

# defenestrator

*throwing power out the window...*

issue 30

august 2004



**AND  
THROW  
AWAY  
THE  
KEY!**

Inside: Penn's Landgrab in  
W.Philly - Phila Cops Murder Haile  
Payne - Republic Nat'l Convention  
Protest Guide - Who's Afraid of  
the Draft?? - Michael Moore's  
Fahrenheit 9/11 - NorthEast  
Mutual Aid Gathering - 'Where  
Children Laugh at Bombs' -  
Letters from Inside -  
Mercenaries in Iraq - Bolivia Gas  
Referendum, MORE!



The defenestrator is Philly's sporadic newspaper for resistance, creative revolution and action. To defenestrate Power means total refusal of its tools and tentacles. Like the Hussites had their oppressors thrown down from the Prague castle into the angry mob below, the defenestrator wrestles power and privilege from its highest and most protected strongholds and casts the beast out of the window and down into the angry hands of the people.

**Deadlines for future issues:**  
September 15 2004 \* November 15 2004

### Prison Staff! Caution! Protected Private Property

This newspaper remains property of the sender unless it has been personally and materially accepted by the prisoner to whom it has been addressed. In the event that the prisoner is denied direct access to this publication, it must be returned to the sender with notice of reasons for failing to deliver to addressee.

### Distribute defenestrator outside of Philly!

The defenestrator is free in Philly. Outside of Philly, send \$2 per issue postage paid. If you care to distribute this fine paper, you can get 10 or more for 80 cents each. We ask you sell them for no more than \$1.50 a piece.

### Get on the defenestrator email list!

We send out announcements for demonstrations, emergency mobilizations, benefit parties and defenestrator events. If you want on, send a blank email from your address to defenestrator-subscribe@lists.riseup.net or click the link on our website. The list is low traffic (usually about 1 message a week) and easy to get off if you so choose.

the defenestrator  
PO Box 30922  
Philadelphia PA  
19104 usa  
rosa@defenestrator.org  
www.defenestrator.org

## Palestinian Activist Farouk Abdel-Muhti Dies in Philly



Farouk Abdel-Muhti 1947-2004

The struggle for Palestinians' human rights has lost one of its leading fighters in the US on Wednesday, July 20, when Farouk Abdel-Muhti died, apparently of a heart attack. He just finished giving a speech at the Ethical Society in Philadelphia. His death comes just three months after he was released from jail where he was detained for two years without charge. He was 57 years old.

Farouk was detained on April 26, 2002 and jailed in various facilities around the country for two years. He was never charged with a crime. He was often held in solitary confinement, subjected to extensive interrogation, and frequently denied food. Although his health was failing while in detention, he remained handcuffed and shackled whenever he went to

the health clinic. After being released Farouk accused his captors of arbitrarily withholding his high blood pressure medication.

Two years after his detention, a federal judge ordered Farouk to be deported, charged or released. He walked out of prison on April 12, 2004.

Farouk Abdel-Muhti was born in 1947 in Ramallah, a Palestinian city in the occupied West Bank of Jordan. Like many Palestinians, Farouk lived the uprooted life of a stateless refugee, traveling from country to country until finally settling in New York in the 1970s. He made it his home and has lived there ever since.

He came to the attention of immigration officials in the mid-1970s after overstaying his visa. An immigration judge ordered him deported, however, there was no way to carry out the deportation, since the West Bank was now controlled by Israel, which did not allow the return of people who left the Palestinian territories before the Israeli occupation of 1967.

Farouk continued to live openly in the New York area, engaging in a number of public political activities, with a focus on Palestinian rights and issues relating to immigration and Latin America.

In March 2002, Farouk began working regularly at Pacifica Radio station WBAI. He used his contacts to arrange interviews with Palestinians in the Occupied Territories on the morning radio program "Wake-Up Call."

One month later, three New York police officers and an INS agent, all in civilian dress, came to his Queens apartment without a warrant. They claimed they wanted to ask Farouk some questions about September 11th. They said they believed there were weapons and explosives in the apartment. When Farouk's roommate, Bernard McFall refused to open the door, they threatened to break it down, entering without a warrant.

But Farouk wasn't at home because he was at an early morning interview at WBAI. He learned of the raid from his roommate and his son, Tariq.

Farouk spoke at a panel hosted by the Philadelphia Anti-War forum about US policy on detention and torture.

A memorial and fundraiser for Farouk's family will be held on August 12, at the Friends Center. Contact Anti-warForum@prodigy.net for more information.

from Democracy Now

## Philly Says HELL NO! to Budget Cuts

by paul

As Bush makes the American economy bleed to fuel corporate profits and fatten the elite, US cities feel the squeeze, and are looking to Philadelphia to see how it will deal with the budget crisis. Philadelphia Mayor John Street has responded to the challenge by cutting cultural funding, trimming the fire department and threatening the wages and pensions of city workers.

On July 1st, in response to protest and public pressure, John Street restored \$3.5 of \$4.5 million which he had proposed to cut from the city's cultural funding. While the victory is no small one, the budget still lost \$1 million, including money which is used to teach art to kids in schools. The Philadelphia Art Museum will get less funding as well.

Firefighters staged protests at City Hall after a man was killed in a fire in South Philadelphia. They gathered to challenge \$7 million in cuts which would eliminate 4 engine companies (which pump water onto fires) and 4 ladder companies (which perform rescue operations and ventilate burning buildings). While no firefighters will lose their jobs, and the Head of the Department refuses

to criticize the cuts, workers, officials, and everyday Philadelphians understand the real risk to public safety that these cuts represent. According to Tom O'Drain, head of the local Firefighters Union, the cuts put people at risk. Dismantling companies



will stretch the department thin, increasing response time to fire and, consequently, the death and property destruction which results from longer fires. The Philadelphia Firefighter's Union, currently battling the city's proposed cuts in court, is urging people to contact members of the city government to demand that the cuts not take place.

On July 7th city workers and retirees from

AFSCME District Councils 47 and 33 were joined by a dozen other unions in a rally to demand a fair contract and to protest proposed city tax and budget cuts. Street is slimming down the city budget at a time when city contracts are being re-negotiated. The President of District Council 47, speaking to a crowd of more than 2,000: "We will not stand quietly by while greedy corporations and spineless politicians try to destroy our lives and our city. We will fight and protest and do what ever is necessary to win what we deserve and need for ourselves and our families."

While Philadelphians tighten their belts, Street offers tax breaks to the rich. Liberty Property Trust, a huge real-estate company that owns skyscrapers, was offered the property it is building on - at 17th and JFK - tax free. Comcast, \$66 billion mega-corp, would move its offices into the building and stop paying property taxes. By moving, not only will Comcast stop paying taxes, it will also create vacancies in the building it currently occupies threatening wages of downtown janitors, who rely on money generated by occupancy for their pay.

**Affected by the Budget Cuts? Let us know what's going on. E-mail rosa@defenestrator.org or write Defenestrator PO Box 30922, Philadelphia, PA 19104**

# Haile Payne Slain by Philly Cops

by Avenging Angel

Haile Payne - a 24 year-old black resident of North Philadelphia - was killed by police on June 10, 2004. He was shot 28 times while handcuffed in police custody.

According to police, Payne was picked up by cops James Venziale, Anthony Mangum, Christopher Sharamatew, and Oronde Watson after a robbery had been reported at 17th and Bristol. Police claim to have taken a handgun off Payne. They proceeded to cuff and beat him. When the four cops started drawing a crowd, they threw Payne in their car and drove him out of sight, allegedly to the 4300 block of N 15th where they were joined by their supervisor, Sgt. David Bonk. Here police claim Payne resisted and drew a hidden pistol from his clothes and shot Sharamatew in his finger. In response, Mangum fired 14 shots into Payne's body, Bonk fired 13, and Venziale shot him once. Haile Payne was pronounced dead at 8:55pm that night.

Haile's murder was especially hard on the family who had lost another son, Immanuel Payne, just last September. Immanuel had been shot in a car in his side and head. The police have no suspects.

Unfortunately, Haile Payne's death was no freak accident or a case of "bad apples" in the police force. The cops who shot Payne belong to the 39th district, notorious in Philly for being especially corrupt and vicious, even by Philly standards. By 1997 some 300 cases were overturned after a scandal broke out over literally thousands of framings by 39th district pigs. In some cases cops

arrested and harassed entire families to take out grudges against other victims. Officer Mangum, one of the 39th District cops who shot Payne, had himself already killed 21 year old Hameed Muhammed while on duty in 1999, shooting him in the back several times. Like most cops who kill black youth, Mangum was kept on the force after an investigation



into the murder was completed.

In response to Haile Payne's murder, several demonstrations have taken place, organized by the Uhuru movement. At a July 10th protest at the Roundhouse, a small crowd of activists from Uhuru, MOVE, as well as assorted anarchists and other activists blasted Philly police for their role in a seemingly endless spate of killings, primarily of young black men. Abdul from MOVE spoke angrily, reminding Philly cops of their recent history of beating and killing MOVE members in the 70s, shortly after they'd protested police killings in the 39th, just around the corner from where Payne was murdered. Elaborating on the systematically racist killings by cops, he went on to draw connections between the poor people of color sent to kill (and be killed) for their rulers, and those being killed on Philly streets. Passersby on foot and in cars were supportive, some joining the small protest.

## ARE YOU A RADICAL GUINEA PIG?

An activist participating in clinical trials? If so, I'd like to talk to you. I am interested in knowing your experiences of the clinical trials you've been in, your motivations to engage, and your opinion on the way trials are conducted and organized. Even if you've done just one trial it's important to me to have your participation. I can offer good quality beer and a small monetary compensation for your participation in a confidential survey.

If interested contact me at:

[rabadie68us@yahoo.com](mailto:rabadie68us@yahoo.com)



# Pentridge Childrens Garden

## The Pentridge Children's Garden Still Needs Your Help. We Will Get Our Garden Back!!!

On a small street in West Philly just south of Baltimore Avenue a garden lot sits locked behind a chain link fence hidden from view by a thick wall of overgrown weeds. This is the second year that the kids of the 4900 block of Pentridge Street have had to experience spring and summer without their special green retreat. Two years ago, the owners, Nic and Eileen East informed us that they were selling their entire property, which surrounds and includes the Garden, to the



Christian Academy, "Crooked Places Made Straight," located on

50th Street. Although the Easts have generously donated the use of these abandoned lots to the Pentridge Children's Garden since 1993 their decision filled us Garden lovers with alarm. We decided that we had to do whatever it took to keep the Garden. After much difficult fundraising and tense times muddling through bureaucracy and neighborhood politics we have finally raised the \$20,000 needed to buy the land and have secured an agreement of sale with the Easts. Once again we will get to look for worms, wait for our seedlings to poke their heads through the dirt, gather around the picnic table for our ritualistic snack, and paint pictures of each other to our hearts content.

I love being part of the Pentridge Children's Garden's collective memory. Most of the gardeners have been part of the garden community longer than I have lived in West Philadelphia. It has been a hard year and a half. The realities of the world have burst through the gates of our garden paradise. The frustration, sadness and anger that we feel and talk about are gigantic. The memory of our garden has kept us bound to each other - I rarely walk down the street without being engaged in a conversation about "our garden." One day after school I was with three of my Pentridge friends, we were eating snack and working on our homework. It wasn't long before we found ourselves talking about the garden. Cue-man, who is nine said, "We cry for that garden." Everyone agreed. Sabria, an amazing 13 year old, has gardened at the Pentridge Children's Garden since she was 4. After thinking for a minute about what she wants people to know about the garden she said, "The garden was a place to go, it was a great environment, it kept the kids out of trouble." Kimberly and Marianne Miller who are 7 and 11 talk fondly about all the art projects. Kimberly said, "I liked the painting." Their older brother Paul told me that "the garden means my whole life." Unfortunately much of the money to purchase the land was obtained through interest free loans from generous friends and family. We need to raise \$13,000 to pay back our debts and ensure that the garden remains in the loving hands of the youth. We are still actively fundraising and welcome any donation no matter how large or small. We also welcome fundraising support. And when we finally get the gates unlocked - because we will get our garden back - we hope you will come join us for some late summer fun.

For more information and to find out how to make a tax deductible donation, contact either Beth at [pulse@critpath.org](mailto:pulse@critpath.org) or Erin at [erinmay@partlycloudy.com](mailto:erinmay@partlycloudy.com)

# STRIKE!

Hot off the press and now on Philly streets check out the Northeast Federation of Anarcho Communists (NEFAC) new paper **Strike!** Put together by NEFAC's Philly based editorial collective, the paper confronts bosses, cops, landlords and covers various struggles where NEFAC have been active lately mostly on the labour front. In the current issue read about Montpelier, Vermont's struggle for a downtown workers union which hopes to organize all downtown workers into one union, Kanehsatake Mohawk's struggle against tribal puppet regimes and Canadian bacon. The Boston Angry Tenants Union gives a rundown on their efforts at tenant organizing, a short picker-upper about workplace sabotage in support of a Canadian telecommunications workers' strike, as well as updates on demonstrations, riots, cross-border solidarity, a GI resisters column, eve a somewhat dry sex advice column (come on NEFAC, we know you can crank out a steamier sex advice page). The Philly NEFACists contribute maybe the best piece in the paper: an interview with Mabel Mallard an activist from the Right to Know Committee, who have taken to dealing with a devastating case of environmental racism in SW Philly caused largely by toxic waste from a Defense Personnel Supply Center and a SUNOCO oil refinery. Mabel talks about her own DDT poisoning, workers' poisoning deaths on the job and their subsequent struggles. Not bad for a first issue. Check it out! Pick one up at your local anachronist communitard watering hole or via: **STRIKE!** c/o Class Action, PO Box 42551, Philadelphia, PA 19104.

# gentrification watch



## Philadelphia's Affordable Housing Trust Fund

by Rafi Rom

Veronica Howard has lived on the 1800 block of 8th Street in Philadelphia her whole life. Once in a thriving, North Philadelphia neighborhood, her house is now the only one still habitable on her side of the street. Her block is a common site in a city with 25,000 to 60,000 so-called "abandoned" houses.

The stress from not knowing if and when her house will be torn down has greatly impacted her health. "I don't sleep good at night, and don't enjoy life anymore." Ms. Howard, 59 years old, blames the eventual plan for demolition for causing a stroke she had in November of last year.

She turned to the Philadelphia Affordable Housing Coalition (PAHC), a grassroots coalition dedicated to increasing housing opportunities, for support. PAHC, which sprung into action in the fall of 2000, has dedicated its energies to countering the erosion of everyone's fundamental right to housing. The city's dearth of affordable housing is not just a crisis. As Habeebah Ali--longtime Philadelphia housing activist and formerly homeless mom--explained, its "a weapon of mass destruction" targeting the poor. Groups involved with PAHC, like the Kennsington Welfare Rights Union, Disabled in Action, Women's Community Revitalization Project, among others, are largely composed of Philadelphians who have been directly affected by free market policies that have made it virtually impossible for low-income families to find and maintain decent housing in Philadelphia.

Like hundreds of other low-income Philadelphians who have little or no affordable housing options, Ms. Howard has since become seriously involved in the cause and is now a dedicated volunteer. "I'm a fighter, and will continue to fight to stay in my neighborhood," Ms. Howard said.

The cornerstone of PAHC is a trust fund, which would secure a dedicated amount of money every year for the city to increase the amount of affordable housing available. Tired of seeing funds for affordable housing dwindle,

PAHC is mobilizing its members around this plan, in which the city would invest \$20 million annually, instead of solely relying on dwindling federal dollars and contractors more interested in making a profit than providing decent housing. Of the \$20 million, \$13 million would go towards the construction of new housing, the rest for housing preservation and to help prevent homelessness (according to advocacy groups

there are 10s of thousands of homeless in the city, and around 7,000 in the shelters at given time). To Ms. Howard, the trust fund may be one answer to the housing problems low-income Philadelphians face. "The trust fund would give us a chance to repair our property, bring it up to their standards," she said.

The trust fund would also help address another endemic problem in Philadelphia: the lack of accessible AND affordable housing for people with disabilities. According to "Closing the Gap," written by Amy Hillier and Dennis Culhane of the Cartographic Modeling Laboratory of U Penn, 151,250 Philadelphians are physically disabled. Liberty Resources, a non-profit organization that assists disabled people in their homes, conducted a survey in which 70% of those with disabilities feel "trapped" in their homes at least some of the time. Jummy Shroader, an organizer since 1989 for Disabled in Action, has seen the housing situation get worse for disabled people. A trust fund would provide more resources for modifying houses, which in turn would allow disabled people the opportunity to live normal lives, with less barriers, he said.

To housing advocates, \$20 million from four revenue sources is only a drop in the bucket compared to the housing crisis Philadelphia

currently faces. For decades, low-income Philadelphians have been the victims of soaring housing costs, predatory lending, and demolition for commercial purposes, issues which have been largely ignored-and in many instances encouraged by the city. Nora Lichtash, Director of WCRP, said, "People think Philadelphia is affordable, but it's not. People don't think there is an affordable housing crisis. Very rarely do people get how serious the problem is."

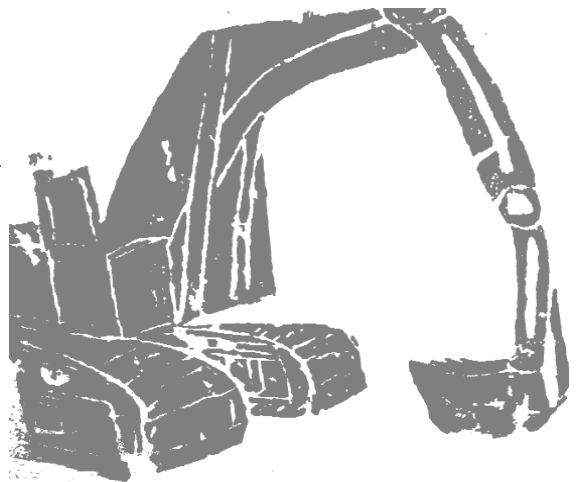
Federal guidelines state that housing is considered affordable if all of the monthly costs do not exceed 30% of the "area median income." Although the area median income for the region is around \$60,000 a year, there are over 206,000 Philadelphia households with incomes of less than \$20,000 a year. Half that number pay more than 50% of their income in housing costs. It has become impossible for a low-income family to find any affordable housing, unless they received Section 8 housing voucher. The waiting lists for federally subsidized housing has been closed for years, and Bush has proposed cutting the amount currently available by 25,000.

The city government over the years has offered little to ease the shortage of affordable housing in Philadelphia. Philadelphia, unlike many other major cities, relies almost exclusively federal programs for affordable housing. Federal housing agencies are notoriously

hostile and ineffective. Mayor John Street has explicitly said that his priority is to attract more middle and upper-middle class homeowners, rather than address the housing crisis for the poor.

To the PAHC, building a movement of low-income Philadelphians and empowering them to react to the city's discriminatory policies is just as important as getting the bill passed. "Poor people in need of housing are leading this campaign," said David Kopish, a community organizer for WCRP. The rank and file who are campaigning for a trust fund stand to benefit most from the proposal, unlike other initiatives by the city government and corporations, which put profit first. Galen Tyler, director of the Kennsington Welfare Rights

*continued on pag 16*



we say "but this is our home!"



university city district

...left of center

Brands used to be burned into livestock to prove ownership of them, and more recently were placed as images representing products. Putting a brand name on a neighborhood is ridiculous. Who can own a neighborhood? The University City District, self-appointed shadow government over West Philadelphia, have taken it upon themselves to brand our neighborhood with a silly logo and the phrase: "left of center." UCD should have asked The Defenestrator for some advice. To the left is an ad we came up with.

# Penn's Landgrab in West Philadelphia

by Richard Rodgers

In order to understand how the University of Pennsylvania acquires land in the surrounding neighborhoods it is necessary to grasp the economic, political and social controls it commands. Penn's operating budget this year of 2,009 billion dollars impacts directly upon West Philadelphia communities and the city at large.

What Penn wants it usually gets. While not without some justification claims to be a private institution, the fact that every governor of

of institutional financial resources came to light. She resigned. In the grand tradition of most Penn administrations, Madame Rodin did not give an unprintable greek damn about the displacement of the working class neighborhoods adjacent to her domain.

Penn's land grab in West Philadelphia began in the 1940s, became painfully evident in the 1950, exploded with devastating consequences for the "Black Bottom" and viciously displaced more than 420 households in the 1960s. Today this destructive policy culminates in the seizure and purchase of real estate,

the deliberate extermination of indigenous family-owned businesses and the unrelenting harassment of black males by the Penn police (who serve as vanguard of this corporate invasion of our community).

Penn's policy toward West Philadelphia echoes the concept of manifest destiny. With glittering generalities such as "progress", "neighborhood improvement", "economic development" and "safe streets," this institution of higher learning cynically exploits the Board of Education to build a school at taxpayers expense of six million dollars and then acquires title to and administration

of the school. The bizarre boundaries of the new school district reflect Penn's plan to gentrify the area by calculated exclusion of the majority of black children who currently reside in the area. If Penn succeeds with its expansionist land policies, they won't be in the neighborhood much longer.

## Changing the face of West Philly

The Sadie Tanner Mossell Alexander University of Pennsylvania Partnership Elementary School located at 43<sup>rd</sup> and Locust Streets gives the word duplicity extended dimension. While the school system in Philadelphia suffered through its worst fiscal crisis (no money for books, school building maintenance, requisite equipment for science classes, etc.) the school board forked over the aforementioned \$6 million to build this edifice

honoring real estate promotion. Tax money built it. Penn owns it.

The immediate objective of this project was to provide a lure for the evasive white middle-class families who shun the inner city because of a lack of decent schools. Chris O'Donnell, vice president of O'Donnell Real Estate Inc., which is located in this area, says that three story houses are "anywhere from \$80,000 to \$100,000 higher in the catchment area than they would be for a similar property outside the catchment area." Consequent escalations in taxes and land values have driven many of the original inhabitants from their homes. Some faculty and staff to the University who were renters in the neighborhood fled to the suburbs due to the rising cost of living in University City.

The boundaries of the school district catchment area are not arbitrary. They deliberately exclude the majority of black students in the neighborhood from attending this institution. Future white middle class families will be glad to pay thousand upon thousand of dollars more for the chance to send their children to a good school and spare them prolonged exposure to black youth. This is the mantra of Penn's administration.

However, the conclusion that the university would leave the outcome to chance would be a mistake. The university has invested 150 million dollars for the development of the Walnut Street corridor and 40 million for the 40<sup>th</sup> Street development project.

Also, the University real estate division made contacts to several holders of real estate urging them to increase the rents of current tenants. These acts were coordinated with the extensive purchase of real estate in West Philly which Penn concealed from the public, and the subterranean assault on many minority owned businesses along 40<sup>th</sup> Street. Utilizing skewed market studies and knowing that many minority owned businesses on that corridor rent and do not own their buildings the administration portrayed them as feckless obstacles to urban development.

This racist determination by Penn to drive the black population out of the area adjacent to the campus provided for the incentive to move the McDonalds from its current location at 40<sup>th</sup> and Walnut Streets to 41<sup>st</sup> and Market and finally to 42<sup>nd</sup> and Market Streets. Neighborhood resentment transformed itself into community activism and NAM (Neighbors Against McPentification) spear-headed a three-year fight against the building of a McDonalds on top of a toxic site in their neighborhood.

Ironically, Mr. Adelman, owner of Campus Apartments, is also the largest private real estate property holder in West Philadelphia and the one who handles all of Penn's current rental properties. He purchased the initially

proposed toxic site at 41<sup>st</sup> and Market for the sum of \$1,050,000. City Councilwoman Janie Blackwell then gave Adelman one million dollars of brown field funding. To this day no one can explain how money was used. If you ever discover it, drop me a line.

## Penn's Policy of Neighborhood Harassment

The University of Pennsylvania Police Force are the storm troopers of Penn's economic and land expansionist policies. One of their major objectives is to discourage the presence of blacks on or near the college campus. To obtain this objective blacks are harassed, searched and arrested on trumped-up charges by police. The administration claims it can do nothing to answer the stream of community protests that stem from this brutal assault on any sense of human decency.

Falsely arrested victims who have been charged with often bizarre misdemeanors usually must also endure the humiliation of Community Court, an insidious instrument of social control in which the accused person has few chances for justice. Community Court enables corporate interests to rid whole areas of people who have been arbitrarily targeted on the basis of class and race.

The theoretical counseling consists of defendants being assigned to some social service agency for therapy for which the defendants must pay. Defendants who are found guilty (ninety nine percent of them) must also endure a humiliation known as community service. Clothed in bright orange uniforms these unfortunates must provide labor for which they are not compensated to myriad institutions which capitalize on their misery.

The UCD is one of them. The UCD, University City District, is a privately funded civic improvement organization in West Philadelphia which operates nominally in the public interest. Factually it is an imposition forced on the community and acts as if West Philly were a colony of the University of Pennsylvania. Its policies and activities are oblivious to the community at large and serve primarily Penn's mandates. It answers to no one but Penn because the university is its primary source of revenue. Along with a few self-serving elitist civic groups who represent real estate interests, it acts as a quasi-government, pushing through zone changes, harassing small minority owned businesses with code violations which border on the absurd and insures that the city will issue housing code violations in the areas that Penn finds desirable.

These are some of the ways that Penn grabs land in West Philadelphia.



print by beth pulsenella

the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is also a de facto trustee of the University of Pennsylvania provides a key to unlocking a chest of concentric networks of political power at both the municipal and state government levels, as well as influence in the bureaucratic forces at the federal level of government.

Indeed, it was understood by the Penn community that if Al Gore had become President of these United States of America, Judith Rodin, the current president of the University would have obtained a cabinet position. The Supreme Court selected George Bush as president and Dr. Rodin was stuck with her position as head of my alma mater at the pitiful salary of more than half a million dollars a year. Poor Judy was present to face the music when a series of financial scandals, administrative mishaps and downright overspending

# NEMA conference in Philly

by onion

Over the weekend of July 9th through 11th, about 50-70 activists of various flavors from the anti-authoritarian left gathered in Philadelphia for the 3rd meeting of the Northeast Mutual Aid Network or NEMA (say niimah). Seeds for what NEMA started with a call for a Continental Anti-Authoritarian Anti-Capitalist Network released on various websites on January 1st, the 10th anniversary of the Zapatista uprising in Mexico, encouraging the formation of a decentralized network of activists to take on the modest goal of confronting empire and capital. This led to a few large meetings in DC where we initiated some discussion to take back home, a more regional meeting in Hartford where the name NEMA was agreed to and then one in NYC where we agreed to take on the hallmarks of People's Global Action, an international network of anti-capitalists and indigenous movements, as our own.

## Hallmarks of the PGA

1. A very clear rejection of capitalism, imperialism and feudalism; all trade agreements, institutions and governments that promote destructive globalization.
2. We reject all forms and systems of domination and discrimination including, but not limited to, patriarchy, racism and religious fundamentalism of all creeds. We embrace the full dignity of all human beings.
3. A confrontational attitude, since we do not believe that lobbying can have a major impact in such biased and undemocratic organizations, in which transnational capital is the only real policy-maker.
4. A call to direct action and civil disobedience, support for social movements' struggles, advocating forms of resistance which maximize respect for life and oppressed peoples' rights, as well as the construction of local alternatives to global capitalism.
5. An organizational philosophy based on decentralization and autonomy.

The Philly gathering's first official event started off in a relatively laid back manner with a showing of the great film, "The 4th World War" in Clark Park to a handful of the first arrivals. The documentary jumps around various struggles against capital and colonialism in Palestine, South Africa, Argentina, Mexico, and Iraq, both heart wrenching and inspiring. The main meeting took place the next day at the Ethical Society, just off Rittenhouse Park. After an excellent breakfast courtesy of Food Not Bombs we got off to a sluggish start with few people in the room. By the time we got past introductions, a basic rundown of our consensus process (if it could only have been that simple) and a short history of NEMA and the PGA (maybe shorter than my paragraphs above) the room had filled up comfortably. Next up was a presentation by NY organizers preparing to confront the upcoming Republican National Convention in NYC. It was good to see how together the NY organizers seemed. Leagues ahead of where we were at planning to disrupt Philly's RNC 4 years

back. NY's Still We Rise coalition of what looks like hundreds of community organizations was exciting hear about as was their outreach efforts and daily consciousness and fundraising events. I was looking forward to getting down to talking about direct action planning, to see where we fit into this whole picture. The main direct action for the RNC was scheduled for the 31st, a couple days after the main march, but talking about it was later on the agenda. A number of brief report backs flew by and we landed at the structure section of the agenda

At the NY emeting we had already used an amended consensus process for decision-making, which means decisions would be based on consensus, but we would agree to move to a 3/4 vote if there was major bog down and we just couldn't make a decision. The "structure working group" presented their proposal to formalize the process which I expected would get

passed quickly. What ensued was a long and nebulous discussion about how to decide to make decisions, which already halfway through a long ass meeting added to our stress and frustration. Half way through the discussion about half of the room had emptied out. By the time the structure bit had wrapped up, we took a break and reconvened to talk about direct action at the RNC. The group, now consisting of only the most enduring and hard core, listened to some background info on the tentative plans and ideas, but never got into anything that would resemble any actual activity on the part of NEMA (though the update was useful in gathering some information). The day wrapped up talking about where to have our next meeting (in Cleveland). Sunday was falsely advertised as a day for workshops, but in practice was a relatively laid back few hours of wrap ups from stuff we'd tabled the day before.

In the days since the Philly NEMA gathering, it seems clear how nebulous NEMA is as a group. There are some obvious contradictions in attitudes and ideas about NEMA within its

own constituents. For one, are we a network purely for exchanging information and resources? Some people suggested this very clearly, elaborating that we never make any decisions as a group period (rendering the structure discussions irrelevant). If so then why adopt something as activist as PGA's hallmarks and identify ourselves on such a confrontational and direct action based pole? I only imagine a hell of confrontational direct action where no decisions about anything were ever made. Can we make something so broad and loose actually do anything? NEMA is of course still in its infancy and still figuring itself out as a group, so we can possibly make room for us to contain different ways. But we do need to get it together to make ourselves into something that consists of more than a bimonthly meeting.

*A longer version of this article with more background info can be found following the articles link on defenestrator.org or by request. For more info on NEMA check out <http://northeastmutualaid.org/>. For more on People's Global Action try [www.agp.org](http://www.agp.org).*

## UPDATE Philadelphia SUSTAIN

SUSTAIN ("Stop US Tax Funded Aid to Israel Now!") works to support Palestinian self-determination by challenging the dominant framework used to support the occupation. SUSTAIN, a national, non-hierarchical organization, is "committed to building a campaign against US military and economic aid to Israel so that U.S. tax-dollars do not support the abuse of human rights." Our basic principles are a) end to occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, b) equality under the law for Palestinian citizens of Israel, c) the right of return for Palestinian refugees, and d) coalition politics.

SUSTAIN nationally is focusing its efforts in a direct action campaign targeting the Caterpillar Corporation, which makes the bulldozers Israel uses to destroy Palestinian homes, 10,000 since the start of the occupation. Israel buys these weapons with US tax dollars.

The Philadelphia chapter of SUSTAIN, which formed in March 2003, has focused its energies on raising awareness about the US role in funding the occupation, as well as providing alternative views of Palestinians.

One of Philadelphia SUSTAIN's current projects is a Palestinian film festival, which will be held in the spring of 2005. Documentaries, short and feature length films, as well as accompanying exhibits, performances, and speakers, will provide a glimpse into the daily lives of Palestinians. Of course, it is impossible to talk about Palestine without talking about the occupation, and many of the films selected will be overtly about the conflict in the Middle East. However the aim of the Film Festival is to expose Philadelphians to the humanistic side of a people usually displayed by the media under the framework of terrorism. The films will include Palestinian, Israeli, and other international directors, but the central focus will be Palestine. If you are interested in helping out with the film festival please contact us.

We are currently organizing a campaign to get PBS in Philadelphia to broadcast the documentary, "Peace, Propaganda, and the Promised Land," to coincide with the film festival. We will be holding public screenings of the documentary over the next few months.

SUSTAIN also meets regularly for "wall pop-ups." Last October The Wall Working Group created large apartheid wall displays. We continue to use these panels as a means to keep discussion about the conflict going in public spaces, such as Rittenhouse Square, in Philadelphia. We welcome new people to join us.

There has been an enormous show of interest for the work and principles of SUSTAIN from various groups in Philly working on civil and human rights. The issue of Palestine, embedded as it is with colonialism, imperialism, and racism, cannot be separated from other struggles for justice in the world today. We work to support Palestinian self-determination with the understanding that a fundamental change in U.S. society will be needed to support the liberation of people everywhere. Only by recognizing the links between this issue and others will we be able to build the alliances and a common analysis powerful enough to eventually defeat the ruling elite.

[www.sustaincampaign.org](http://www.sustaincampaign.org)

**SUSTAIN meets every Wednesday at the Green Grocer on 15th and Cherry Streets, 7PM. You can also contact us at [sustainphilly@yahoo.com](mailto:sustainphilly@yahoo.com)**



## Letter from Baquba, Iraq

by Dahr Jamail

June 25 — How much worse does it need to get here before the occupiers consider changing their policy? One hundred dead every day? In light of what happened here yesterday, it appears as though we're heading in that direction. For those of you who think June 30th will signify a decrease in the number and magnitude of attacks against the occupation forces after the "transfer of sovereignty" — think again.

After having coffee and listening to the Coalition Provisional Authority's "Green Zone" receive its morning mortars, I was out the door to get some things done, as my time here is drawing to a close.

After over 11 weeks back in Iraq, I've never been as exhausted as I am now.

Baghdad seems ever closer to lockdown today. I took a cab over to the Palestine Hotel — a small "Green Zone" where so many corporate journalists and mercenaries live behind suicide walls, razor wire, and soft checkpoints. It closely resembles another mini-"green zone" over at the Al-Hamra and Al-Dulaymi hotels, where journalists and mercenaries are hunkered down behind concrete suicide barriers and checkpoints.

En route to the Palestine to run an errand, there were Iraqi Police and Iraq Civil Defense Corps on nearly every street corner. My cabbie pointed to them and laughed while shaking his head. "La, la Amerikia," he says (No, no America). The absurdity of it all increases daily — so many of the ICDC wear face masks. Not that I blame them, for if their identities were known by the mujahideen, they and/or their families would be dead. Not a good time to have any affiliation with the occupiers — consider yesterday's attacks as a case in point.

There certainly weren't any inside Baquba yesterday, where I was faced with another great irony. During all of my five months in Iraq from my two trips here, the only two times I've been shot at have both been by US troops. Yesterday was yet another example of this, when our car was shot at five times by troops in a Bradley which sat in a nearby palm field as we passed.

Warning shots, for sure, or I wouldn't be typing this right now. But the adrenaline flows about the same when bullets are whizzing near the car. This occurred while we watched two Apaches engaged in strafing part of the city, bobbing above the date palms in dive bomb-like flight patterns, then swooping back out of sight as they trailed smoke behind their blazing guns.

The city was a ghost town. Inside it reminded me of Fallujah when I was there in April. The main roads sealed by the military, and the constant buzzing of unmanned military drones telling the residents that more air strikes were simply a matter of time. Just like Fallujah.

All the shops were closed, bits of plastic bags and garbage were blown about on the streets by a dry, hot wind. Torn Iraqi

flags fluttered in the winds, dogs running here and there.

We had lunch in Baquba with a Sheikh I have become friends with. Just before lunch, several loud bombs exploded nearby. My friend Christian Parenti and I looked at each other with wide eyes while the Sheikh, his brother, Abu Talat, and an older man with us who is a Haji began to laugh. "This is normal, even my children laugh at the bombs now," said the Sheikh.

In the next room the children were laughing excitedly.

The Sheikh remained calm throughout the blasts. He smiled and told me: "God will take us when it is time. People are killed in their homes by warplanes, yes. But people in the middle of fighting remain unharmed. It is up to God. We are a people of faith."

While these people were in no way connected to the resistance, their anger towards the occupiers seemed to fuel their acceptance of the mujahideen in their city.

"The mujahideen are fighting for their country against the Americans," said the Haji. "This resistance is acceptable to us."

His opinion is reflective of those held by more and more Iraqis I talk with nowadays.

When we were exiting the embattled city, we drove slowly past a bullet-riddled car on the median of the main road. It appeared as though the car was trying to turn around. The drivers' body lay in the middle of the road, feet the only parts uncovered by a black mourning flag draped over his corpse.

Fifty meters further down the road there were patches of pavement mangled by tank tracks. Near these sat a large pile of empty machine gun shells, glistening gold in the hot sun.

The scene had all the classic signs of an Iraqi seeing a checkpoint and attempting to turn around quickly... which appears to have led to yet another indiscriminate killing of a civilian.

A bit shaken by this, we continued on and saw several

Humvees and soldiers blocking our exit further down the road. We pulled the car over, and while Abu Talat waited, Christian and I walked the quarter mile towards the soldiers.

"We are unarmed journalists," we took turns yelling while holding our press credentials in the air. "Please do not shoot! We just want to leave the city!"

The walk felt like it took 4 hours... halfway there I noted three soldiers who knelt down and kept us in the sights of their guns. I looked behind us to see a string of cars in a wedding party approaching. The timing could not have been worse.

I walked towards the side of the road, but Christian wisely suggested we stay in the middle and keep walking. Our pace quickened, our shouts grew louder and thankfully the wedding party turned around.

Needless to say, the soldiers are a little touchy about cars that approach them these days, as Iraq has averaged more than a suicide car bomb per day this month.

The soldiers understood our situation when we approached them and asked to be allowed to leave. Christian went back to get Abu Talat and bring the car up.

I spoke with a Sergeant, and said, "After seeing that bullet-riddled car and the corpse back there, we thought it'd be better to approach you guys on foot." He told me that the car had rammed a tank, so they had to shoot it. "Crazy mother-fucker, that guy was," he added.

Since I recalled that, aside from being completely riddled with bullets, the car was intact — particularly the front end of it — I kept my mouth shut.

Two photographers were there with the soldiers. They were very scared, and one of them asked me, "Did you see any bad guys in there?"

I said, "I did not see any mujahideen inside the city."

I wondered why they, like so many other journalists here, won't venture out amongst Iraqis to report on how the occupation is affecting them. Of course it's dangerous, but then, why else are we here?

Dahr Jamail is Baghdad correspondent for The NewStandard, in which this article was originally published. He is an Alaskan devoted to covering the untold stories from occupied Iraq. You can help Dahr continue his crucial work in Iraq by making donations. For more information or to donate to Dahr, visit

<http://newstandardnews.net/iraqidispatches>.

# Where Children Laugh at Bombs

**Baquba was a ghost town.  
The main roads sealed by the  
military, and the constant  
buzzing of unmanned military drones  
telling the residents that  
more air strikes were  
simply a matter of time.  
Just like Fallujah.**

**The MARVELOUS!**  
records // comics // books

208 S. 40TH ST. // 215.386.6110  
records.comics.cds.books // new & used.bought & sold

BRING IN THIS AD AND GET  
\$2 OFF \$20 PURCHASE!

# Where to Now America? Michael Moore's Fahrenheit 9/11

by Bronwyn Lepore

"What is important in a text is not what it means, but what it does and incites to do. What it does: the charge of affect it contains and transmits. What it incites to do: the metamorphoses of this potential energy into other things -- other texts, but also paintings, photographs, film sequences, political actions, decisions, erotic inspirations, acts of insubordination..." Lyotard 1984

It may be awhile before any tangible affects of Michael Moore's Fahrenheit 9/11 can be gauged as so much depends on those who see it. We live in a time where what should create daily outrage in the streets - the last election, the Enron scandal, the lies upon lies upon lies told to promote the War on Iraq, Halliburton and Bechtel, Abu Ghraib, the daily death toll in Iraq, a massacre of a wedding party in the desert by the U.S. military - is often quickly subsumed and what one day may seem to be the final straw to break the camel's back - is the next barely newsworthy. Like Jane's Addiction sings, "Nothing's Shocking." But there must be a cumulative effect on our political unconscious, a sense that, as the Buddha said, certain things are unwholesome and wrong and must be given up and I think it is Moore's hope that his film will at least prod this sleeping giant, make nervous the powerful. Moore himself we hardly need to worry about; it's unlikely he'll calm down and retire to porch-sit in Flint, Michigan anytime soon; he's like a tsunami - when people see him they either get out of the way (in the film, Congressmen he accosts and encourages to enlist their own kids in the military literally skitter away from him in fear) or are engulfed in his quest. What's good is that his vision isn't insular; it moves outward, and Moore may set out with a very definite perspective but he is also changed, (and how couldn't he be as a documentarian?) affected, by much he discovers. In Bowling for Columbine, when Moore pushes two young male victims of the Columbine Massacre to seek justice from K-Mart for selling the bullets that injured them, at first it seems like he's using them to make a point, but they become visibly empowered by the experience and the greater recognition of the preventability of their suffering is inevitably cathartic. Moore is one who ignores the serenity prayer and he's right, I think, to do so. More of us should. After all, how do we know what can be changed till we've made every effort? Maybe the "wisdom to know the difference" is just an excuse for passivity. Maybe it's better to be stupid sometimes, to make mistakes. A friend who's finishing her dissertation in political science finds the polemical nature of Moore's work dangerous - "if he were on the other side," she argues, "you'd think he was the devil." And Moore is manipulative, but he's also awkward and it is in this awkwardness that his films offer up the most potential for influencing change. There's no way Moore could have premeditated Lila Lipscomb, the working-class, patriotic, military mom who loses her son to the War on Iraq and whose singular story resonates with the layers of

betrayal and ignorance and shame, alongside the working-class struggles and dignity and dreams, that are the history of the United States. Though his films are undoubtedly humorous and offer biting satire, as with Roger and Me and Bowling for Columbine, what interests Moore most in Fahrenheit 9/11 are such themes of betrayal (on multiple levels - but mostly of the wealthy/elite towards the less fortunate) and fear (both real and media/government-manufactured) and loss (of jobs, of hope, of children, of dignity, of the soul - a young soldier in Iraq talks about the disappearance of a little piece of his soul every time he sees or participates in the killing of the 'enemy') and the magnitude of these themes in the past four years in the U.S. means that Moore can only skim the surface of the damage done; he barely has time to point towards a way out of such a mess.

Bush, confronted by Moore at a rally, tells him to behave and "find real work," but if

anybody's slouching it's not Moore who is less of a physical presence in this than in his previous films, but is still the moral backbone, directing the audience to laugh, to feel outrage, and to cry. People on both the left and the right find Moore irritating and it's not hard to see why; he's like that annoying kid in class who was always taking up all the teacher's time with goofy questions that sometimes, but not always, led to interesting discussions. In 9/11 Moore's obsession with the power-politics of the House of Bush and the House of Saud (a relationship now pretty well-documented) is understandable, but on a pragmatic level it's hard to know what to do with such information. What's both admirable and somewhat (and at times inconsiderate - although I disagree with those who thought he was too hard on the brain-addled Charlton Heston, that's like saying it's unkind to want to spit on Ronald Reagan's grave - they had it coming) about Moore is that he doesn't really care; he seems to like himself, perhaps even recognizing his faults and then deciding "so what."

His bit last year promoting military guy Wesley Clarke was truly puzzling. There was the Mumia faux pas where he managed to get himself included in his own stupid white guys category. In 9/11 he does this 6th-grade social studies anthropologically stereotyping film clip bit of the nations dragged into Bush's "Coalition of the Willing" that's kinda fucked-up and could use a good, if brief, explanation of just why such countries put up no resistance - other than that they're just backwards third-world types stuck in some historical quindness pounding on drums and riding animals.

The New Yorker's David Denby calls the film "incendiary and viciously funny," but for me (not that there weren't some funny-as-hell scenes) it was mostly a document of betrayal and betrayal is never a funny thing; it haunts the soul and the soul of America, and the film only hints at the damage, will be haunted for a long time to come.

## Boys Gone Wild Mercenary Forces in Iraq

by Rory

The life of a private security contractor in Iraq is a shadowy one.

What little information we have of these federally funded mercenaries comes in the form of droplets. The average American knows little about these "civilian" contractors past the brutal mutilation of the four Blackwater employees in Fallujah, or the private security forces that were gently implicated in the Abu Gharib prison abuse scandal. In reality, Iraq is flooded with private mercenaries contracted to do the military's work.

Part III, Article 47 of the General Provisions of the Geneva Convention, which bans the use of mercenaries, defines a mercenary as one who "is motivated to take part in the hostilities essentially by the desire for private gain and, in fact, is promised, by or on behalf of a Party to the conflict, material compensation substantially in excess of that promised or paid to combatants of similar ranks and functions in the armed forces of that Party." The US is able to skirt this law by arguing that official combat operations have technically ceased and it is simply a matter of aiding in stabilizing a hostile territory. But make no mistake, the US is deeply embroiled in what is shaping up to be a long and grueling ground war in an effort to stabilize a tumultuous Iraq and employing mercenary forces to get the job done.

As the violence escalates, so does the population of private security contractors. In fact, private contractors recently outnumbered



Photo taken from Blackwater's Web Page

British troops and are now the second largest military body in Iraq with estimates at 15,000 strong. Since the contracting companies are not required to disclose their official number of employees in Iraq, nor the deaths of their employees, the media can only hypothesize on numbers from what little information is available.

Who are the security contractors?

A cross section of the contracted security forces in Iraq reveals three main types of security contractors: Iraqis, who make up a very disorderly and lax police force, former militiamen from countries like Lebanon and Nepal, and internationals from the U.S., Western Europe and South Africa. The Iraqi police force is lowest on the totem pole. While in some instances they make four times as much as they had before the war, the police force currently pays at most \$150 a month, a paltry sum by any standards, but obscenely low when compared to the \$14,000 per month that third country-militiamen earn and the \$10,000 or more per month internationals earn. The security contractors are also not the most pleasant bunch. U.S. contractors all have some sort of military background, usually former Navy SEALs and Green Berets who see Iraq as an opportunity to satisfy their aggressive temperaments and be paid handsomely in the process. There

continued on page 19...

## de / briefs

**FBI raid activist house in Denver, Colorado**  
On July 22, 2004, the FBI raided two houses in Denver, and arrested at least two people. The FBI questioned activists about the upcoming plans for the Republican and Democratic Conventions, as well as questions about the Anarchist Black Cross. Agents made threatening statements to individuals who were attempting to record names and badge numbers of those agents that were present (source: Kansas Mutual Aid Legal Collective).

**Anti-War Resistance in South Korea Builds**  
Following the beheading of the kidnapping victim South Korean Kim Sun-il on June 23rd, 2004, the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU) demanded the cancellation of the South Korean Government's plans to dispatch troops to Iraq, in order to avoid sacrifice of further lives. KCTU said, "We demand that the Korean government not play puppet to the foreign policies of the U.S. and that it take a firm stance against it, and that it protects the rights and the lives of its citizens." On Thursday, June 24, 2004 the labor unions of South Korea's two major airlines, Korean Air and Asiana Airlines, declared their refusal to transport anything related to the troop dispatch to Iraq, including Korean soldiers to be stationed in Iraq along with armor and related equipment. Up to 3,000 troops are due to be sent in August in addition to the 670 medics and engineers already there. Mass street protests against such an action show the people of South Korea uniting against the Occupation. The Union of the Unemployed and the Federation of Worker's Councils and Unions in Iraq sent a solidarity letter to the KCTU and airline labor unions in appreciation of their stand against sending Korean troops and called on "all labor organizations and Unions worldwide and especially in UK and USA to join this action of Korean Trade unions to end the occupation in Iraq and for immediate withdrawal of all troops from Iraq."

# RNC Pullout Extravanganaesa

RNC Pullo  
Extravanganã

ut  
aesa

# RNC Pullout Extravanganaesa

**the Defenestrator**

**N  
E  
E  
D  
S**

The Defenestrator is constantly looking for contributors, artwork, scam artists, layout artists, benefit shows, government bonds and computer wizards. If you or someone you know fit the bill, GET IN TOUCH!

Seriously...

[rosa@defenestrator.org](mailto:rosa@defenestrator.org)

**HELP!**

# LAVA

LAVA is the Lancaster Avenue Autonomous space, "soon" to open its doors to the world as a community center for radical media and politics.

It all started with the Space Exploration Team, a loose collective composed of individuals interested in finding a place for a radical community center in Philadelphia. We had been scoping out properties around the area that could fulfill our vision -- a three story building with a storefront located on a main street, large enough to house several organizations and projects. On October 17, 4134 Lancaster, a three story building with a storefront located on a busy street, large enough to house several organizations and projects, went up for auction at the sheriff's tax lien sale. For a healthy bid of \$15,100 we snagged it. By December 14 we were able to raise, from generous people like you, the entire \$15,100 necessary to buy the building.

Since then it's been a struggle, a seemingly unending uphill battle to replace termite damaged floors, walls, running electricity and plumbing from scratch. Financial ruin, burnout and stagnation nearly did us in. In the meantime, the defenestrator newspaper and Radio Volta moved their operations to the space carving out functional spaces within the building. And now after 3 years of hard work and long winters, we seem to be on the very cusp of opening our doors to the world. Despite all odds we're closer than ever.

What will be at LAVA?

We want to build a reliable, accessible physical space from which our groups could welcome participants and community members. LAVA will be a public gathering space for film screenings and classes; office space for small and startup organizations; and publicly accessible spaces such as a library, a darkroom, gallery space, a computer lab that would include web access and audio-video editing equipment. Most importantly, we share the vision of a space that will embody the values of collective management, open access, and sharing of knowledge and resources, a space where many of us who are organizing for another world can fuse our ideas and our work with those of people who don't normally intersect with our circles; a place for radical action to intersect with the public.

Among many other things, the building will house:

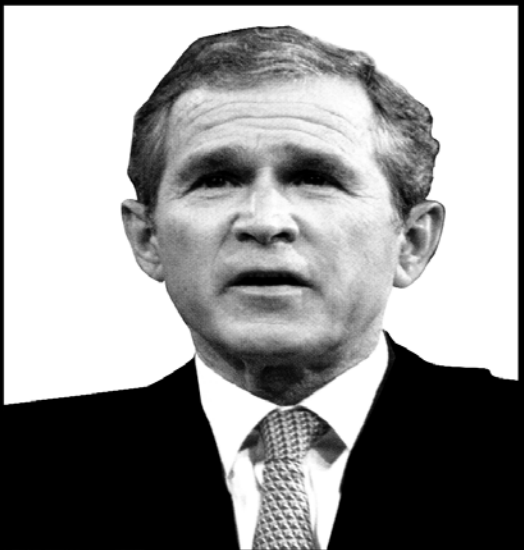
- a performance space covering the entire 1st floor. it will also serve as a space for community classes and workshops, meetings, film screenings and performances
- The Independent Media Center
- Radio Volta (the IMC's internet radio station. Check them out at [radiovolta.org](http://radiovolta.org))
- the defenestrator - a bimonthly radical newspaper ([defenestrator.org](http://defenestrator.org))
- Alpha Labs - a computer lab for public computer access literacy and education.
- a radical literature lending library · darkroom · printing press

We want you!!!

Most of all we want this building to be an interactive space where those who use it are those who run it. So despite not being open as of yet, we want your input, your energy, your involvement! Currently there's a ton of work to do and areas to get involved: we need help with construction (especially people with skills who could give us advice or help us take on some construction projects), helping organize the daily operations, on working groups (like the library, events co-ordination or fundraising) and especially with fund raising. We still need to raise thousands just to get the performance area up to code for public events. Don't be shy!

LAVA holds its general meetings every second Wednesday of the month 7pm at LAVA, 4134 Lancaster Ave.

**INTERNATIONAL**



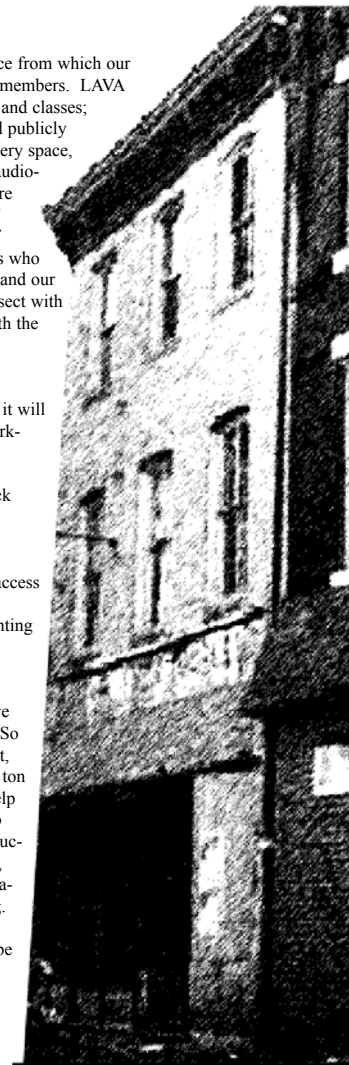
**TERRORIST**

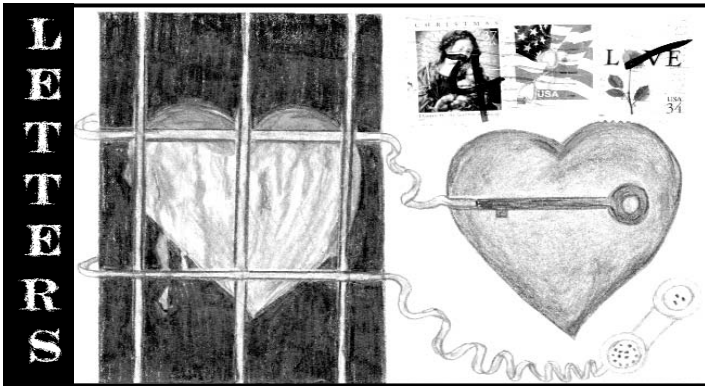
**THIS T-SHIRT AVAILABLE IN SIZES SMALL TO XXL, ON BLACK AND WHITE!**

along with dozens of other designs (EZLN, feminist, queer, anarchist, anti-police...) and hundreds of buttons, pamphlets, books and more!

[www.kersplebedeb.com](http://www.kersplebedeb.com)

Kersplebedeb, CP 63560, CCCP Van Horne, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, H3W 3H8





## Prison Abuse in Abu Graib

by Eric Wildcat Hall

The news is everywhere of the abuse of prisoners in Iraq's Abu Graib prison and the US Government is claiming that such abuse isn't representative of "American values" Of course, what the mainstream media isn't publicizing is the fact that there are an estimated 10 to 20 thousand personnel in Iraq who, when not on active duty in the military, are Correctional employees, Police Officers, or otherwise involved detention and control of prisoners in one form or another here in the United States.

The US Government and Military Command claim that the personnel at prisons in Iraq are untrained and inexperienced in their capacity as prison guards, which is misleading, as the military is aware of the civilian employment of every soldier, and made efforts to assign trained and experienced soldiers to oversee the detention and control of Iraqi prisoners.

The truth is that the abuse of Iraqi prisoners is representative of American values. Prisoners in the United States suffer abuses on a daily basis. Unfortunately, such abuses are covered up by the prison administrators as well as by the Presidents who nominate the judges, by the Congress which confirms the appointment of these judges who allow the abuse to continue. Except in the rare instance in which compelling evidence, such as photographs or recordings, force the courts to take action, the abuse continues.

Witness the American public's perverted hunger for television programming that portrays prosecutorial misconduct, police brutality and the psychological and physical torture of prisoners. The popularity of such shows has desensitized America. The Government even provides the media with people who claim to be mentally upset over the abuse of Iraqi prisoners, as if care. In truth, what upsets these frauds is that their values have been exposed to the world. Deep down in their hearts most Americans are morally corrupt and have no values. If they did, they wouldn't tolerate the abuse of prisoners in the US, as they have for decades.

Rumsfeld's visit to Iraq is nothing more than a cover-up to place the blame for the abuse on the leaders over there in Iraq and not to implicate the Secretary of Defense and Director of the Central Intelligence Agency who gave the orders or otherwise encouraged US personnel to commit such abuse, which they obviously enjoyed, as is revealed by the smiles on their faces. This ensure that the rope of responsibility doesn't trail back from Iraq to President Bush.

In the end the fall guys will be rewarded handsomely and the illusion that America is a nation of people of good morality is preserved. The idea that people like me are not worth listening to or supporting is also preserved and the rampant abuse of prisoners in the US will continue to be encouraged and condoned behind the cloak of security concerns.

*Eric Wildcat Hall is serving 35-75 yrs for helping ship arms to Central American Indigenous activists. He is serving his time in Albion, PA.*

**The truth is that the  
abuse of Iraqi prisoners  
is representative of  
American values.**

## International Rogue

When it comes to observing the rules and norms of international law the United States, far from being its protector, is one of the greatest and most habitual offenders. In 1989 the United Nations adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child which established international standards for the treatment of children. The convention covers everything from the state's protection of children to its punishment of children. Article 37(a) of the Convention states that State Parties shall ensure

(a) No child shall be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Neither Capital Punishment nor Life imprisonment without the possibility of release shall be imposed for offenses committed by persons below eighteen years of age.

It should not be surprising that the United States, the prison capital of the world, did not sign this international treaty establishing standards for the treatment of children. The United States is one of only 3 countries in the world that sentences juveniles to life imprisonment without parole and imposes the death sentence on juveniles. In fact -merican politicians appear to gain a sadistic satisfaction in passing laws that treat juveniles more harshly than ever.

What can be said of a society that discards its children like trash on the side of the road? That feeds its children into the jaws of a brutal and unmerciful prison system? All too often the juveniles sentenced to life in prison or to death sentence are youth of color while white youth get sentences more appropriate for juvenile offenders. While this double standard is partly due to economic reasons the primary reason is the institutional racism that is inherent in the U.S. justice system. Youth of color are seen as predators and remorseless killers beyond hope of redemption - a completely false stereotype. Therefore before any change can come in the unjust sentencing of juveniles to life in prison without parole or the death penalty there must be a change in society's perception of youth of color. The Black and Latino community must demand that society recognize their children as human beings and not expendable capital to feed the prison industry. Their children are deserving of a second chance.

The United States portrays itself as a bastion of human rights while within its own borders it relentlessly violates the rights of its young citizens. Forty years ago the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. said the United States was the greatest purveyor of violence in the world. Today, as demonstrated by its unjustified war against the people of Iraq and its continued violation of the U.N.'s Convention governing the punishment of juveniles, the United States stands as one of the greatest and most frequent violators of international law. It has become the very example of a rogue empire.

Robert X. Holbrook #BL-5140  
SCI Greene  
175 Progress Drive  
Waynesburg, PA 15370-8082

## Cacophony

As I lay myself down upon my bed at night,  
I can hear the mired echoes traveling across  
the airwaves as they infiltrate my cell.  
No matter how hard I try to combat  
these contumacious tones,  
their overwhelming influence manages  
to seep fervently into my head;  
causing my ears to ring and my head  
to pound,  
as my torso slowly descends towards the ground;  
leaving me helpless upon my knees.  
As I strive through prayer and meditation  
to drown out this abhorrent sound of  
keys rattling,  
this lets me know that the "man"  
isn't too far away-  
immediately I'm reminded exactly  
of where I'm at.  
In the morning I will have to face  
and endure an even more potent current  
of turbulent noises.  
Which is why I've learned how to  
live within.

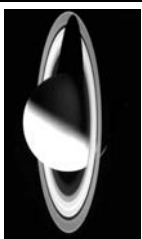
-Frank Prieto

3001 S. Emily Dr.  
Beeville, TX 78102  
# 652,068

The art shown on this page represent selections from the Contexts Collection from artists in prison, on exhibit at the A-Space, July 1 to August 24. Hours: Tuesday 7:30 to 10:PM, 1st and 3rd Saturdays from 11AM to 3PM and by arrangement. Closing event on Sunday, Aug 22 from 5:30 to 7:30PM. All work is for sale. To arrange a special viewing or to purchase a piece contact Books Through Bars, (215)727-8170 or email contexts@booksthroughbars.org



# Another World is Possible!



With the presidential elections approaching, many on the left recognize that, while Bush must go, Kerry is not much better, and are continuing to question the fundamental assumptions that underlie electoral politics in this country. Cindy Millstein, writing just after the elections in Spain wrote:

“Our goal as anti-authoritarians in America should not be to turn out the vote (though as voters who despise Bush, we may want to do that too). Nor should it be to worry about whether to vote or not (a minor irritant relative to numerous other statist intrusions). Nor should it be to match the presidential spectacle with one of our own. Our aim should instead be to expand people’s sense of political and social possibilities in contrast to actually existing (non)democracy and capitalism. For a political culture must first be forged before politics (that is, self-governance) can be imagined, much less constituted.”

And people are doing just that. In Boston the Democratic National Convention WAS preceded by the Boston Social Forum which brought together progressive community organizations, unions, and others to network and discuss alternative visions to capitalism’s domination.

In New York, the Life After Capitalism gathering will precede the more than a million-strong street demonstrations being expected at the Republican Convention in Manhattan. Like the Boston Social Forum, the Life After Capitalism gathering hopes to help build relationships between anti-capitalist activists, and to offer a space in which to explore long-term vision and strategy.

The real choice we are offered as the elections near is whether to participate in a sham Democracy - run by the powerful, for the powerful - or whether to participate in our own liberation. If we choose the latter, we should use the elections to focus on the importance of revolutionary social change, and to forge relationships that will allow us to achieve them.

### LIFE AFTER CAPITALISM

Left Turn - People’s Global Action - Argentinian Social Movements - Coalition of Immokalee Workers - Cindy Millstein - Many Others

visit [www.lifeaftercapitalism](http://www.lifeaftercapitalism)

**NYC Aug 20 - 22** (212) 591 0083

# Sherman Austin Freed, Sort Of ...

Sherman Austin Sherman Austin, former webmaster of RaisetheFist.com, was released from prison on July 12 and left Arizona for a halfway house in his home of Los Angeles, California. Under the sentencing guidelines of the USA PATRIOT Act, he was facing over twenty years in prison for bomb-making recipes posted on another site, which he linked to and was hosting, and decided to plea-bargain for a year in jail and 3 years of probation. The actual author of the post has not been prosecuted.



The nightmare hasn't ended for Sherman, however. He will serve the remainder of his sentence in a halfway house until August. In addition, Sherman will be serving a sentence of federal probation for the next three years, under which he will not be allowed to use a cell phone, computer or other digital device unless approved by the government. Furthermore, Sherman has been forbidden any contact with "anarchist groups," who the federal government maintains "advocate violence as a means of disrupting order and achieving social, economic and political change."



# Courts Blast FCC

In a lengthy decision of over 200 pages, the Third District Court today told the Federal Communications Commission that its attempts to further deregulate the American media system are unjustified. The court determined that the FCC relied on “irrational assumptions and inconsistencies” in determining the new cross-ownership caps, and ordered them to make a new decision that takes seriously their duty to regulate media to preserve the public interest. The court’s decision in this case requires the FCC to reverse its controversial June 2003 decision relaxing the regulation of ownership of the newspaper, television and radio industries. Judges faulted the FCC’s methodology in measuring concentration, and rejected the FCC’s argument that ownership limits should be removed unless evidence could be shown to warrant their retention. With the burden of proof back on the FCC, consumers groups, parents, activist organizations, and even FCC

Commissioner Michael Copps joined Prometheus in celebration of the Court’s decision. “The rush to media consolidation approved by the FCC last


June was wrong as a matter of law and policy,” said Commissioner Copps in a released statement. “The commission has a second chance to do the right thing.”

“This outstanding decision comes at a time when unprecedented debate on the role of media outlets in Americans’ lives is taking place,” said Prometheus Program Director Hannah Sassaman. “Thousands of Americans are telling the Commission and everyone who will listen that consolidation is bad for their communities and families. It is of paramount importance that the FCC use that debate to inform new ownership rules that will preserve and protect America’s diverse, local voices.”

The Prometheus Radio Project is also currently working to expand the number of Low Power FM (LPFM) Radio stations in the United States. FCC Chairman Michael Powell, Senator John McCain of Arizona, Senator Patrick Leahy of Vermont, and many

thousands of Americans have looked to LPFM to provide a good source of local, diverse content in an era of profoundly consolidated media. “Senators McCain and Leahy recently proposed Senate Bill 2505, which will, if passed, bring thousands of low-power community radio stations to America’s cities and countryside,” said Prometheus Technical Director Pete Tridish. “Now that the American people, members of Congress, and the courts have all said that consolidated ownership of media doesn’t serve us, we urge Congress to pass this bill, and bring more truly independent media outlets to our country.”

Prometheus brought the original motion to stay the rules on behalf of their constituents, the many thousands of Americans fighting to build low power, independent radio stations. The Prometheus Radio Project is an activist organization that fights for more democratic ownership and regulation of media. Prometheus advocates for community organizations that want to start radio stations, and has helped build the first radio stations owned by civil rights and environmental organizations in the United States. For more information about this case, and the continued work to expand Low Power FM, contact Hannah Sassaman or Pete Tridish at the Prometheus Radio Project.



**Wooden Shoe Books**  
**Anarchist & Radical**  
**Books & Periodicals**

People’s History • Labor • Chomsky  
 Radical Ecology • Media & Technology  
 Native Uprisings • Black Liberation  
 Feminist • Queer • Youth  
 Armed Struggle • Non-Violence

Collectively Run by Volunteers  
**508 S. 5th St. • Philadelphia**  
**(215) 413-0999**  
 Open Seven Days [www.woodenshoebooks.org](http://www.woodenshoebooks.org)



the defenestrator

# Philly's Housing Trust Fund

...continued from page 4

Union, was a single father who became homeless several years ago when he lost his job and fell behind on the mortgage. As a member of KWRU he's heard hundreds of similar stories. He thinks that earmarking funds for affordable housing is a step in the right direction.

Several major cities, including Los Angeles, Chicago, Boston, and Washington D.C., have dedicated housing trust funds. According to Mary Brooks, Trust Fund coordinator at the Center for Community Change (CCC), housing trusts funds across the country have spent nearly \$1.5 billion on building and preserving 200,000 units for low-income households. She described Philadelphia's proposal as similar in its funding scheme to many other successful trust funds across the country.

The Philadelphia City Council need not look beyond the state of Pennsylvania for examples of housing trust funds. In 1992, the State Senate passed Act 137, which allowed counties to double real estate - related recording fees, and use the proceeds for a trust fund. The only county prohibited from this option was Philadelphia. To date, 51 out of the 67 counties have established such trust funds. Ms. Sierra noted that all of the counties that have not opted-in are "so small and rural that the paperwork generated would outweigh potential revenue."

There is also a national coalition aimed at passing legislation to address the country's housing problems. Over the last couple of decades, the real wage and purchasing power of working people has plummeted, and housing costs have grown considerably. According to the U.S Department of Labor's Consumer Price Index (CPI), housing costs have more than doubled in the last two decades, outpacing all other major categories of spending except health care. A Harvard Business Bulletin from 2000 reports that "demand for affordable housing exceeds the supply by a record 5.3 million units." Activists and politicians alike have advocated for a Nationwide trust fund as well, one that would support local efforts across the country to improve affordable housing.

In 1991, HUD published a report that recommended a "modest" housing trust fund of \$25 billion dollars. Affordable housing advocates leaped at the idea and over time built a movement to support it. Senator John Kerry, ranking Democrat on the Senate housing and transportation subcommittee, gave his first public speech endorsing a National Housing Trust Fund in 1999. He proposed that the surplus from the "Mutual Mortgage Insurance Fund" be



**Wrecking havoc:** The city of Philadelphia dedicates almost all of its money earmarked for "affordable housing" to bulldoze homes.

used for such purposes instead of being diverted back to the general treasury. In 2000, Kerry introduced "The National Affordable Housing Trust Fund Act," and had reintroduced it every year since. Similar bills exist in the House and Senate, currently with 213 and 18 co-sponsors respectively. This year, all three Philadelphia area congressmen supported the legislation, while neither senator from the state supported the bill.

What makes a trust fund such an attractive response to the housing crisis is that it effectively provides housing for thousands of low-income families, while strengthening the local economy. Sue Sierra is the policy coordinator for PACDC, who was a principle in drafting the council bill. She believes it makes economic sense to establish a trust fund. She estimates that the city would see in additional 75-125 million a year by investing the 20 million.

Local and state governments often look at how an investment into a certain program would "leverage" money from other sources, like private funds, or even other state and federal dollars that would be otherwise inaccessible. On average, trust funds of leveraged about \$9 for every dollar nationwide, which for Philadelphia would be a great boost in economic activity.

Home ownership is one of the cornerstones of the economic well being of a family, and also generates property taxes needed to fund other necessities, such as education. Trust funds would only further secure this dream for more Americans. Reems of studies have also shown that rental assistance programs help low income people step out of poverty by allowing them to allocate their money for other basic needs, like food or clothes, which often are neglected if 50% of a families budget goes solely towards housing.

A housing trust fund would have an extraordinarily large impact on job creation. It takes lots of people to build houses, and even more to provide the materials to build them.

Moreover, these are the sort of jobs that over the years have been replaced with low wage service jobs, like working at McDonald's. It is sound fiscal policy for the state to provide funding for sustainable jobs.

The Philadelphia Affordable Housing Coalition adopted the idea of the trust fund as an alternative to Mayor John Street's Neighborhood Transformation Initiative. NTI is Street's signature plan addressing the housing crisis in Philadelphia. The city will demolish city "blight" and sell the land to developers for a song. NTI pledges to knock down 15-18 thousand houses in 5 years. (253 of the selected homes are still occupied), and build an equal number of new units over the same period.

David Kopish said housing activists "quickly realized that NTI was not going to do anything" about the low-income housing crisis in Philadelphia. Costs of demolition and land acquisition were underestimated. Demolition costs, initially estimated at \$10,000 per home, are now estimated at \$20,000, according to Kopish. The city was razing antiquated "projects," but not building enough replacement homes. Of the new units NTI promises to build, only 3,500 of them would go for less than the market rate. Empty lots and Caterpillar bulldozers now speckle Philadelphia's urban landscape, along with the occasional "Coming soon... Rite Aid!" sign.

On May 24, 2003, the Philadelphia Affordable Housing Coalition held a community meeting at the Quaker Meeting house, in which hundreds of Philadelphians came to hear Deborah McColloch, Director of the City's Office of Housing and Community Development, and Jeannie Blackwell, a prominent member of the City Council (who promised the coalition she would introduce the bill), answer questions about the Trust Fund. After testimony from five people who have personally experienced housing crises, neither politician said they would support a \$20 million dollar fund. Right off the bat McColloch proposed a paltry

\$1.5 million from NTI, which immediately put her at odds with the audience. Blackwell, who brought her own brute-squad to the meeting to cheer her on, used more rhetorical tricks to duck the issue about whether she would support a trust fund.

Staci Moore, who is co-chair for WCRP's board, was one of those who testified at the hearing. She and her family moved into the Salvation Army Shelter after they were evicted in 1992. Because they were living on a shelter, they were given priority on the long Section 8 waiting list (closed for the last five years), and moved to a house in Northern Liberties a year later. Ms. Moore, who has volunteered for WCRP for the last six years and has seen countless others in worse situations, said she now views that time of her life as a "fairy tale," because she was lucky enough to find housing when so many others in her same situation were not. In another testimony, Nadine Bent, a member of the Tenant Action Group (TAG), recounted how her and her family spent months battling a nasty landlord who allowed raw sewage and feces flies to sit in her lawn.

A week later, Blackwell, who told PAHC and PACDC she would submit their proposal as is, ended up introducing a watered down version. In a memo to the "Housing Advocate Community, Alissa Orduna-Sneed, a staff member of Blackwell's, wrote "We know that organizations have worked very hard on putting together this legislation and may be disappointed in the form that has been introduced," and then ticked off several reasons for the change, all political cop-outs. In June, the bill failed to receive the number of votes needed, after the council's attorneys issued a memo outlining several legal problems with the proposal.

But PAHC and PACDC members plan on reintroducing the plan next October, and are confident that it will ultimately pass. "I can't help being encouraged by how far its gotten," said Sue Sierra of PACDC. Kopish said, "A lot of the time we were trying to work out the exacting wording of the bill. By the time we were ready for action, it was too late." At this point in time PAHC is already gearing up its troops to pressure the City Council to adopt the trust fund during the upcoming term. Nora Lichtash, director of WCRP and long-time housing activist, looks forward to the upcoming battle. "If it could pass that quickly, then we clearly weren't asking for enough."

The Housing Trust Fund *will not* happen without your help! To get involved, contact the **Women's Community Revitalization Project:**

407 Fairmont Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA 19123  
tel: 215.627.5550

# Bolivia Casts Vote For Gas Exploitation Plan



by benjamin dangl

extensive road blockades across the country. These mobilizations were marked by intense confrontations between security forces and protesters, which resulted in nearly eighty deaths and hundreds of injuries.

In the middle of July Bolivians were asked to choose from a limited set of options about what to do with the country's natural resources. The voter referendum proposed was the government's response to last year's Gas War, a massive protest movement, in which Bolivians took to the streets to demand that the gas be used to help the nation's poorest social sectors, instead of being exported to the US for a meager price.

Hundreds of thousands of farmers, coca growers, students, union workers and ordinary citizens protested, went on strike and constructed

On October 17, after countless calls from activists and fellow politicians for his resignation, President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada left office and the Vice President Carlos Mesa took his place, as stipulated by the country's constitution. Mesa promised that his administration would hold a referendum in order to decide what to do with the gas. As promised, the referendum took place on July 18th, 2004.

Voters were to choose yes or no to five questions including whether to repeal the previous gas exportation plan, make more money with a new exportation plan, use the gas as a strategic way to gain access to the sea from Chile,

and whether to use most of the profits from the exportation plan for the development of schools, hospitals roads and jobs.

Many Bolivians did not understand the convoluted questions, which were not only difficult to say no to, but also left open opportunities for neo-liberal reform and corporate use of the gas. Citizens were reportedly forced into voting by harsh new laws which called for the imprisonment of any people who refused to vote. Unfortunately for Bolivian activists, this referendum did not include the nationalization of the gas as an option. This detail and others have led to numerous divisions among activist leaders in Bolivia.

Jamie Solares from the Bolivian Worker's Union (COB) and Felipe Quispe, the director of the Bolivian Farm Workers Federation, led blockades and protests against the referendum but were not able to generate enough grassroots support to stop or impede the voting. Congressman Evo Morales, leader of the Movement Towards Socialism Party and coca grower leader has supported the referendum. Such divisions between leftist leaders may have stopped another movement for the nationalization of the gas from taking place. President Mesa has argued against nationalization out of fear that it would scare off foreign investors from the country and create less international

backing, particularly from the IMF, which supported the July 18 referendum.

After the polls closed on July 18th, it was announced that seventy five percent of the voters agreed with all five questions. No massive protests demanding nationalization have occurred, yet. The new exportation plan will now have to be approved by congress, which could take weeks or months.

If this watered down version of the Gas War activists' initial demands does move forward, it may mean that one of Bolivia's largest grassroots uprisings has come to staggering halt. After the riotous events of last year's mobilizations, it is difficult to tell what to expect.

For more information on the Bolivian Gas War check out [www.theupsidedownworld.org](http://www.theupsidedownworld.org)



photos from Indymedia-Bolivia

## NEW FROM KERSPLEBEDEB AND NIHIL PRESS

An international directory with over 2000 listings from the worldwide anarchist movement - squats, zines, infoshops, community spaces, bookstores, newspapers and more!

perfectly bound  
most current listings available  
over 100 letter size pages  
organized geographically  
and indexed alphabetically  
published in May 2004

### THE ANARCHIST YELLOW PAGES



Anarchist Yellow Pages  
2004 edition  
No Copyright  
ISBN 1-894946-09-X

\$10 + \$5 postage = \$15 all included

send a U.S. check or International Postal Money Order to:  
Kersplebedeb, CP 63560, CCCP Van Horne, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, H3W 3H8

[www.kersplebedeb.com](http://www.kersplebedeb.com)

## Cyclists Arm Yourselves!



V.S.



The mechanized world has an achilles' heel!

## Drivers Beware!

# Who's Afraid of the Draft??

by mcMike

he last few months have seen a surge in discussion, and debate, over the possible implementation of a military draft in the U.S. Two bills have been introduced into the House and the Senate, which would enable the government to begin a compulsory military draft as early as June of next year in the event that the bills are passed.

**“For those who say the poor fight better, I say give the rich a chance.”**

*Democratic Congressional Representative Charles Rangel on the draft.*

**(As long as the long as the poor still fight...)**

The twin bills, S89 and HR163 are entitled the Universal National Service Act of 2003 and were introduced as an

effort to “Provide for the common defense by requiring that all young persons (18-26) in the U.S., including women, perform a period of military service or a period of civilian service...” HR163 was introduced by New York democrat Rep. Rangel and has 14 co-sponsors, most of which are members of the Congressional Black Caucus.

Some right wing critics of the two bills (HR163 and S89) have been arguing that the bills are an attempt to turn people off the war in Iraq, and are not a “sincere attempt to make sure all Americans bear the brunt of the war.” But as Rangel said himself, “Those who love this country have a patriotic obligation to defend this country. For those who say the poor fight better, I say give the rich a chance.”

According to its sponsors, the Act is an attempt to more broadly place the burden of the fighting and dying in U.S. wars on American society. The move attempts to ensure that wars are no longer just fought by the poor and working class of the country, but by the middle and upper classes as well. But, for some reason, it doesn't actually go so far as to challenge the reasons and rationales behind the wars were fighting now, much less war in general. There are incredible disparities in the composition of the military services when looked at by economic class and racial background. For many people the military is a way to learn technical skills, get intensive job training, and go to college. There is an economic trap which forces people to consider the military as a means of employment which snarls people with no desire to kill, or be killed, in the wars that require their bloodshed. This is why many folks join the National Guard and the Reserves, both of which have now seen unprecedented levels of action and duty fighting U.S. wars.

These bills make clear a call for the return to a draft to meet the high demands placed on a military stretched thin with too many wars, but a draft that will at least have the poor and working class fighting and dying next to their rich and privileged counterparts. But the poor must still fight and die of course - the bills' authors don't seem to have a problem with that.

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, and everyone over at the Selective Service offices, are saying that the idea of a draft is absurd and that there is absolutely no need for anyone to worry. But there are other moves on the part of the government which make such reassuring statements seem odd. The Selective Service System recently received an extra 28 million dollars in funds for this year's budget to fill 10,350 draft board positions

and 11,070 appeals board slots nationwide. In September of 2003 they were running ads for volunteers to fill the same slots. As soon as the story began to appear in the mainstream media the ads were pulled without comment. Selective Service spokesperson Richard Flahavan has also gone on the record as saying that while he doesn't believe that there will be a large scale draft anytime soon if there was to be one it would probably be a special skills draft targeting health care professionals, linguists, and computer specialists. Not terribly reassuring.

In December of 2003 The U.S. and Canada signed a declaration called the “Smart Border Declaration” which lays out a 30-point plan implementing, among other things, a “pre clearance agreement” of people entering or leaving each country. Stop checks and border patrolling have risen since 9/11, but would surely take an unprecedented direction if the military was afraid of losing some bodies across the Canadian border. Also buried in the 670 pages of the No Child Left Behind Act there's a provision requiring public

high schools to give military recruiters access to facilities and contact information for every high school student in the country or face possible cut off of federal aid.

The war in Iraq is the largest operation in the US “war on terrorism” and has caused massive strains on U.S. armed forces. General John Abizaid, who has been in charge of American forces in Iraq, has insisted that the U.S. needs more soldiers to deal with the situation in Iraq. Stretched thin with running wars in Afghanistan and involvements in Korea and the Balkans the Defense Department has been making a habit of detaining and forcing U.S. troops to stay and fight long after their enlistment times have passed.

The U.S. military has prided itself on having a so-called “all-volunteer military” since ending the draft three decades ago after Vietnam. The use of the “stop loss” policy not only proved to many people that the U.S. was stretching it's military further than it could manage, but also offers a light on just how volunteer the military really is. The very idea of a “volunteer” military also falls apart in light of the massive disparities see in economic, class and racial figures - not only who makes up the military, but also who does the

bulk of the fighting and dying.

In addition to the “stop loss” move, the government has also just announced its plans to draft, yes DRAFT, 5,600 retired or discharged soldiers to be deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq. What do you call it when the government involuntarily mobilizes forces in order to fight a war? Volunteerism, or conscription?

Really, I think that in all likelihood there wont be a time too soon when we have to worry about the realities of a draft. I do, however, believe that the government is seriously considering it, and there is enough movement around the edges of actual draft legislation to make us want to pay close attention to what's developing. I do not believe any of the polite reassurance from military and government figures as to what's happening, but right now, both socially and politically, a draft is too unpopular and costly to either the Republican Bush administration or the would-be democratic contender for the upcoming election. Neither Bush nor Kerry, if he wins, will hesitate to expand the “war on terrorism” if given a safe footing to do so from. Of course, it'll be up to everyone opposed to war, militarism, and the expanding American Empire to make, or break the ground they'll try and stand on as they order us all off to fight their future wars.

## WHY ?



**BECAUSE THERE'S MONEY TO BE MADE**

# Boys Gone Wild

...continued from page 8

are also brutal former South African apartheid enforcers under contract with Erinys Iraq, a subsidiary of Erinys International. Blackwater has hired former Chilean commandos, many of who were part of dictator Augusto Pinochet's death squad. But since large-scale security corporations can hide behind contracts and subcontracts, a complete and wholly accurate census of the mercenary population is unavailable.

## Boys Gone Wild

The actual role and daily activities of the mercenary forces in Iraq is even more ambiguous than their estimated population. What little information the public does have of mercenary activity in Iraq comes in the form of snippets usually part of a larger article in the already biased mainstream media.

What piqued my interest in the activity of the hired guns in Iraq was an article by John G. Roos on ArmyTimes.com from November 23, 2003 titled, "1-shot killer: This 5.56mm round has all the stopping power you need - but you can't use it. Here's why:" The article features an account of a former SEAL named Ben Thomas who is under contract with an unnamed private security firm in Iraq. While he and three colleagues were on patrol driving north out of Baghdad they came under fire and a brief gun battle ensued. In the firefight Thomas used a 5.56mm bullet in his M4 carbine that he received from an ammunition manufacturer named RBCD out of San Antonio, Texas. The results turned out to be horrific. At what Thomas estimated to be 100 to 120 yards, he shot an Iraqi assailant in the left buttock, and while a shot of this nature is typically not fatal, the round completely decimated the entire left side of his body, killing him instantly. What is so controversial about this scenario is that Thomas was using a new "blended-metal" bullet that has yet to be reviewed and approved by the United States government. Quoting Roos for the Army Times, "The bullet is so controversial that if Thomas, a former SEAL, had been on active duty, he would have been court-martialed for using it." But since Thomas is under contract with a private security firm, standards like rules of engagement and Geneva Conventions apparently do not apply to him. What's more, the article goes on to say that when Thomas and his team returned to base, news of the illegal bullet's stopping power had spread and the other mercenaries in his camp were fighting over the remaining free samples.

Mercenaries operate inside Iraq with little or no oversight. According to Dahr Jamail who is currently reporting for The New Standard

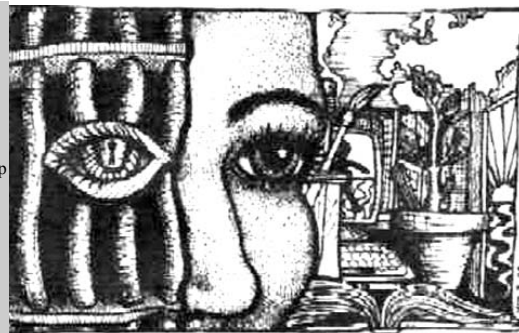
News inside Iraq, "Without a doubt mercenaries are operating outside the rules of engagement. (The) Abu Ghraib atrocities were committed by private security personnel. In addition, in the field, there is no oversight for them, so they can fire at will, so to speak. I have seen them traveling around very often in their armored SUV's...and they appear to have a free hand to do whatever they need to do to get the 'job' done. I've driven by them conducting home raids." Jamail goes on to say in my correspondence with him, "While I haven't seen them firing indiscriminately at Iraqis, I've seen photos of this, and taken several witness statements from various Iraqis...this is also another reason why (their) SUV's have become prime targets of the resistance." While coverage of the Abu Gharib prison scandal is teetering on the brink of overkill, it is worth it to point out that last month contractors from the Titan Corporation, (based out of San Diego, California), and CACI International Inc., (based out of Virginia), were implicated in the scandal. Julian Borger reports in his article from April 30, 2004 for the British newspaper The Guardian that, "According to lawyers for some of the soldiers, they claimed to be acting in part under the instruction of mercenary interrogators hired by the Pentagon...lawyers for the soldiers argue they are being made scapegoats for a rogue military prison system in which mercenaries give orders without legal accountability." As if this isn't shocking enough, Mr. Borger goes on to say, "One civilian contractor was accused of raping a young male prisoner but has not been charged because military law has no jurisdiction over him."

## No End In Sight

As recruitment by security corporations continues around the globe, from Armor Group's recruitment of Gurkhan soldiers in Nepal to recruitment by an undisclosed corporation in Fiji, it seems as if the United States will be relying on mercenary forces for quite some time. With a growing insurgency weakening an already downtrodden and thinly spread coalition, the use of private sector force must be all too appealing to the Bush administration. After all, with the use of security contractors there are no body counts or gross misbehaviors to report, and, in the grand tradition of this administrations' demeanor, no consequences to assume responsibility for.

# The Human Rights Coalition

The Human Rights Coalition is an organization of prisoners' families, ex and current prisoners, and community members who are dedicated to changing the prison system. The group is led by prisoners' families and ex-prisoners because we feel that the people who experience the dehumanizing and brutal force of prisons everyday should be the ones who decide how to change it.



Right now we are spreading the word, letting folks know the real deal about prisons, and building up a base so we can be a real force to be reckoned with.

We sponsored a reading in conjunction with Temple University's Pan African Studies Community Education Program (PASCEP) of prisoner Shaka N'Zinga's book, "A Disjointed Search for the Will to Live." The event went very well. We had a panel of ex-prisoners and prisoners' families who read excerpts from the book, and then talked about their own personal experiences with the prison system. Everyone who attended was very moved.

April 17 HRC and Books Through Bars co-sponsored "Jazz Exodus," a poetry and music show that took place at the Church of the Advocate. Jazz Exodus started off with a reading by the Cultural Nationalist Brotherhood, a group of formerly incarcerated poets who helped put out the prison poetry anthology "Time is Of the Essence" (and features HRC's own Reuben Jones). Then came the musical stylings of Owen "Fiidla" Brown and his band, a funky collection of jazz, hip hop, R&B, and a whole lot of other musical influences blended together. While Fiidla worked his electric violin, performance painter Kevin Johnson created an amazing painting right on the spot, splashing colors and blurring brushes to create a masterpiece.

We have events every first Tuesday at the Rotunda (4012 Walnut St.), at 7 p.m. This will be a way to bring different issues to light, to tie in cultural and artistic expression, and to allow folks to come and find out more about HRC. Our first event July 6 was a presentation of the video "Living with Life", produced by TOVA, that has eight lifers explaining what it's like to live with life in prison. It was followed by a panel featuring family members of lifers, former lifers and organizations that work around that issue. Aug. 3 we will be having a poetry slam, co-sponsored with the Philadelphia County Coalition for Prison Health Care.

HRC has also sponsored a number of visits to prisons, especially SCI-Greene, which is far away and hard to reach from Philadelphia. We have taken dozens of people up to see their family members, and we hope to make this a more permanent part of the organization, with regular trips out to Greene and other prisons. If you are interested in helping make that happen, or would like to go on the trips, let us know.

We still have our general meetings every second Monday at 7 p.m. at the Friends Center, (1501 Cherry St.), which is open to any and all who are interested. Feel free to join us, or call for more information.

215-604-1768 humanrightscoalition@hotmail.com. PO Box 9235 Phila PA 19139

### Tuesday, August 3rd

The Human Rights Coalition and Philadelphia County Coalition For Prison Health Care present an Open Mic & Poetry Slam featuring the Twin Poets !!! To sign up in advance for the slam, call 267.978.7405. Winner receives \$50 gift certificates from Armand's Music 7pm at the Rotunda, 40th and Walnut - free but asking for donations

### Wednesdays, August 4, 11, 18, 25

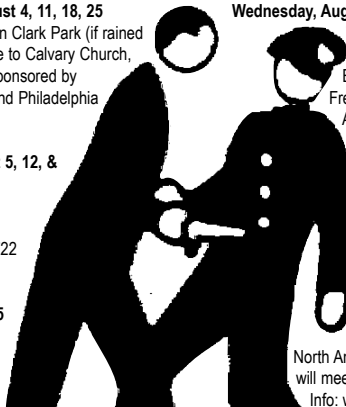
7pm - Free Movies in Clark Park (if rained out screenings move to Calvary Church, 48th & Baltimore. Sponsored by ANSWER, Uhuru, and Philadelphia Anti-War Forum

### Thursdays, August 5, 12, & 19

RNC Direct Action Planning Meetings 7:30 @ A-Space, 4722 Baltimore Ave.

### Thursday, August 5

Free the Shac 7 Benefit 7pm Rotunda, 4014 Walnut Street



### Saturday, August 7

RNC Protest Organizing Event 8pm @ the Code, 48th & Woodland Ave. (n.e. corner of woodland ave. across from the park) \$5 fundraiser for RNC Not Welcome Speakers, bands, DJ's, lots of info about RNC protests, organizing Info - robottdesign@hotmail.com

### Wednesday, August 11

7:30 pm @ A-Space "An Injury to One is an Injury to All: Mikhail Bakunin's Social Concept of Freedom," talk by Harold Beyer-Amesen, editor for Anarcho-Syndicalist Review.

### Thursday, August 12

7pm @ Friends Center, 15th & Cherry St. Memorial and Fundraiser for Farouk Abdel-Muti - recently deceased Palestinian Activist.

### August 12-15

North American Anarchist Convergence will meet in the foothills of Appalachia. Info: www.naac2004.org or

info@naac2004.org

### Friday, August 13

7:30pm Dinner and a Movie - A-Space - "Olive on a Seder Plate" video screening of the play and a meal.

### Saturday, August 14

THE SOLE IN THE HOLE BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT to acknowledge and support Russell "Maroon" Shoatz and all of our political prisoners with hip hop entertainment at halftime. At the Amos Recreation Center 1817 N.16th St. 10am-3pm

### Wednesday August 17 - Sunday, August 22

9! Lost Film Festival: Heaps O' Fun Radical Media Convergence - Docs and Narratives and Shorts and Riot Porn and Music and Mischief and Bike Jousting. @Code Space and Rotunda - more info www.lost-filmfest.org

### Thursday, August 19

5:30-7:30pm, A-Space. Philadelphia Alliance for Labor (as in Labor/Childbirth) Support Meeting.

7pm @ Rotunda, 4014 Walnut St. "Into the Quagmire." Iraq discussion - Sponsored by

Philadelphia Anti-War Forum

### Sunday, August 22

1-4pm @ A-Space, Southwest Stray Services Vegan Bake Sale.

5:30-7:30pm @ A-Space, Contexts Art Show Closing - Prisoner Art.

### August 25-27

Food Not Bombs World Gathering in New York City Food Not Bombs chapters from around the world will come together in NYC prior to the Republican National Convention for discussion, food sharing, workshops and direct action. For more info contact nyc\_gathering@foodnotbombs.net

### September 24-26

Renewing the Anarchist Tradition: A Scholarly Conference. It's the big event for anarcademics in Plainfield, Vermont. For info contact Cindy Milstein cbmilstein@yahoo.com or check out the RAT Web site at www.homemadejam.org/renew



## ONGOING EVENTS AND MEETINGS

### Food Not Bombs

In a country hungry for war, that bombs countries hungry for food...join Food Not Bombs Every Sunday at 3:00 PM; 20th St. and The Ben. Franklin Parkway For more information: foodnotbombshilly@yahoo.com

### Vigil to Support Israeli Voices of Peace

Every Friday from 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm Israeli Consulate; 15th & Locust Streets Sponsored by Jewish Mobilization for a Just Peace. Email: jmjpp\_philly@yahoo.com for more info.

### Honk for Mumia - small demonstrations to distribute information and show support

2nd and 4th Saturday of every month 2pm at 52nd and Market

### SE Chapter PA Abolitionists Monthly Vigil

First Thursday of every month from 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm Outside Governor Rendell's Office 200S. Broad St. Calling for an end to executions in PA. info: waxie55@hotmail.com for more info.

### Women's Anti-Violence Education (WAVE)

Monday drop-in classes every Monday night from 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm Friends Center; 1501 Cherry Street Phone: 215-241-5720 for more information WAVE offers a drop-in, self-defense, class every Monday night. There is a sliding scale fee of \$5-\$20 (pay what you can). Women of any age, size, or physical ability will benefit. Can't make it Monday? call about our full length self-defense courses offered regularly.

### Saturday Afternoon Self-Defense for Women

class taught by women 1-4pm at the Friends Center, 1501 Cherry St., \$60 full fee but pay what you can, no one turned

### Philadelphia Social Forum

First Sunday of each month at 3PM Robin.s Book Store, 108 S. 13th Street

### Philadelphia Gender Changers Academy

Female to Female Trans Technology Womens' computer classes on Wednesdays 6:30pm-9pm (\$10-\$25 cost for materials)

info@phillygca.org

### Philadelphians United to Support Public Schools

Every Monday from 5:15 pm - 7:45 pm United Way . 1st floor; 21st & Ben Franklin Pkwy. E-mail: jordanpcy@hotmail.com for more info

### Philadelphia Regional Anti War Network

Meetings Thursday nights at 7pm 2200 N. Broad, 2nd Floor Susquehanna and Broad phillyprawn.org

### ACT UP

Weekly Meeting Every Monday from 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm St. Lukes Church; 330 S. 13th St. (between Pine & Spruce) Email: actupphilly@critpath.org for more info.

### Neighbors Against McPenetration

Weekly Meeting every Tuesday from 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm Toviah Thrift Shop; Chestnut betw. 42nd & 43rd Phone: 215-382-7251 for more info.

### Weekly Meeting of Phila. County Coalition on Prison Health Care

Every Tuesday from 9:30-10:30 a.m. Philadelphia FIGHT office, 1233 Locust St., 2nd floor, For info, contact Laura McTigh: 215-380-5556

### Books Through Bars

Packing Café Every Tuesday from 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm The A Space; 4722 Baltimore Ave. E-mail: info@booksthroughbars.org for more info

### International Concerned Family & Friends of Mumia

Every Thursday from 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm 4601 Market St., 5th floor Phone: 215-476- 5416 for more info.

### Philadelphia Anti-War Forum

Meeting Third Sunday of every month from 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm A-Space; 4722 Baltimore Ave. E-mail: clanarchy@prodigy.net

### SUSTAIN

Meets every Wednesday at the Green Grocer on 15th and Cherry Streets, 7PM. email: sustain-philly@yahoo.com

4134 Lancaster Ave - A conspiracy from the fanatics at the defenestrator, the Philly Independent Media Centre, Radio Volta, the derailleur collective, the Unconvention and others comes this new project: a radical community centre in the pancreas of West Philly. We bought a building, now we need your involvement! info: 215.387.6155 or space@phillyimc.org \* defenestrator.org/space

A-Space - a collectively run anarchist gallery and meeting/community space. Events are free and generally start at 7:30pm unless otherwise noted. Accessible by the 34 trolley. Plenty of parking for cars and bikes. They pass the hat to cover rent. 4722 Baltimore Avenue Philadelphia, PA 19143 215.727.0882 a-space@defenestrator.org

WOODEN SHOE BOOKS and RECORDS - Anarchist bookstore owned and run by an unpaid collective of geniuses with nothing better to do than sit around talking philosophy and riots. Carries a wide range of anarchist and radical books, periodicals, pamphlets, T-shirts, patches, CD's records etc.

508 S. Fifth Street Philadelphia, PA 215.413.0999 woodenshoe@rocketmail.com

Firehouse Bikes- A worker owned collective bike shop. 50th and Baltimore

The Divine Bicycle Church - Bike repair co-op at Neighborhood Bike Works. Tools, advice and recycled parts available. Every Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday from 6:30-9pm 40th and Locust Walk, behind St. Mary's Church

Crossroads Women's Center- open Tuesdays and Thursdays 10am-2pm or by appointment 33 Maplewood Mall, Germantown 215-848-1120

### The Spiral Q Puppet Theater

3114 Spring Garden Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104 spiralq@spiralq.org 215-222-6979 Fax: 215-222-7002

the defenestrator  
PO Box 30922  
Philadelphia, PA 19104

