reason we are proposing to the National Democratic Convention and the National Civic Alliance that a General Council of the National Consultation be formed that is responsible in tying together the National Organizing Commission, the National Promotional Commission and the EZLN. This General Council of the National Consultation would be made up of five representatives of the CND as proposed by the EZLN, five from the National Civic Alliance, and one from the EZLN, and its work would be to follow through with the works of the consultation and to settle any differences that could develop.

FIFTH. All that is involved with the International Consultation will be the result of, in organization and promotion, an International Coordinating Commission made up of 10 Convention members proposed by the EZLN. That is to say that the organization of the International Consultation is the responsibility of the CND.

CHRONOLOGY OF ACTIVITIES

We proposed the following calendar. I repeat that it is not definitive and could be adjusted:

a) June. Convocation, preparation meetings, installation of the National Organizing Commission and the State Organizing Commissions.

b) July. Distribution and organization of the National Consultation. Implementation of the International Consultation.

c) August. Carrying out of the Consultation, results and evaluation

I believe that is all for now. I am sure true to what Old Man Antonio teaches, this will bring more questions. I hope that we will answer them together.

Lastly, some words regarding the possibility that you reject this invitation. We do not ignore that you, like us, have your mechanisms for making decisions. Nor has it escaped our attention that your participation, if you decided to do so, could bring you unjust accusations and calumnies. Whatever is your response we will accept it and respect it. I only tried to explain to you why it is worthwhile to participate. I am sure that there will be reasons, and that they are neither few in number nor less forceful in reason, for not participating. Regardless, value this as a greeting and a

small recognition of your work..and of your history.

Vale. Health. And hopes that the stories that are worthwhile, or in other words those that cause one to wake up, be many.

From the mountains of Southeastern Mexico
Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos
Mexico June 1995

P.S. I am sending a copy of this letter to the National Democratic Convention along with our proposal for the Convention members who would make up the General Council and Directing Promotional Committee.

P.S. Durito asks if beetles are included in the consultation.

For now he is announcing a solemn piano recital in four hands in order to promote it. The menu will include Bola De Nieve and a global premiere of the work "The Ballerina and The Beetle" whose author (did anyone have a doubt) is Durito! I reminded him of the military blockade and he decided that was good because it would avoid re-sale. ★

No-Choice

(Continued from 3)

identified three of the original eight signers of Paul Hill's Defensive Action List (the signature campaign justifying the assassination of abortion providers) in leadership and high level support. OR has forever denied connections to the hit list and to clinic violence, but among the dirty truths about OR's violent history is that their leader, Joe Forman, one of those arrested in the following day's hit and a main speaker at their LA church rallies, was among the original signers. Forman, like many other OR leaders, is active in the US Taxpayers Party, a far-right party that is central in the Militia movement.

In Riverside, the Fund had pro-choice people hold signs and chant in front of the clinic and in half of the parking lot—leaving the other half of the parking lot for OR to hold their media event unchallenged—getting on their knees in front of the clinic where clients and workers were coming and going. We jumped with our signs, blocking cameras from taking pictures of women going into the clinic, and we held cartoon-looking thought bubbles over the heads of OR thugs, saying things like, "I love clinic

been cordoned off by police. Hundreds of pro-choice people were being organized into a picket line, holding signs and walking in a circle. The Fund led the applause for the LAPD as the anti's were slowly and gently led away. Anti leaders were in the street holding forth to the press about how loving and godly protesters shouldn't be charged with federal crimes—and self-righteous bible and bead-rubbing phalanxes were posing for the media.

Preventing OR from achieving a victory in the media proved difficult because Fund monitors tried to stop us from chanting "What About Boston" and finger pointing at the real criminals. A Fund marshal yelled at us to leave the anti's alone, and a Fund woman came over yelling that we were creating a "bad photo op." We consider a bad photo-op to be pictures of "peaceful Christians" on their knees—the false image of the anti-abortion movement as (1) non-violent (2) about loving for children (3) as protest expressed in a loving and prayerful manner.

Not terribly surprising, the police soon moved in to separate the "two sides" by turning their backs to the anti's and shoving pro-choicers with their clubs. The Fund told the police that we (those who weren't letting the anti's get off unchallenged) had nothing to do with the official pro-choice

choicers across the street and down the block, while leaving the anti's to continue their media circus in the street and in front of the clinic. One BACORR person reported that the police gently lifted up an anti woman who was praying on her knees and gently moving her to a safer area.

The scene was much the same in jail. The anti's were sitting on chairs in the shade outside. All had plastic cuffs on so that they could have a good 8-10 inches between their wrists to comfortably make room for their ample girth. Lilly and I, both injured and in metal cuffs, were chained to a bench inside with our faces to the wall and our backs to the police while Jeff White, OR California spokesman and leader, was strolled through. "It'll be just a few moments Mr. White, we'll have you out of here in no time. Just come this way and we'll take your cuffs off and you can sit in the lobby."

The level of politeness and concern for the anti's by the LAPD was moving. The police conversed among themselves about how all of White's family was in law enforcement. Brian Kemper, an OR white supremacist with nazi-skin tattoos, was patted on the shoulder by one cop walking by, "Don't worry bro, we'll have you out of here real soon."

WHEN IS ENOUGH ENOUGH?

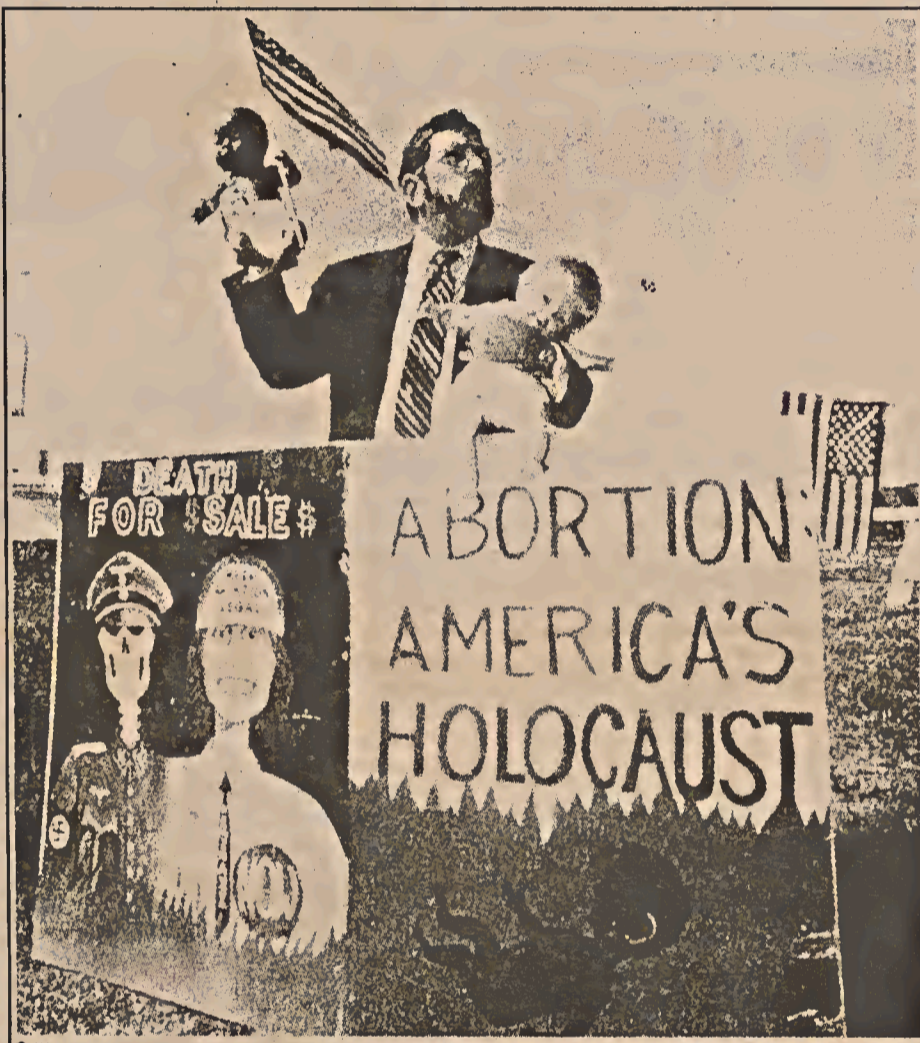
We were charged with "failure to disperse"—the same charges leveled against OR. The Fund never bothered to follow up to find out our actual charges. They told the press and at least one person who called their office that we were arrested for assaulting an officer and resisting arrest, and suggested that we got what we deserved. The National Lawyers Guild had provided legal observers for a number of sites, but the Fund didn't bother to inform them that two

pro-choice people had been arrested, or enlist their assistance in any way.

Of course the media reported that "both sides" declared a victory. The Fund declared that all the clients had gotten into the clinic, but for all clients to have gotten in, the clinic must have known about the hit ahead of time and told clients to arrive and get inside before 8:30 a.m. Frankly letting OR shut down a clinic, take arrests, and create a "non-violent" image of their movement is a victory for OR, not for women, not for providers, and not for people fighting right-wing repression. This didn't need to happen, there were certainly enough people ready to keep the clinic open who could have done so.

Stopping shut-downs and assaults on our clinics is necessary but not sufficient means for stopping the aggression of the Christian Right. The actions of the Fund, and BACORR's criticisms of those actions, highlight two different strategies of how to contend with anti-abortion assaults on our clinics. The difference is not merely one of image, but spells the difference between a small middle class movement that puts its hope in the police and the government to protect our rights, and one that builds people's ability to keep our clinics open and fight the Christian Right.

Our charges were dropped a few days before our arraignment in mid-June. To date, OR has not been served with federal charges, and it doesn't look like they will be. This means that OR will be on the road again as soon as they get out of their current legal entanglements, taking their cart and pony show to the next town in the hopes of more PR, more intimidations, and a Supreme Court case. Lesson learned? Next time, let's stop them before they get near the clinic door. ★



bombings," "I'm having a butyric acid flashback," and "Fetus shmetus, when do I get to hit the girl?" We challenged OR's "peaceful" image with basic facts about their members and their history. The anti's had a much harder time pulling off their plans. Many pro-choice women who had come with the Fund joined us, asked to hold signs that were a little sharper than "keep abortion legal"—and used their voices to challenge the assaulters. The Fund leadership was clearly as agitated by the stepped-up pro-choice response as they were by the anti's.

Saturday, the day of the hit, hundreds of pro-choicers were at the clinics around LA. Many had followed the OR caravan from its church meeting-point earlier in the morning. The Fund's "official leaders" made it clear from the get go that they would offer no resistance to OR if they rushed the door, and were depending on the police to move the anti's away and level federal charges.

In a nutshell, the anti's were permitted to sit down in front of the doors, creating the image of non-violent anti-abortion protest. They kept the clinic shut down for two hours. The Fund's main office lied to BACORR and to Palm Springs NOW, who they knew was working with BACORR, about OR's whereabouts—telling us they had lost the caravan and had no idea where it was. Our last communication was around 9:00 a.m. According to all reports, OR hit the North Hollywood clinic around 8:30 a.m. A local reporter told us that she had interviewed pro-choice people who were standing at the door when the hit went down who were told not to stop the anti's and to move away from the door.

When we arrived the entire block had

response, essentially giving the police license to move in on us. As the cops shoved and jabbed us with sticks I loudly pointed out the sham—OR had planned months ahead of time to violate federal law, organizing nation-wide (isn't that a conspiracy?) while the police obviously negotiated to let them. Some of the most notorious anti's were leading the crusade of terrorism against the doctors and women—but who gets clubbed?

CAN YOU SAY "DYKE-BASHING"?

I started the tired but accurate chant "OR, Cops and Klan work together hand in hand" and a cop grabbed me by the neck and another group of cops grabbed Lilly, who was protecting my injured arm. The cops threw Lilly on the ground, one cop dropped his full weight on her chest with his knee and threw her on her belly, smashing her chin into the asphalt, stomping his boot on her shoulder blade.

While my dislocated shoulder was being reinjured, Officer Hillman was letting me know my rights: "You Stupid Fuck," he kept repeating, "You idiot, you're going to learn from this you stupid fuck." Hillman is well known by ACT-UP LA as he has consistently targeted their members. That explains why we were asked repeatedly if we were from ACT-UP while in jail—despite the fact that we both were wearing BACORR t-shirts. Hillman had targeted the group repeatedly, and we obviously fit the profile of the "militant homosexual" in his homophobic peahood. Can you say "dyke bashing"?

While the arrests were taking place cops on horseback moved in and ran all the pro-choice folks out of the area, forcing pro-

Anarcho-Pantherista

(Continued from 5)

Revolution is learning how to bring a large variety of personalities together into a powerful harmony. This harmony must lay down some general direction and get work done. It's never easy. It's struggle. It takes a lot of skill. The BP Collective was gonna learn this. We started off without a formal structure. We just called it and got it together. The Old Guard of BPNC too already had responsibilities to put out the newspaper and work to raise consciousness of our comrades who are STILL political prisoners. An informal structure, more or less leaderless, developed around this work with the BPNC encouraging others to join in. And they did!

The initial crew was baaa! Yeah. Sold the Black Panther like they owned it, and with spirit. Wasn't afraid to talk with people and engage them. Or challenge them for that matter. "Well, why don't you wanna buy the paper? It's for you, Sista. Don't be afraid, Brotha. Don't wait for them to kick down your door..." Mm-m. Panther spirit.

So much work to be done. "There's a Political Prisoner meeting on blah-blah, at 7:00 PM. Those of you who are interested in working..." That's all. They were there. You should see them now with the FREE MUMIA work! We worked so much that we never got around to structure or structuring our activities and decision and direction-making processes. It was gonna cost us, and it did. But it had to happen.

Revolution, after defeat and years gone by, is as much psychological as it is formally political. Panthers, automatic members of the BPNC, came together after years in the absence of the intense, disciplined struggle that we once knew. We been through changes. We were still trying to gel our different personalities. But now it's structure time. The Collective is calling for leadership. It is time for the essential struggle to begin: one for clarity, uniformity of will, formal organization of BPC with ideology, a chain of command and rules. Oh god!

In the Collective, everyone is encouraged to speak one's mind. In the BPP, we practiced Mao's Combat Liberalism as best we could. It is still a good thing and not a bad thing. As an anarchist now, with other groundings in psychology and Feminism, I offer, when appropriate, my 2 cents on matters of structure, taking initiative to do things on one's own, and against sexism. A big part of the difficulty I have working my 2 cents is that people raised on hierarchy, authoritarian beliefs truly see such as natural. There's always gotta be leadership. I say why? Who says? What kind? Why assume that there's only one form of organizational structure?

And what does it mean when our structure resembles the enemy's? As a member of this Collective body, I accept its general direction even if I am the minority member in my views. Because it is democratic enough to allow input, I can still raise my views, as can anyone. Oh yeah, I get frustrated and angry. But that's normal stuff in any grouping. I think that the BPC who are young-in-experience understand at this point that frustration and anger are part of the process. As we'd say in the Party, "It's a good thing not a bad thing." It's the only way we can pull a diverse group of people together. As one BPNC member said in referring to the Collective, "They are a bunch of crazy-ass muthafuckas," the kind of good human beings who make Revolution.

It's hard to feel comfortable if you truly believe that you see internal dangers in your group. I am one person. I guess I believe like anybody else that my critique is on-point, that my warning-signs should be heeded. But this is a body of people and though it may not be anarchist, it's democratic enough for me to feel that my 2 cents is valued.

My collective knows that I raise my voice against sexism. I talk revolutionary sexuality and lay out condoms on meeting tables. I'm always bringing reading material because I believe we must be encouraged to read, read, read. But I don't want to just get stuck off into Marxist stuff—"Lil' Red Book," etc. No matter how valuable they are. I've shared Lorenzo Komboa Ervin's (Black anarchist, former Black Panther, and now member of the Federation of Black Community Partisans) writings with them. Exposure to diverse views and critiques is what is needed. I am one of these diverse "elders," as they call us of BPNC. As the @nacho-pantherista I can only be me and give my best and hope that others see that my main concern is Revolution, ALL Power to the People, and victory over all our enemies, from people who oppose freedom to mind-sets that continue to hold on to anti-freedom, anti-revolutionary ideas.

The BPC is a spirited group of hard-ass revolutionaries. Already, on their own, tired of waiting for us (the leadership), they put a food program into motion on 116th St. and Adam Clayton Powell Blvd. in Harlem, the capital of this "captive nation" (I'm a revolutionary intercommunalist, personally, to add fuel to the fire). I say Right On! It's about initiative and I like theirs. The People are their own leaders, their own Liberators. I see myself as participant-facilitator. @nacho-pantherista, the highest stage of pantherism.

ALL POWER TO THE PEOPLE!

Ashanti Omowali
BPNC/BPC
BPNC
P.O. Box 16330
Jersey City, NJ 07306 201-432-0874

Review of Settlers

(Continued from page 5)

a total of 16%. This goes on to show that 35% of all households had a net worth of less than \$5,000. Is this affluence?

It certainly looks like a good case for classic class struggle, with the evidence that Lundberg gives us. Sakai warns us, however, "most typically, the revisionist lumps together the US oppressor nation with the various Third World oppressed nations and national minorities as one society."

In this light, the figures check out. New African income, which today averages 56% of white income and stood at about the same or less in 1953, makes up a disproportionate of the deficit, zero, under-a-thousand and under-five-thousand dollar consumer units. Definitely more than 10% of them, which was our percentage of the population. If we could make a sensible judgment, we'd have to say that the combined captive nations: New African, Mexicano, Puerto Rican and Native, or about one sixth of the population as of 1981 all make up a disproportionate amount of the consumer units with deficits, and below \$5,000. This forms a cushion for the white population.

Sakai points out that, "the medium Euro-American family income in 1981 was \$23,517, and "that between 1960 and 1979 the percentage of settler families earning over \$25,000 per year (in constant 1979 dollars) doubled, making up 40% of the settler population." We may have had a general idea from neighborhood walks, but Sakai gives us an idea of the extent.

This extent, and the "conspicuous concentration of state services—parks, garbage collections, swimming pools, better schools, medical facilities and so on" and the fact that "to the settlers' garrison goes the first pick of whatever is available—homes, jobs, schools, food, health care, governmental services and so on." Not to mention racism within settlers, puts to rest an idea of a multi-racial class struggle that includes whites.

"Nation is the dominant factor, modifying class relations." Lundberg who overlooked the national factor in the economic tables he based his argument on, notes that "in the rare cases where policy is uppermost in the mind of the electorate it is usually a destructive policy, as toward Negroes in the South and elsewhere. Policies promising to be injurious to minority groups such as Negroes, Catholics, foreigners, Jews, Mexicans, Chinese, intellectuals and in fact, all deviants from fixed philistine norms, usually attract a larger-than-usual supporting vote," or mandate if you will.

"Approximately 10% of the European-American population has been living in poverty by government statistics. This minority is not a cohesive, proletarian stratum, but a miscellaneous fringe of the unlucky and the outcast: older workers trapped by fading industries, retired poor, physically and emotionally disabled, and such families supported by single women."

How many of this group of whites will side with the revolution, how many whites will come to view their interests with the

long-term interest of those of us who prefer to live on a living planet, and how many will fail to equate their quality of life with 50,000,000,000 hamburgers is anyone's guess. However, it's a small wonder why white anti-imperialists have been giving me blank stares whenever I've mentioned class struggle to them.

The left in this country is very small, by whatever way you might want to look at it. If you define left as those of us who stand for a decentralization of wealth and power—taking the question is completely out of the realm of bourgeois civil rights and rightfully includes the independence of captured nations, which is part and parcel of the decentralization of wealth and power—the left is microscopic.

We are left with ourselves. Left in homes that police drop bombs on from helicopters, and without any shared sense of outrage. We are left where murders by police and other racists are commonplace and for the most part celebrated. Left in the ghettos, barrios, and other reservations.

Let's not forget that New Africa has a class problem. That not only do police, but politicians, poverty hustlers and representatives from the established Black publishers and churches, move up in the world when they join the ranks of the oppressors. The oppressors never have a problem finding Black leaders to condemn their blatant disregard for life, like that which took place in Philly [when police bombed a home with eleven Black people, including four children]. We only have established leaders to draw us into the ranks of a Democratic Party without being able to introduce as much as one Black plank into a white platform. Leaders who beget other leaders like Mayor Goode [a Black mayor who was thought of as being a victory for Black people].

Where I differ with Sakai is the assertion that "building mass institutions and movements of a specific national character under the leadership of a communist party are absolute necessities for the oppressed." What communist party is he talking about? I feel that we must build revolutionary institutions that buttress on survival through collectives, which in turn should form federations. Grassroots collective building can begin immediately.

In an epoch where New African nationalists and Marxists have voluntarily taken the defensive, without even a fraction of a blueprint of a party or consistent practices in the colony, it's incredible that people outside the ranks and currents of those who believe in magic words aren't encouraged to collectively take matters in their own hands, to build the collective institutions and superstructure of a superseding society. We must begin where we are, with each other and the time we don't waste.

I think that the building of revolutionary collectives and forming of federations of collectives is the most practical and righteously rewarding process of preserving and enhancing life and developing the character of all nations. We can change ourselves and the world.★



Consultation Extended

In a report entitled "San Andres V- A 'New' Solidarity," Cecilia Rodriguez, Coordinator of the National Center for Democracy, Justice and Liberty, announced that the International Consulta timeline has been extended:

The International Commission of the CND has authorized three stages for the international plebiscite to correspond with national events. Participation in the International Plebiscite is open to all peoples of the world. Please plan other events and gather as many ballots as possible.

JULY 31—Deadline for the completion of the first stage

AUGUST 20—Completion of the second stage to coincide with the National Plebiscite

SEPTEMBER 13—Completion of the third stage to coincide with the National Student Plebiscite

In the report Cecilia also had 4 other recommendations for supporting the struggle for a new peace in Mexico:

1. Send a substantial contribution to the Mexican Commission for the National Plebiscite. The commission must raise \$100,000 in order to make the plebiscite happen.

Contributions should be sent to the

Banco Inverlat SA (branch #038), account # 910695-2, in the name of Esperanza Ayar Macias.

2. Support the humanitarian aid caravan being organized by Pastors for Peace due to arrive in Chiapas on August 27th. For more information, please call Pastors for Peace at (612) 378-0062 or <p4p@igc.apc.org> for specific information. The campesinos have been severely impacted by the militarization of southern Mexico. Unless there is a significant increase in humanitarian aid, the widespread hunger and illness which already grips the area will intensify. Will we allow hunger to be the only compensation for a people who dared to stand for their dignity?

3. Participate in the International Plebiscite by personally filling out a ballot. Take a bunch of ballots to your union, school, health club, church. Talk to people and explain the importance of their participation.

4. Participate in the peace camps located in many of the villages which have been militarized. Your presence and hard work in these communities provide enormous moral support, and serve as a deterrent to continued military harassment and intimidation.

For more information about "new" solidarity contact the Center for Democracy, Liberty and Justice at (915) 532-8382 or email at <moonlight@igc.apc.org>. ★



Other Revolutionary Periodicals

Bad Attitude
121 Railton Road
London SE24 6ER
United Kingdom
Bi-monthly giant-sized radical women's newspaper/magazine. News and articles on revolutionary feminism worldwide. Something like \$6 by mail.

The Body Politic
Box 2363
Binghamton, NY 13902-2363
A 36 page, 11 issues/year magazine devoted to the struggle for reproductive freedom. \$4 by mail.

Black Autonomy/FBCP
attn: subscriptions
323 Broadway Ave E Box #914
Seattle, WA. 98102
A newspaper of Anarchism and Black Revolution

Free Society
PO Box 35
Stuyvesant Sta.
New York City 10009
Quarterly Journal of Anarchist Theory and Action. With special issues on strategy, international resistance and an upcoming issue on radical ecology. Free Society is an essential read for every activist. A year sub is \$10 US, \$15 outside the US

The Blast
PO Box 7075
Minneapolis, MN 55407
Bi-monthly Anti-authoritarian newspaper produced by the Agitator Index collective. \$9 in the US, \$11 Mexico & Canada, World \$12



Smoke gets in our eyes...

Dust from a civil war within whiteness blinds us to genocide-as-usual words

BY BURN ONE AND NIKOLAS KAUTZ, MINNEAPOLIS BRANCH, PRISON-ABOLITION WORKING GROUP

The Love and Rage Federation denies the US government the "right" to execute anyone convicted of any crime, no matter how heinous. Obviously, we fight to keep the government from murdering friends of the people, or innocent people, like Mumia Abu-Jamal. But we also want to make it clear that the US has no moral authority to execute the white nazis who blew up the Oklahoma City federal building, killing a handful of cops, a lot of hapless government workers, and a slew of innocent children. A lot of the workers and kids were people of color.

When the government and white-power thugs go at each other, it's tempting to say, Just forget about us, fellas. Do what you gotta do to each other. But silent neutrality stifles our real politics.

The Minneapolis members of the Prison-Abolition Working Group of the federation believe that abolishing whiteness is an important part of our future vision.

Whether we're calling local prisoncrats on the phone to protest on behalf of a prisoner, publicizing the case of the Minnesota 8, or, as of this writing, doing emergency work to stop the execution of Mumia on Aug. 17, we're doing it in part with this in mind: To articulate a critique not merely of "racism" but of whiteness.

We're not hoping to make prison better so

that prisoners like it in there, we're seeking to build a prison abolition movement with an anti-genocide focus. We see a future where anti-social activities now known as domestic violence, black-on-black violence, people-on-people violence are way down because people's sense of personal responsibility and responsibility to their community is way up. In order for that to happen, all the institutions of whiteness in North America will have to be seriously weakened, on the defensive, and eventually destroyed.

What does this have to do with white-power dolts, shit bombs, and the government? Just this: We have to see through the smoke, see that the bombers and the system they're bombing are flip sides of the same white coin. Both must be fought. And neither side has any moral or political credibility to fight the other.

Timothy McVeigh, the bonehead bomber, calls himself a "prisoner of war." On the one hand, this is an intolerable insult against the imprisoned soldiers of the real liberation struggles of the colonized peoples within the US empire. On the other hand, he is a POW of a civil war within whiteness. If you doubt that the "Aryan" purists and the pro-status-quo whites are mortal enemies, you've missed a few shoot-outs lately.

We know what the Aryans, Christian Identity-ites, and boneheads want. We've read their books and listened to their musik and speeches. And we know from experience what lynchings, gas ovens, and mass graves look like. We don't want any part of that noise again, but don't forget this: The status-quo whites don't really want it, either. We may

call ourselves race traitors with pride, but the nazis also call Bob Dole a race traitor. And he loves it. It makes his racism seem mainstream. The type of genocide the Republicans and Democrats carry out, because the whites who vote for them approve it, is different from the "Aryan Bastion" in this regard: its purpose is sustain whites in privilege forever, not to wipe people out in a new "final solution." The pro-status-quo whites don't want their prisons to look like death camps, or their suburbs to look like settlements in the Occupied Territories. They just want their MTV.

If we let the whites punish McVeigh, we let them think that their society is kinder & gentler than a nazi's wet dream. Wrong, white America, we have to say, you created McVeigh, you alienated him, he bit off your face, and now you don't get to feel good about punishing him.

And any "whites" who understand this logic should feel free to start acting like race traitors.

The genocide-as-usual of the status-quo whites was just intensified: Congress rushed through the Comprehensive Terrorist Act (CTA) as the dust cloud from Oklahoma City was still in everyone's eyes. An amendment to the law cuts off death penalty appeals a year after your conviction. Under this law, Mumia Abu-Jamal would have been dead by 1983.

The McVeighs of the world are hardly the target of this law. Specific members of a "lost generation" of young Black men are the ones going down. This is a tightening of the noose in the fabricated drug war that the state and the white, suburban drug lords

are waging in poor Black, Latino/a, and Native American communities. This is heaped on top of the already-existing race disparity of death row prisoners: 40% of death row is Black, but African Americans make up 12% of the US population.

And, as usual, colonized people of color around the globe will also feel the terror. The organizations that liberation movement create will get put on the new, improved "terrorist" list that the CTA authorizes, and US solidarity with them will be criminalized even further.

In this light, we need to acknowledge with a clenched-fist salute the African National Congress's recent act of solidarity with Mumia: the ANC government that just abolished the death penalty has also condemned the signing of Mumia's death warrant, popular organizations have flooded the courts and governor's office with protests. The Black majority of South Africa understood capital punishment as a linchpin of the apartheid system, and demanded its repeal.

None of us is going to divert any energy to building a defense campaign for the bonehead bomber, McVeigh. Your first meeting would be mighty interesting: look around the room and, oh, wasn't that you who desecrated that Jewish cemetery a few months back? But, as we do our current work, we must make clear that we deny the US government and the pro-status-quo whites any political use of their boy McVeigh. We keep our "eyes on the prize": abolishing whiteness, building a just and free society: and that means denying both the fascists and the centrist ruling class any moral authority to attack one another. ★

FREE THE LAND

5-21-95

Dear Love and Rage

Love and Rage, i hope you all are well.

i have just received my March/April '95 *Love and Rage*. As always, there is much in it that has inspired serious thought and critique of my own positions. i have been fascinated with the discussion between the "White" wimmin on the *Love and Rage* Production Group and Noel Ignatiev. i wish to learn more about what wimmin feel is sexism. i have a lot to learn. i do have to say to Christopher Day, though, that i assumed when Noel Ignatiev used the term "strangers" in his response in relation to whom White Supremacy protected White wimmin from, that he was talking about Black men.

What i am writing about, and to, however, is Matthew Quest and his latest piece "Lessons of the Bandung Conference." Other than how to do a back-door snipe at Black Nationalist in the u.s. i fail to see the "lesson." Unless, of course, the lesson is your bitter contempt for Black Nationalist. Referencing your previous piece, "Afrocentricity vs. Homosexuality," in which you use "Afrocentrism" as if the term leaves the taste of shit in your mouth, i must say that i could not help but come away from that article with the inescapable conclusion that you, Mr. Quest, have a problem, a serious problem, with Black people; not just the problems We have, such as Our own cyst'ms of patriarchy, homophobia, class distinctions, etc., as a people and as formations. Black Nationalist or otherwise. This in spite of the focus of your ire having been, ostensibly, Dr. Welsing and her book *The Isis Papers*. my assessment is borne out by your latest piece. Just a few questions, Mr. Quest:

Wouldn't you agree that the Anarchist Movement in general, and the Anarchist "scene" in the u.s., in particular, for all its universalistic pronouncements to the contrary, is a "White thing?"

Or, rather, in relation to non-White Anarchist, don't Whites exist in a Anarchist ghetto? That being the case, We have to recognize that the Black people, politically aware, or not, Anarchists and their formations are more of the same thing; White folk coming along *telling* Us what and how we should think, speak, and act. And when there is a Black person "out front" of these White formations pushing that "White" agenda on Black folk, that Black person becomes what, Mr. Quest? A "Tom" or "Aunt Jemima." Correct, or not, the perception is real and real in its consequences.

As a rule We have no reason to believe that Whites have Our best interests at heart. The natural tendency is to reject out of hand Whites and "White things." Let's look at it this way: If i know that a wummin has been raped by most of the men she has come in contact with i would be a fool not to expect that she would harbor distrust and ill-will

toward me as a man UNTIL i have PROVEN that i am different. That i mean her no harm. Should anyone expect any less from Black people? If they do, then they are fools of the worst sort, or they think We are!

The responses of Black people to White people are not the result of some irrational pathology We have. We have just cause. From the beginning of Our clash with Whites here in the amerikkkas the story has been the same; no reason whatsoever for Us to believe that We have some sort of "natural" affinity and unity with White folk as the Marxists would have Us believe with the theory of the "working class" in amerikkka having a common enemy. History and contemporary reality demonstrate that the "White working class" is the enemy; the front line soldier of the White Supremacy Power Cyst'm. The only distinction most Black people can make between Whites they don't know personally is there are Whites who rule and Whites who follow. Rulers are rich. The other is poor. They are both White and after, and doing the same things. Mr. Quest, are these conditions which We have created? If they are not, then what responsibility do We have to those who are responsible for those conditions? i submit the only responsibility We have is to mash *any* sucka who is a part of it. We did not enslave Whites, nor are We out to enslave Whites. Nor do We hate Whites because they are White. Blacks who do hate Whites can justly argue that White people will make you hate them.

How do you explain, Mr. Quest, the interest of young Black people in formations such as the Nation of Islam? Black youth are moving, in droves, toward groups and ideologies that have a narrow nationalistic agenda and perspective now more than ever. Explain that Mr. Quest. i submit that the increase in the appeal for Black nationalism is directly proportional to the level of overt hostilities towards Black people by the white proleteriat and the failure of "integration." i submit that with White people becoming more openly racist and fascist; with the Japanese deeming Us inferior and mass producing racist dolls caricaturing Us; with the Chinese beating the hell out of the Afrikans and running them out of China, and them running Us out of China-towns here; with Koreans and Arabs on the West and East Coasts, respectively, assassinating Our daughters over bottles of orange juice, and assassinating Our sons over bags of cookies; and with most of Us not giving a damn about some distinction between a "Jew" and an East Texas in-bred red-neck, the B'nai B'rith and the KKK, that White people will make Black people hate them and want to get away from them. Black people are being pushed into nationalistic positions!

In the face of these realities how do you think you are going to build an Anarchist reality and you would take from Black people the very thing which has caused Us to survive— Nationalism? Unless, of course, your idea is that We (Black people) should

assimilate and miscegenate Ourselves out of existence. If that is the case, let Us be the ones who assimilate others into Us. Would that be okay? It is Black Nationalism, not the philosophies and ideologies and the "goodness" of Whites, or others, that has caused Black people to survive. A nationalism imposed upon Us first by slavery, then by segregation, and now by discrimination, adapted to Our peculiar situation. It is not a hollow lament when Black people state "When We had to stick together We were better off."

Mr. Quest, how do you propose to take Black Nationalist, and especially Black Revolutionary Nationalist, "to task"? And how do you propose that you are going to prevent Black Nationalist from articulating and guiding the Black National Independence Struggle in the manner in which they see fit? Especially since you, Mr. Quest, are not a part of it and have so much disdain for it? It is either the arrogance of another "White thing" which leads you to make such a statement, or it is that and your contempt for Black people. Do you propose to take the Zapatistas' "to task" about how they are articulating their struggle which has to do, primarily, with their national questions? Are you really planning and advising that they should not articulate their struggle? Or are you threatening Black Nationalist on the cool? Apologizing for Black folk, or what, Mr. Quest?

i submit that you, Mr. Quest, and by extension Love and Rage, have a problem with Black Nationalism in the us! i would also submit, in closing, that you, Mr. Quest,

and Anarchist in general—myself included—are Nationalist! Politically speaking, the "nation" is the social, political, and economic structures of a single people. Often, but not necessarily, with access to a common gene pool. The "nation" of people share common experiences, perspectives and values. This is different from the "state" which is created to protect the interests of the "nation." By this definition, Anarchist comprise a "nation." A nation of people who, in fact, aspire to gain control of the social, political, and economic structures of Our lives. That is to say that under the definition of "state" in the international law (see, for instance, "The Montevideo Treaty" of Dec. 26, 1933, "Rights and Duties of States.") Anarchist are striving for "State Power." It can be argued that formations such as Love and Rage have embarked upon a "national liberation struggle" themselves—using the current international law. By setting yourselves up against "nationalist 'people of color'" you have come very close to proclaiming yourselves enemies of people of color by virtue of setting yourselves up in competition with other national liberation struggles, especially the one going on in your own back yard!!! And you're exhibiting the same type of intolerance, and absolutism, of any other non-revolutionary, narrow nationalist formation.

Stiff Resistance!
Prince Imari A. Obadele
Anarchist Political Prisoner
Wynne Plantation #563888
Hunts[down niggahs]ville, TX 77349



MATTHEW QUEST RESPONDS

Mr. Obadele is irritated with me because I have bluntly illustrated three obstacles to Black nationalist politics being the path to unity and autonomy of Black people.

The first obstacle is exclusion. Aspiring Black political leaders frequently call for unity in the community while ideologically excluding some Black people as not being an authentic part of it. Most consistently excluded as not being "Black" enough to fight for Black liberation are women and queers.

Molefi Asante, who coined the term "Afrocentrism," argues that "homosexuality cannot be condoned or accepted as good for the national development of a strong people." Asante believes, as does Afrocentrist and homophobic author Frances Cress Welsing, that Black homosexual expression is a product of "European decadence." Asante has a similar position to Welsing regarding how Black gay males can "redeem" themselves. "The time has come for us to redeem our manhood through planned Afrocentric action. All brothers who are homosexual should know that they too can become committed to the collective will. It means the submergence of their own wills into the collective will of our people." This translates to a reactionary advocacy of abstinence and keeping queer identity in the closet!

Similarly, Haki Madhubuti (formerly Don L. Lee) explicitly argues in his book *Black Men: Obsolete, Single, Dangerous?*, that "male dominance is on the decline in the Black community...which places the community in jeopardy." This can be seen as an uncritical endorsement of male dominance which grows out of essentialist notions about race and gender. The implication is that a powerful liberation movement, and thus an enduring Black autonomy, can be based only on straight Black men and women who will fight white supremacy and unify the community by playing different, gender-specific roles.

According to Madhubuti, "biological and sexual roles within the human species are not interchangeable...The sexual deficiencies and needs of men and women are, indeed, different and correlate along biological and cultural lines." Thus, men and women are locked into distinct, immutable, naturally defined roles that we must adhere to. Madhubuti mirrors in other comments Welsing's assertion that the patriarchal model of Black manhood is the key to Black



He implies that I believe Black people "have some sort of 'natural' affinity and unity with white folk." I do not. I don't believe Black folk have a "natural" affinity with each other either.

The essential quality of grass-roots Black nationalism in the US is the feeling on the part of Black individuals that they are responsible for the welfare of other Black individuals, or of Black people as a collective entity, because of a shared heritage of racial oppression. This claim is of collective identity, love for one's people.

Mr. Obadele accuses me of wanting to "take from Black people the very thing which has caused Us to survive—

regarding melanin and climate ("ice people"; "sun people"), share the same fears as Mr. Obadele and the KKK about miscegenation. Biological amalgamation of hue and "integration" of culture through so called "interracial relationships" do not predetermine people's politics, although it makes, such offspring highly unlikely to favor separation of "the races."

I am not opposed to the goal of Black nationalism: unity and autonomy of Black people. However, I am opposed to separatism as the program of a revolutionary organization and the conservation of race distinctions as the basis for revolutionary politics. This is not grounded in any illu-

Love and Rage, are opposed to or in competition with Black nationalism in the US and by extension against Black people in general. He also wishes to leave the impression that any person of color, who is a member of Love and Rage, who argues against statism or for the absolute freedom and dignity of Black women and queers within the Black community is a "Tom." Mr. Obadele believes when Love and Rage advocates such politics, it is part of a "white agenda."

In conclusion, let me just say this. Love and Rage is a revolutionary organization. Revolution is not the act of a leader or a tiny party seizing power. It is a movement of millions acting to change their lives for

Letters

empowerment. This is consistent with other paternalistic insults to Black women's strengths and capabilities, at times bordering on outright misogyny. Dissident voices that challenge prevailing oppressive and tired notions about gender roles and sexual orientation have never been welcome in most Black nationalist circles.

The second problem is political opportunism and the goal of seizing state power. While arguing for an "autonomous" Black nation, many Black nationalist leaders are doing everything in their power to ensure that they'll be at the top of that new "autonomy." Mr. Obadele has a most personal stake in attacking me for my article on the Bandung Conference, which concludes that national liberation struggles of the past century, and their leadership, have failed to recognize or deal with the perils of striving for state power.

As a member of a "New Afrikan" provisional government in exile, Mr. Obadele believes, after Black national independence in the US, that the majority of Black folk will consent to him and other self-appointed leaders presiding over a separate Black state composed of land which at this time is part of the continental US. From Nkrumah to Mandela, Lenin to Castro, no national liberation struggle that achieved state power succeeded in liberating the people. Any autonomous Black nationalist politics in the US that does not struggle over resolving these questions is doomed to failure. There is no need for apologies from those of us who criticize the historically failed ideology of liberation based on oppressive social and political relations of a different hue. The absolute freedom and dignity of Black people is non-negotiable!

The third obstacle is racialism and its partner, separatism. Mr. Obadele believes Black folk as a rule have "natural tendencies," "perceptions," and "responsibilities."

Nationalism." But in doing this Mr. Obadele collapses the distinction between national identity as a historical and political sense of unity, and Race nationalism as a predetermined historical destiny of "the race." He asserts that Black nationalism is a "natural" reaction to the behavior of whites. At the same time Mr. Obadele says it has been "imposed" upon Blacks by whites but "adapted to Our peculiar situation." Peculiar, indeed. How can political responses of human beings, which are presumably a product of nature, be created, taken away, or adapted by other human beings? How can white supremacy be "adapted" by Black folk to create new, autonomous, and separate social relations for a society just for Black folk? This is where the shaky foundation of Mr. Obadele's argument for race separation, based on erroneous assumptions not just about Black nationalism and Black people, but on his conceptions of nature, culture, and biology explodes.

Anyone could make the argument that Black folk in the US have had such a common cultural experience in reaction to white supremacy that it almost seems that such a reaction borders on a natural or biological "racial" response. If this be true why is it politically necessary to invoke the idea of race at all? Allegiance. Not loyalty to "the race," but allegiance to a particular political ideology or program.

Black folk in the US are not as Mr. Obadele defines a "nation": a "single people," "sharing common experiences, perspectives, and values," "often, but not necessarily, with access to a common gene pool." Black folk have always been members of the same gene pool as everyone else, the human race. Politics, like other perspectives and values, are not pre-determined by genetics no matter what common cultural experiences folks share! Welsing, Leonard Jeffries, and others, with their theories

sions about Marxist theory or the potential of the white working class to overcome their racism. Rather my objection is to the idea that the conservation of race distinctions could be the basis of a new and free society.

Claiming one's people does not imply an inherent (biological) habit of mind, aesthetic sensibility, or political ideology or program. However, claiming a collective racial destiny does allow aspiring Black nationalist leaders to impose their own beliefs that all Black folk do already, or should, have common perspectives or values. I am not saying that Black folk should ignore the real history and culture that is socially uniting. Rather, if the value of such is so obvious in determining political action, it would not be necessary to take any hostile psychological measures to conform folk to such conclusions. Mr. Obadele does exactly that by labeling anyone who disagrees with him as a "fool," "sucka," "white," "Aunt Jemima," "Uncle Tom," or close to "an enemy of Black people."

Race, not merely the white race, is a historically constructed social reality despite corresponding to no facts of natural science. It has been created and re-created, like the concepts of nation and nationality, as a political response to historical circumstances by both Blacks and whites.

Treason to the white race is loyalty to humanity because such treason subverts white supremacy. However blind allegiance to just anyone's conception of the Black race impedes Black autonomy by making one susceptible to unilaterally decided and undemocratic politics in the name of Black liberation. A new Black autonomous politics will be based not on racial, ethnic, or cultural descent but on a collective consent to mobilize around a collectively determined ideology or program.

Mr. Obadele would have readers of this correspondence that I, and by extension

the better. In today's world, such a movement will inevitably be diverse and complex. The revolutionary challenge is to build principled alliances among the many alienated, exploited and oppressed parts of a society in order to fight for change. What is the role of a revolutionary organization in this kind of mass movement? Obviously, it should not force the entire movement to conform to its ideology or organs of power. That's why Love and Rage does not see itself as the organization that will "lead" a revolutionary movement. Instead, we aim to help build such a movement and to participate in it as equals with other organizations and people. We have two goals: 1) to argue for the most democratic and militant movement possible and 2) to encourage struggle against all forms of oppression. These goals are not in opposition to Black nationalism. These goal do not preclude individual members of Love and Rage collectively from defending ourselves against undue disrespect or false accusations. Nor do these goals prevent us from encouraging revolutionaries of different hue to join our organization in particular. If Mr. Obadele insists on implying that Love and Rage is even remotely not in solidarity with the struggle for Black liberation in the US, let it be known now that such an accusation is a fraud. However, if after reading this correspondence, anyone should come to the conclusion that I, Matthew Quest, am opposed to Mr. Obadele's particular conception of Black liberation, then I stand accused.

I as a man of color do not have the right to hope in the white man there will be a crystallization of guilt towards the past of my race...There is no Negro mission; there is no white burden...I have no wish to be the victim of the Fraud of a black world.

— Frantz Fanon,
Black Skins, White Masks

¡Alto a la Masacre!

¡Viva Zapata!

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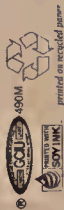
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