

defenestrator.org

the defenestrator

issue 33 March 2006

a newspaper for refusal and optimism



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BROAD SPECTRUM DISORDER * IRAQ WOUNDED COME HOME * EARTH LIBERATION FRONT ARRESTS * ROB X ON FAMILY VALUES * ANTI-IMMIGRANT BILL HR 4437 * THE POLITICS OF TORTURE * MAJOR COURT VICTORY FOR MUMIA * NTI AND EMINENT DOMAIN IN PHILADELPHIA * THE NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT * MILITANTS ATTACK SHELL IN NIGERIA * CHINA ERUPTS * ABOLISHING LIFE WITHOUT PAROLE * RACISM IN KATRINA RELIEF * MUMIA ON HAMAS



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 who 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.

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 events and defenestrator events. If you want on, send a blank email from your address to defenestrator-subscribe@lists.riseup.net or sign up on our website. The list is low traffic (usually about 1 message a week or less) and easy to get off if you so choose.

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the Lancaster Avenue Autonomous space

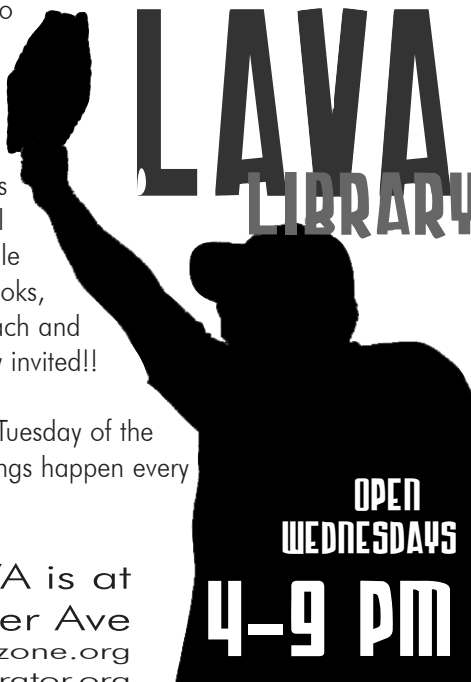
LAVA is a community space for radical media and politics in West Philly. It's where the defenestrator has our office as well a host of other projects including ACT UP, the Independent Media Center, a biodiesel collective, Food Not Bombs, Radio Volta and more. The bulk of renovations is behind us, and we're looking for groups and individuals who want to get involved. LAVA was conceived as a resource for those working towards a participative world free of oppression as well as a place for the public to plug in to our work and for us to plug into neighborhood struggles. So if you have a project you think would work well at LAVA, by all means get in touch!

The library on the first floor of the building is just starting to have open hours. And we still need volunteers and participants to staff while we're open, as well as sort and organize books, maintain the space, build shelves, do outreach and help plan events. Consider yourself cordially invited!!

Library meetings happen every 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month at 7:15pm. Our LAVA general meetings happen every 2nd Wednesday of the month.

LAVA is at
4134 Lancaster Ave
lavazone.org
lavalibrary@defenestrator.org

LAVA
LIBRARY



Women's Rights Are Under Attack!

What are you gonna do? Act Up, Fight Back!

This chant could be heard echoing throughout North Philly Sunday night, as the people of Philadelphia held a demonstration against Justice Sunday III and the nomination of anti-choice Supreme Court nominee Samuel Alito.

Joined by members of Philadelphia ACT-UP, Philadelphia Anti-Racist Action, the Metropolitan Community Church, and the World Can't Wait, 200 to 300 people rallied outside the Greater Exodus Baptist Church to confront the Family Research Council's rally of religious extremists - including Rick Santorum and Jerry Falwell - who are fighting for a judiciary that is as reactionary and conservative as they are. The Greater Exodus Baptist Church and its programs have received approximately one million dollars from the Bush administration and spoke openly in support of him in the last election and more recently when Bush has faced criticism.

Storming up Broad Street with torches, banners and puppets in hand, about 50 people were joined by another several hundred people already protesting outside the church, completely blocking north-bound traffic and giving the police no choice but to allow the rally to take place in the street. A loud and spirited rally took place during the entire two hours the right-wing extremists were meeting in the church. Upon exiting, attendees were the target of jeers and boos from the protesters, although Falwell, Dobson and Santorum all chose to use a different exit and cowardly avoided the demonstrators.

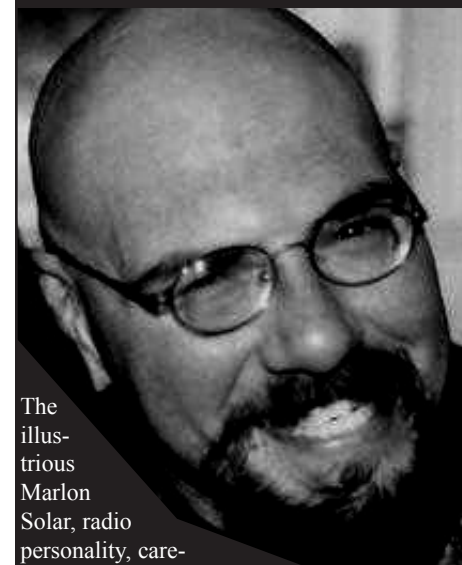
Various speakers informed the crowd about the effect of abstinence only educa-

tion on youth in Philadelphia as people chanted "Youth need the truth, Condoms save lives!" and the Reverend Jordan from the Metropolitan Community Church spoke about the inaccurate use of the scripture to justify hateful laws the right claims are faith-based and legitimate. One speaker from the World Can't Wait coalition was dressed in a bloody shirt to symbolize the return to dangerous back-alley abortions that will take place if Roe v. Wade is overturned, and that still currently occur in many of the states that have limited reproductive rights.

The demonstrators were also treated to an appearance by Michael Marcarvage, director of Philadelphia-based Christian fascist organization Repent America. After being confronted by members of Anti-Racist Action, Michael stayed near the police and away from the demonstration, fearing, as he told the police, what would happen if he tried to return and preach. Instead, Michael wasted his time "debating" activists who were doing nothing more than causing a distraction to keep Michael even further from the demonstration.

Earlier in the day, Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Pennsylvania organized a pro-choice visibility demonstration at Independence Mall. A diverse group of almost two hundred people from a variety of organizations and political opinions attended this rally. An entire city block - from 4th to 5th Street along

*In Memory of
Martin Solar*



The illustrious Marlon Solar, radio personality, caretaker of Lancaster Avenue Autonomous Space (LAVA), supporter and volunteer at Neighborhood Bike Works and the Divine Bicycle Church, motorcycle tough, embroiderist, handyman extraordinaire and savage chainsaw wielding bunny passed away this summer as a result of a heart attack stemming from longstanding heart problems. The Defenestrator collective will miss his laughter in the halls of the LAVA building and his presence in the many spaces we have shared through the years.

Market Street - was filled with people holding signs and banners and chanting. There was a tremendous show of support for our cause, with many drivers honking enthusiastically and giving us the thumbs up sign and pedestrians stopping to say how much they appreciate seeing people standing up for this issue.

This was a great day for Philadelphians - we showed the right-wing that we are united and that we will NEVER BACK DOWN and NEVER let them take away our rights!



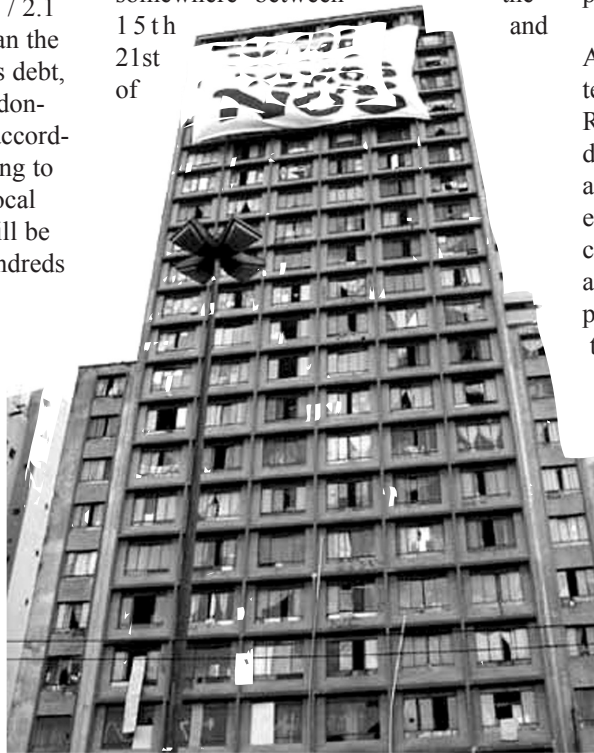
South America's largest squatted highrise building is under threat

The "Prestes Maia", by far the largest squatted highrise building on the South American continent, is under threat of eviction. With its 468 families, accounting for more than 1600 previously homeless people, including children, elderly and disabled, the building will shortly be returned to its 'lawful' owner, Mr. Hamuche & Co., who in the last 15 years of 'ownership' accumulated a debt in municipal taxes of some 5 million reais (approx. 2.2 million dollars / 2.1 million euros), which is more than the building is worth. This enormous debt, together with long years of abandonment, should well justify (even according to law) a claim for the building to become public property by the local municipality, but nevertheless will be returned to its owner, putting hundreds of people back onto the streets.

The 468 families, united in the Downtown Roofless Movement (Movimento Sem Teto do Centro or MSTC) of São Paulo, have lived in the 22-storey highrise since 2002. The building had simply been closed down for years and left in deplorable condition, serving as shelter for rats and cockroaches, as is the case of many buildings in downtown São Paulo. The new residents cleaned out tons of rubbish and litter (200 trucks to

be exact!), organized it, expelled drugs and other criminal bosses always there to take advantage, turning it into an exciting and lively human dwelling.

Last January 27th, the family's representatives met with the police authorities in charge of the forthcoming eviction. During the meeting, it was made clear that the action would take place somewhere between the 15th and 21st of



February -- an exact date was not given for 'strategic' reasons - and that the troops will be 'prepared for the worst'. On February 7th, the residents of Prestes Maia's building blocked the street in front of the occupation. They stayed there for almost 2 hours. This act was an attempt to bring more attention to the situation of the residents and to the possible eviction, scheduled to take place the following week.

An update from Brasil's indymedia tells us some tentative good news: Resistance by the occupants and solidarity actions have won the squatters an extra 2 months, giving them a bit of extra time to organize in an unfriendly climate. The city's right wing mayor is already pushing to aggressively drive poor residents out of Sao Paolo's downtown intending to transform the area into a yuppie metropolitan cesspool.

Sao Paolo's "downtown Revitalization Project" (sound somehow familiar?) has already met some notable resistance. Aside from street blockades mentioned above, Orlando de Almeida, the city's housing secretary was pied and the residents have kept tightly organized to keep up resistance.

Compiled from indymedia.org

UPDATE! UPDATE!

-penelope

SUPREME COURT SIDES WITH THE PENTAGON

So last issue, you might remember it was a very long time ago, some universities and law schools were headed to the Supreme Court to challenge the presence of military recruiters on college campuses. Well the Supreme Court came and went, and surprise, surprise, it sided with the Pentagon. In a unanimous decision the week of March 6th 2006, the Supreme Court upheld that colleges and universities are NOT eligible for federal dollars if they do not keep their campuses and students open to recruitment. In the decision they said military recruiters deserve the same access as other potential employers. That's kind of ironic, as a student at Temple I cant remember the last time public schools or local hospitals or local museums or non-profits set up for a week in the center of campus with rock climbing walls and video games to try a lure me their way for future employment, but, wait a second, yep, that is exactly what the military recruiters do every semester. The decision comes as a two fold blow. First: the colleges and universities were challenging the presence of recruiters because of the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policies. They charged, rightfully so, that the military policy contradicts their

policies of tolerance and anti-discrimination around sexuality. These universities and colleges charged that the military policy violated their free speech rights. The Supreme Court decision is an ominous start to the new G.W. Bush appointed line-up and an anti-queer agenda. Second: the decision also illustrates the growing involvement of military in the realm of education, especially targeting public institutions that are far more dependent on federal dollars, and tend to be more socio-economically and racially diverse. It illustrates a theme over the last year of the right trying to target and subdue educational institutions that are critical of governmental policy. However, despite the brief respite from the recruiters over the top presence on campuses such as Temple University in North Philly, it does not mean that once the recruiters are back they should be made to feel welcome.

WELCOME TO MY BODY

Hey, are you sick of a bunch of mainly male politicians writing all over your body? Me too. Mississippi and South Dakota recently passed state laws banning all abortions except those in the cases that the pregnancy gravely endangers the life of the mother. It is even illegal to get an abortion as the result of sexual assault. Anti-choice groups' goals here are to push this issue to the Supreme Court with newly appointed Alito and Roberts sitting on the bench. The hope is that the result

will be the over-turning of Rode v. Wade. It has been scary out here lately, attacks on birth control, on condom usage, abortion, morning after pills. This is a hard issue for me to write about because it strikes very close to home, in fact it resonates in the very walls of my uterus. See no matter how you personally feel about abortion, birth control, condoms, and safe sex, it is no one's right, especially a government dominated by men that will never, ever, ever, have to bare the burden and reality of pregnancy in the same way, to dictate over my body just because I have a uterus instead of a penis. I sit here thinking about the words of a member of the South Dakota legislature, who said that he could possibly see extending the abortion law to include rape, if it were a particularly violent one and the woman was a Christian. Yep these are the guys that are making decisions about my body. The issue here is not whether or not a fetus should have the same rights as a person, the issue here is inherently gendered and rests on the question does the government, local or federal, have any right to pass legislation that restricts the rights of one sex? Does the government have a right to dictate what half its population can do in controlling their bodies and their sexuality? I'd say no...in fact I'd like to say a big fat fuck you to all those guys out there who think they have any right to legislate over sex organs they don't have. So FUCK YOU.

meanwhile, at
the defenestrator
**CONFUSION
CAR CRASH
BROKEN
BONES
DEPRESSION
OVERWORK
NIGHTMARES
HANGOVER ...**

Yes we've had it all, but we ain't dead yet. We've once more staggered to our feet to present you with another issue. Please understand the nature of this project - well loved but understaffed and under funded - and continue to read, contribute, and support.

As always, we are looking for submissions, donations, and help. We are always desperately seeking not just funding, but people with time! If you have any interest in getting involved in making this paper come together, we are always in need of contributions, editing help, layout help, and will be happy to show you the ropes of how the process of making the defenestrator works (So if you don't have great computer skills, don't let that stop you!).

If you're in Philly keep your eyes and ears open for defenestrator events or stop by Lava or Firehouse Bikes (listed on back). Otherwise, drop an e-mail to rosa@defenestrator.org. Donations can be sent to us (again, address on back). To make a tax-deductible contribution, get in touch.



The Belly of The Beast

Family Values

Writing and Art by
Prisoners and Articles
Relating to Prisoners'
Issues and Struggles

by Robert X. Holbrook

Lately within Department of Corrections (DOC) around the country all the rage has been around so called Family Values programs the institutions are implementing. The stated purpose of these programs is to introduce the prisoner to the values of society and to teach him the values that surround the family. The assumption being that prisoners have no sense of family and the D.O.C. can instill in us the values of family and our responsibility to society. I find this a incredibly sad approach. How in the world can the D.O.C. teach family values? How can an institution committed to the destruction of the family teach family values to prisoners. How can an institution that sends men 300 miles away from their homes and family as a matter of policy have the audacity to attempt to teach its prisoners family values? By comparison, this would be like a serial killer teaching a course on the sanctity of life and humanity. Only a psychopathic personality, in the case of the D.O.C. a psychopathic bureaucracy, would take such a course of action and see no hypocrisy in it.

There is something else ironic about Department of Correction's attempting to teach family values to prisoners. The D.O.C. belongs to a culture which has turned prisons into a profitable business, to such a extent that rural communities engage in bidding wars for the opportunity to have a prison in their backyards. This behavior is reminiscent of the auction blocks of slavery and the D.O.C.'s policy of deliberately transferring prisoners hundreds of miles from their 'homes and families is reminiscent of slaves being forcibly separated from their families and sent to plantations across the south. How can this institution teach prisoners anything about family values?

There is nothing the D.O.C. can teach me or other prisoners about family values or being a responsible, citizen. I can say that a majority of prisoners are not lacking in family values rather we are in prison because we deviated from the values

we learned at home and adopted the values of a society that revolves around greed and the greater pursuit of materialism. We pursued the quickest avenues available to us to obtain the maximum amount, of wealth. Is that not American?

The only thing that separated our reckless and immoral pursuit of wealth from young white kids is they had the option on hitting Wall Street to make it big while young minorities hit the corners of 18th Street, 15th Street etc. to make it rich in the drug trade. The majority of prisoners acknowledge our actions were wrong and many can accept responsibility for them but cannot accept the D.O.C. ramming the responsibility we owe society down our throats as if our imprisonment is actually serving society. And what society is the D.O.C. referring to? My crimes were perpetrated in North Philadelphia, predominantly Black and Latino territory. Why then am I up here paying my dues to predominately white rural communities that not only share no cultural connection with me but are profiting from the imprisonment of men from Philadelphia? My imprisonment has not made the streets of Philadelphia any safer.

As long as the D.O.C. maintains the facade that its policies and programs are serving the good of society and instills values in prisoners its attempts will land on deaf ears and will continue to fail. The D.O.C.'s family values and citizenship programs are nothing but con games and if there is anything certain in this world it is that a con can recognize a con.

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

See Rob X' regular column which comes out in fact more often than the defenestrator itself can be found online at defenestrator.org

A note to prisoners...

We are a relatively small collective of people so it is hard for us to respond to all the letters, requests, and questions we receive from our Prisoner subscribers. We apologize for this and wish we could help and correspond more. To try and help we have put together a short resource zine for Prisoners that we can send out.

Please continue to send art, articles, and other contributions for the paper. Though it might not appear in the next issue, we keep everything in hopes of getting it in the paper.

in solidarity,
The defenestrator
collective

INHUMANE AND DEGRADING

by Russell Shoatz

"In 1978, the European Court of Human Rights confronted a similar technique employed by Britain in the early 1970's against Irish detainees...the so-called five techniques, scientifically developed interrogation practices...wall standing, hooding, sleep deprivation and withholding of food and drink"...it labeled it, "inhumane and degrading."

POP TORTURE, R. KIM Over and over, the leaders of the U.S, swear they do not tolerate any torture or inhumane and degrading treatment in "any" U.S controlled prisons.

Yet, right in the state of Pennsylvania, prisoners at the State Correctional Institution at Greene (SCI-Greene) are daily, being subjected to just that.

You may recall that SCI-Greene is where Abu Ghraib torturer, Charles Grainer worked in civilian life and where Mumia Abu Jamal is being held.

Well, SCI-Greene, which should be called State Concentration and Internment Ground, since no correction (in a positive way) takes place there, has a prison within a prison, called the Restricted Housing Unit (R.H.U-Control Unit)...A veritable hell on earth! It is where most of the five techniques are practiced, along with other "no touch" torture and some physical brutality for good measure.

There's close to 500 men there and most of them are subjected to sleep deprivation, because their cell lights stay on 24 hours a day. Also, there's the withholding of food, showers and cell water at the whim of the guards. The withholding of food and water is very hard on the prisoners because all cells are

fully enclosed, preventing any passing to the victims.

Yet, other "no touch" torture techniques are even harder to deal with.

They revolve around keeping prisoners on 23 hour lockdown, hundreds of miles from their families, for years and decades! The author has been in prison for close to 34 years and has been held on lockdown for 25 of those years, 11 at SCI-Greene.

Within the bathroom size cells, you're allowed 3 sets of underclothes and socks, shower shoes, jumpsuit, canvas slides and a single "record box", to hold legal and other papers and 10 soft cover books.

Now if you're "good", they'll allow you to buy a TV and radio, as well as a limited amount of food items from the commissary.

Outside of that, you're "suppose" to get one hour of outdoor exercise, in a dog cage, 5 days per week, three 10 minute showers and a one hour "no contact" visit, every seven days...if your family can afford to travel for hundreds of miles on weekdays, the only time you can see them.

DOES YEARS AND DECADES OF SUCH TREATMENT SOUND INHUMANE TO YOU?

Furthermore, degrading strip and cell searches are carried out daily!

All prisoners are made to undergo a full strip and body cavity inspection, including examining your penis, testicles and rectum, on going to the yard, showers, visits, hospital etc... despite being handcuffed and escorted by two guards, presenting no physical threat...except maybe spitting...which will cause you to be hooded and strapped to a rolling contraption, like Hannibal Lechter.

The intense and degrading regular cell searches are exercises in pure sadism, where guards go out of their way to read, comment on and provoke you, concerning your personal mail, photos, books and reading material, while afterwards, leaving your cell looking like Hurricane Katrina ran through it!

If that don't beat all, some of the more sociopathic ones will go as far as to even leave you without any toilet paper, toothbrush, pens or comb.

The author has repeatedly complained about Officer's Lynch and Peters, who have subjected him to most of the above, only to be "retaliated against" each time. And worse things are happening to other prisoners here...

WE NEED YOUR HELP! WE NEED FOR YOU TO CIRCULATE THIS MESSAGE FAR AND WIDE, AS WELL AS TO ASK PEOPLE TO CALL OR WRITE TO MAKE THE SUPERIORS OF THE SCI-GREENE STAFF, LISTED BELOW, AWARE OF THIS TREATMENT AND DEMAND THEY PUT A HALT TO IT!

PLEASE CALL OR WRITE:

Governor Edward Rendell
225 Main Capitol Bldg.
Harrisbur, Pa 17120
717-787-2500 Secretary Jeffrey Beard PA Dept. of Corrections
2520 Lisburn Rd.
P.O Box 598 Camp Hill, Pa 17001
717-975-4918 Michael P. Wolanin Director Office of Professional Responsibility P.O Box 598 Camp Hill, Pa 17001
717-731-7777 FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Russell Shoatz AF-3855
175 Progress Dr.
Wayesburg, Pa 15370 Human Rights Coalition
1213 Race St.

Major Court Victory for Mumia Abu-Jamal

By Jeff Mackler

The Dec. 6 ruling of the U.S. Court of Appeals of the Third Circuit reversing two critical Federal District Court decisions in the case of innocent death row political prisoner and award-winning journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal opens the door wider than ever for a new trial and Mumia's eventual freedom.

The court's ruling was a major blow to the Pennsylvania legal establishment, which has sought to publicly minimize the political damage it has suffered. The decision also registers a blow to reactionary provisions of the 1996 Anti-terrorism and Effective Penalty Act that was designed to eliminate constitutional protections in the name of efficiency in implementing state court death penalty decisions.

The Third Circuit granted "certificates of appealability" to Jamal to challenge defense alleged race and judicial bias in the 1995 Post Conviction Relief Action proceedings that were overseen by Mumia's original 1982 trial court "hanging" judge, Albert Sabo. Sabo went to extreme lengths to keep evidence of innocence out of the court record.

The court also allowed Mumia to challenge the 1982 trial summation remarks of the state's lead prosecutor, Joseph McGill, who told the jury, "If you find the Defendant guilty of course, there would be appeal after appeal and perhaps there could be a reversal of the case, or whatever, so that may not be final."

Mumia's lead attorney, Robert R. Bryan of San Francisco, told this writer that McGill's summation had the effect of qualitatively lowering the historic burden of proof regarding reasonable doubt and presumption of innocence. Virtually the same remarks by Pennsylvania prosecutors in other cases have resulted in new trials.

The Third Circuit's decision is especially remarkable since, under the provisions of the reactionary 1996 Anti-terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act (AEDPA), the court had no obligation to even consider defense challenges to the Federal District Court's denial of certificates of appealability.

When Federal District Court Judge William H. Yohn Jr. ruled against Mumia four years ago with regard to some 27 of the 29 points that the defense raised in its original habeas brief he cited in almost every instance the strict provisions of the AEDPA. This Clinton-signed law qualitatively raised the standard required to secure a "certificate of appealability," the prerequisite for having one's appeal issues heard by the next level of the federal judiciary - in this case, the U.S. Court of Appeals of the Third Circuit.

With the AEDPA the presumption of innocence standard was replaced by a requirement that federal judges were henceforth required

to grant a "presumption of correctness" to the findings of state courts. This reversal of the burden of proof has now been itself reversed, or at least in part.

The AEDPA was passed by Congress in the aftermath of the Oklahoma City bombing, when Democrats sought to grant law enforce-

ment agencies greater leeway to circumvent constitutional or due process protection in the name of fighting terrorism. This goal dovetailed with the Republican's effort to make state court convictions in capital cases "effective." The result was the AEDPA, two laws combined, both reactionary.

The "effective death penalty" portion of the Act was incorporated to essentially eliminate the right to appeal to higher courts. This was because prior to the AEDPA some 40 percent of state court convictions in capital cases were reversed on appeal to the federal courts, largely, according to studies on the subject, because of police misconduct, racism, intimidation of witnesses, falsification of evidence and ineffective assistance of counsel.

In essence, the AEDPA junked the presumptions of reasonable doubt and innocence and essentially required defendants to virtually prove their innocence rather than simply presenting evidence of reasonable doubt in order to qualify for the right to appeal.

Judge Yohn gave Mumia a certificate of appealability with

regard to just one of the 29 points argued in his habeas brief -- the Batson issue, or the application of the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in the case of *Batson v. Kentucky* that banned preemptive exclusions of Blacks from juries without stating a specific non-race-based reason for each exclusion.



Judge Yohn did not agree with and in fact rejected the defense's arguments with regard to Mumia's Batson claim. But he did grant Mumia the right to appeal his view. Citing the AEDPA, he denied this right with regard to the remaining 27 claims presented in Mumia's habeas corpus, or appeal brief.

Since Yohn decided Mumia's case, however, the U.S. Supreme Court has at least in part overturned the near-insurmountable "presumption of correctness" standard established by the AEDPA. The court essentially substituted something more akin to the previous standard.

This important modification of the AEDPA was a product of the court's decision in the case of *Miller El v. Cockrell*, decided in 2003.

While the Third Circuit's rationale for its reversal of Yohn and the resulting granting of the two new certificates of appealability have yet to be published, it is likely that the court relied on *Miller El*. Mumia's appeal to the Third Circuit, authored by Robert R. Bryan, indeed cited *Miller El* several times.

The Third Circuit's decision was not entirely positive. It denied Mumia certificates of appealability with regard to four other important points raised by the defense, including the right to self-representation, the exclusion of Mumia from a majority of the court proceedings in his own trial and the racist exclusion of an already selected Black juror from the jury panel.

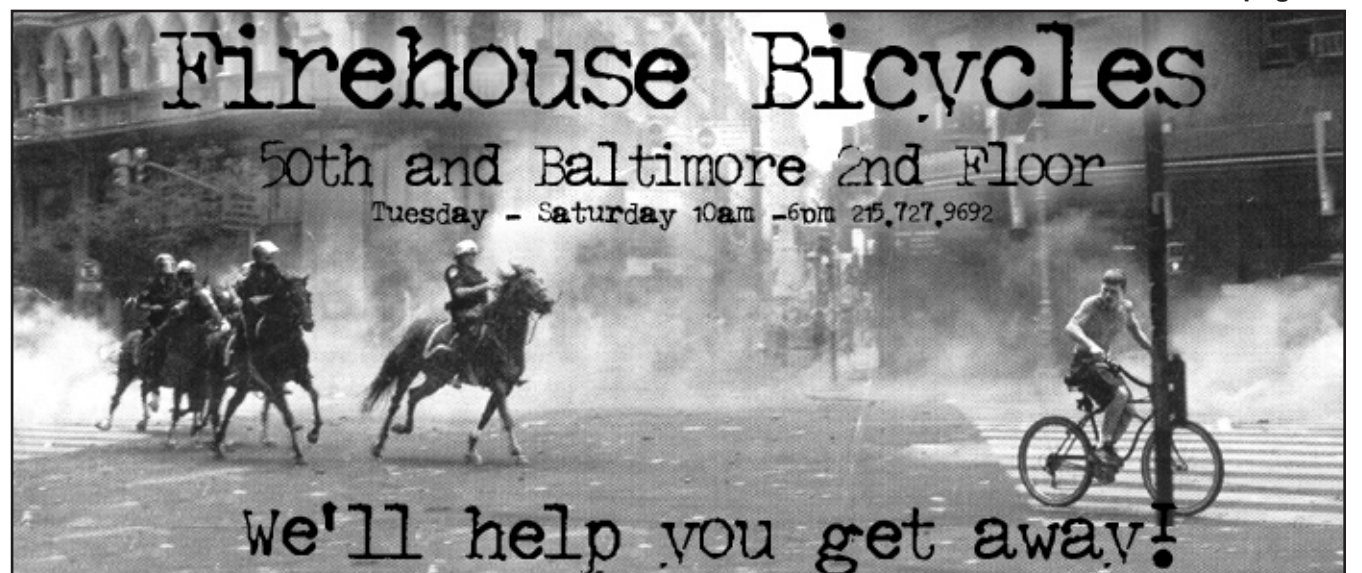
The Third Circuit also allowed the State of Pennsylvania to challenge a Federal District Court decision that had previously ordered the State to hold a new sentencing hearing based on the constitutionally flawed jury instructions issued by Judge Sabo. Sabo improperly told the jurors, during the sentencing phase of Mumia's 1982 trial, that if they were to decide to find mitigating circumstances sufficient to impose a life sentence rather than execution, they would have to be unanimous.

The Federal District Court ruled that unanimity had never been required. It ordered the State of Pennsylvania to hold a new sentencing hearing, in effect a new trial, within 180 days and with the proper jury instructions. If the state failed to do so Yohn asserted that he would impose a life sentence on Mumia in place of the jury's execution verdict.

The Dec. 6 Third Circuit granted the State of Pennsylvania a certificate of Appealability on this matter, an ominous ruling to say the least.

While legal analysts doubt that Pennsylvania prosecutors will be successful in pursuing this "victory" for reaction, if they are, and if Mumia loses on the remaining three issues where he was granted review, he will once again be subject to an order for his execution by lethal injection. But Robert R. Bryan,

continued on page 19



All for the Taking:

by dave onion

In the documentary *All for the Taking*, filmmaker George McCollough looks at how the City of Philadelphia's use of eminent domain combined with Mayor Street's Neighborhood Transformation Initiative (NTI) has had devastating impacts on poor people in Philadelphia, covering several different Philly struggles on the forefront of gentrification locally.

The documentary starts off in the West Philadelphia home of Carolyn Thomas, just as she gets notice that the City's Redevelopment Authority (RDA) is "contemplating condemnation" of her property. After dismissing the note as junk mail, Carolyn starts paying attention once another letter comes in the mail and begins to research eminent domain.

Carolyn's research leads her to North Philly's Community Leadership Institute (CLI), a small grassroots group fighting NTI and its gentrifying effects. The group headed up by organizer Rosemary Cubas has been fighting gentrification in North Philly for years, often dealing with Eminent Domain as one way the City forcibly evicts homeowners. Part of Cubas' own Kensington neighborhood was slated for demolition under NTI. As she walks around her old neighborhood, past row-houses in apparently decent condition but abandoned and boarded up, she talks about the security and community its old inhabitants once enjoyed. She points to a forsaken looking lot trying to evoke memories of the community garden that once filled the space. "This block was vibrant and this blight was caused by the City. This was not caused by the residents. This blight was caused by the city pushing people out."

Started in 2001, NTI is Philly's most ambitious urban renewal project to date. From its inception, the program quickly became married to Eminent Domain as a means of clearing out Philly's so called blighted ghettos. As a desperate attempt to lure wealthier people into the City to increase the tax base, NTI quickly became a tool for real estate developers to snatch up thousands of properties in communities that had been systematically put in an economic

stranglehold through insurance redlining and the general increase in the country's wealth gap. Entire neighborhoods were declared "blighted" to give the city the legal authority to hand land over to developers, regardless of the state of many of the buildings, not to mention the communities which once inhabited the space.

Al Alston of Brewerytown's African American

Business and Residents Association (AABRA), a group at the forefront in resisting NTI, explains gentrification in some basic terms. "The only way of improving this neighborhood is by destroying as many houses as you can and bringing in new people who have significant resources to renovate the rest of it;

21st Century Urban Renewal

small community of horse owners and riders, a much loved element locally for providing rare chances for an alternative activity for kids and others inside the city. Once speculators set their sites on the land surrounding the stables, city lawyers systematically divided renters and stable owners before forcing each to give up their land. Appropriated land taken by eminent domain was then given to real estate developers like Westrum to build condos, now selling for \$200,000 and up just off West Girard. A billboard on 31st and Girard featuring a white guy at a coffee table rubs it in with the words "It's your turn," welcoming Brewerytown's new rich residents to their gated community.

Mindy Fullilove, of Columbia University, explains what being forcibly displaced can mean to people and communities. Comparing displacement of people to the uprooting of plants, Fullilove uses the term "root shock" to describe the gravity of threat to the life of communities. After forming systems of mutual aid and interpersonal connections over the years, being torn from one's home can be traumatic to the point where sometimes the communities or individuals don't survive, like a plant being repotted. When the neighborhood becomes an extension of what people are, the feeling of losing everything to a cold unresponsive bureaucrat is unbelievable frustrating, like railing at the wind.

her home and some more for the costs of her moving. She counters furiously, "If I get another house for \$40,000 I'm going back to another ghetto section which you're calling blight, which you'll be redeveloping in no time soon. I'm already in a blighted section now. But I fixed my blighted area up to be comfortable for me. I now you're just using hypothetical terms, cause I'm not going anywhere."

Poor neighborhoods aren't the only ones to see Eminent Domain's hand. A shopping strip in solidly middle class Lower Merion shown in AFTT is also being "blighted" by the township with the intent of consolidating property ownership under a single owner. This justified with the supposed idea that a single owner could more effectively ensure the diversity of stores in the area. The term "blight" here sheds its clothes. The conditions under which people live have nothing to do with it, making profit is the obvious and only motive at work here. The area affected is spotless, seems to be doing fine economically. And, of course, a community has grown up in the area. All of which is entirely irrelevant to developers.

Comcast's center city skyscraper plans also have found their place in the NTI picture. Designating the block as blighted seemed like the best way to get something else for free from the City for Comcast as well as to get away with some juicy tax cuts. The chance to build themselves a corporate headquarters with tax money,

however, failed, as the decision bogged down it went over the City's heads to the state. Instead the government somehow "found" another \$43 million to help poor Comcast out.

Wrapping up AFTT, we see Carolyn Thomas moving out of her home. The city had shut off utilities a day earlier than she had been told and Carolyn seems defeated as she picks and

chooses what to take with her in the dark. As a final insult, after taking so much the City billed her \$9075 for the demolition of her home, which she is of course refusing to pay.

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drive out the poor folks and that's going to increase the tax base. It's the classic justification for gentrification that cities around the globe are using."

And what's happening in Alston's neighborhood is exactly this. Alston introduces us to Brewerytown's Black cowboys, a

One scene documents exactly the sort of "railing at the wind" Fullilove describes. A representative of the RDA comes to prepare Carolyn in the vaguest terms of her "possible reimbursement" by the city for her home. The rep throws around \$40,000 as a possible reimbursement figure for



NID, UPenn and West

Philadelphia

by Colin Cascia

The Neighborhood Improvement District (NID) has been announced and, although plans to implement the newest phase of Penn-trification have been stalled, the beast still lives.

The NID would be an expansion of University City District (UCD) further west, and proposes to clean up neighborhoods to make them safer, cleaner and more appealing for business. The catch? If the city legislature approves of the NID, you have to pay an extra tax for it. Can't pay or think, rightfully so, that you are entitled to those services already, since you pay taxes? Well, you could lose your home, like many did during the Center City District (CCD) and UCD projects.

Don't swallow the NID's lies. They have said that the tax will not apply to single family owned houses, at first. Neither did the taxes in CCD and UCD, but then as time passed more and more citizens without any say in the matter were taxed for services they never asked for, and in some cases, never received.

The claims of UPenn to bring safety, cleanliness and more business are interesting, to say the least. So honest is their effort to increase commerce and competition that they are completely dislocating the entire block of businesses from the 3900 block of Walnut Street, including

small, local stores such as Last Word Bookshop, College Pizza, Philadelphia Locksmith and Campus Copies, for the purpose of building more high rise dorms. As for the safety and cleanliness matters...

When I moved here in September I was warned about crime in West Philly, but working a delivery job I've found that most of the criminal behavior I've witnessed is in University City District (UCD). Seeing the actions of many UPenn students, I can only gather that they view West Philly as their private playground, which the NID seeks to expand.

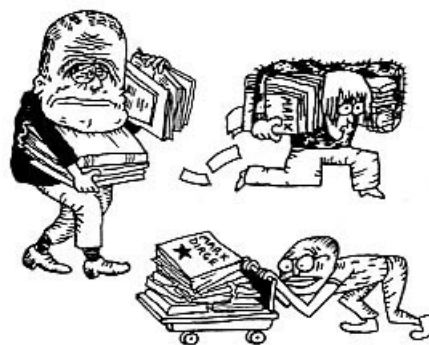
I've been assaulted by students from both Penn and Drexel, a coworker of mine was physically thrown out of the UPenn hospital while making a delivery and another delivery person almost had her bike stolen by a student. Then there's the public drinking (in front of cops stationed to "maintain order") followed by the public intoxication, which eventually leads to the public vomiting. Knocked over trash cans, garbage left outside of frat houses for days on end, verbal harassment and to make the climate more sickening, they don't tip you for delivering to their door at 2:30 in the morning on a bicycle in the middle of a blizzard (no exaggeration). If NID is going to look anything like UCD, heaven help us.

If UPenn and the NID cared so much about the community why, instead of pushing for an extra tax in which residents have no say, don't they use their political sway to make sure the taxes we already pay go where they're supposed to. We don't need UPenn to clean the streets or make the city safer; we already pay for that. UPenn has a private security force to protect its students from West Philadelphia. Who will protect West Philly from UPenn?

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Since the film's release, organizing against NTI continues. The CLI, along with others, have put together a short list of buildings they've chosen to target as a beginning in fighting the city and developer's land-grabs ("the Takings" is posted on defenestrator.org). For more info about the film check out the "All for the Taking: 21st Century Urban Renewal" website. Filmmaker George McCollough, a resident of West Philly, can be contacted at georgemmccollough@hotmail.com

The LAVA (Lancaster Avenue Autonomous Zone) radical library, is open Wed. nights from 4-9pm. DVDs of the film are available to borrow as a library member.



Ultra-leftists burdened by the weight of their texts

The Movement to Abolish Life Without Parole in Pennsylvania

By Kristi Brian

Those who resist change will be swept away in the irrelevant dust of history.

-Elaine Brown
A Taste of Power

On May 21, 2005 families and activists from across Pennsylvania and beyond gathered at Temple University to confront yet another oppressive tool of the criminal justice system: the sentence of Life Without Parole (LWOP). The statewide conference hosted by the Fight For Lifers (FFL) of Philadelphia aimed to galvanize the movement to change the 64-year-old Pennsylvania law that denies the possibility of parole to all lifers in state prisons. The conference was attended primarily by loved ones of the 4000+ men, women and juveniles who are currently doing life in Pennsylvania.

Pennsylvania is one of only three states in which there is no alternative life sentence (i.e. no 10 years to life or 25 years to life), but rather mandatory imprisonment until death for anyone convicted of 1st or 2nd degree murder. Many of the men and women serving LWOP did not actually commit murder but were sentenced to life as so-called conspirators. Pennsylvania has the highest population of LWOP prisoners in the country with one out of every ten prisoners doing life. These men and women will die in prison unless they are fortunate enough to have their life sentence reduced through a commutation.

Unfortunately, the commutation process for lifers has essentially shut down in the face of the "tough on crime" culture that has left us with unprincipled elected officials who are afraid to think beyond the current fear-hype paradigm. Over the past decade only one lifer has been granted commutation by a governor. This is in sharp contrast to less conservative eras of the past in which governors, such as Milton Shapp in the 1970s, granted over 240 commutations during his eight years in office.

Furthermore, the 1997 amendment to the State Constitution regarding the commutation process now makes this avenue of release even more difficult. Prior to this amendment a majority vote by the pardons board in favor of commutation was enough to send a recommendation for commutation to the governor who holds the ultimate power to grant or deny commutation. Since the amendment, however, a unanimous vote by the pardons board is the only way a commutation application makes it to the governor's desk. One

"no" vote (now typically cast by the attorney general) can kill the commutation process, and completely derail a lifers' chance at parole-eligibility.

These obstructions of justice stacked against the growing lifer population were among the issues discussed at the statewide conference. The community-building event opened with a "theatre of witness" performance from TOVA that poignantly conveyed the multiple forms of violence associated with drug crimes, police brutality, and prison-related injustice that so many of the families in this movement have experienced.

Because many of the loved ones of lifers are also the loved ones of murder victims, an expanded notion of victimhood was a sustained theme throughout the day-long event. The inclusion of this topic throughout the conference counters the assumption (voiced by Frank Rubino of the Philadelphia Weekly and others) that working to abolish LWOP requires that we become "desensitized" to violent crime. On the contrary, FFL believes that family members of prisoners are among the members of our society most sensitized to violence in all its forms-imposed poverty, class warfare, institutionalized racism, prison torture, and all the other injustices for which the U.S. government is world-renowned. For this reason, the loved ones of lifers must be the well-supported leaders in this struggle to change public opinion about who lifers really are, to disseminate the developed analyses from transformed lifers on the "culture of crime" that many of them have experienced, and to reveal to legislators the brutality and wastefulness of escalating life imprisonment.

The FFL conference also included a keynote address from Butch Cottman who addressed the prevailing inequities across the entire landscape of American capitalist culture. As a Vietnam veteran, Cottman asked all to question how he was able to earn honorable, bronze-star status for taking countless lives in the name of war, while those associated with taking a life here at home are considered the "throw-aways of society". He suggested that modern-day street violence is simply a replication of the rationale that drives big business as well as the imperialist agenda of the U.S. government, the main difference being that those with political and economic power feel that

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Torture Flights and Black Sites

The official admissions of torture

by Eian Weissman

9/11

Recently, it was alleged by a number of European newspapers including Le Figaro (French), The Guardian (UK), and Berliner Zeitung (Germany) that the CIA has been operating secret "torture flights" to Eastern Europe and certain Middle Eastern nations as well as operating secret interrogation centers - in some cases at former Soviet sites. Despite these new revelations, the policy of Extraordinary Rendition - which entails extraditing suspects to a third party for interrogation - has long been practiced by US intelligence agencies.

Former CIA counter terrorism expert Michael Scheuer recently told the New Yorker magazine that he helped to found the rendition program in the aftermath of the first World Trade Center attack. The program, he says "...was begun in desperation..." during the scramble to apprehend Al Qaeda suspects.

At first the rendition program was used with restraint, but 1995 changed all that. That year the CIA, unsatisfied with the methodical interrogation strategy of the FBI, forged a new relationship with the Egyptian Mukhabarat - the Egyptian security force - who had been frequently cited for torturing prisoners in human rights reports issued from the US State Department itself.

In September of that year, the first major cooperation between the CIA and the Mukhabarat took place in Croatia, with the apprehension of a suspect in the assassination of the Egyptian president Anwar Sadat in 1981. The suspect was extradited to Egypt where he disappeared and is believed to have been executed. A similar operation occurred in the summer of 1998, with four Al Qaeda suspects thought to have been involved in the first World Trade Center attack sent to Egypt. One was killed during the operation while two more were later executed in Egypt. All were allegedly tortured severely during their captivity. In August of that year, in retaliation for this operation, Al Qaeda bombed the US embassies in Tanzania and Kenya, killing 224 people. At this point the rendition program expanded, with many such operations occurring over the next few years. During this time, US intelligence agencies were careful to delegate the actual torture to foreign security forces.

Five days after September 11th, in an appearance on Meet the Press, Dick Cheney presaged the change in policy that would lead to Abu Ghraib when he stated that we would have to "work through, sort of, the dark side... And so it's going to be vital for us to use any means at our disposal, basically, to achieve our objective." The implementation of such a strategy was confirmed a year later when Cofer Black, then CIA director, stated that "...After 9/11, the gloves came off." Further confirmation of the change in attitude came in a now famous set of legal memos.

In January of 2002, John Yoo of University of California Law School, then serving temporarily in the State Department, penned a memo creating a new category of prisoner in the war on terror. He redefined terror suspects as "unlawful enemy combatants" in an attempt to exempt them from the Geneva Conventions and to exempt US officials from the US Federal War Crimes Act of 1996 (which carries the death penalty). Shortly thereafter, Alberto Gonzales, then serving as legal council to the White House, penned the notorious memo calling the Geneva Conventions "obsolete" and "quaint." After these memos were leaked to the press, Bush issued a directive stating that even though his administration did not consider the Geneva conventions to apply to prisoners in the war on terror, detainees should be treated "humanely." The CIA, however, was exempted from this directive. Then, as if to confirm the general suspicions, in February of 2004, the CIA obtained a formal exemption from this pledge.

In August of that year, another memo, penned by John Yoo and assistant attorney general Jay S. Bybee redefined torture as inflicting pain that was the "equivalent in intensity to the pain accompanying serious physical injury, such as organ failure, impairment of bodily function, or even death."

There is an ancient Roman law stating that the testimony of a slave may only be admitted to a court of law if and only if, it is extracted with torture-a slave cannot be trusted to speak truthfully without coercion. John Yoo seemed to reflect the spirit of that law when he stated, in a phone interview with the New Yorker, "Why is it so hard for people to understand that there is a category of behavior not covered by the legal system? ... What

were pirates? They weren't fighting on behalf of any nation. What were slave traders? Historically, there were people so bad that they were not given protection of the laws. There were no specific provisions for their trial, or imprisonment. If you were an illegal combatant, you didn't deserve the protection of the laws of war." He also gave a historical precedent, "The Lincoln assassins were treated this way, too... They were tried in a military court, and executed."

With Guantanamo Bay, Abu Ghraib and now the evidence of US torture centers in Eastern Europe, it has become abundantly clear that under the Bush Administration human rights standards are simply ignored and torture is a commonly accepted practice. The U.S. public, which (other than human rights groups and some incredibly hard working lawyers) has expressed little outrage over such practices, needs to wake up from its stupor and recognize the horrors and implications (increased hatred towards the US) of allowing these violations to continue. A February United Nations report (ordered by the UN Commission on Human Rights) recommended that the Guantanamo prison camp be shut down, citing numerous human rights violations, as well other violations of international law and seriously questioning the legality of the camps which house about 500 "suspects." The administration basically shrugged it off, and our great failure to react made it easier to do so. Echoes of Chile, El Salvador, Guatemala and too many other places around the world where the US has encouraged, paid for, trained perpetrators of, and participated in the torture and massacre of human beings, ring in the ears.

The following are excerpts from an interview with Denise Michultka, Ph.D. director of the Liberty Center for Survivors of Torture, (231 N. 63rd St. in Philadelphia) which provides services to torture survivors, such as: assisting with legal representation, referring medical and mental-health treatments for survivors and social rehabilitation. The center also does educational work to broaden understanding of "pertinent human rights and protection issues surrounding the survivors of torture and to provide restorative services under a social justice model to needy immigrated survivors of torture in the tri-state areas." Michultka addresses some of the personal/social/political/psychological aspects of U.S. torture.

The Politics of Torture

Eian Weissman interview with Dr. Denise Michultka of the Liberty Center for Survivors of Torture.

Denise: The reason that we have torture-the reason that torture has existed-is that it's really effective. It's not effective in the way that we generally believe... The torture is really not about the target of torture. It is not about getting rid of that person or getting info; it is about planting the seed. If you know that person or hear about that person [who was tortured] it plants a seed. And you think to yourself "it could be me; it could be my family." And that seed is what is powerful. That changes the way that we behave. You start thinking, "I won't go to that meeting; I won't go to that service; I will do whatever it takes to make sure that this doesn't happen to me..." There is a change in personal relationships. It changes what I do when I hear the door slamming next door and hear screaming and gunshots. You don't call the police; you don't go see what's happening. In many of these cultures that is extremely unusual. Normally, if there's a hole in the street everyone is there helping and there has to be a society wide de-motivator to make people change, to make people not trust each-other.

In my research I came across one guy- I think his name was James Scheuer- that seems to have defected from the CIA, in a sense. He was involved in the original extraordinary rendition program from when it started right after the first WTC bombing. He said that the FBI made some headway with the U.S. Embassy bombings in Tanzania where the FBI was involved in the intelligence activity and interrogated the Al Qaeda detainees. They do use coercion-the bad cop good cop kind of thing--but it's not torture; their methods are focused on creating a rapport with the person under interrogation.

Denise: Any health professional will tell you that. With people that are abused, torturing doesn't get crap, for intelligence. Abusive parents are like that. I love you one minute and the next...

The people that they brought in-Al Qaeda suspects-were surprised to be treated well, to have rights.

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Denise: Exactly....

With the perpetrators too, they are affected by torture...

Denise: It is hard to work with survivors of torture. But there is no known workable treatment for torturers. My talks have changed after the whole Abu Ghraib thing. It used to be that I would say, "torture is bad" and they would all agree. But now it's like, "torture is bad" and they are like, "well who is being tortured and why are they being tortured?" What I tell them about is... to talk about perpetrators of torture... we are all a part of it; all our hands are dirty. These are our young people doing this. And it's not that hard to shake someone [soldiers] up. When they are told that they are hated and they will be killed...

There are those two social psychology experiments: (the Milgram experiment and the Stanford Prison Experiment) that show that we all seem to have the capacity to torture.

Denise: Yes... it's not hard to push them... It's a community thing; if I am okay with it then you are okay with it... It's like the emperor has no clothes because if I don't say anything and you don't say anything then you assume that everyone is okay with it. It gets progressively worse once you cross the line...

I remember reading about the Israeli defense forces that when they declared "mild physical coercion" to be legal that it got out of control... they had to stop it and change the law...

Denise: Right, prisoners were being killed. Once it starts it is a spiral and you have to justify yourself, "are these evil people or am I bad?" They [soldiers] come back [and receive] no psychological care whatsoever. How do you make it okay? How do you say "this is what I had to do"? Torture is hard because it gets at what it is that makes you human. And you don't, you shouldn't, ever have to do that. You make them rape someone's wife. People walk around with that and feel horrific. They feel unclean and how do you get cleansing.

Then you see a lot of violence when they [soldiers] get back: a lot of intra-family violence, domestic abuse. Then there is extraneous violence: getting arrested for a robbery. The military is trying to keep them quiet, but these are the direct results of the training they are given.

You are talking about the US military in Iraq here, right?

Denise: Yes. And when the first gulf war

happened...

When I was in Guatemala, the summer before last, the Ex-PAC [civil auto-defense patrols-paramilitary forces that the Guatemalan Gov't forced to do their dirty work during the civil war] demanded money.

Denise: Yes. That's because Rios Montt [former Military Dictator of Guatemala during early 1980's] promised them-and this could never happen-he promised them military pensions to get the vote.

In another article I was reading, it said 1600 women were murdered and tortured in Guatemala City over last 4 years. They showed signs of torture in fitting with this... with the techniques of security forces.

Denise: It's one way when you are in a country where that happens but then you come back here. And there is no way to process that information. They go to the VA hospital and they give them tons of medications. There is no way that they can justify who they are and give them treatment at the same time. It has to be nothing.

It would be an admission by the military...

Denise: Yes, exactly... In fact I was called [by the military]. They wanted me to come down to the military base in Delaware. They had reentries and they wanted me to train the doctors there. I thought it was a setup [laughter]. They'd let me in and never let me out ... and I think "what am I possibly going to tell them. That they are victims of a capitalist society? [laughter] I doubt that. They ended up not hiring me. I'm not sure that I am the person that you want and my therapy is about being socially active. A model we developed from Nicaragua... That is, that [torture] is not a random thing. It doesn't happen like this-randomly. We can't go around thinking that horrible things happen all the time because we would go crazy. So if you take a global explanation that this happens because of capitalism [protecting capitalism's corporate interests]: this is what happens to poor people who are organized. And, when you give them a context, it helps them to get better and then you give them their hands back. They feel powerful, that their testimony is powerful and it is a blow to the people that tortured them. That is our model: a social justice model. This is about restoration. There is a whole movement [in the USA] about refugee resettlement where we take poor little refugees and we resettle them. We are about justice: saying that it was not random or because you are a bad person [that you were tortured].

Refugees are used in a political way.

To...

Denise: Exactly. "Asylees"--people asking for asylum-refugees are people that are in a different country and are claimed by them as refugees. There are the Mung. There are tons of Mung refugees. The Mung fought with the U.S. against the Vietnamese army. Then we took them with open arms. They are used to populate rural places where they need a workforce.

I was reading something about Haitians-an essay by Chomsky-under Aristide we loved Haitian refugees. They were political capital. Now we don't want them. We love taking people from Cuba because it is political capital. There was mention in Jennifer Harbury's book, Searching for Everardo, of her working in Texas with refugees from the dirty wars. Their asylum requests were denied...

Denise: TPS. They were given Temporary Protected Status. That says "we know if we send you back you'll be killed but we don't want to hear your story right now. We don't want your story in court; we don't want them stamped with a notary's stamp. We'll let you stay here and we'll let you work but you can't bring your family and you can't move. You're here per our graciousness not because it is your right." Even though it is an international law. It is a right. "And then when we are done we will send you back. Whenever we want to." Immigration law is based on foreign policy entirely. In Guatemala and when no one was winning every single [asylum] case included a letter from the state department saying "there is no war in Guatemala." What judge is going to go against the state department and say "I believe that there is a war, according to this poor Campesino who has no education. Unlikely.

Have you had direct experience with that?

Denise: Every single case. I was in the sanctuary movement in Texas... the letters were part of every file. .01% of every Guatemalan was winning [asylum] and .05 of every Salvadorean was winning asylum. At that time I was working in the Florence detention center. People were held outside in tents.

What I want to do here is to place this in a context, in a historical context. It seems that this [policy of torture] has been a policy for decades. People are even aware of this but don't have a sense of its wrongfulness.

Denise: Yes. The [politicians] won't say that torture is a bad thing. The only way they said that was "it's a tiny bit

bad." I watched how quick those stories got squashed. They say "Torture is bad because if we torture them then our people will be tortured." They seemed to think they couldn't say that it was bad. Even people with a conscience say that a majority of people don't get it-they are not interested.

When Gerardi was killed in Guatemala [Guatemalan Clergyman who headed the REMI human rights condemning the Guatemalan Government for genocide during the Guatemalan civil was 1960-1996] there was nothing.

And during the Liberian conflict the US would not send Peace-Keeping forces in. We kept them on boats. In protest [against US inaction] the Liberians piled dead bodies in front of the US embassy. The Liberians were convinced that everyone in the US saw that. But no one saw that. It was only a few years ago. Literally there is footage, a movie done by the BBC where there is footage of them [small number of security forces deployed] walking around the bodies and bringing beers to the embassy. The Liberians felt that people in the US did not care.

With Gerardi... the case is unsolved. He was bludgeoned to death outside his home...

Denise: First they said that it was a dog or that it was a 70 year old priest that they had in prison. But nobody said anything. There was no demand for justice. All the international rights groups were in Bosnia and Serbia and they were like "y que?" (so what?) "Another Central American Priest." And if it doesn't get press here, then it doesn't get press elsewhere. Their hand are tied, they tie their own hands. The only activism that gets press is the violent activism and most people don't relate and so we don't see positive problem focused activism.

and even when it starts to work, like the campaign against the US Army School of the Americas, [notorious US army school which allegedly teaches torture and interrogation techniques to foreign military officers] then the Army goes and changes the name of the school. It was changed to the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation.

Denise: I will stick up for the SOA program that is a movement that has maintained numbers. But you are right in the bigger picture: there are 10,000 people there and it is the biggest act of civil disobedience in the country. But [the school] still continues [to operate]. We go into communities at risk and talk to [torture survivors]. They get really freaked

Solidarity not Charity: Racism in Katrina Relief

by Molly McClure

I recently spent three weeks working at the Common Ground Relief Clinic in New Orleans, an all-volunteer run free healthcare project that opened a week After the hurricane. The following are some thoughts I had about the difference between solidarity and charity, specifically reflecting on the role of folks like me--- white activists from out of town--- in Katrina relief work.

As many people have said, the mess of Katrina was caused by a storm of racism and poverty more than wind and water. Katrina was about the racism of war that took money away from fixing the levees and other much-needed disaster preparations and went instead to the killing of poor people of color in Iraq and around the world. Katrina was about the racism of US-led capitalism that accelerates global warming, bringing bigger hurricanes and tsunamis and other "natural disasters," which always disproportionately affect the poor. Katrina was about the legacy of slavery, which meant that many white New Orleanians had the economic resources to evacuate, such as a car or other means to escape the storm and subsequent flooding, while many Black New Orleanians did not. Katrina was about the racism of FEMA and the Bush administration in their murderously slow response (you know it would have looked different in Connecticut!). And Katrina was about the racism of the police chief of Gretna, who, with the support of his predominantly white town, turned Black survivors away at gunpoint as they tried to cross the Crescent City Bridge to safety because he "didn't want Gretna to turn into the Superdome."

Like most of you, I'm guessing, I was outraged and heartbroken by what I saw, and I wanted to go down and see if there was some way I could support the people of the Gulf Coast in their efforts to deal with this mess. When I got there I saw and heard devastating things, stories of loss my ears are still full of, images of destruction that cut into the meat of my heart. I also saw and heard many, many inspiring things--- stories of resistance and hope, of survival and vision. I met incredible people who fed me red beans and rice on Mondays and told me about their families and their lives, who shared with me some of what New Orleans meant to them, people who through their stories helped me understand the depth and breadth of this atrocity.

(By the way, I'd really encourage folks to seek out these first-hand stories, and prioritize reading information and analysis about Katrina written by survivors and long-time residents of the Gulf Coast, for example "New Orleans and Women of Color: Connecting the Personal and Political" by Janelle L. White, available online).

I was also inspired by how many folks from outside New Orleans had gone down to volunteer

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teer, had seen what was happening and were appalled, and found a way to go down and support in any way they could. I met incredibly committed activists, folks with skills and energy and immense creativity and huge hearts.

And while it was moving to see how many people came down to volunteer, with that also came one of the unexpected heartbreaks for me of being in the Gulf Coast post-Katrina: the racism that white activists like myself brought along with us, even as we came intending to stand in solidarity with the people of New Orleans. And although there are many, many stories I want to tell, this is what I feel a really deep need to write about, and I see this as part of an ongoing conversation. (Note: for this article, I'll be using the People's Institute definition of racism, which is race prejudice plus power, and using it interchangeably with "white supremacy," meaning the system of wealth, power, and privilege which keeps racism in place).

First, I want to say that I'm not approaching this conversation as if I've got it all figured out, because I have a ton of work to do and make plenty of mistakes, including the ones I'm about to discuss. And I want to say that while I will be speaking from my own perspective, there have been many people of color whose analysis and experiences have helped me develop the antiracist framework I'm using to think about this situation. I just want to put that out because I think it's important to recognize whose labor and experiences have helped inform what I am saying, and how I'm saying it.

So having said all that, I want to talk a little about the ways that we white folks, no matter how well-intentioned, bring our white privilege and our racism with us wherever we go, and how this really hijacks solidarity projects and imperils our capacity to be true allies. Despite the fact that what happened in New Orleans was understood by the majority of whites even slightly left of center to have its roots in racism, it does not seem that this awareness has translated into us wrestling any more seriously with white supremacy, even as many of us mobilize to support the communities of the Gulf Coast.

One example I want to give is the looter/finder distinction made by mainstream media outlets in describing stranded New Orleanians carrying food. Do folks remember seeing that? The captions of pictures said white people "found" stuff, and Black people "looted" stuff, though the images were identical except for race. Lots of us forwarded an email around about this, and were justifiably outraged at the blatant criminalizing of Black survivors in the media. People I know wrote letters to the editors of newspapers, sent scathing emails, and called in to radio shows to protest that and other racist portrayals of Katrina survivors.

The question I want to ask is how many of us white folks make these kind of looter/finder assumptions about people's behavior all the time, in our heads? How many of us make these kinds of racialized good guy/bad guy distinctions when we're walking down the street in our hometowns, standing at a bus stop

late at night, interacting with new people in our activist spaces, talking to co-workers at our jobs, seeing patients in the clinic?

While the media portrayals were egregious and telling, I think the insidious, often unconscious prejudice that we've learned by living in a racist culture is also incredibly dangerous. The People's Institute for Survival and Beyond calls this "internalized racial superiority," and that's what I saw playing out so dramatically among many white solidarity workers who came to New Orleans, even though many of us were there because we felt a deep desire to take action against what was clearly a race-based hate crime.

So I have some questions for white folks thinking about going down, questions I am still asking myself: first of all, why you? Why are you going? Could resources and energy be better used supporting survivor organizing at home or fundraising, rather than spent traveling to the South?

Are we committed to doing support work that may not feel as exciting as going down ourselves? How did it come to be that we are able to travel to and around New Orleans, while many survivors still can't go home? What are we bringing with us; what will we take back? What has been the role of white people and white institutions in the destruction and reshaping of communities of color in the US, in the history of New Orleans? When we go down, are we expecting to be thanked, to be welcomed, what is our real motivation for going? What will be the long-term impact of our work on the Gulf Coast communities with whom we're supposedly standing in solidarity?

How are we going to be accountable to what we saw and heard and did when we come back, and to whom do we feel accountable? How are we going to make meaningful connections to the same kind of injustices back home? Do we know about the issues facing poor communities and communities of color in our hometown, and are we as motivated, as committed to dealing with those issues where we live, which could bear a striking resemblance to what's going on in New Orleans? Are we seeing survivors of Katrina as "worthy" poor, deserving of resources and relief work, without recognizing that the poverty back home is equally a result of systemic racism, and equally crucial to address?

In the three weeks I was working in New Orleans, I spent most of my time at the Common Ground Clinic, where most of the volunteers and healthcare providers are white. (Though the call to create Common Ground was put out by Malik Rahim, a Black activist and organizer who never evacuated New Orleans, the people with the resources and time to respond first to that call were overwhelmingly white, class-privileged folks, who continue to be numerically the majority). While I was there, I heard comments like "this is so cool that New Orleans is going to have a free clinic now!" or other statements suggesting that we, the white saviors, had come to bring capital a **ACTIVISM** to the region, which before we got there was presumably some kind of political wasteland. Now, I definitely didn't do my homework like I should

have before I got there, but I was pretty sure that the city had had a vibrant history of resistance and organizing from the time of the slave revolts on, and I had recently learned about the Saint Thomas Clinic and other local healthcare justice projects. The fact that the town was so intensely depopulated may have made it possible for an inexperienced out-of-towner to mistake the absence of people with the absence of organizing. But I know there was more to it than that--- racism fosters in white people an easy, unconscious arrogance, an inability to see past ourselves, the capacity to be "blinded by the white." Mixed up in this also, I think, is the classist assumption that poor folks aren't politically conscious or organized, or that they only "become" so when outside organizers arrive.

Another example of these racist assumptions could be seen when folks expressed the valid concern that the community wasn't involved enough in running the health center, even though flyers were put up around the surrounding Algiers neighborhood inviting residents to volunteer and become a part of the clinic. I've been part of this dynamic in the past--- wondering why "they" don't come to "our" meeting or event, without understanding how alienating the white culture of our project or organization might be to people of color, from the language, timing, and structure of our meetings to the way we dress (especially in places like Common Ground, which, when I was there, had a predominantly punk/hippie subcultural scene going on). When there has been a lack of community involvement in other neighborhood projects of which I've been a part, it's usually because the project began or evolved without a concerted effort to connect in a respectful, non-tokenizing way with people in the neighborhood to see what they were working on already, what their priorities were, what strategies they'd tried before, how we might support their work before starting a brand spanking new project with us in leadership.

In the case of the clinic in particular, it was an immediate disaster relief project that needed to happen, and I see it as a fantastic example of the capacity of the left to effectively mobilize in an emergency when the state infrastructure failed. But now that the clinic is a more permanent fixture, there will be some real wrestling with power and privilege in the months ahead, if it is to reach the stated goal of transitioning to community control, and if it is to have a role that is less about service provision and more about rebuilding infrastructure and offering resources in a way that supports community self-determination.

Another example I want to offer is a hand-painted sign at the clinic that said, "Less Tears More Action!" I never found out who painted this, but I'm guessing it was a white person from out of town, like me. And no matter who created the sign, I wondered what the impact of that statement was (for the day it was up) on the people who came to the clinic, who were mourning immeasurable losses and experiencing worlds of grief that we as outsiders would never be able to fully comprehend. Yet we felt entitled to offer brightly-painted

suggestions about it being time to quit whining and move on, and presumably we were to be the role models of what kind of "action" folks should take.

A big slogan at the Common Ground Clinic was "Solidarity not Charity," which is easy to say, but what does it mean? And how do we know if what we're doing is charity or solidarity--- is it as simple as choosing to work with Common Ground instead of the Red Cross? This was one of the biggest lessons for me, and something I'm still thinking a lot about.

A definition of solidarity I've heard is that it's about providing concrete support to an oppressed group so that they can more easily use their own power to change the conditions of their lives. As I understand it, solidarity is about working with people who are struggling for their own liberation in a way that means my future gets bound up with theirs.

On the other hand, charity is about me feeling good, assuaging guilt, feeling like I'm doing something about injustice but without actually threatening the status quo. Charity doesn't really cost me anything, especially my self-image as being someone who's down with the struggle and on the side of the oppressed. With charity I don't have to acknowledge my privilege in a situation, and in the case of work in New Orleans, I don't have to take responsibility for the fact that my family and I have materially benefited, historically and presently, from the racism that bludgeoned the south long before the hurricane. With charity, I don't have to connect the dots between sudden catastrophes like Katrina, and the perhaps slower but very similar economic devastation happening in poor communities and communities of color, every day, right here, in my city. And most importantly, with charity, I don't have risk that what I'm doing might truly transform society in such a way that white folks like me may not end up on top anymore, because charity actually reinforces existing relationships of power. And while the work we did at Common Ground may have been in solidarity with a liberation-oriented vision, I'm not sure that was enough. It scares and pains me to admit it, but despite the sign proclaiming proudly that the clinic was about "solidarity not charity," I think the majority of what I saw us white activists doing at Common Ground was essentially charity.

One day at the clinic, Kimberley Richards and Bridget Lehane, organizers from The People's Institute for Survival and Beyond, came to meet with us about the possibility of doing an antiracism training for volunteers at the clinic. Kimberley pointed out that like it or not, we--- mostly white healthcare providers and activists in a hurricane-ravaged poor Black town--- stood to profit off our time in New Orleans, either socially through gaining "activist points" or professionally by writing papers or books about our experience. She asked us how we were going to be accountable to that fact, how we were going to make sure that the people most affected by this tragedy would also stand to gain and not be profited off, as they so often were by the organizations and institutions supposedly serving them.

The difference between charity and solidarity felt huge that day and as we discussed whether or not we could--- more truthful to say whether or not we would--- close the clinic in order to participate in their two and a half day training, called the "Undoing Racism Workshop." I realized that solidarity felt easier when I thought

about it in terms of us simply offering a crucial resource to the community --- providing free, accessible healthcare and free medications in a place and time when that was a dire, dire necessity. And that's incredibly important.

But the challenge of real solidarity is that it requires us to take a critical look at the bigger picture of Katrina, the context, and to see how we fit in. Solidarity means looking at how power and privilege play out in our own lives, and obligates us to consider our role in relation to the state and system that helped engineer this disaster. To be in solidarity we would need to understand how our class and race privilege impact why we were the ones able to offer the healthcare resources in the first place, and be real about whether the clinic serves to challenge or reinforce that inequality. Solidarity requires us to seriously grapple with our racial prejudice, and recognize how it affects the work we do in the clinic and how we interact with the community. To really be in solidarity, we would need to more fully examine and drastically overhaul the assumptions and biases in how we deliver healthcare, we would have to acknowledge and deal with the white culture of the project and how that affected our patients and which providers felt welcome in the clinic, and we would need to see and wrestle with the fact that our presence in New Orleans was profoundly changing the class and race dynamics of the intensely depopulated neighborhood and town.

We would have to be willing to look at and be accountable to the ways in which we might actually stand to gain more in the long term from our "solidarity work" in the clinic than the community who we were supposedly serving.

At this point I still have more questions than answers about what being in solidarity really means. But I know solidarity's a hell of a lot less comfortable than charity, and involves me not just going to someone else's decimated town and helping out for a little while or even a long while and then going home and doing a reportback, or writing a reflection piece, though that could be part of it. Real solidarity means keeping up the conversation about race and class in the US with other white folks, and working diligently to break down the racism in mainstream white communities---where institutional power currently resides---as well as challenging racism in the white left. Real solidarity requires me to go on an ongoing, difficult journey to reckon with my own stuff, and my family's stuff--- to recognize and challenge our collusion in the system of white supremacy. My experience in New Orleans makes me ask myself what I'm doing right now, right here, to support the self-determination of communities of color and of low-income people, what I'm doing right now to support a revolutionary transformation of systems of power in this country. It makes me ask myself what I'm doing right now, right here, to help root out the racism in my own heart and the heart of communities I'm a part of, so that I can struggle in true solidarity with communities most affected by injustice as they lead the movement for radical social change.

Molly McClure does sexual health and racial justice work in Philadelphia, and is excited to hear your comments, questions and discussion: genderific@hotmail.com. This writing happened with a lot of support, feedback, and insightful conversation for which I'm incredibly grateful.

Politics of Torture continued

out and dis-empowered by their own mental problems. In my opinion, there is no Post Traumatic Stress Disorder-it is not a disease. It is that we weren't made to have these things happen to us. We do not absorb these things well. When you have these nightmares your body is saying it should not have happened... [survivors of torture] feel crazy and that is what the perpetrators of torture want them to think. They don't want to talk about it and it gets worse. We work with TASSC (another organization that helps survivors of torture). Some of [the victims] are continuing work but because of torture they stop their activism and to me that is the saddest thing. Some of them, they want to do advocacy about different issues here. They don't have medical care, or with immigration... we do as much as we can to help maintain their passion for social change and social activism. It is good for the world... it would be bad to lose these people; we can learn a lot from them. After the torture they say, "I will never raise my voice again." And I say, "that is unacceptable" and that is the kind of activism that we do.

In my experience in Guatemala... to me it seemed that there, in small communities, progress is happening. I stayed near Santa Anita where a group of refugees from the war got their own land... But the situation is frightening now. Recently Donald Rumsfeld spoke in Quito Ecuador at these security talks and he said that they need to go back to the dirty wars. So I wonder, for you, what is effective? How can we-and I know that you can't make people care-but how to get across to people that this is bad?

Denise: Depends on the audience. What makes sense is to tell them that there is something to do. That they can get involved or donate time as a professional to help win an immigration case. Just to make them see a real live human being that is like them; that is the only way to make headway. I am the worst offender sometimes; I go in and I finger point, but then you don't get anywhere. There is a real dilemma. The other thing is ignorance about the immigration system that is; when I say how it is they go "ooooh that's how it works!"

The truly sad thing is that, and I know that they were not moral pillars by any means, but there was headway with human rights and preventing torture under Clinton. There were civil suits happening, the laws were being applied. Then 9-11 happened.

Denise: Yes, that was totally an excuse to go back. It

has set us back a lot. But you know, I have been working long enough with this to see that these things are cyclical. Things get better and then they get worse...

I was reading, with Nixon and the coup in Chile during Nixon which brought Pinochet to power... after Watergate there was the Church Report which helped to reign in the executive branch of the government. I feel like we've had our Watergate. But where is the Church committee?

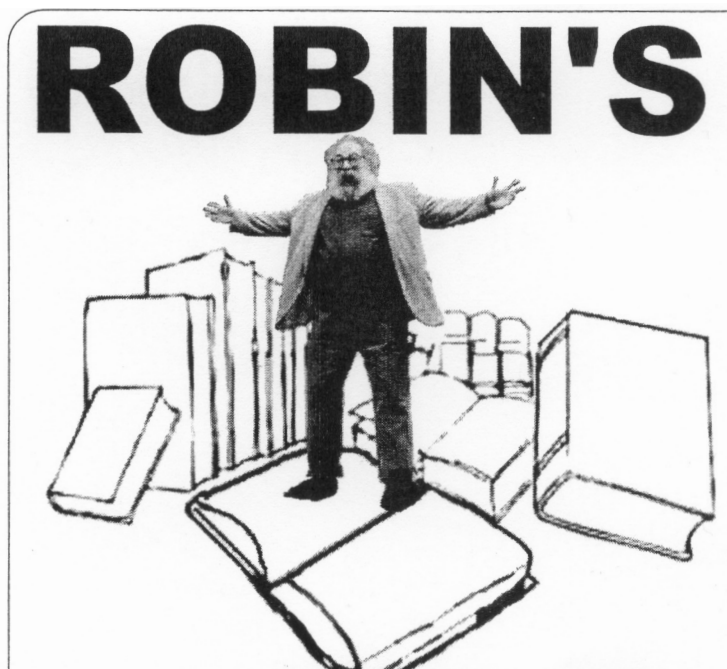
Denise: Yes. The Red Cross went to Abu Graib and didn't make a report about the torture. You have to focus on single people... You have to build off the small communities. You have to have the big battles. We're not just trying to fix them up so they are well enough to be tortured again, or to move them so they are silent again.

What I really wanted to talk about, too, was that it is beyond debate that we have tortured people for years and that it is policy. It's not like they're not admitting it. But how can people help change this and get involved? People seem to have the sense of outrage or would have it but they don't know or want to know, or feel helpless.

Denise: We teach and we can come out and speak. We are a positive social resource for people that are tortured. We help to get them with activists from other countries. We need all kinds of volunteers. They come here and they are never around other activists. Hanging out with them and having coffee or whatever... Sometimes, working with them we think we came up with an idea that will solve world problems. But they are like, "No. I've tried that. No." To have international activists, to have that experience is important.

It seems important to be faced with direct impacts of torture.

Denise: Yes...when you are confronted There was, we had Rufina, the lone survivor of El Mozote [in December 1981, about 900 civilians were slaughtered by army forces in El Salvador]. I remember, people were like "wow she is a real person." And she is this amazing, little, old woman and she's so bossy... There are whole books about her but then she's like "I am one with the people all the time but this is my one week of vacation."



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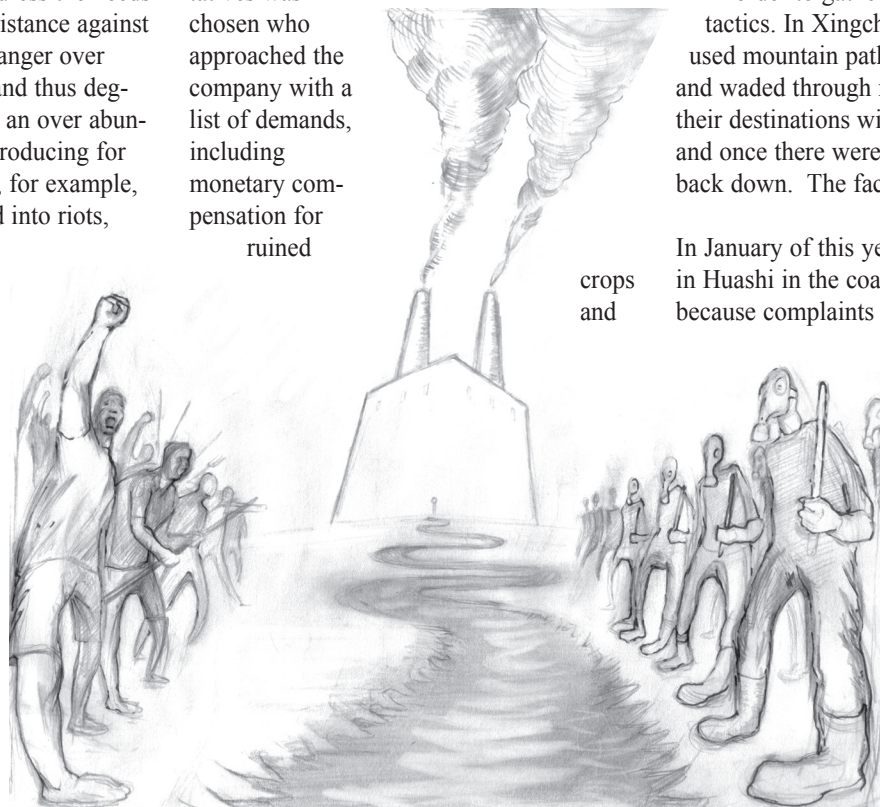
China Erupts: The Rising Tide of Discontent

by Bronwyn

The tipping point for the epidemic of riots and protests taking place all over China during the past year (87, 000 riots, demonstrations and protests in 2005) was Spring of 2005's Dongyang riot, where tens of thousands of demonstrators, many of them angry farmers, decisively routed the authorities, overturning police cars, killing several police officers and finally, shutting down the factory (the source of their discontent) which remains inactive today. Though the government-run press tried to keep the event out of the papers, news of the win spread, encouraging demonstrators in different parts of the country who are increasingly learning tactics and strategies from each other to achieve similar goals. The rising tide of discontent is mainly due to the failure of China's system - a sort of free-market oligarchy - to address the needs and desires of the people, resistance against corrupt local authorities and anger over environmental degradation (and thus degradation of health) caused by an over abundance of factories typically producing for foreign clients. In Dongyang, for example, demonstrations, which turned into riots, were over pollution caused by a local pesticide-producing factory that was destroying the livelihoods of local farmers as well as causing serious health problems. After years of complaining to local officials and sending representatives with clear and specific demands that basically reached dead ears the local people had had enough and decided to shut down the factory by any means necessary. Despite large numbers of armed police and serious beatings for many the demonstrators prevailed, with elderly women setting up roadblocks and helping overturn police cars.

Even before this, China witnessed the power that can be unleashed by angry Chinese workers and peasants. According to John Gulick's "Insurgent Chinese Workers and Peasants: The 'Weak Link' in Capitalist Globalization and US Imperialism" "Scattered outbursts of worker and peasant protests have been on the upswing in China since 1998" . Gulick describes how "In March 2002, up to 50, 000 workers cut loose by the Daqing Petroleum Administration Board (DPAB) pro-

tested in broad daylight against the board's capricious slashing of their severance pay. For over a week, some of these workers overran and occupied the headquarters of the DPAB, a subsidiary of China's leading oil transnational, the public-private PetroChina." . On July 17th, 2005 in Xingchang (a suburb of Shanghai) over 15, 000 demonstrators again waged battle with authorities, overturning cop cars and throwing stones despite heavy use of tear gas. They swore to keep going until the factory is shut down or relocated. Though there had long been discontent over the factory, the conflict was exacerbated when an explosion at the Jinxing Pharmaceutical Co. killed a worker and contaminated the local water supplies causing serious environmental degradation and health problems. Initially a group of local representatives was chosen who approached the company with a list of demands, including monetary compensation for ruined



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land, free health exams and medical care. Instead of getting to read their demands, the reps were beaten by factory security guards. As word spread of the beatings and the death of the factory worker villagers in the surrounding area changed their goals, demanding the closing of the factory, which had been causing health and agricultural problems for years. According to a Reuter's report by Lindsay Beck (2/2/06) "...residents lived for more than a decade with a river unable to sustain fish and shrimps and a population with so many liver problems they say the army rejected recruits from the village." One local woman (people don't

give their names as this would mean immediate arrest) described to a reporter how "our fields won't produce grain anymore... and we don't dare to eat food grown from anywhere near here." The woman's husband recently had to stop working due to constant weakness and nausea: "they are making poisonous chemicals for foreigners that the foreigners don't dare produce in their own countries." Such environmental racism is a common practice of corporate globalization. Despite his illness, he was among the first to occupy the factory, stating "It is better to die now, forcing them out, than to die of slow suicide." While the government has used the internet to keep track of such uprisings in order to quell them, sending out greater numbers of police in response, the people have also taken advantage of new technologies, particularly mobile phones, to keep each other abreast of developments in order to gather quickly and coordinate tactics. In Xingchang, demonstrators used mountain paths known only to locals and waded through rice paddies to get to their destinations without police interference and once there were clearly not prepared to back down. The factory was shut down.

In January of this year huge riots broke out in Huashi in the coastal Zhejiang Province because complaints that newly built chemical plants were polluting the land and water were continually ignored. "Using China's centuries-old method of petitioning, they took complaints first to local authorities, then to city officials, and finally all the way to the central government, more than 600 miles away in Beijing" (Beck)

The protests grew from a small roadblock to thousands of protestors who finally were able to shut the plant down after storming the factory and once again routing the police. Villagers in Huangniqiao similarly forced the closing of a pharmaceutical plant despite a heavy police presence, with local peasants chanting "Give back the land! I want health! Give back the land! I want descendants! Give back the land! I want food to eat! Give back the land! I want an environment!"

According to the World Bank "After

decades of all-out economic growth, China now has 20 of the world's 30 most polluted cities. An estimated 300 million nationwide have no access to clean water." Neo-liberalism and free-market capitalism have mainly added to the suffering of the majority of China's people; for those who can no longer make a sustainable living from the long-standing traditions of fishing and farming, often the only choice is to move into urban ghettos and work in sweatshop factories for some of the lowest wages in the world. Such life and death struggles are sure to continue until grievances are truly addressed.

Shell may pull out of Niger Delta after 17 die in boat raid

From UK Independent
By Daniel Howden

The oil giant Royal Dutch Shell is considering pulling out of the volatile Niger Delta region after heavily armed militants stormed one of its facilities and killed at least 17 people.

The attack early on Sunday, January 16 the latest during an upsurge of violence in the oil-rich swamp area, came only days after the kidnap of four foreign oil workers. Militant groups demanding local control of oil wealth warned Shell to withdraw immediately from the world's eighth largest oil exporter.

The Anglo-Dutch company has already pulled out 330 employees after gunmen in speedboats overran the Benisede flow station. "The attackers invaded the flow-station in speed boats, burnt down two staff accommodations, damaged the processing facilities and left," Shell said in a statement.

At least 17 troops died in the attack as well as an unknown number of militants and Shell employees, said Brigadier General Elias Zamani, commander of a task force deployed by the government. A group calling itself the the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (Mend) claimed responsibility for the recent spate of attacks in the region, including a raid on January 11 at Shell's EA offshore platform in which four foreigners were kidnapped, and a subsequent explosion that ruptured a major oil pipeline. The group advised oil workers to leave the delta, which produces almost all of Nigeria's 2.5 million barrels a day of oil.

"It must be clear that the Nigerian government cannot protect your workers or assets. Leave our land while you can or die in it," the group said in an e-

continued on page 13

"How do you make the invisible, visible?"

by eian weissman

"How do you make the invisible, visible? You take it away."

So states the byline for the 2004 film *A Day without a Mexican*, directed by Sergio Arau.

One morning California wakes to find that one third of its population has disappeared. A thick fog surrounds the state and communication outside its boundaries is completely cut off. As the day goes by we discover that the characteristic that links the 14 million disappeared is their Hispanic background.

While *A Day without a Mexican* delivered a lighthearted answer to its own question-in the end the Non-Hispanic Californians realize what they've lost as the oranges rot on the branch and grass grows long and unruly in Beverly Hills.

Unfortunately, the reality of the situation seems poised to worsen.

The passage in the house of representatives of the Border Protection, Antiterrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005, aka HR 4437, seems like the proverbial fog settling around this nation.

Perhaps taking inspiration from Arau's film, a group of immigrant workers from across Philadelphia recently formed a group calling itself El Paro (which means stoppage or strike) or A day without an immigrant. As their website (<http://daywithoutanimmigrant.com>) states, "A day without an immigrant is a 24 hour period where immigrants and friends do not attend work AND they notify their employer or affected person that the absence is due to the upcoming immigration reform and that they need to take action." While their focus is on informing and rallying their employers to their cause-a group whose interests are tightly bound to their own -- HR 4437 promises to affect us all.

HR 4437

HR 4437 In their recent "concerned persons" memo, the American Civil Liberties Union outlines the bill's salient points and highlights the threats that it poses to the civil rights of both citizens and non-citizens.

It quickly becomes clear, reading any summary of this bill, that it provides only for penalizing illegal immigrants and those that aide them. It does not address the underlying causes of illegal immigration.

The ACLU memo illustrates the flawed nature of this "enforcement only" policy, "From 1993 to 2004, the number of Border Patrol agents tripled (from about 4000 to

about 11,000) and the amount of spending has gone up five times (from \$740 million to \$3.8 billion), yet the number of undocumented immigrants doubled (from 4.5 million to 9.3 million)." The memo summarizes the bill as well as a related bill HR 4312, including the following provisions.

Expedited removal: H.R. 4312 requires border patrol to remove anyone found within 100 miles of the border without an administrative hearing. The ACLU memo references a number of cases, presented in testimony to the Senate in 2001, where expedited removal resulted in the wrongful removal of citizens and legal migrants.

Mandatory detention: Included as a response to the "catch and release policy" which releases certain suspect Non-citizens apprehended by the INS on their own-recognizance. All suspected non-citizens are subject to detention, regardless of whether they are a flight risk.

Indefinite detention: applies to non-citizens whose countries of origin refuse them or who are considered stateless, or who the Department of Homeland Security determines to be a security risk. It also grants the DHS ultimate authority in deciding who is a security risk. HR 4437 allows indefinite detention of broad categories of non-citizens, including:

- 1) those with a contagious disease,
- 2) any non-citizen convicted of one a very long list of "aggravated felonies," which is something of a misnomer and includes many less serious and non-violent crimes, as well as non-citizens who committed other crimes but whose "mental condition" creates a danger
- 3) non-citizens whose release would pose foreign policy problems, and
- 4) non-citizens charged even with very minor immigration violations who, based on secret evidence, are deemed a national security risk.

Restricts due process: Administrative review of decisions regarding immigration violations are highly restricted and in some cases impossible. Expedited removal doesn't allow for any review of deportations.

Illegal Presence: Criminalizes non-citizens further by creating federal crime called "illegal presence." Effectively disqualifies all non-citizens convicted of immigration violations from future citizenship which will drive illegals further into the shadows. Criminalizing non-citizens will involve all local police in immigration matters. This will drive a wedge between police and immigrant communities.

Redefines "smuggling": this could criminalize many humanitarian organizations for

merely providing services to non-citizens. HR 4437 treats churches like smuggling organizations.

In "The Battle and the War" an article by the American Friends Service Committee, the Nobel Peace Prize winning Quaker group, a concise outline of the origins of anti-immigrant movements in US history is provided.

Restrictionism and Race Racism in immigration policy

For the past 150 years, attitudes towards immigrants have changed cyclically, often undergoing rapid shifts in response to economic or political conditions. In periods of social and economic turmoil anti-immigrant sentiments tend to flare up as people look for someone to blame.

There was the Chinese Exclusion Act that banned Chinese-born laborers from entering the country in the late 1800's. There was "operation wetback" in which 500,000 or so people of Mexican descent (including US citizens) were deported during the great depression. Then, there was the Japanese-American internment during WWII. The battle for immigrant rights is not new, and it is certainly not over.

Though it may seem otherwise, the right-wing is not, by any means, united over the issue of illegal immigration. The rift in the right wing is illustrated well in an article "The Immigration Debate: Whose Side Are You On?" By Tom Barry.

Therein he states, "Most of the leading neoconservatives, especially Jews and Catholics, have a strong sense of their immigrant origins. Moreover, the neoconservatives have regarded immigration flows of both cheap and skilled workers as an unmitigated benefit for U.S. corporations and hence the U.S. economy."

There are, however, many anti-immigrant groups in the US which operate "...outside the political network of the right's leading think tanks and policy institutes, such as the American Enterprise Institute and the Heritage Foundation--organizations that are closely associated with corporate interests and therefore opposed to the restrictionist agenda."

Many of these anti-immigrant groups have strong ties to white-supremacist and white nationalist groups. In his article, Tom Barry mentions a man named John Tanton. Of Tanton, Barry states, "In addition to being a cofounder and current board member of FAIR, Tanton has been a key figure in establishing and funding a phalanx of anti-immigrant

and "English Only" institutes, including NumbersUSA, the Center for Immigration Studies, Population-Environment Balance, U.S. English, ProEnglish, Social Contract Press, and U.S. Inc."

A few years back, the Southern Poverty Law center published a few articles in its quarterly newspaper about the same man. One of these articles, entitled *The Puppeteer*, begins with the subtitle, "The organized anti-immigration 'movement,' increasingly in bed with racist hate groups, is dominated by one man, John Tanton." The SPLC lists all of Tanton's organizations as hate groups.

The Cultural War

White nationalists seem to have entered into a courtship with cultural nationalists, another stripe of resurgent nationalism.

Barry places Samuel P. Huntington at the vanguard of this "cultural nationalist" school. Huntington is famous for his work, *The Clash of Civilizations*, which proposes that immense cultural differences divide the dominant civilizations of today and are a major source of international conflict. Huntington has given an intellectually acceptable air to cultural nationalism, says Tom Barry. Of Latin American immigrants, Huntington wrote,

"In this new era the single most immediate and most serious challenge to America's traditional identity comes from the immense and continuing immigration from Latin America, especially Mexico." And further, "as their numbers increase Mexican-Americans feel increasingly comfortable with their own culture and often contemptuous of American culture."

White nationalism and cultural nationalism, in this case, are two movements that share some overlap in membership. Both consider themselves to be under attack by malicious foreigners. Both groups seem to have adopted a certain "siege mentality" as a result, and are digging in for battle.

Unfortunately there seems to be a new, or at least stronger, bond forged between white supremacist anti-immigrant groups and the neo-conservative movement, whose adherents dominate the Bush administration. Perhaps it is merely a bid by the neo-conservatives to capitalize on anti-immigrant constituency, but it is troubling nonetheless.

Understanding these movements seems to shed some light on HR 4437. This bill is not a realistic response to the crisis of illegal immigration so much as a mutation of a xenophobic wave of public hysteria into a xenophobic piece of legislation.

Operation Backfire

Arrests, snitches, infiltrants and other wintry news

by onion

Two waves of arrests have shaken the radical environmental community. In the first wave of arrests, 6 activists were picked up across the country in a coordinated FBI raid on December 7th. Several others were given subpoenas to testify before a Grand Jury in February, two of whom were later also arrested and released on bail. All of those arrested are facing charges meriting life sentences if convicted, for a number of arsons claimed by the Animal and Earth Liberation Front between 1998 and 2001, among them, notably, an arson carried out immediately before the trial of Jeffrey Luers or Free now serving 20+ years for burning 3 SUVs. A total of 11 people are now looking at October 31st as their trial date, all facing 36 counts. Among those arrested are Joseph Dibee, Chelsea Dawn Gerlach, Sarah Kendall Harvey, Daniel McGowan, Stanislas Meyerhoff, Josephine Overaker, Rebecca Rubin, Darren Todd Thurston and Kevin Tubbs. In Eugene, Oregon, two defendants, Jonathan Christopher Mark Paul, 39, and Suzanne Nicole "India" Savoie, 28 were also arrested. Of these, three are thought to be living outside of the country.

All these arrests, it turns out, are thanks to FBI snitch Jacob Ferguson, who lived with and was trusted among Oregon's radical community for years. Since September 2004, Jake had been wearing a wire and deliberately fishing for information from his friends for the FBI. During this time, according to an FBI affidavit made public since the arrests, he helped organize and carry out several actions and secured crucial information for FBI investigators. The news has been devastating to many of his former friends. Bill Rodgers, also known as "Avalon," one of those arrested December 7th committed suicide in his cell just after Ferguson's name came out in the mainstream press. And since his arrest Stanislas Meyerhoff, who was extensively cited in the affidavit turned snitch and is now a "co-operating witness" against his former comrades.

On January 13th the FBI picked up 3 more people in Auburn, California, accusing them of planning to burn down a cell phone tower, a power plant and a US Forest Service facility. This time around a "confidential source" had provided the FBI with information for the arrests. Another affidavit, released in connection with their arrests, documents a paid FBI infiltrator now known to have gone by the name Anna Davies, as she befriended a number of anar-

chists and eco-activists and helped plan a number of bombings and fires. Not only does she "inform" the FBI, but she uses FBI money to pay for ingredients of the explosives as well as rent a cabin they use to plan actions from; she helps pick targets and leads the others into situations where they are under audio and video surveillance. Just before their arrests, "Anna" allegedly stormed out of the FBI rented cabin pissed off they weren't moving fast enough.

Other worthy mentions in the affidavit are the ELF's "strong philosophical connection to the anarchist movement". They go on to cite Crimethink as a major influence to anarchists, giving special mention to the book Evasion. They go on to cite references to Crimethinkesque slogans and to Evasion in previous ELF actions.

The affidavit mentions Philadelphia twice. Once in reference to the June of last year's "Biodemocracy" protests when a Civil Affairs cop gave himself a lethal heart attack while punching his way through a crowd of docile anti-biotech protesters. Hanging out with the anti-biotech protesters was our informant Anna all geared up as a street medic in the thick of the action (according to the affidavit) supposedly learning how to make Molotov Cocktails from McDavid. The affidavit then places McDavid and our informant Anna at what the FBI dubs "the anarchist convergence called Pointless fest", where they recruit Zachary Jensen (known as "Ollie") and Philadelphian Lauren Weiner (known as Ren) to join their crew.

A little research on Anna, the infiltrator places her all over the US, doing her best to buddy up to activists of various stripes. Comments to a post on the alternative news website indymedia.org places Anna at a number of eco and anarchist gatherings (Feral Visions and Crimethink), protests against the G8, the DNC in Boston and the Organization of American states in Florida. She also attempted to get involved with the Pittsburgh Organizing Group, and various animal rights groups including Philly's Hugs for Puppies, whose house was raided by the Joint Terrorism Task Force back in 2004.

Some of the surveillance methods exposed in the affidavit include being followed by agents, watched, video surveillance, wires etc. But the use of My Space and Live journal are also cited. FBI surveillance of Jensen's My Space page made it just a little too easy for them from the comfort of their office to place Jensen at a protest in California where windows were smashed and someone had spray painted more or less direct references to his collective house. The arrests, incidentally, come after years of FBI blundering in the dark after the ELF, who according to the FBI affidavit have caused upwards of \$100 million in property damage since 1997. Even after an arson in Vail, considered by many to be among the ELF's greatest hits, feds made statements to the press describing their frustration in their inability to track down any culprits of this "shadowy" and "elusive" organization. No doubt contributing to this is that the ELF as well as the ALF are not typical organizations. Anyone can carry out an ELF action provided they follow three principles:

1. To inflict maximum economic damage on those profiting from the destruction and exploitation of the natural environ-

ment.

2. To reveal and educate the public about the atrocities committed against the earth and all species that populate it.

3. To take all necessary precautions against harming any animal - human and nonhuman.

That the term "terrorist" is used liberally by the feds when describing the ELF is suspect, to say the least, especially considering principle three. The ELF doesn't have members; it doesn't have a command center or tangible leaders. The ELF has actions. Desperate to fit the ELF into their box as an entity which can somehow be busted, the FBI are now trying to pin those few in their grips with all the major of ELF and ALF cases still open, including the Vail arson. And obviously desperate to get any significant victory in the government's fruitless hunt for terrorists, the feds themselves went as far as orchestrating arsons and bombings in order to bust anyone they could.

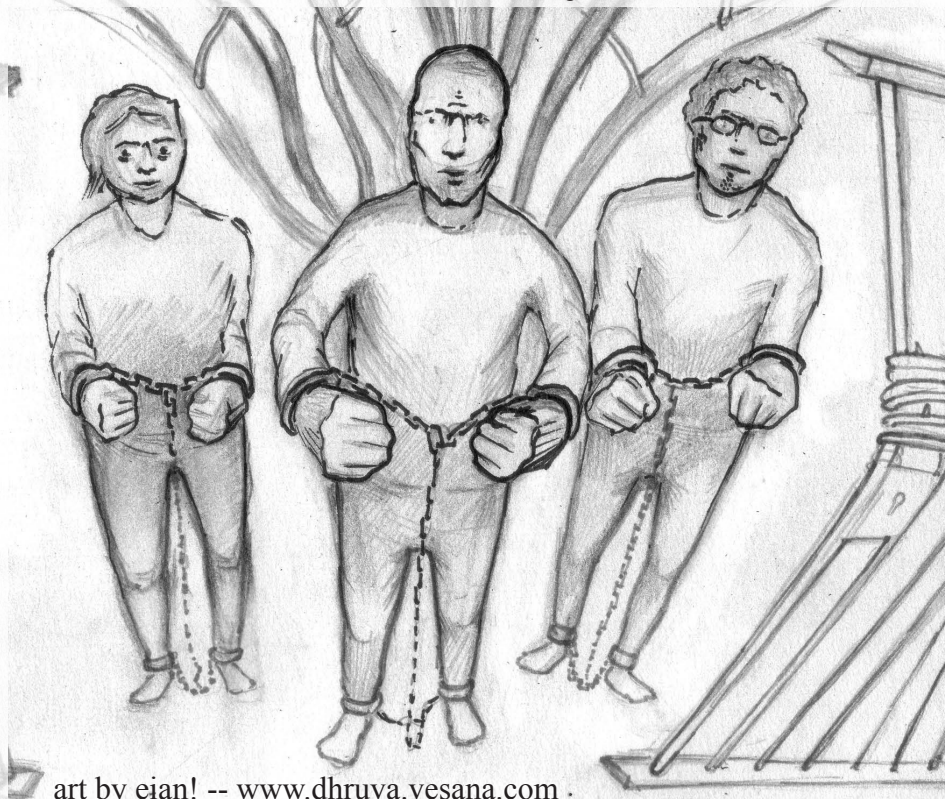
Since the arrests there have been a number of hearings.

On December 19th Kevin Tubbs was hit with 36 charges in connection with the Romania Chevrolet dealership fire immediately before Jeffrey Luers' trial with a charge for each vehicle destroyed (carrying a maximum of 20 years each) plus an enhancement for the use of an incendiary device, carrying a mandatory minimum of 30 years

At a January 28th hearing cross examining revealed a number of things about the informants and snitches. Anna Davies, the infiltrator, was paid by the FBI \$75,000 plus expenses for her snitching which lasted over 2 years and involved "twelve anarchist cases". Not only did the FBI pay for ingredients of the explosives and bought them a laptop to use, they also rented the cabin where they stayed at Anna's request, the same place she stomped out of just before their arrest, allegedly furious they weren't acting fast enough. "Anna" also co-authored their "burn book," a list of explosives and targets being used as evidence. Reading through the affidavits and reports it seems unlikely that without FBI involvement there would have even been an action to bust.

Another hearing on January 25th allegedly included numerous citations of Zachary's My Space and Live Journal entries including a dream, which was promptly thrown out by the judge.

On January 20th, came 12 indictments, rubber stamped by a Grand Jury. The evidence listed cited testimony from five "confidential sources" including Ferguson and Davies. A third is thought to be Jen Kolar previously associated with the Earth First group Buffalo Field Campaign. A few days later Chelsea



art by eian! -- www.dhruva.vesana.com

Gerlach was arraigned on new charges related to an arson at a meat packing plant and a Poplar farm in Oregon

On January 31st Eric McDavid began a hunger strike and is allegedly in bad shape. Eric has been vegan for years and is being denied access to commissary food or any food he can eat. While prison authorities were claiming he was doing fine his supporters say he is very sick and needs help.

In a February 6th parole hearing, it became clear that Kevin Tubbs both agreed to co-operate with authorities against his former comrades and was denied parole by the judge.

In August of 2005, the FBI testified to Congress that "The No. 1 domestic terrorism threat is the eco-terrorism, animal-rights movement" (see post below). It seems obvious now that the agency wanted to ramp up hysteria about these groups in the lead-up to the arrests. The FBI used to make these claims in 2001, but dropped them after 9/11 when they were pressured to go after some real live terrorists for once.

Some obvious lessons emerge from this story. Number one: If you do illegal things, don't talk about them. There's absolutely no reason to bring stories of actions outside of the group who carried it out. Email and phone conversations are all already recorded and tagged (just google Echelon for more info on this), so best not mess with these for planning illegal actions let alone My Space blog entries.

Among the worst of those who gave information was Jake, now "Jake the Snake". Jake had allegedly been strung out on heroin at some point around when friends of his think he was approached by the FBI. It's a bad time of course for people who have both in ways abandoned their friends and no doubt feel themselves alienated. Making sure comrades are given care in rough times is important.

Despite all the bad news, the famous elusiveness of the ELF has kept the FBI relatively clueless. While still claiming to have busted the "family" who they claim to be responsible for the majority of ELF and ALF actions

in the last decade, numerous ELF actions have gone down even since the arrests, including a \$2-3 million dollar arson of elite homes in Washington State.

This all has been a brutal hit to the radical left in general. Just following Operation Backfire came arrests of a number of other activists including Rod Coronado and the SHAC 7, who all are looking at possible decades in prison, very rough sentences considering the supposed

crimes. Though we all know the potential costs of struggle, these arrests were for the most part unexpected and unexpectedly painful as a movement to swallow. Not so surprising is the concurrent passage of a new Patriot Act and laws like the proposed anti-immigrant bill (see article elsewhere in this issue) all, measures which entrench and broaden state control. I'm sure we can expect this to be just the tip of the iceberg.

In the time since this article was written Jacob Ferguson, Stanislas Meyerhoff, Kendall Tankersly, Kevin Tubbs, and Jennifer Kolar have all made public statements that they are co-operating with the courts.

For more info on Operation Backfire and the recent arrests see

<http://www.spiritoffreedom.org.uk/>
<http://portland.indymedia.org/en/topic/prisonissues/>
<http://defenestrator.org/prison>



Infiltrator "Anna Davies" at the Biodemocracy protest in Philly. Anna spent 2 years of planning arsons for the FBI at dishwashing wages. Beats the hell out of shooting kids in Iraq.



Book Review

Broad Spectrum Disorder: The Military in the New American Century

By Stan Goff, US Army (Retired)
 Soft Skull Press
 Brooklyn NY
 2004

Reviewed by Paul Walker

Stan Goff's Broad Spectrum Disorder chronicles the journey of a Special Operations soldier from the conflict in Vietnam through Guatemala, Panama, Haiti and the Gulf War. What makes Stan Goff's story so vital is that it is the story of an awakening of a particular sort, one which many soldiers are surely experiencing today in Iraq and Afghanistan. Goff entered the military and became a member of the Special Forces. He describes the beginning of his radicalization from within the Special Forces

[T]he very strength of Special Forces – their ability to work autonomously immersed in other cultures, and called upon constantly to exercise extreme resourcefulness and creativity – is the greatest contradiction they carry into an imperialist military. They are asked to conduct operations in the world's most "politically sensitive environments," often on missions of profound strategic significance, but to do so, they must think independently, observe carefully, and exercise a great deal of personal and cultural sensitivity. This exposes them to subversive influences, like international reality.

From the transgression of Vietnam, where Goff is irrevocably stripped of a great deal of his naiveté about the nature of our world, to the killing fields of Guatemala where he listens to a drunk CIA agent describing massacring Indians as the "best fuckin' thing I got to do since 'Nam," to Haiti, where a group of soldiers come within a hair's breadth of firing on a protest after a rock is hurled at them, to the chaos of Mogadishu, Broad Spectrum Disorder chronicles this subversion.

Stan Goff picks away at the cracks in the US military's mortar: their unwieldy

command and control structure, behemoth bureaucracy and the Powell Doctrine, with its precept of troop protection which essentially limits ground action by US forces to guaranteed victories, eliminating any potential initiative or agility which they might take on the field of battle. He uses today's conflicts as case studies, pointing to Iraq where US troops are confined to heavily fortified bases, moving supplies and conducting operations via expensive airlifts or cumbersome armored convoys which insurgent elements are free to attack at will, even as they enjoy freedom of movement through most of the country.

From these case studies, and his own military experience, he builds a two-pronged revolutionary praxis. On the one hand, he insists that a guerilla insurgency is the most effective way to combat US armed power. In the chapter entitled *Strategy, Chaos, and Agility* Stan Goff lays out a blueprint for successful battlefield strategy which emphasizes hit and run tactics carried out at a pace meant to through an

adversary off of their guard, by getting inside of their "decision cycle."

In the initial phase of development of the Iraqi guerilla resistance, for example, many of the actions seemed uncoordinated – which they may or may not have been. But the tempo of the hit-and-run attacks on US occupation troops – averaging one attack almost every day

– served to disorient the operation commanders.

On the other hand, Stan Goff places the soldiers in the US Armed Forces at the center of his analysis of long-term social change.

Every successful revolution requires either the neutralization or active participation of military people... My vision is that the American armed forces, when they are harshly taught as the current conjecture will teach them, will unite with the people, and that sections of it will break away and become the defenders of their families, and thereby a liberatory force.



Cellphone War in the Congo

By Paul Walker

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), formerly Zaire, has been involved in a bloody civil war spanning nearly a decade. Beginning in August of 1998, the conflict involves many neighboring Central African countries and is fueled by long-standing ethnic rivalries, the region's brutal legacy of colonialism and competition over valuable natural resources largely consumed by the west. Columbite-Tantalite, known as Coltan is one of those resources. Found in cell phones and other electronics, demand for the mineral spiked in recent years, contributing to the ongoing violence in Central Africa. While the American media seems not to have noticed, American corporations and consumers are helping to fuel a devastating war and speed the extinction of endangered species.

Adam Hochschild documented the legacy of European colonialism-and particularly its impacts on the territories that became the DRC-in his book *King Leopold's Ghost*. His work focuses on the imperial ambitions of King Leopold II of Belgium, who originally laid claim to the vast territory surrounding the Congo River, enslaving its inhabitants so as to extract its natural resources. The genocidal plunder of the Congo region is a shameful and largely forgotten chapter of European Colonial history, during which some ten million Congolese were killed. But the deep and abiding scars this period left on the Congo cannot just be recorded with a tally of the dead. (Although considering the dimensions of the violence committed-which numerically rivals other instances of genocide in the 20th century-it is interesting to note its utter absence from the historical memory of most western nations).

One obvious imprint of its colonial past is the distinction in Rwandan society between the Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups, a key factor in the recent Rwandan Genocide, with roots in the Belgian colonial administration. The Belgians created this distinction by selecting the more Caucasian looking inhabitants of their colony as the members of the Colonial administration. The lighter-skinned "Hutus" were given some authority over the "Tutsis," thus pitting groups against each other.

In the last chapter of his book, Hochschild explains the involvement of Western powers-namely the US and Western Europe-in shaping the politics of post-colonial Congo, which was swept up in the mass of anti-colonial, independence movements that convulsed the continent in the 1950's. The Congolese independence movement made Patrice Lumumba the Prime Minister of the Congo, in what was the first

Democratic, national election the region had ever had. Lumumba sought a clean break with the Congo's past, believing "that political independence was not enough to free Africa from its colonial past; the continent must also cease to be an economic colony of Europe." His politics frightened Belgian, British and American Corporations which had invested heavily in mineral extraction in the Congo, and when he went so far as to seek economic aid from the Soviet Union, his fate was sealed.

Shortly after the election, then CIA director Allen Dulles authorized Lumumba's assassination, of which he later stated, "The President [Eisenhower] would have preferred to have him taken care of some other way than by assassination, but he regarded Lumumba as I did and a lot of other people did: as a mad dog... and he wanted the problem dealt with."

The CIA supported anti-Lumumba elements of his government, culminating in Lumumba's eventual torture and secret execution in January 1961. According to Hochschild, "a CIA agent ended up driving around the city [Elizabethville] with Lumumba's body in his car's trunk, trying to find a place to dispose of it."

The coup against Lumumba brought the former chief of staff of the Congolese armed forces, Joseph Desire Mobutu to power, and his 32 year reign was characterized by monumental graft, netting Mobutu some \$4 billion in personal wealth at the height of his power, and encouraging the complete breakdown of the Congolese government. His greed and that of the foreign mining interests was sanctioned all the while by the US who provided him with his own private jet to facilitate his frequent visits to Washington.

The current war in the Congo finds its roots in the Rwandan genocide of 1994 during which some 800,000 Tutsis were killed by the Hutu Interahamwe militia. The militia fled to Northeastern Congo where they were given refuge by then-president Mobutu. Rwanda decided to use military force to disarm the militia. In 1997, anti-Mobutu rebels supported by Rwanda took the capitol Kinshasa and renamed the country the Democratic Republic of Congo, installing Laurent Desire Kabila as president. In 1998, Rwanda and Uganda re-invaded. By the end of 1998, rebels - supported by Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi - occupied more than one third of the DRC, while forces from Angola, Chad, Namibia and Zimbabwe fought on the side of Kabila's government. In 2001 Laurent Kabila was assassinated, to be succeeded by his son Joseph.

According to Human Rights Watch civilians are the primary victims of the war in the Congo with more than 3 million dead since the war's outbreak in 1998. The U.N. Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth in the DRC noted that after Ugandan incursions into the Congo, diamonds became an official source of revenue for the Ugandan government, despite the fact that they were illegally obtained. Rwanda has benefited from ill-gotten DRC resources as well, though in a murkier, less brazen fashion. The U.N. Panel made the following observation:

"Military specialists argue that the Rwandan objective is to capture these mineral-rich areas [in the northeastern Congo] to deprive the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo of the financial sources of its war effort. Without the control of this area, the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo cannot sustain the war. This rationale confirms that the availability of natural resources permits the continuation of the war."

Coltan - like gold, diamonds, petroleum, copper, rubber, tin, etc, etc, elsewhere - is one of these resources. Coltan, columbite-tantalite, occurs in 3-billion-year-old soils and is mined in conventional mines or dug out of river beds. Much of the element is found in protected parks in the northeastern Congo, occupied by rebel militias. As stated above, rebels have strategically occupied these regions in order to set up mining operations which finance the militias and the war. The ore is smuggled out of the country and sold up the chain through a network of suppliers to chip manufacturers who make tantalum capacitors. These heat-resistant capacitors are used to manage the flow of electricity in cell-phones, video-game systems, digital cameras, cars and other modern electronics.

Most of the world's supply of Coltan, a metal-bearing ore not regulated on international markets, is found in Australia but the DRC cites Canada as having the world's fourth largest Coltan supply. In 2000 demand for the substance spiked as cell phones and electronics sales boomed and the price of ore shot up from around \$40 a kilo to \$100 or more. In the DRC this spelled disaster. It is estimated that as many as 30% of school-aged children abandoned their studies to mine the substance, while numerous farmers abandoned their vocations to mine as well - exacerbating an existing food shortage in the region. This is in addition to the fact that mining is prolonging a war.

In 2000 the United States was the world's largest consumer of the nearly 7 million

pounds of tantalum consumed.

Beyond the human impact of the trade in Coltan and the continuation of the DRC's bloody war, local populations of endangered gorillas, elephants and okapi have plummeted as rebels occupy the parks, set-up mining operations, and cut access to park rangers. Reports suggest that the population of lowland gorillas has dropped by as much as 80 to 90 percent in the northeastern Congo.

A shaky peace process in the Congo is constantly interrupted by sporadic violence and the price of Coltan has dropped to its pre-boom value of \$40 per kilo with unforetold consequences for the Congo and Central Africa, but it is transnational corporations and first-world consumers who benefit from the environmental destruction and human misery wrought by Congo's war and the looting of its natural endowment of material wealth. The story is a very old one in Africa and throughout the world. As Shell stood by while the Ogoni people were massacred to clear lucrative oil-fields, the executives of Nokia, Motorola, Nintendo and others glibly shrug their shoulders and collect the massive harvests of the technology boom. While North Americans sip lattes in air-conditioning and chat on cell phones during rush hour, children and farmers are driven into mines by a brutal 10-year war that has its roots in European colonialism. The pretension of "progress and advancement" which capitalism claims to bring is belied by the brutality with which it obtains the blood-stained resources fueling that so-called progress. Built on the barbarism and slavery of not only the past, but the present as well, the rise of the high-tech industry, much like the rise of the industrial age before it, is predicated on the stolen resources of the global south, and the stolen labor of the world's poor.

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SO YOU SAY YOU WANT DEMOCRACY?

[Col. Writ. 1/26/06]
Mumia Abu-Jamal

The results of the recent Palestinian parliamentary elections, principally the surprise gains by Hamas, have sent shock waves throughout the world. The elections not only toppled the ruling Fatah movement from the majority in Parliament, it sent shock waves through Europe, Israel, and the United States.

What was most surprising is that the Hamas victories took place just hours after the corporate press cited exit polls showing Fatah winning a majority, and Hamas badly trailing them.

American reporters didn't get it so wrong simply because they relied on the wrong exit polls; they also relied on the same, old talking heads, so-called experts and journalists alike, who in turn relied on primarily Israeli sources.

If they could be so wrong and so misinformed about Palestine, what does that tell you about the American/Western adventures in Iraq? It shows, as clearly as a red flag before a bull, that the Iraq misadventure is based on misinformation and wishful thinking.

The avowed purpose of the Iraq Invasion and Occupation was to bring democracy to the Middle East, starting with Iraq.

Yet, once people are free to vote, especially in this repressive climate, who do

you think they'd vote for?

Will they vote for leaders that are bought and paid off by the West? Or will they choose representatives that are independent of Western influences?

What we have seen in Palestine and the Occupied Territories is a precursor of what is to come in Iraq.

When Arab populations see their leaders wearing slick Italian suits, living like princes (some *are* princes!), and living in the lap of luxury, do you think this engenders trust?

Within minutes of the Hamas victory, American and other donor countries announced they would cut off subsidies to the Palestinian Authority if Hamas intends to participate in government.

Statements such as these illustrate how compromised the former leaders were, dependent as they were on money from foreigners.

It's almost as if the West was offering to buy off Hamas.

The stunning victory at the polls is a harbinger of things to come.

The consternation and eruptions of temper from western leaders shows us that they didn't really care about 'democracy' at all.

And what of 'the peace process', you ask? Simple. There never was a peace process.

There was a negotiated surrender, which used words like 'peace' to disguise more land-grabs, more occupation, more *lebersraum*.

The Hamas electoral victory, gives us some inkling of what

'democracy' could mean in a future Iraq, one which becomes an Arab province of a vast Shi'a superstate.

Is there any real doubt that if a true 'democratic' election were held in Egypt, it would topple the Mubarak regime?

Islamic parties won a nice, new and improved chunk of Egypt's parliament recently.

And what of the principates throughout the region?

How long do you think the royal houses would last, if the people were able to vote for democratic rule?

The Palestinian elections show us many people in the Arab regions long for a change. Who would've thought that the party once led by Yasir Arafat, so soon after his passing, would be so quickly swept from power?

The Bush Administration claimed to want democracy.

This is what democracy looks like.

And yet, truth be told, the Palestinians haven't been freed by this election. Their lands are still occupied. There are over 5 million Palestinian refugees scattered in squalid refugee camps throughout the region. Their election may've given them a burst of national consciousness; it didn't deliver sovereignty.

For millions of Palestinians, this is a day to be remembered, but it pales beneath the "Nak ba" (Palestinian term for 'catastrophe'). They mark their days by the invasions, expulsions, and military actions of the Israelis.

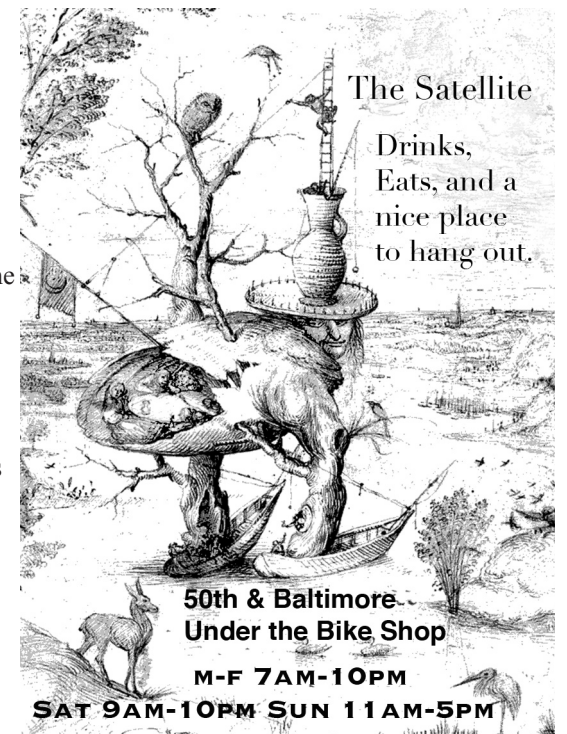
Yet, though good days may be rare, they are still good days.

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Making the invisible visible continued from page 9

Wisconsin (republican) Congressman James Sensenbrenner who introduced the legislation has shown himself to be ardently pro business, supporting the recent bankruptcy reform which makes it harder to escape debt (he refused exemptions for victims of hurricane Katrina**), and has consistently voted in support of free-trade bills as well as reducing taxes on the wealthy.** At the same time, he has voted on the side of restrictionism, as in the case of the Real ID act, which restricts the issuance of id cards to non-citizens, or in the case of HR 4437.

In a sense Sensenbrenner seems to represent the rift in the right wing over illegal immigration, and its apparent reconciliation through xenophobia. Lets just hope that this nation comes to its senses, and that we can make the invisible visible before it disappears for good.



Shell continued from page 8

mail statement. "Our aim is to totally destroy the capacity of the Nigerian government to export oil." Violence in the region has flared since the arrest in September of Moujahid Dokubo-Asari, a militant leader who is now in custody awaiting trial on treason charges.

Militants in the delta enjoy widespread support as 20 million people remain rooted in poverty despite the enormous wealth generated in the oil-rich area, putting Nigeria among the leading Opec nations.

The fate of the indigenous people of the delta was brought to global attention by Ken Saro-Wiwa, the human rights campaigner executed in 1995 after a vocal campaign against the practices of major oil companies in Nigeria.

Shell, which controls just under half of Nigeria's daily exports of 2.5 million barrels, has reduced operations by 106,000 barrels a day after the pipeline rupture. In December, an attack on another key pipeline similarly forced the company to suspend export of large quantities of crude oil from its Bonny oil export terminal for two weeks.h

Shell is the largest oil producer in Nigeria, which is key to US hopes of reducing dependence on supplies from the volatile Gulf region. A major staff pullout is likely to trigger more output cuts in the country, already hit by the attacks.

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The Wounded Come Home: The Hidden Cost of the War in Iraq

by Bronwyn

While public opinion polls steadily show decreased support for the continuing war on Iraq, and the Cindy Sheehan campout and a well turned-out march in D.C. in late September gave the anti-war movement a much needed jolt, the lack of a consistent and well-organized anti-war voice or of daily outcries or actions against the war can likely be partly attributed to the still "relatively low" number of casualties (now over 2, 270* - check Coalition Casualty Count and Iraq Body Count's website for daily updates on death tolls) in comparison to other wars/conflicts of U.S. involvement. Though their was vocal opposition to the Gulf War, the low casualty count, as well as the relative swiftness of the operation, allowed most in the U.S. to feel "grateful" for the supposedly insubstantial impact to 'our side.' (Despite the fact that post-war over 8, 000 Gulf Vets have died and over 220, 000 are on disability). "The bloodshed...is worth it," proclaims the Commander in Chief. So unless one is directly hit - in the form of the death or injury of a loved one or close friend, things still don't seem so bad considering the amount of time in country.

"Like most Americans," Bush declared in yet another rhetorically empty speech last Fall, "I see the images of violence and bloodshed." But it's not like we're actually confronted with pictures of the carnage in the papers or on the news. One has to research and go through more academic channels like the New England Journal of Medicine (see photos) to find pictures of the damaged, or to run into a returned soldier on the streets and get a look at his anxious eyes, feel the nervous handshake or get second-hand reports about how Johnny or Jill just "isn't the same person" since he or she came back (Philadelphia Weekly's "In Dubious Battle" 2/1/06 reports on soldiers returning to the area). How many photographed moments of the agony of Iraq has the average American really been witness to? During the Vietnam War, when the public was exposed to portraits of the wounded, the dead, the suffering, essayist John Berger wrote: "Confrontation with a photographed moment of agony can mask a far more extensive and urgent confrontation. Usually the wars, which we are being shown, are being fought directly or indirectly in 'our' name. What we are shown horrifies us. The next step should be for us to confront our own lack of political freedom." The current lack of exposure to the truths of the war, along with the relatively low body bag return (and, of course, even photos of the draped caskets aren't allowed in the media), make such a confrontation even less likely, the horror less real. The human damage isn't smacking us in the face on a daily basis, but it's there, and more and more it will be coming home, so we should pay attention. (According to The Casualties of Iraq: The Human Cost of Occupation website, the official count of U.S. wounded is 16, 653, while unofficial counts are as high as 48, 000 - this does not include psychological wounds/disorders).

In the July 2005 issue of *Harpers* magazine, pediatric nephrologist/former military doctor Ronald T. Glasser, M.D., reported on some of the horrible consequences of the current war for the surviving soldiers, and consequently



typical large fragment wound of the leg

"Now you have your leg, now you don't. Get your head around that and you've got your head around war."

Stan Goff

for their friends and families and for all of us who have failed to put enough pressure, take enough of a stand, to bring it to an end. Despite all the arguments about free will (it's their choice to join), moral failure (killing is wrong), and misguided patriotism (some of them want to be there/believe they're 'doing good'), their suffering (and the suffering they cause) still represents our collective failure. The often massively diminished quality of life, (which is not to say that the disabled can not still achieve quality, but to seriously question the necessity or goal of such sacrifice) through loss of limbs, serious burns, neurological damage, psychic trauma, and blindness must be taken into account. How can the impact of not being able to see, to write, to draw, to make love, to work, to think clearly, to feel productive and whole be measured? Iraq veteran Charlie Anderson writes (in "Open Letter to Bubba" 2/2 - see IVAW website) of returning soldiers: "...they get to live in a physical and emotional hell, not able to recover and not able to voice the pain they feel or the psychic demons they face."

Though today's soldier is more likely to stay alive than his counterparts in previous conflicts, other stats are not so rosy. "...these people would have died in earlier wars," states Anderson "But because of the gallant efforts of brave doctors and medics they get to live. They get to live with teams of ten or more doctors just trying to get their broken, mangled bodies through another day." According to Glaser's research, "eight soldiers have been wounded for every one killed, about double the rate in Korea, Vietnam, and the Gulf War. The percentage of soldiers who have undergone amputations is twice that of any of our past military conflicts; nearly a quarter of all the wounded suffer from traumatic head injuries, far more than in our other recent wars." Advances in medical technology and protective armor may allow more soldiers to survive, at least with their torsos intact, but the weapons of urban warfare have also become more lethal and destructive, injuries more serious. There are more amputations, and more blindness and brain damage. 70% of injuries are caused by IEDs (Improvised Explosive Devices), rocket-propelled grenades or car bombs - the indirect combat of getting hit from below, from the side, while driving in a poorly armored vehicle. "Walter

Reed is full of soldiers whose bodies are riddled with shrapnel," writes Christian Davenport ("Scarred Beneath the Skin" 2/4/06). "Many carry around the fragments doctors have left inside them to work their way out over time." Extreme facial and eye injuries are common as is damage to the central nervous system and muscle tissue. An entirely new medical diagnosis (TBI) Traumatic Brain Injury (which can have a delayed onset and is thus often not treated effectively) had to be created. "Soldiers," writes Glasser, "suffer from memory loss, short attention spans, muddled reasoning, headaches, confusion, anxiety, depression and irritability." Add to this the consequences of PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder), major depression, and generalized anxiety, much of which will go



undergoing therapy for a prosthetic leg

untreated. If it is treated, it's typically through medication rather than therapy combined with meds. As the war comes home, the personal, social and economic costs are immeasurable.

Glasser describes how the "largest monetary costs will involve the long-term care of thousands of severely and irrevocably damaged veterans - and these costs will only increase as the years pass." A below-the-knee computerized prosthesis, for example, comes with a \$50,000 price tag. Soldiers are treated by the more state of the art military health-care system only while still on active duty, and, of course, the most badly injured can hardly remain "active" or useful to the military. In today's insurance driven managed health-care system it's unlikely that such soldiers will find affordable medical coverage. VA hospitals, already way under funded and overburdened, are hardly prepared to take on the types of treatment many soldiers will require. They simply don't have the capacity to take on the inevitable influx of physical and emotional casualties. Veterans can wait months for needed surgeries and treatments - some die waiting, others aren't treated adequately or in a timely manner. And many states, such as Illinois, where homeless Vets can wait years for aid, play it cheap when it comes to disability pay (poverty thus exacerbating health problems).



a common type of injury associated with running over an explosive device in a humvee

"PTS is not a disorder. Calling it that earns it a place in the DSMIV - professionalizes and medicalizes the very accurate perception that the world is not safe, and that life is not a comforting film convention. Calling it an individual 'disorder' cloaks the social systems responsible for experiences like Vietnam and Iraq." Stan Goff, from "Returning Home Alive"

Last summer a group of Iraqi veterans, many disabled themselves, did a bike tour to raise money (shooting for 2 million) for injured comrades. Called the Wounded Warrior Project, the group is trying to call attention to the present and anticipated need of funds for operations and the kind of long-term care some returning soldiers will need. Such a goal is certainly worthy. But the terms warrior and hero the project uses ring a false note considering the circumstances of the war on Iraq where soldiers could be better defined as corporate slaves risking their own lives and destroying the lives of Iraqi's for the ideological and economic benefit of a small, rich and ugly few. As the Iraqi civilian death toll climbs (depending on the source anywhere between 25, 000 and 140,000) for a war based on lies, greed and more lies, (97 billion dollars slated for "reconstruction", 15 billion of that going to Halliburton, in Iraq can't be accounted for, yet VA hospitals are under funded by close to 3 million dollars) notions of heroic Americans fighting for "God, country and to defend our freedoms" hardly seem fitting, though obviously there are still some soldiers and military families who still believe such propaganda. More and more military soldiers and families are speaking out against the war. In The New Yorker journalist George Packer's recent piece "The Home Front" (4 July 2005) a father who asks why his son died in Iraq, despite trying over and over again to rationalize, find just reasons for and honor in, his son's death, comes up empty-handed; "Kurt's life - was he worth that? I'd say no. He was more important than that."

So what to do? For one, help discourage new enlistments. Military recruitment, for good reason (it's a little harder to lie about not seeing combat, though recruiters still do their best to lie about all the great 'benefits' of the military), is at an all time low. Counter-recruitment groups (check out AWOL magazine in Philly and the AFSC's Youth and Militarism program) need support. Also check out Opt

Out's website. Opt-Out actively flyered Philly public high schools as school started last September to let students know their rights and discourage them from recruitment. Help set up counter-recruitment tables at schools, colleges and other places recruiters hangout (excellent flyers can be downloaded at the Y and M website). Something that really stuck with me was hearing Vietnam Vets at an anti-war event at Robin's Bookstore shortly after the war started saying how they wished friends, family, etc. had tried to talk them out of enlisting and told them killing those who have done you no harm is wrong and that they could and would be killed or severely damaged physically and mentally. They wished people hadn't been so polite, so supportive, and so blindly patriotic. They wished people had tried to talk them out of it or shown them other options even if it meant going to jail. "Support the Troops" is a slogan that requires a lot of heavy thinking. Killing and maiming and death and amputation, and burned bodies and souls are strange things to support and we should not turn away from that truth. Soldiers fight wars, this one was wrong from the start, and we do them and ourselves a disservice when through our supposed support we fail to think critically and act accordingly to end it and to question the capitalist structures that create and perpetuate the need for ongoing wars.

(Check out the new doc *Why We Fight*)

Groups like Iraq Veterans Against the War (based here in Philly - check out their website: www.ivaw.org), because of their support for soldiers and veterans as human beings (many working class men and women of color who join up to get money for college or because they don't see other options), have come out firmly against the war: "We are committed to saving lives and ending the violence in Iraq by an immediate withdrawal of all occupying forces." "We also believe," declares their website, "that the governments that sponsored these wars are indebted to the men and women who fight them and must give their soldiers, marines and airmen/women the benefits that are owed to them upon their return." Other groups working against the war and therefore in support of stopping its horrors are Military Families Speak Out, Gold Star Families, and Bring Them Home Now, among others. Check them out to see what you can do to help end the occupation and to help those coming home. And, most importantly, we must begin to more seriously confront our lack of political freedom and take it back from the powers that be.

* Soldiers who die en-route to hospitals in Germany or in the hospital are not added to the casualty list, which would then be closer to 9, 000 dead.

Abolish Life Without Parole continued from page 7

judging others, while not being judged, is their birthright. Cottman's remarks encouraged conference attendees to demand that people in their families, neighborhoods and churches organize around a moral and ethical base that forces people to take a position on everything from the senseless killing in Iraq to life and death sentencing at home, all of which are leaving gaping holes in our communities.

Letters from lifers Sheldon Daniels, the president of the Lifers Association at SCI Huntingdon, Dannielle Hadley from SCI Muncy and Richard Marra from SCI Chester were read by their loved ones, keeping the day grounded in the realities and vantage points of the lifers themselves. Death row prisoner, Mumia Abu-Jamal also sent a recorded speech to the conference, which addressed one of the program's themes: Is LWOP a suitable alternative to the death penalty? In Mumia's words, "[a life sentence] in Pennsylvania is a half-life on Life-Row. It is a lifeless life. It differs from the death penalty only in degree, with Time as the executioner." Mumia forcefully articulated the parallels between the abolition of slavery and the present movement to abolish LWOP. He strongly cautioned against gradualism, stating that "gradualism really means never," and he thoughtfully affirmed the families who have loved ones serving life to "unite, organize and become a powerful social force."

The Fight For Lifers view the conference as a first step in a long-range program of community-organizing that includes a legislative agenda as well as a sustained support system for loved ones who are assisting lifers with commutation applications and the daily injustices of prison

life. FFL welcomes and encourages all activists and concerned citizens to become informed about life-sentencing in Pennsylvania and to join loved ones of lifers in the struggle to abolish LWOP.

Fight For Lifers meets the second Tuesday of every month at 1501 Cherry St. Philadelphia. Please contact us at 215-843-0620. www.lifewithoutparole.org

Fight For Lifers-West in Pittsburgh meets the 3rd Saturday of every month at the Thomas Merton Center in Garfield. 412-361-3022.

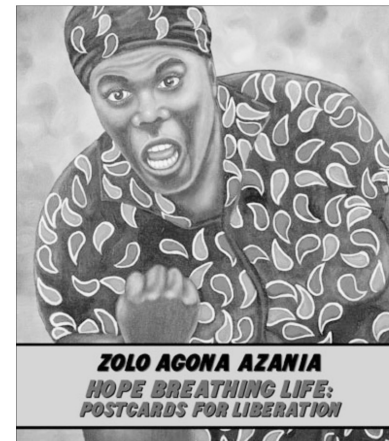
Hope Breathing Life: Postcards for Liberation

by Zolo Agona Azania

Sixteen postcards featuring artwork by Zolo Agona Azania, a New Afrikan political prisoner who has spent 23 years on death row, and this despite having forced the State to admit to racist improprieties in his trial and and having his sentence overturned

not once but twice. Although a judge ruled in May 2005 that the State should not be allowed to pursue the death penalty a third time as this would constitute a clear violation of Azania's rights, the prosecution is appealing, shamelessly pulling out all the stops to kill this man!

Funds from the sale of this booklet are used for Zolo's support campaign.



bulk rates available

this price includes postage:

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

email: info@kersplebedeb.com
web: <http://www.kersplebedeb.com/azania.html>



* \$20.00 Cdn postage included

— send only US or Cdn checks or Canadian or INTERNATIONAL U.S. Money Orders —

Mumia update continued from page 5

backed by several precedents on this point, seriously doubts that Pennsylvania prosecutors can succeed in their effort to uphold Judge Sabo's flawed jury instructions.

Assuming Bryan is correct and the State of Pennsylvania fails in this matter, the result must be either a decision by state prosecutors to drop the matter of Mumia's execution entirely and abide by Yohn's decision to change the verdict from execution to life imprisonment, or, in the alternative, the state can impanel an entirely new jury and retry the entire case. In this eventuality, however, the jury's verdict would be restricted to two options only, execution or life imprisonment. A verdict of innocence would be excluded from consideration.

Even here, however, the defense's ability to bring in evidence of innocence during a potential second trial might well result, according to Bryan, in new proceedings that could lead to Mumia's freedom.

From the realm of speculation we now proceed to consideration of more probably out-

comes. Bryan asserts with confidence that "The Third Circuit decision opens the door to a new trial and freedom for my client."

The case is now on the legal fast track. The next several months will see defense and prosecution attorneys meeting stringent deadlines for a series of briefs and counter briefs. The first deadline, January 17, has been imposed on the State of Pennsylvania to present its opening brief. Barring the granting of extensions, thirty days later the opening brief for the defense are to follow. These will be followed by a series of rebuttals. The 10-person court will then issue a decision or first set a date for a hearing and oral arguments.

In addition to the possible outcomes discussed above the Third Circuit could either order a new trial on all issues or send the case back to the Federal District Court to re-hear the issues where it had previously ruled without regard to Mumia's constitutional rights.

Close observers, including former Pennsylvania state prosecutors believe that a new trial for Mumia, where for the first time

in 24 years he would be allowed to present the full range of evidence proving his innocence, could only result in his acquittal and freedom.

While Mumia has won a critical victory on this road, Pennsylvania officials are far from conceding any error. They remain focused on securing a third order for Mumia's execution. Mumia's freedom will be a product of both his legal efforts and a mass political movement exerting its will and making the price of his execution and continued incarceration to high to pay.

Friend of the court or amicus curiae briefs are in preparation for Mumia by the NAACP's Legal Defense Fund on the Batson/jury selection issue and by the National Lawyers Guild on the issue of the constitutionally-flawed trial summation by state prosecutor, Joseph McGill.

In Philadelphia contact: International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal at 215-476-8812. In San Francisco contact: The Mobilization to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal at 415-255-1080. jmackler@locrian.com

Note from ICFMAJ:

Since this article was written the prosecution was granted two thirty day extensions. They were They were supposed to file in mid January. Now they must file in mid March. Two extensions are all they are entitled to.



rebel calendar

Saturday March 18th

Regional Anti-war march in New York City. Troops Out Now Coalition will gather in Harlem for a march into Manhattan.

Sunday March 19

Afropick: Rock for Light Show: Brown, Loud and Proud. with Cipher. the Mighty Paradocs, Blak Bushe and Gov't Cheese
7:45 pm Rotunda Free/All Ages

Monday March 20th

Autonomous Anti-War actions throughout Philadelphia
Join Brigada M20 in direct action across Philadelphia to bring consciousness of the war back into our local minds.

Immigrant Rights Demo: Everyone is an Immigrant
12pm - 4pm NJ State House, 125 W. State St., Trenton, N.J. - info : <http://daywithoutanimmigrant.com>

Wednesday March 22

The Hidden Massacre in Fallujah
A Documentary Film by Sigfrido Ranucci
This film charges the US with using Weapons of Mass Destruction on Iraqis. Sponsored by the Philadelphia Anti-War Forum www.phillyantiwar.org
7pm-9pm at the Friends Center 1501 Cherry ST, 15th and Cherry St

Liberation Jazz: Fuasi Abdul-Khalig

8pm at the A-Space

Friday March 24

Third World Newsreel: Call for Change video premier. Call for Change gives voice to the concerns of immigrant, low-income groups and communities of color often marginalized or silenced, particularly in this period of diminishing civil liberties.
International House, 3701 Chestnut Street, \$10

Saturday March 25

Infoshop Workshop
12-8 at the A-space

Girls' DJ class at the Rotunda 5-7pm

Tuesday March 28th

Taina Asili - Bend With the Wind
Taína will be featuring her newest multimedia performance, Bend With the Wind, which explores an Afro-Boricua warrior's fight against colonialism.

Friday, March 31

Poems Not Prisons Open Mic
With Monica Peters aka 91.75 FM WKUD's Mama wit da Drama. Also featuring Coffee, tea & treats as well as a Prisoners Families update from HRC. Bring your songs, poems, short stories, music, announcements and rants for the open mic. Raise funds, raise consciousness, raise the roof. All Proceeds to Benefit Human Rights Coalition A Prisoners' Families Organization
7:30pm at the A-space

Sunday April 9

Hibiscus: Queer Open Mic
7:30 at the A-space

Sunday April 16

Nomy Lamm and Tricrotic
at LAVA 4134 Lancaster Ave.

Thursday April 27

Philadelphia Premiere: Twelve Disciples of Nelson Mandela
In 1960, while apartheid was shoring up its foundations, a group of young activists from the African National Congress decided to fight back from outside South Africa. Via interview and re-enactments, the filmmaker recount how Lee and his ANC colleagues came to political consciousness and went into exile.
7pm International House, 3701 Chestnut Street, \$10

Friday April 28th

Poems Not Prisons Features a presentation on Supporting Transgender Prisoners
7:30pm at the A-space

Friday, May 19

An Evening of Interdisciplinary Art with Mendi + Keith Obadike
Their projects include the sounds of sex toys, electronic race marketing, and visualization of untold stories as disappearing hypertext. Their music, live art, and conceptual artworks reject the notion of Internet anonymity by using the web as a way to broadcast their innovative investigations of per-

sonal identity. 7:00 PM Scribe Video Center, 4212 Chestnut Street, 3rd Floor, \$10

June 30 - July 2 Baltimore MD

Mid-Atlantic Radical Bookfair & Infoshop gathering

The Bookfair brings together radical and independent publishers, distributors, bookstores, and authors for a weekend of workshops, panel discussions, and performances engaging with a variety of topics from radical approaches to social services, to anti-war activism, to political art and aesthetics. The 2006 Mid-Atlantic Bookfair will take place at CENTERSTAGE, one of Baltimore's most beloved independent theaters, located just 3 blocks away from the center of the Mount Vernon district, and just a block away from Red Emma's Bookstore Coffeehouse.

for more info, see redemmas.org/bookfair

DEFENESTRATOR.ORG
is back up and alive. The new site has all the new articles as well as the ones we couldn't fit in as well as newsfeeds from a number of autonomous and anarchist sites from around the world.

The idea is also to open up the site to other radicals in the Philadelphia area. So if you're interested in contributing, shoot us an email!!!

Ongoing Events and Meetings

Food Not Bombs

In a country hungry for war, that bombs countries hungry for food.
Rain or shine: Servings are Sundays at 5:00PM and Mondays at 7:00PM across from the Free Library on Vine Street between 19th and 20th Streets
In West Philly : sharings happen every Wednesday @ 5pm-CEDAR PARK (50th and Baltimore) for more info, see

Women's Anti-Violence Education (WAVE)

Monday drop-in classes every Monday night from 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm Friend.s 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.

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.

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 Aspace; 4722 Baltimore Ave and first Thurs. at Last Drop Coffee. E-mail: clanarchy@prodigy.net

INCITE! Radical Women of Color

Calling Radical Women of Color
Philly INCITE! Starting in December Philly INCITE is meeting each 1st & 3rd
Thursday from 6:30-7:45pm at the A-Space

PRAWN (Philadelphia Regional Anti-War Network)

Meets 1st Tues. at Local 4, AFSCME, 1606 Walnut. 6:30-9pm www.prawnworks.net

Liberated Spaces

LAVA

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 info@lavazone.org * lavazone.org

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

Rotunda- Music and arts space on UPenn campus
4012 Walnut Street

the defenestrator
PO Box 30922
Philadelphia, PA 19104

to:

DEFENESTRATOR.ORG