

the defenestrator

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the defenestrator

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

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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 click the link on our website. The list is low traffic (usually about 1 message a week) and easy to get off if you so choose.

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COVER: by crash. Which images are those of Baghdad, and which are of Philadelphia? The US government is a mannequin standing over the ruins of its capitalist wars, whose pale, expressionless face can be seen around the world, and whose voice is a broken record player, delivering worn out speeches full of words that it never understood in the first place; words like democracy, freedom, liberty. All it has to offer is the same, meaningless gesture again and again and again...

New Jersey Bans Death Penalty

On December 17 Gov. Jon Corzine signed legislation repealing New Jersey's death penalty statute, after lawmakers and criminal justice experts found that capital punishment wastes tax dollars, prolongs the suffering of murder victims' family members and is likely to result in wrongful death sentences. Law enforcement officers and district attorneys from across the state supported the repeal effort, as did many crime victims' advocates.

With today's signing, New Jersey becomes the first state in 42 years to legislatively abolish the death penalty; Iowa and West Virginia last did so in 1965. New Jersey reflects a growing national trend against the death penalty, with death sentences and executions facing a steep decline since the late 1990s and with more states advancing abolition and moratorium legislation as well as other reforms.

With your help and support, Pennsylvania can be next. Onward toward abolition!

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Guinness Records: Massacre or Suicide?

[col. writ. 11/17/07] (c) '07 Mumia Abu-Jamal

For millions of people worldwide, the Guinness Book of World Records is the definitive source for matters great and small.

Many a conflict has been resolved by reference to it, for it is seen as the last word. It appears that there are more copies of its books in bars and taverns than there are in libraries.

But in at least one case, the venerable record keeping agency has been called into serious question. That case is of the May 13, 1985 MOVE Bombing, where 11 men, women and babies were killed by Philadelphia police.

The problem arises when the Guinness company notes and records the event as a case of mass suicide -- not mass murder. MOVE's Ramona Africa, who narrowly escaped being burned to death during the bombing, heard about the reference, looked it up on the Web, and -- voila! -- there it was; in the online 2008 edition of the Guinness Book of World Records, in a section on cult suicides, MOVE (in the text, it actually reads, erroneously, "The MOVE") is listed as one case among six.

When she contacted the Guinness editors, she received an answer citing a London based group called the Cult Information Centre (CIC) as the basis for its listing.


As the MOVE Organization has noted in its online public message: We are not a cult, we're an organization, and we certainly did not commit suicide on May 13, 1985. The U.S. government dropped an incendiary bomb made of C4 on our home. The bomb ignited a fire and the fire department refused to do anything to put out the fire. They made a conscious decision to let the fire burn. Our home was a blazing inferno. 11 MOVE men, women, babies and numerous animals were burned alive because of that fire and because cops deliberately shot at us as we tried to escape that blazing inferno. It's documented that fragments from police bullets were found in some of the bodies of murdered MOVE people. That is not suicide; it's deliberate murder.

In the Oct. 19, 2007 reply letter from Guinness World Records' editor-in-chief, Craig Glenday, the London based company cites CIC as a "credible source" for its report, and includes a section of CIC's self-description from their web site. They insist their data is both "accurate" and "correct."


Question: Why is the CIC account more "credible" than that of Ramona - who was in the house and almost burned to death? It is a measure of the arrogance of those in positions of power and influence that no one ever bothered to contact MOVE before adding it to a suicide list - nor the one adult who survived this mass murder.

MOVE is currently circulating an online petition at: <http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/OnaMove/signatures.html> (or simply contact: www.onamove.com) The organization designed the petition to direct both Guinness and the CIC to retract this dangerous notation. Sounds like a plan.

--(c) '07 maj



LAVA Library



needs librarians!

Without your help, the library may not stay open!
This all-volunteer radical library needs staffers to keep the library open on
Wednesdays from 4 to 9pm and Sundays from noon to 6pm.
We're located on the first floor of the LAVA Space, at 4134 Lancaster Ave.
We house an extensive collection of radical books, zines,
DIY reference materials and DVDs.
Monthly meetings are at 7pm on the last Wednesday of every month.
Contact us at lavalibrary@defenestrator.org or call 215-387-6155.

Al Nakba Remembered in Philly

60 Days of Action to Coincide with the 60th Anniversary of the Palestinian Catastrophe

By Nathaniel

This spring marks the 60th anniversary of Al Nakba, "the catastrophe," the little known side of Israel's creation that murdered thousands of Palestinian civilians in 1948 and drove over 700,000 others into exile after a terror campaign by the nascent Israeli state. Philly SUSTAIN (Stop US Tax-funded Aid to Israel Now!), Temple and Penn Students for Justice in Palestine and the AL Nakba Committee are responding to the call made at the US Social Forum for 60 days of action to coincide with what will likely be a self congratulatory celebration of Zionism.



photo by Candace Saunders

March organized by the Al Nakba Committee against the Israeli Siege of Gaza on January 26

Philly's Palestine solidarity movement insist Al Nakba not be forgotten with a series of events every day from March 16th to May 15th. Defining occupation broadly to include the gentrification of Philadelphia neighborhoods through eminent domain and white colonization, solidarity activists plan to work with various groups in the city to insure Al Nakba and all occupations are remembered.

Billions of dollars each year go from U.S. taxpayers to the Israeli military, funding the destruction of Palestinian homes, agriculture and infrastructure. At the same time, people in the U.S. -- including Philadelphia -- face crises around health-care, housing and education. Federal taxes need to come home to support our communities instead of a militarized racist foreign policy in Palestine, Iraq and around the world.

Some events to look forward to are a mini Palestinian film festival, a mjeddara dinner (traditional dish eaten by poor Palestinians) and music night, folk dance, agitprop theater ("Café Intifada," an occupation themed puppet show and checkpoint street theater), a photo exhibit, a Palestinian political prisoner event and various decentralized actions throughout Philadelphia.

If you want to become involved we'd love your help and input. You can contact



photo by Sue Rouda

Philly SUSTAIN at sustainphilly@gmail.com or visit our myspace page <http://myspace.com/sustainphilly> for up to date information.



photo by Sue Rouda

Jobs with Justice Press Release:

ACTIVISTS WIN \$1.5 MILLION WAGE AND BENEFIT INCREASE FROM TEMPLE AND PENN

Activists Plan More Efforts To Reform Industry, Local Company Will Remain Target

Philadelphia, PA, January 28, 2008 -- A year long campaign to raise wages and benefits for security officers at Philadelphia's two largest universities has finally paid off. The Philadelphia Officers and Workers Rising Campaign (POWR) an effort of a coalition of students, community activists and faith leaders will bring at least \$1.5 million in additional income to workers. The new contracts include up to 3 days sick-leave on both campuses and raises for roving security guards at UPenn from \$9.70 to \$15 per hour.

"We started to fight for these improvements for our own safety." Says Kevin Paris, a junior at Temple University. "I know that guards were forced to come to work ill and injured. No one should work like that much less guards. It is a public safety issue"

The activists from the local group, Jobs with Justice, focused on paid sick-leave as the first step in a series of improvements that workers and their advocates want to win on behalf of security guards.

"We see this as a civil rights issue." Says Bishop Dwayne Royster, Pastor from Living Waters UCC in North Philadelphia, "It is the largest effort to raise African-American workers into the middle-class in our city's history."

97% of the private security guards in Philadelphia are African-American.

"We want to turn these jobs into family sustaining jobs." explained Eduardo Soriano, Organizer for Jobs with Justice, "We want to professionalize the industry, raise the standards, that's why we are focusing on AlliedBarton."

AlliedBarton is the largest security company in Philadelphia and largest domestic security company. AlliedBarton's largest shareholder is MacAndrews & Forbes. MacAndrews and Forbes is wholly owned by Philadelphia native, Ronald O. Perelman.

Workers and advocates plan to continue to push for improvements on both campuses but say that they are expanding their focus to other large AlliedBarton customers around the city.

Jobs with Justice is a coalition of labor unions, community groups, student and religious constituent organizations building a movement for workers' rights and social and economic justice. We ate united by the principles of solidarity, reciprocity, militancy and action. Jobs with Justice is dedicated to using direct action to win victories that matter for working people.



We finally took the plunge into the evil realm of myspace. Check us out and be our friend. You'll get bulletins about events we're doing and of course you can use us as your own personal jukebox! And for all you feds out there trying to keep tabs, what are you waiting for?

http://defenestrator.org/defenestrate_tom

Philadelphia for Philadelphians!

The Don't Tax Me Out Campaign

by Candace Saunders

This past October 25th, amid umbrellas and honking horns, the voices of a small but impassioned group of demonstrators filled the western plaza of City Hall. Philadelphians on their way to lunch might not have paused to acknowledge the rousing chanted refrain, but they could scarcely avoid hearing it:

"Don't tax us out! Don't tax us out! Don't tax us out! Don't tax us out!" The picket line strode in a circle around a small PA system and a collection of placards stating the group's demands. The picketers, mostly older black women but otherwise varied in age and race, held signs bearing slogans like "IMPLEMENT TAX FORGIVENESS" and "STOP 10 YEAR TAX ABATEMENT". A few folks stood at the gateway to City Hall chatting with curious passersby, collecting petition signatures and handing out flyers. Between speakers, the protesters stood with their signs shielding them from the chilly rain. It seemed it would take more than a little stormy weather to keep the members of the Don't Tax Me Out Campaign from educating fellow Philadelphia residents about the shady plans hatching just above them in looming City Hall.

Don't Tax Me Out, a campaign of the Community Preservation Network and its member groups, including Brewerytown's African American Business and Residents Association (AABRA), Concerned Citizens of Point Breeze, INCITE's Anti-Displacement Solidarity Committee, the Community Leadership Institute, and the Haddington Residents Association, came together to challenge City Hall's newest money-making scheme—a city-wide property tax increase that would further elevate already soaring property taxes in Philadelphia, especially in rapidly appreciating neighborhoods. Throughout the spring and summer, the campaign organized community meetings in neighborhoods throughout Philadelphia. I was fortunate enough to attend the June 28, 2007, meeting hosted by the Haddington Residents Association at the Salvation Army community center at 55th and Market streets in West Philadelphia. At all of these meetings, community organizers and concerned residents gathered together to share information about the economic war that developers and speculators, with City Hall's blessing, are waging against low-income

communities in Philadelphia.

The City's plan to get back on budget will place an even heavier tax burden on poor and working class Philadelphians despite widespread foreclosure thanks to property taxes already overwhelming for many low- and fixed-income home owners. Properties, the scheme urges, should

following formula:

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{Market Value (MV) x Pre-} \\ & \text{Determined Assessment Ratio (PDR) =} \\ & \text{Assessed Value} \\ & \text{Assessed Value (AV) x Tax Rate} \\ & \text{(TR) = Property Taxes} \end{aligned}$$

For example:

$$\begin{aligned} & \$50,000 \\ & (\text{MV}) \times .32 (\text{PDR}) = \\ & \$16,000 \\ & \$16,000 \\ & (\text{AV}) \times .08264 (\text{TR}) \\ & = \$1,322.24 \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, the owner of a house with a listed market value of \$50,000 can expect to pay \$1,322.24 in real estate taxes this year. *The market value on the books does not always reflect the actual market value of a property, and is often much lower, especially in or near gentrifying areas.* The predetermined ratio and tax rate may fluctuate on an annual basis.

How will taxes be determined under a Full Market Value system?

In 2004 state law charged Philadelphia's Board of Revision of Taxes (BRT) with the task of assessing the real market value of all 569,000 commercial and residential properties in Philadelphia. According to its website, "The BRT does not set tax rates or determine any property owner's taxes. That job belongs to the Mayor and the City Council. But the Full Value Project simplifies the property tax system, by making it more uniform, fairer, and easier to understand. As a result, property taxes will be based on what properties are actually worth."

Proponents argue that full market reassessment is good for home-owners because their assets will increase in value. But with many already barely balancing fragile budgets, or finding themselves buried under taller and taller stacks of unpaid bills, an upsurge in property taxes could mean losing their homes. There were 646 foreclosures in Philly in all of 2006, but by June, 2007, there had already been 949.

be taxed at full market value instead of the lower "assessed value" now used to determine real estate taxes.

Though all of this is purportedly to simplify the system and to collect funds desperately needed to improve and maintain city schools and other social services, one has to wonder who these changes will *really* benefit. If taxes are so high that low-income folks can no longer afford to pay them, and if there is no community protection plan in place to prevent endemic foreclosure, many will indeed be taxed right out of the city. This disturbing trend has started in many neighborhoods throughout Philadelphia. But it can be stopped, and Don't Tax Me Out is on the job.

How are property taxes determined in the first place?

There's nothing like a little algebra to add some spice to an issue. Property taxes are set by City Council, are regulated by the Pennsylvania Constitution, and are currently calculated based on a uniform rate of about 8.2% applied to the "assessed value" (or 32% of the market value) of a property.

Property taxes are determined using the



It is important to note that the BRT's Full Value Project and the City's plans to tax properties at full market value are not one in the same. However, the Full Value Project is the first step towards full value taxation and is in itself quite alarming.

Consider the following example. A house in gentrifying West Philadelphia (a.k.a. University City) near UPenn currently listed on tax roles with a market value of only \$80,000 could be reappraised at over \$200,000. Even using the current assessed value system, taxes would more than double, from \$2115.28 to \$5288.96. Remember, this is still using only 32% of the market value. Full value taxation would apply the tax rate to 100% of the market value.

As reported in the South Philly Review in August 2007, "Bahiya Carbal-Johnson, of the Community Leadership Institute... and the Community Preservation Network, demonstrated what this could mean for the owner of a property for sale at 334 N. Gross St... In '08, with a market price of \$69,900, taxes for the property would be \$1,840. If full-market valuation comes to pass, the taxes would jump to \$5,776." *More than tripled!* Does that sound "fairer" to you?

Though possible that the actual tax rate (the current 8.2%) would be lowered under full value taxation, there is no doubt that overall taxes would rise dramatically. After all, the plan was designed to pull in more money. For low- and fixed-income folks, especially seniors, the new and trendy commercial district a few blocks away could mean a shocking spike in taxes that destroys a true community generations in the making.

Renters Beware!

The full market valuation will affect renters as well. The higher the taxes landlords pay, the more they will raise rents. With the extra money, the landlord might actually start fixing the place up, even completely renovating units or selling out to real estate developers. In this manner, a building previously occupied by mostly lower-income tenants can be quickly overtaken by an influx of wealthy university students or yuppies in only a few short lease cycles. It's happened all over the city—the draw



Rally in Support of Community Protection Plan
photo: Sarah Smith from allforhetaking.org

of proximity to Center City and college campuses has sent ripples through all of Philadelphia, and rents are rising steadily outward, with a few hotspots here and there.

In the 2005 documentary “All for the Taking: 21st Century Urban Renewal” on the Neighborhood Transformation Initiative, eminent domain abuse, and gentrification in Philadelphia, AABRA’s Al Alston says, “We believe that the rents are going to increase dramatically, the property values are going to increase dramatically, and the property taxes are going to increase dramatically. And it’s an easy step to go from lots of black folks in a blighted community to no black folks because we’ve been priced out.”

The rising property values and rents are related to a steady process of gentrification, a reversal of the 1960s-80s “white flight” phenomenon that left city budgets high and dry. With today’s gentrification, opportunistic real estate speculators and developers are capitalizing on sheriff’s sales and buying out large numbers of residential and commercial properties, renovating or leveling their way into neighborhoods, and then selling them off whole hog to the new city slickers. It’s a lucrative business, sure, but it’s also institutionalized racism and a violation of basic human rights.

Free Dough for the Upper Crust: The 10 Year Tax Abatement, Gentrification, and Racism

Philadelphia currently grants a 10-year tax abatement for new development. This means that developers and purchasers of new homes are free from paying property taxes for up to ten years. Let’s just go ahead and call it what it is—city-sanctioned tax evasion! When a developer or individual sells a new home, the remainder of the 10 tax-free years passes to the buyer. At the same time, there are no regulations requiring that a certain number of affordable/low-income housing units are built for every new “luxury” or market rate unit built. And let’s not forget that the City has adopted the Clinton era HOPE VI low-density low-income housing policy wherein public housing projects are thinned out, leaving more and more poor folks without affordable housing.

Market rate development is significantly more profitable than affordable housing and also falls in line with City Hall’s plans to draw a wealthier tax base to Philadelphia, hopefully turning one of the poorest cities in the United States into a quasi-Parisian, world-class megalopolis.

We need fancy outdoor eateries, hip boutiques, and offices stacked high enough to scrape the sky. That may sound nice to some who are tired of nicknames like Filthadelphia, but are the true costs too high? Was the massive Convention Center expansion really worth the loss of the Asian Arts Initiative’s home in Chinatown?

We’ve heard them described as “up and coming” neighborhoods, but the fact is



Rally in Support of Community Protection Plan
photo: Sarah Smith from allforhetaking.org

that neighborhoods like Brewerytown were already there before developers took an interest in them. Newcomers’ fear and loathing of their Black and Latino neighbors betray the racism underlying gentrification, though many would deny it. Even those who claim they are simply looking for an affordable place to live benefit from the predatory actions of developers. Gentrification is neoliberal capitalism on a smaller scale, though how small is the scale, really, when the same thing is happening in every major city in the US? Not very.

It’s true that people need places to live, and that many come to urban areas in search of employment, education, or a community that might not exist at home. Should newcomers simply be denied access to Philadelphia and all that makes it special? Of course not. But there are ways that the city could protect current residents from the ill effects of gentrification, and these solutions must be discussed and implemented as soon as possible. While wealth and development do bring new amenities and greater “curb appeal” to neighborhoods, longtime residents are often unable to enjoy these improvements. The Don’t Tax Me Out Campaign is here to debunk the popular yet foolhardy notion that development necessarily benefits low-income people—clearly it does not.

Philadelphia for Philadelphians!

Isn’t it interesting that City Hall grants a huge tax break to the folks it supposedly wants to pump for the money so desperately needed to revamp an ailing system of overextended social services? The 10-year tax abatement, coupled with the proposed full value assessment, is a de facto plan to push out the poor

to make way for the rich. The lower income residents of this city are literally subsidizing schools, sanitation, and fire and police departments for wealthy newcomers. And if taxes are too high and aren’t getting paid, where does that leave these services?

In 2006, City Hall postponed full market valuation until 2008. Fortunately for homeowners and activists, the City announced in August 2007 that it would not start the tax hikes in 2008 as originally intended. However, the plan remains a real possibility, and without adequate resistance, it will happen. Clearly our elected officials have their priorities jumbled, or they wouldn’t be pushing for tax reform that will raze the field for a new, world-class Philadelphia without its most important element—the heart and soul of the city of brotherly love—PHILADELPHIANS!

Demands

The Don’t Tax Me Out! campaign understands that Philadelphia needs more in the way of tax dollars, but doesn’t think it should come at the cost of broken communities, homelessness, and displacement.

NO CITYWIDE TAX REASSESSMENT WITHOUT COMMUNITY PROTECTIONS:

There will be no citywide property tax increase until a comprehensive community protection plan is put in place to safeguard poor and working class residents from displacement and increased financial strain.

NO MORE BURDEN FOR THE POOR AND WORKING CLASS:

While we support a more just tax system where poor neighborhoods do not have to pay higher tax percentages than wealthier neighborhoods, we believe that no change in the system should further burden poor and working class people.

STOP TEN YEAR TAX ABATEMENT

End the ten year tax abatement program that has sold off neighborhoods to developers and those with money to invest, making our communities places where longtime residents can not afford to live.

IMPLEMENT TAX FORGIVENESS

Create and implement a tax forgiveness program for low & moderate income homeowners to be able to pay their taxes, stay in their communities, and invest in their neighborhoods.

BALANCED REINVESTMENT

A 50/50 plan of development will be implemented, where all market rate development that is built in the city of Philadelphia should be matched with the development of minimum income housing that is affordable to those with minimum

wage incomes.

To Get Involved...

The Community Preservation Network is a growing movement of residents associations, community groups, and individuals committed to uniting all Philadelphia residents impacted by gentrification pressures to prevent the displacement of working and poor people. To get involved with the Don’t Tax Me Out Campaign, call 215-701-7085 and visit www.allforhetaking.org for related news, events, and updates.

Director of Obscure Police Agency Assassinated in Oaxaca City

01.30.08 Simon Sedillo

This morning Alejandro Barrita Ortiz, director of the Auxillary, Industrial, Banking and Comercial Police, was assassinated in Oaxaca City at the “El Tequiro” sports park near the international airport.

Two versions of the assassination have surfaced, one which claims the assassins used a 380 and 9mm handguns, and another which claims AK-47s were the weapons of choice. The second version further states that the assassins fled the scene in a red pickup and a black Dodge Stratus.

Unofficial reports have surfaced indicating that a phone call was made to the local emergency services hotline by someone claiming to represent the Popular Revolutionary Army (EPR), and that the caller clarified there were “two more left to go”.

Barrita, director of the obscure police agency, had been identified as a key player in police operations during and immediately after the 2006 Oaxacan popular uprising. He was accused of illegal detentions of activists, as well as coordinating extra judicial operations against the popular social movement.

At the very least, his assassination represents serious ideological provocation against members of the peaceful popular social movement of the Oaxacan People’s Popular Assembly (APPO). Police operations are underway throughout the city, and the military has cordoned off the area of the assassination.

<http://www.jornada.unam.mx/ultimas/2008/01/30/ejecutan-a-mando-policiaco-en-oaxaca>

This is a guide for anyone who suffers from panic attacks and wants strategies for treating them without the use of drugs (psychiatric or recreational). Any drug that controls panic can be habit-forming and have serious side effects. Sometimes drugs are the best option; some conditions respond best to medication. Only you can judge what's best for you. Offered here are more options, meant to help you control your attacks and understand their causes. This guide is not intended to cure or diagnose any condition. If your panic attacks are debilitating, or if you are thinking of suicide, please find help through a good counselor, psychiatrist, or trusted friend.

Anatomy of a Panic Attack

Panic attacks are sudden, overwhelming episodes of irrational fear.

Common symptoms include heart palpitations, rapid breathing, dizziness, weakness, and feeling terrified. The physical symptoms are accompanied by racing thoughts and obsessive fixations. The symptoms are caused by an increase in adrenaline that creates an increase of carbon dioxide in the blood. How you react to an attack can affect how long it lasts. There are some physical conditions that can cause anxiety attacks. These are:

- Hypoglycemia
- Thyroid gland problems
- Adrenal gland problems, especially tumors
- Cushing's disease
- Vitamin B deficiency
- Epilepsy

You may want to get screened by a doctor for these disorders. Panic attacks can be triggered by anything in your environment or internal state, including the fear of having an attack. You can learn what triggers your attacks, how to lessen their intensity, and what emotional patterns are causing them. Panic is often a response to a negative emotion that feels unsafe to experience. Overcoming panic can require dramatically changing your understanding of yourself and how you relate to the world. The better you learn how to take care of yourself, the less panic you will suffer. Listen closely to the strongest fears that arise during an attack for ideas of what you need to change, and don't rule out any options while imagining different futures. Make sure you are in a safe space or with a trusted person when you attempt to confront your fears. Panic attacks can actually be useful. Facing your greatest fears in the face is an act of strength, doing so makes you less ruled by fear.

The short guide to recovering from a panic attack

1. Recognition

First recognize that what you are experiencing is a panic attack, not a life-threatening emergency. Understand that panic attacks are brief, and can be treated and prevented. Fear of the panic itself can prolong the attack. Some people are afraid that the symptoms of panic are signs of a

more menacing disease, others may try to deny that anything's wrong. Both attitudes feed the attack. If your thoughts are spiraling out of control, focus on the factual: This is only a panic attack, nothing worse. After you make some adjustments the symptoms will quickly subside. Reassure yourself that although you're feeling panic, you can cope with it and it will end quickly.

thoughts may be intrusive, negative, and fatalistic. You may feel unreal, weak and incapacitated. Nevertheless, you can distance yourself from this condition and ground yourself in a broader view. A panic attack may dredge up your greatest fears—fears of failing, loss of love, loss of sanity. Don't let these fatalistic thoughts dominate your thinking. Now is not the time to rationally consider life changes or examine your own failings. Focus instead on relaxing your breath. This is the fastest way to stop the flood of adrenaline and end the attack. Breathe slowly and calmly, like you would when falling asleep. Try to spread this calm, sleepy feeling to all the muscles in your body. Meanwhile, when either physical fear or intrusive thoughts interrupt you, practice a meditation technique called non-attachment:

Allow your thoughts and feelings to arise without letting yourself be pulled along by their urgency. Don't try to repress

your fears, but don't dwell on them. Watch the anxiety and know that although it is a part of you it doesn't control you. See yourself on the other side, once the panic has passed. This becomes easier with practice.

3. Scanning

Identify what triggered this attack. What is happening at the moment the attack hits? Pay close attention to your environment and what you've been thinking about. Does something around you remind you of something that's been worrying you? Does someone around you make you feel trapped or uncomfortable? Do you feel confined? Have you recently experienced a trauma, or are you trying to ignore a confrontation looming in the future? With practice you will start to see a pattern in what triggers you. Common triggers include:

- Crowded subways, elevators, large parties, classrooms
- Ingesting stimulants like caffeine, cocaine, antihistamines or sugar
- Intimate relationships and the feelings of dependence and responsibility they inspire
- Being the center of attention: public speaking, birthdays, interviews
- Times of transition: moving, breaking up, unemployment
- Encounters with authority figures or dominating personalities
- Trying to fall asleep, worrying

In addition to the triggers, there are many possible causes to scan for, which are usually anxious or negative emotions such as:

- Feeling that you cannot meet your own or others' expectations of you
- Feeling powerless to change a bad situation
- Feeling powerless to express anger
- Feeling afraid of losing a loved one
- Feeling incompetent, weak or bad
- Feeling alone and unloved
- Feeling incapable of taking care of yourself or reaching out for support
- Feeling ashamed of your fear or powerlessness

Remember that a number of triggers or causes can contribute to any panic attack.

4. Action

First, acknowledge what factors have triggered your attack. This helps contain it. Then immediately change what you can. Take care of your physical needs first (eat, restake an herbal tincture of Valerian, Skullcap or Kava, take a walk), then address the larger situation. Give yourself space and permission to take care of yourself, even if it involves not meeting an obligation.

Immediate action is the key to keeping your panic attacks short. If you can't escape a triggering situation, you can adjust your own response to it. Keep practicing detachment and conscious relaxation, and remember that it is still temporary. Cultivate a protective warmth towards the part of you that is panicking. If you can, distract yourself from negative thinking through some kind of activity or reaching out to a friend. Sometimes the best action is to reach out to another person. Let your friends know the best way to help you. I find the best thing my friends can do is to stay calm – not to treat my panic attack as a crisis, not to try to fix it for me. Instead, I ask them to distract me with a story about their day or keep me engaged in something practical, like describing a recipe. When the anxiety is weaker, I may talk to them about my fears and worries.

5. Patience and Focus

Panic!

A short guide to recovering from Panic Attacks

by Corina Delman

2. Distance and Grounding

Terror and nausea are flooding your body. Your



To Snitch Or Not To Snitch: The View From The Other Side

by Robert Saleem Holbrook

I decided to write this article in response to the endless criticism that is being directed against the “Stop Snitching” movement by critics claiming that Hip Hop is responsible for the “Stop Snitching” movement and the “Us vs. Them” mentality youth of color have towards law enforcement agencies. As a former gang member and street combatant of the drug wars that dominated the streets of Philly in the late 80’s and a member of the generation that came of age listening to Hip Hop I believe I am qualified to offer a frontline perspective from the other side of the issue, especially as one who was sentenced to life without parole as a juvenile because of the testimony of a snitch co-defendant that was close to 10 years older than I.

The “Stop Snitching” slogan that has spread through urban America like a wildfire, which many refer to as a “movement”, has emerged more so as an “urban phenomenon” that is not organized or directed but rather is spontaneous and fluid. This phenomenon emerged out of the county and state prisons of America and was a legitimate backlash against unscrupulous law enforcement agencies striking deals with unscrupulous criminals to testify, truthfully or falsely, against their co-defendants or any other individual charged with a crime with whom the D.A. lacked the evidence to prosecute. It was born of prosecutors granting immunity and informant fees to criminals in exchange for their testimony only to see these same criminals leave prison and resume a life of crime in the hood. It was born of prosecutors striking deals that allow drug kingpins to keep the profits of their drug empires in exchange for their testimony against street level dealers that worked for them only to see these “kingpins”

released to become bigger kingpins while on the payroll of the state and federal authorities. It was born of prosecutors striking deals with 30 year old triggermen who murdered in exchange for their testimony against their 16 year old co-defendants. It was born of grown men breaking under pressure providing statements to the police implicating a juvenile co-defendant as the ringleader of a murder. It was born of prosecutors striking deals with jailhouse informants who came forward time and time again claiming a prisoner “confessed” their guilt in a casual conversation on the yard.

Is it necessary to continue? There are countless other examples. It is these circumstances combined with the countless families within the black and latino communities fractured due to the testimony or statement

of a snitch who abused the system and the prosecutors who were/are their partners in crime. This gave birth to the “Stop Snitching” phenomenon.

I do not want it to be interpreted that I am ignoring the endless suffering of families within the black and latino communities that have lost a loved one to gang or drug related violence. I do want it to be emphasized that “Stop Snitching” is not directed to the majority of people within these communities that are working class people. It does not apply to the grandmother living in terror from idiot thugs terrorizing the neighborhood and robbing working class people of their hard earned dollars and possessions. It does not apply to child molesters who prey on children, child murders, rapists or any category of sexual predator. “Stop Snitching” is directed at those who are in the “game” and street life, informing and telling on people in exchange for the freedom to continue their criminal activity. It is a call to responsibility: If you are captured, be prepared to do the time and accept the consequences. Ride it out. Don’t cut statements or strike deals to save your own ass.

Just as Hip Hop did not create the “Stop Snitching” phenomenon, it did not create the “Us vs. Them” mentality between law enforcement and youth of color. The “Us vs. Them” mentality between youth of color and law enforcement has long been raging within American society. Youth of color did not create this conflict, it was created by law enforcement agencies that are saddled with historical, institutional racism and prejudice and view youth of color as “the enemy” and our neighborhoods as “enemy territory” and “free fire zones”. Every major urban rebellion in this country was a direct response to police brutality against persons of color! The history of this relationship is so extensive it would be a waste of time to further elaborate.

Why is no one challenging the “blue wall of silence” among law enforcement agencies that encourages police officers not to snitch on each other or even stop fellow officers from committing acts of brutality on individuals. How many officers were not charged with or acquitted of murder, assault or civil rights violations because officers refused to testify against a fellow officer. Is it any wonder why gangs refer to police as just another gang? Why is the policeman’s code of silence legitimized by the state?

What does it say about the leadership of the black and latino community when the most widespread protest phenomenon since the civil rights/black liberation movements amongst the youth today is a campaign to stop snitching? How is it that rappers and so-called thugs

have the vision to capture and direct the anger, frustration and lack of direction of the youth while all the activists and educators have intellectualized the debate and have nothing to say? It is because the activists and educators have abandoned the hood. They have abandoned the prisons. In their retreat they have allowed the debate to be defined by the streets and those in prison. Instead of attacking the Hip Hop community and the youth embracing the “Stop Snitching” call they ought to be out there tapping into this discontent and frustration and directing it into more positive community action.

Like it or not the “stop snitching” call at its roots is about LOYALTY to one’s friends. If activists can re-direct some of this loyalty to one’s family, friends, neighborhood and people we could seriously begin re-building our neighborhoods and ending senseless murders. That ain’t going to happen when activists or community leaders align themselves with law enforcement agencies responsible for the injustices and hardships committed by snitching. The youth ain’t going to pay attention to anything anyone has to say when they align themselves with the biggest and baddest gang on the set = law enforcement. Here is the cold reality: At the end of the day, like it or not, that damn young thug on the corner with his hoodie pulled up and his baseball cap on and those hardened men emerging from prison with empty eyes are the people you have to talk to in order to put a stop to the senseless violence in our neighborhoods. Let’s start rapping...

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Frees a l i mnet

Check out Saleem's new web site containing most of his public writing, photos as well as info on the struggle against life sentences for juvenile lifers!

Once you’ve taken action, you must wait for the chemical reactions in your body to level out to normal before all your symptoms disappear. In the meantime, keep resisting the pull of fear and obsessive thinking. Be patient and stay confident, even light-hearted. It’s often a good idea to immerse yourself in listening to a friend, watching a movie, or starting a new activity while you wait out the last symptoms of an attack.

6. Taking Stock
When the attack has subsided, take a moment

to appreciate your strength and skill in recovering from it. As your confidence increases, future attacks will be shorter and more easily managed. But also take this time to address the root causes of the attack—why did these things cause you panic? What are the larger patterns in your life right now that could be increasing your anxiety? Do you expect too much from yourself? Do you feel others expect too much from you? Do you have trusted friends to rely on during a crisis? Are you ashamed of showing weakness? Do you find it hard to take care of yourself? What kind of changes could you

make to be living a less anxious life—short-term and long-term?

Local Resources for Mental Health Support:

The National Alliance for Mental Health offers a free Anxiety Hotline: 1-888-826-9438
Their website is: <http://www.nami.org>.

The Philly Icarus Project, a DIY mental health support group, meets 2nd & 4th Sundays at the A-Space. http://www.the-aspace.org/icarus_project

Philadelphia Community Acupuncture offers a sliding scale and group setting to accommodate low-income clients. Many find acupuncture relieves anxiety. 701 S. 50th Street, 3rd Floor, 267-357-2795, www.phillyacupuncture.com.

This article is an excerpt from a larger zine, Panic, available for sale at the Wooden Shoe or for checkout at the Lava Library. Corina Dross can be contacted at mud@riseup.net.



a fictional account by Paul J. Walker

You wake up screaming. Your eyes dart to the window, the corners of the room, the door, the space beneath the dresser, the pile of clothes on the floor. You are soaked in cold sweat, sheets and pillows damp. The adrenaline drains from behind your eyes, sinks into the pit of your stomach leaving a hollow, nauseous ache. You begin to shiver. Your eyes clamp shut, but tears leak out. Softly you whimper, then begin to sob. An hour later you are lying curled in a ball, head pounding. It's three in the morning.

The alarm is bleating. Roll over. Through bleary, head-ache eyes you read the red polygonal numbers: seven o'clock. You roll out of bed and pull on yesterday's blue jeans, a navy blue work shirt, redwing boots. You step through the open door into the bathroom and sit down to relieve yourself. You splash water on your face and step out of the bathroom. Dim light filters in through the haphazard vertical blinds. The dresser and desk are piled with bills and shut-off notices, thick manila envelopes from Veterans Affairs and the Army. Somewhere in there are your discharge papers and information about the GI bill. You managed to cash the disability check the day that it came, but navigating the GI Bill will have to wait.

The answering machine flashes and you hit the button, bracing yourself. It's Pedro:

"Jesus Christ, Samantha, call me already. I'm worried sick about you." The answering machine beeps and spits out another entreaty..

"Look, Sam, I'm worried about you. Give me a call." Click. Another beep.

"Hey Sam, are you there? Come on, pick up the phone. Listen, I'm sorry about how things ended the other night. Can we get together and talk after work? Give me a call." His voice is tired, pleading.

It didn't end well the other night - that's for sure. As another epic relationship conversation wore on, things lost focus until all you could feel was the ragged hole that had been torn in you while you were overseas. It wasn't until your return that you realized it was there. Pedro wanted to fill that hole - to give you the love that your country had failed to give you. He thought he could, and you loved him for it, but you hated him for it as well.

"I'm here for you Sam, don't shut me out.

Help me to understand."

"You can't understand what I've been through. I don't know if I can keep going like this." You spoke through bitter tears.

"You don't mean it Sam. We can get through this."

"Don't tell me what I fucking mean!" you screamed, silencing the crowded restaurant. You stood up, knocking the table aside and scattering broken glass in your wake as you stormed out of the restaurant and into the cold night air.

Your life had begun to disintegrate.

* * *

On the street chaos reigns. Cars swerve in and out of their lanes, battling through the crush of traffic. The machines press savagely forward, jockeying for position, blocking intersections, devouring the space in front of them. Pedestrians spill the sidewalk's banks, fanning out around the cars in a free-form melee. Somewhere out of sight a siren scream. A black SUV swerves out of its lane, accelerating towards you, sending your heart into your throat. The blast of a horn forces a rapid intake of breath. As you turn to walk towards the subway station you search the morning rush hour for the next threat.

The plastic subway bench is scribbled and scratched with graffiti. An Army recruitment poster portrays a young muscular black man wielding an M-16. The steel in his eyes reflect the bold text along the bottom of the poster: "Army of One." "That's what I am," you laugh, "an Army of one." There was no air-support anymore. No Intel, no dispatch, no mess hall. Just you. You against your family, you against your lover, you against the VA, you against the world. A real army of one. Gripping the stainless steel handrail you scan the mass of faces for suspicious signs: darting eyes, quick or concealed movements, bulky packages, oversized clothing. You see a man at the edge of the train holding two suitcases. You flee in the opposite direction, pushing through the doorway into the next train car where you resume scanning. You check your watch and estimate your arrival time. As the moment approaches you become, if possible, even more tense, scared of what awaits you on the street. You step off of the train.

Once outside you hustle the five blocks to Stu's garage. "What's up Skeet?"

Your distant, hunted eyes say it all. Manny whistles softly and shakes his head sympathetically. It's not the first time they've seen you like this. They've seen you a lot worse.

"Listen, that Bronco is getting a suspension upgrade. Do you mind?"

You shrug, and walk over to the brown Bronco, already up in the lift. You kick at the boxes of shocks despondently. They respond with a reassuring clatter. Tuning the radio to hip-hop you tear into the boxes. For the better part of an hour you forget that your life has fallen apart.

"So, have you and Pedro sorted things out?" The note of condescension in his voice is unmistakable.

"Could you mind your own business for once, Manny?"

"Well, if you need someone to talk too..." He leans in close enough that you can feel his breath. You shudder.

"Fuck you, Manny."

"Oh lighten up."

An uncomfortable silence settles in around you. You can hear the hiss of air-brakes in the yard behind the garage. Passing conversations and diffuse daylight filter in through the open garage doors, along with the sweet stink of diesel. Your arms and eyes wrestle with the suspension mounting bolts. Finally you settle into your rhythm and the day moves by. By the time the Bronco is back on the ground you're feeling the agitated edge of hunger.

"You guys hungry?" you ask the others.

"Yeah"

"Me too."

"Well, I'm gonna get some fried chicken and potato salad from the grocery store. Any takers?" The others assent heartily.

You collect the money and walk out of the garage into the harsh mid-day sun. Squinting at first, you make your way to the grocery store, setting a quick pace, scanning the street ahead of you as you go, periodically throwing a glance backwards over your shoulder. By the time you've walked through the grocery store parking lot, past the racks of house plants and through the dirty automatic sliding doors, you can feel your heart beating in your chest, the flush on your cheeks.

You take in the scene and freeze. A small child, distracted by a colorful assortment of boxes rifles the goods as his mother pulls items from the upper shelves, returning some items, and dropping others into her half-full cart. You start to smile at the child's distracted exploration, then freeze, the hair on your neck stiffening in primordial fear. The scene has changed: the boy in front of you is barefoot, his clothes are stained and torn, his skin, likewise, is mottled and bruised. He looks unkempt, gaunt with hunger, splotched with sickness. The desperation in his child's eyes tells the story of a million shattered lives. He suddenly notices you and the desperation disappears, replaced by stark hatred, terrifying on the soft face of a child. You take a quick step backwards, upsetting a shelf of jars. One falls to the floor and shatters, a crimson splatter. Someone screams. You are transported to a market in Baghdad. There is a massive crater on one side of the store, the wall and ceiling are gone, black smoke billows into the sky from the flattened wreckage of a car. There is gore splattered everywhere: the remains of shoppers mix with the sundry goods to form a slop that covers everything. Here and there you recognize limbs, pieces of flesh and bone. Human wailing is joined by the sound of sirens. In the distance you can hear the rumble of a helicopter.

A ring of shocked faces looks down at you. Your head and chest pound in time with the beating of your strained heart. Your shoulder stings where you hit the ground. A new panic sets in as you begin to understand where you are, as you return to your body and its present reality. "Are you hurt? We called an ambulance." You can't determine which

scared face the concerned voice belongs to, but you don't wait to find out. You scramble to your feet, press through the ring of onlookers, and out onto the street.

There's a hungry, disappointed crew waiting for you back at the shop. You hope that the hollow, terror-struck expression offers enough of an explanation. They grumble among themselves, but nobody complains openly.

"Uh, can I talk to you a minute, Sam?" It's Stuart, your boss. You follow him to the back of the shop, eyes downcast. "What's up Skeet? You look terrible."

"Can I get out of here, boss?"

"Allright - I'll see you tomorrow?"

"Yeah - tomorrow..." Your voice trails off, and your gaze follows it.

On the way home, you pass your subway station and keep walking. As the sidewalks become cracked and uneven, imaginary enemies stare out at you from the dark empty windows of vacant houses. The haphazard fencing catches plastic bags and random bits of trash. It reminds you of things you've seen hanging from razor wire perimeters. A boy on the corner stares out at you with hard eyes.

"You alright?"

"I need Xanies."

"We got that. Hold on a minute." The man disappears around the corner, calling out to some unseen ally. The minutes stretch out. You feel naked, standing alone on a tough corner in the wrong neighborhood. You are about to leave when your man reappears. He shoots his eyes left, then right, and pulls a translucent orange pharmaceutical bottle from his pocket. "Fifty bucks."

The bottle looks like it has twenty pills in it. You check the prescription. It is for Xanax. You pull the bills from your pocket and hand them over, pocketing the pills. With a nod, you do an about-face and half-walk, half-run back to the subway stop.

The ride home is as bad as it was this morning. At home, Pedro is standing in the kitchen. "What the fuck are you doing here?" He winces at the harshness of your voice. Momentarily, you soften, allowing him to put his arms around you. He holds you tight and you quietly begin to cry. As he begins to carress you something inside you breaks and you lash out with fists and nails.

"Get off of me! Get away from me!" The look in Pedro's eyes is pitiable, but you only feel rage. "Get out of here! Why did you come here? Why!"

"I'm sorry Sam. I'm sorry." He is crying now, but in a moment he is gone. You lay back on the couch, head pounding, exhausted. You fumble in your coat for the bottle of pills. You swallow two of the pills dry and lie back, waiting for the Xanax to take effect. Soon you feel the warm, liquid comfort creeping through your shattered nerves. For the first time since you woke up a smile twists your lips. Your eyes begin to lose focus; your muscles lose their rigidity. You drift off into a warm, dreamless sleep. The pills will not carry you through the night, but for now you float in their warm oblivion.

Border Anarchy:

Hundreds occupy U.S./Mexico borderlands to challenge militarization, neoliberalism and racism

by Jen Lawhorne

Overcoming the racism, xenophobia, classism and fear that borders represent hundreds of people created a space on the U.S./Mexico border in November that challenged the dominant paradigm to offer a world without borders based upon solidarity, self-organization, autonomy and mutual aid, without borders.

After five days of creating the dream, the No Borders Camp in Calexico and Mexicali also demonstrated the true inhumanity of the border when Border Patrol agents attacked the camp's final protest, brutalizing participants and arresting three individuals.

A growing global network that for the past couple of decades has demanded the freedom of movement for all humans and denounced the deportations and repression lived by migrants, No Borders mobilized people to oppose the detention and deportation of migrants, the corporations making money from migrant repression and the multinational agreements crafted that spawn migration. Although the network has formally ceased to exist since 2004, groups and movements have borrowed from their principles to carry the movement forward.

With anti-immigrant backlash on the rise in the U.S., the movement has much to accomplish. Federal plans to build a 700 mile-long border fence in the desert allow the Department of Homeland Security to circumvent any environmental and labor regulations during the wall's construction. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers regularly conduct workplace sweeps rounding up hundreds of undocumented workers at their jobs and leaving their children orphaned at home. Some of the most vicious anti-immigrant sentiments reside in CNN host Lou Dobbs, whose views sway millions of viewers in the U.S.

Building upon recent momentum from protesting border vigilantes like the Minutemen and years of cross-border actions, the No Borders Camp 2007 was organized by activists from Mexicali, Tijuana, San Diego and Tucson. No Borders Camps have occurred in European countries, but the camp on the U.S./Mexico line was the first to occur on an international border.

"The border is a war zone, a monster that divides families and kills people. We should act against the economic tactic where corporations have freedom of movement but people no," said Hernan, an organizer from Tijuana.

"We know that physical and ideological borders generate hate, xenophobia, racism, classism among others and their principle function is to protect the economy of a country," said Carlos a NoBC organizer from Mexicali.



To establish the camp, people converged in Calexico and Mexicali, two cities separated by a 15 foot corrugated steel wall in the Sonoran desert and ports of entry for the U.S. and Mexico respectively. Calexico, a sleepy agricultural town full of Border Patrol employees, serves as the gateway to the U.S. from Mexicali, a Mexican city with a population of nearly a million people and home to dozens of maquiladoras (factories that produce cheap consumer goods by paying workers dirt cheap wages.) Around 200 activists met up on the



Calexico and Mexicali sides of the border wall during a rally on Wednesday Nov. 7 and marched east almost four miles together along the wall to where the wall ended.

There the wall gave way to a strip of dusty desert terrain, covered with trash and sliced by the "The All-American Canal," which robs water from the Colorado River to provide irrigation to the Imperial Valley. A low cattle gate continued the border for a bit with the canal then taking on the duty of border barrier. The Border Patrol claimed that the land gate to a Mexican street 50 yards away was U.S. territory and threatened anyone with arrest on the Mexicali side who attempted to set up camp.



Even though an armed contingent of Border Patrol agents awaited marchers once they reached their destination, activists defiantly pitched tents on the Mexican side, their camp hugging a busy thoroughfare. "A multitude of illegals, we managed to occupy U.S. territory for five days, peacefully without arms but with bravery and enthusiasm," a statement by Mexicali organizers said. "It's to say that we managed to establish an anarchist community at the margin of two governments that were watching us but didn't get to control us."

On the U.S. side, a bloc of bikers led the march to the cattle gate, but were stopped by Border Patrol agents from opening the gate to cross to the other side. As people prepared the camp the first night, the Border Patrol established its presence as well, rigging up stadium lighting to shine on the camp at night, bringing out dogs and lining agents along the "border."

By the end of the first night, the camps were about two hundred feet apart. Communication between the two sides occurred between people atop ladders on the border wall. Border Patrol agents prohibited anyone from standing along the cattle gate. People on the U.S. side were told that once they crossed the cattle gate that they would not be allowed to return through the gate. Even though the land on the other side of gate was technically U.S. territory, people would have to return to the U.S. side of the camp through a legal port of entry.

The idea was to create a temporary autonomous zone of one camp on the border, but the Border Patrol presence and the threat of repression kept the Mexican side physically divided from the U.S. side. As the camp progressed, actions carried out by campers brought the two sides closer together. People self-organized workshops and meals. The lower-power FM transmission on 90.9 followed the camp's beat with music, information and commentary. Camp assemblies heard action proposals, suggestions, and discussions.

Graffiti, flags, and posters covered the border wall. The Mexican camp crept from the highway toward the cattle gate. More people crossed the cattle gate to join the Mexican side. Curious folks from the neighboring areas of the camps checked out the scene. Undercover cops roamed about filming and photographing activists.

On Friday, campers decided to hold a bi-national breakfast by sharing food over the gate. Border Patrol in full-riot gear cops marched into the Mexican side of the camp to deny the exchange of food.

"One of our main goals was to unify the camps physically. We brought that proposal to the Mexicali side and they were in consensus as well. We had the idea to have a binational breakfast buffet at the vehicle barrier area, where we would serve food over the vehicle barrier and share it," said Don Kilo, an organizer from San Diego.

Legal observers from the National Lawyers Guild and the Midnight Special Law Collective negotiated to free some of the space around the cattle gate from BP agents and vehicles so people could approach it. The demand was won and hot breakfast was dished out. The Mexican Camp moved forward to touch the banks of the canal. Physical contact between the two camps was established.

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New Police Commissioner

Charles Ramsey:

Police Repression and Disaster Capitalism

by eian

Mayor elect Michael Nutter recently named former Washington police chief Charles H. Ramsey as the new police commissioner, to take office along with Nutter. Charles Ramsey has a long and distinguished career heading police departments, most recently in Washington DC and previously in Chicago.

Unfortunately these distinguishing characteristics have been repeated abuses of constitutional rights of citizens—especially against those attempting the exercise their right to free speech and dissent—and his predilection for declaring states of emergency during crime waves over which he presided.

Ramsey started his career in Chicago, home of machine politics and monumental police corruption, one of whose most authoritative law enforcement histories is entitled *To Serve and Collect*. He climbed quickly through the ranks in Chicago, surviving the tumultuous politics of graft and patronage that the windy city is so well known for. In 1983 there was a huge shakeup of the political order in Chicago with the election of Harold Washington—the city's first black mayor and an enemy of the longstanding political dynasty of Richard J. Daley—which almost finished off the moribund Democratic machine, heavily divided along racial and ethnic lines. A fair number of Democrats switched to the Republican ticket at this time, including a longtime friend and ally of Ramsey, Terrance Gainer (currently U.S. Capitol Police Chief), who would go on to join Ramsey in DC. Ramsey went on to serve as Commander of the Narcotics Section from 1989 to 1992 and then for two years as a Deputy Chief of the police force's Patrol Division. In 1994 he was appointed Deputy Superintendent.

Ramsey stayed on with the Chicago department until 1998.

An article in the Asheville Global Report on the handling of the 1996 Democratic national convention by Chicago cops, describes how Ramsey as Deputy Superintendent in Chicago "...shaped DNC police strategy on the streets, which included police spying, illegal raids on gathering sites, routine harassment and arrest of suspected

protesters in public spaces, destruction of activists' video and film, and a consistent refusal to grant march permits --forcing protesters to the courts to fight for the right to peacefully assemble." The courts in Chicago found in favor of many protesters after the fact, awarding settlements for their treatment in the hands of the Chicago PD.

During his tenure in Chicago, Ramsey also lobbied, along with other police commanders, for a revival of the so called "red squads". The red squads—special police counterintelligence units intended to "neutralize" "anti-social" organizations—were explicitly outlawed in Chicago in 1975. Documents revealed that year by a class action suit filed by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and the Alliance to End Repression (a coalition of churches, women's groups, civil rights organizations, and war veterans) - to disrupt and destroy law-abiding political and community groups. The grand jury investigation also revealed "a close working relation" between the military intelligence group called the Security Section, and the Legion of Justice, a local right-wing para-military terrorist group.

As reported by *The Socialist Worker* in a 2004 article, the *Chicago Sun Times* received internal police audits from 2002 that described how "...undercover officers infiltrated meetings and rallies of the Chicago Direct Action Network, American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), the Autonomous Zone, Not in Our Name, and Anarchist Black Cross."

This was not his only scandal while presiding over the Chicago Police. Ramsey

helped create the controversial Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy program which was touted as a new alliance between citizens and police, but has been heavily criticized as an ineffective attempt to recruit informants.

Charles H. Ramsey retired from the Chicago police and was then appointed chief of the DC Metropolitan Police Department on April 21, 1998.

In DC Ramsey spearheaded such projects as extending the youth curfew, installing surveillance cameras, and instituting traffic stops which collected information of drivers, decried as a flagrant violation of privacy rights.

Ramsey got another chance to flex his muscles in 2002 with the World Bank / International Monetary Fund (IMF) meeting in DC.

Another article from the Asheville Global Report, entitled "Police chief's tactics no surprise, say activists," the similarities between Ramsey's handling of the 1996 Democratic Convention in Chicago to his handling of the 2002 International Monetary Fund / World Bank protests in Washington DC. (For the sake of disclosure, I was arrested at that protest in an unprovoked mass arrest in Pershing square.) Washington DC is currently facing hundreds of lawsuits for its violation of protesters constitutional rights in DC and has already doled out millions of dollars in settlements.

In an interview on Democracy Now after the mass arrests in DC in 2002, Mark Goldstone of the National Lawyers Guild stated,

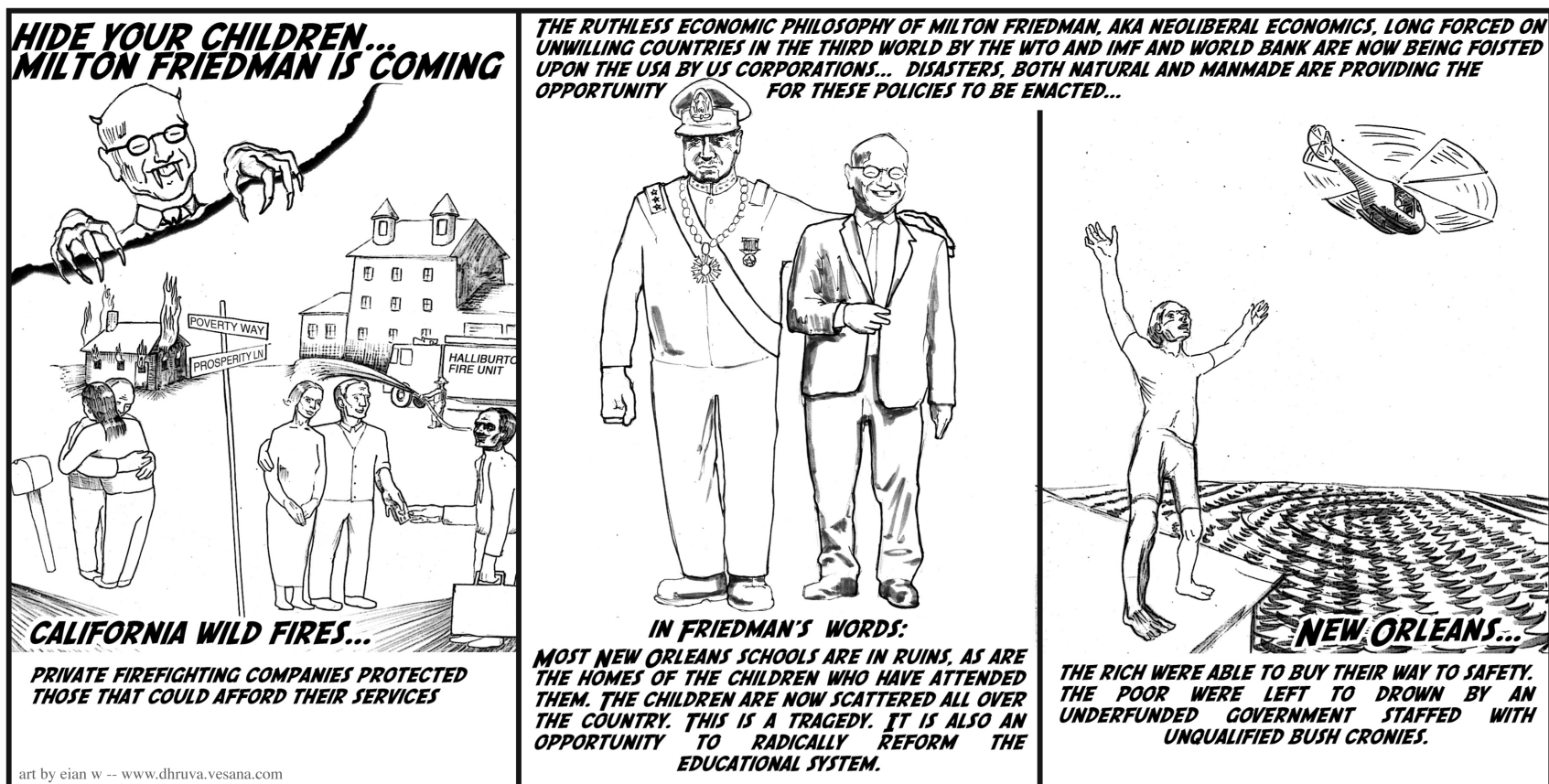
"...that the government of the District of Columbia was actually defending and facing more lawsuits for false arrests and for police misconduct and for police brutality than they had gotten convictions for criminal charges in the five-year period since 1999." He goes on to describe what he calls, "...the Ramsey plan, which is named after the

Chief of Police, Charles Ramsey in which they were arresting people for their thoughts, and not for their actions, and I analogized it to the Tom Cruise movie called "Minority Report," where people were arrested for pre-crime."

During Ramsey's watch in DC, there was a general drop in violent crime in DC, which coincided with a period of accelerated gentrification. A Washington Post article *No Wonder Some D.C. Folks Feel Abandoned* from 2004 details the process by which a housing project controlled by drug dealers called Sursum Corda was bulldozed by the Department of Housing and Urban Development. "The buildings have failed inspections, which gives HUD the right to foreclose, which in turn would allow the owners to pay off their mortgages and flip the properties to market-rate units, adding them to the wave of gentrification now sweeping Washington's core." In that case, a crime-ridden neighborhood was merely removed along with all its residents.

It is natural, in a chaotic situation, to desire safety. In her new book, *The Shock Doctrine*, Naomi Klein explains how a radical vision of capitalism put forward by the late economist Milton Friedman has been put into effect through what Klein refers to as the "shock doctrine". The shock doctrine relies on catastrophe, either artificial or natural, to stun a society. While a population is still reeling from this disaster (read: hurricane Katrina or the shock and awe military campaign, or in our case a crime emergency), the disaster capitalists attack, pushing through a radical societal transformation. Appropriately enough, Friedman's policies are also referred to as the Chicago school of economic thought since Friedman was an influential professor at the University of Chicago. Friedman's doctrine, the aforementioned radical societal transformation, entails what Klein refers to as a "holy trinity" of privatization, deregulation, and cuts to social spending.

In New Orleans we can currently see the impacts of Chicago School economics



with the demolition of public housing now occurring and the recent firing of unionized teachers and dismantling of the public education system and its rapid replacement with privatized, non-union charter schools which did not rehire most of these experienced teachers. Philadelphia too is experiencing a drastic economic transformation: a wave of new development and a reversal of white flight, a wave of gentrification, and the displacement of entire neighborhoods. Ramsey's appointment seems timely indeed.

Yet, despite Ramsey's experience, his appointment was not to the liking of the Philly Police who had picked their own candidates for the post from within the Philly Police Ranks. Another mitigating factor was that Ramsey declared crime emergencies four times during his eight years in DC. His use of "crime emergencies" to contravene Police Union contracts in DC did not endear him with the Police Union there. He also used those emergencies as a pretense to lengthen youth curfews and install CCTV cameras.

While the evidence of coordinated repression of protesters throughout Ramsey's career appears anecdotal, Ramsey himself is quoted by one Washington Post reporter as stating, "I've had people from [the special operations division] also go to Quebec City, Genoa, Sydney, New York, Seattle, Salt Lake City," Ramsey said. "We share police tactics, but more importantly, we learn tactics used by demonstrators that may be used against us." Clearly these are not rogue cops or a bunch of bad apples here.

Unfortunately the truth travels a bit slower than cops on horseback. The shambling bureaucracy of legislation cannot keep pace with the battle in the streets. Ramsey knows this, and he is—if nothing else—a skilled manager of public opinion. There is a certain similarity to the shock doctrine here—that the higher ups know what they are doing is unconstitutional yet they strike when the opportunity presents itself, falsely arresting large groups of protesters with the knowledge that while the courts may fine the city later, no one can stop them now. Ramsey and his militarized police force clear the streets, pull down the banners, silence the most outspoken critics of corporate dominance and globalization, of Chicago school economics in their purest form. Ramsey has displayed clearly where his true allegiance lays.

On a recent appearance on *The Countdown* with Keith Olberman, Naomi Klein stated that our accounting for the wrongdoing of the disaster capitalists is usually conducted after the fact—when the dust has cleared. We only know what has happened once it is too late to stop it.

Watching Michael Nutter ride into the Mayor's office on his "stop and frisk" horse, it seems that the citizens of Philadelphia are traumatized, and are still reeling from an extremely violent year. Lets just hope that we are not so blinded by our desire for revenge or an easy solution that we will accept the replacement of one set of gangsters, the drug dealers and their minions, with another set of gangsters, the bankers and real estate brokers and their footsoldiers in blue.

WORKERS, NOT POLITICIANS, WILL END THIS WAR

Build Our Solidarity, Not Their Elections

-Antithesis, NYC NEFAC Collective

Before bombs began dropping on Iraq, millions of us protested against the war. Today, the war is dismally unpopular and every day we learn of new atrocities being committed in our names. And all at the expense of the lives of U.S. soldiers, drawn heavily from the working class. Faced with this dire situation, leaders of the antiwar movement have focused on electing Democrats, lobbying Democrats, and calling on Democrats to impeach Bush. We reject this whole electoral strategy. It has not brought us any closer to stopping the war. Of the leading Democratic candidates for President, all plan on keeping U.S. troops in Iraq indefinitely. It is clear to us that a new type of movement and strategy is needed, both to end the unjust wars in Iraq and beyond, and to work towards the liberation of all of us here in the U.S.A.

Part of building this new movement is working class solidarity. Although the ruling class would love for you to forget it, the truth is that we live in a society that is divided along class lines. The vast majority of humanity creates the wealth of society, but is robbed of its wealth and its power by the capitalists. The State and its politicians exist to keep this system going, to keep us in line with their police and prisons, and in time of war, to send us to die for the corporations they serve. They do it all in the name of a phony democracy. It's a "democracy" that gives power to this or that faction of the rich, instead of power to the communities and power to the workers. By voting in someone to make decisions for us, we cede our power to make real change in our society.

Just look at where they have gotten us. How many people are working well over 40 hours to get by, and can hardly afford to get by at that? How many people now find themselves forced from their homes and communities? How many are without health insurance? How many young people are in prison instead of good schools? Why have we not been able to stop the devastation of this planet of ours? This is the war that is being waged against us. It is up to us whether we are willing to fight back.

We must consider this class war when debating the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and beyond. The working people of those nations are our allies, not our enemies. Our common enemies sit in the mansions and palaces on both sides, and it is those in power who keep us at each other's throats and makes us think we have different interests. Over here and over there, the truth is that most of humanity simply wants to live in peace and enjoy the products of their labor. We have built everything that exists in our society. We grow and serve the food. We build and maintain the buildings. We take care of all the people and things. We have created a society that could very easily provide for all, but we are forced to turn its vast potential towards the profit of the few, the waste of our resources and the tools of their wars. We do not control our society. We do not control our futures.

But we can! And the alternative? It is right there in our history of struggle. All progress in the U.S.A. has been won, not by elections, but by mass struggle and people's solidarity. The great gains of the unions were won in the 1930s by massive, illegal strikes, direct actions and occupations of the factories. The defeat of Jim Crow was won by African-Americans through illegal marches, civil disobedience, and urban rebellions. The Vietnam War was ended through large demonstrations, campus strikes, draft resistance, and a virtual mutiny in the army.

Our movement against the Iraqi war must become independent and militant. Let us reject support for the Democrats or Republicans, or any other attempt to elect someone responsible for this war. Let our movement be rooted in the majority of the population. Only we, as working class people, are capable of making society work for us and not for the bosses and their wars. The government will not give in to peace parades or scattered acts of violence. We need mass action, workplace struggle, civil disobedience, and unrelenting hostility toward the warfare state and its corporate masters.

Let us support the many troops and veterans who are speaking out against the war. Let us prevent any more of our fellow workers and youth from being recruited and sent to die. Let us support the struggles of working women, people of color and LGBT people. Let us STRIKE against the war and in solidarity with working people worldwide. Together, we have the power to shut down the machinery of war. We reach out to you as fellow workers in the anti-war movement to help push this movement towards working-class solidarity, unity, and organization. The people of all nations have the right to determine their own future. When we learn to use our own power, the war will end and will be but the beginning of a march towards emancipation.

"The greatest bulwark of capitalism is militarism, but an international feeling of solidarity is bringing all the workers to the point when they will say to their masters, 'Go and do your own killing. We have done it long enough for you.'"
- Emma Goldman, anarchist communist, New York City, 1917

No War for Empire – No Peace for the Ruling Class!

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prison pages

Correctional Officer Hung Noose on Prisoners Cell Door at SCI- Houtzdale

This report is written by a person incarcerated at Houtzdale

In early November I reported an incident of racism by a Correctional Officer in which the officer made a hangman's noose and hung it from another inmate's door. One of the witnesses filed a DC-804 (grievance) about the incident and here's the status update to this point:

Today is Thursday, November 15th, 2007. SCI-Houtzdale is emerging from a 50-hour lockdown initiated by a senseless gang brawl between the Latin Kings and Bloods. All the while, the festering spectre of racism hangs over Houtzdale like a pall. As inmate's attack each other, ostensibly fighting over pride and disjointed idealism those charged with the reform and safety of society's errants are conspiring to bury a hate crime.

At 3:15 this afternoon, the Unit Manager, Ms. Jennifer Rossman, called prisoner Benji Hill over to the officer's station on AA unit to render her disposition to grievance #206170. The inmate reported that Ms. Rossman spoke informally about the incident. She admitted that C.O Clevensline's actions were wrong and that her long-time association with this C.O. indicated that he had no racial animosities or prejudices. The whole thing was a "joke," albeit one in poor taste, she said. Ms. Rossman repeatedly made allowances for the C.O.'s behavior by referring to the matter as a "joke."

What follows is verbatim accounting of Ms. Rossman's official response regarding the incident:

"The following is a summary of my finding regarding your grievance:

In your grievance you state that you witnessed officer Clevensline take a black electrical cord, tie it into a "hangman's noose," and tie it onto the door of 4 cell for a moment before taking it down. You claim that Officer Clevensline "looked at you as if making a point and laughed." You further state that you were stunned by his senseless act of hatred and that you viewed this as ethnic intimidation and a hate crime.

I interviewed Officer Clevensline regarding this incident. He admits that he did tie the cord onto the door of 4 cell then immediately removed it. Officer Clevensline reports that he did this in a joking manner and that it was never his intention to have it represent any type of racial or ethnic gesture.

Officer Clevensline was counseled regarding this incident. He is fully aware that his actions were inappropriate, regardless of his intentions, and that he needs to be more aware of how his actions can be interpreted by others. He is

adamant about the fact that he did not mean to disrespect anyone and he understands that his actions were unacceptable.

Based on my discussion with Officer Clevensline, I am confident that there will be no further incidents of this nature. This grievance is considered resolved.

CC: to the superintendent, both Deputy Superintendents, and the inmate's filed. Signed by Jennifer Rossman, UM; dated: 11-14-07 "

There are several incredible things about Ms. Rossman's response, but we'll focus on the broad points involving the act and how it was perceived.

National headlines from Jena, Louisiana and various locales across the country have shown that the "hangman's noose" has had a renaissance of sorts among frustrated and angry whites. In isolated communities like Houtzdale and others near prisons, the attitudes of residents on issues of racial tolerance are decidedly hostile, if they exist at all. The PA Department of Corrections trains all its officers and support staff on race matters.

Unfortunately, there seems to be a disconnect with many staff at any point of their training or daily interaction with inmates where they must consider an inmate's humanity. And so, racial sensitivity training in an environment where 99.9% of the staff is white and 70% of the prisoners are minorities falls on deaf ears.

It seems incomprehensible that a college-educated woman could be so glib about her employee's "joking" use of an implement of racial intimidation and murder whose very form harkens back to the hellish end of Reconstruction. It can make no difference at all that she knew this officer for years and could effectively "vouch" for his intent. That C.O. Clevensline could so brazenly admitted committing a hate crime is testimony to his knowledge that he was secure in his workplace and that a half hearted excuse and mea culpa would be all he would be called on to offer.

It is beyond dispute that this C.O. hung a noose, however, he shall remain exempt from the same legal process which so easily sent us here.

"Resolving" the grievance in this manner is a slap in the face. It is the "Thin Blue Line"

protecting one of its own from the very ideals it purports to represent. It is white privilege combined with white apathy and the clearest possible example I've seen about how such power should not be given to individuals without checks against abuse.

And so, Houtzdale returns to normal operations today safe in the knowledge that its employees remain above the law and above reproach. There are no lessons to be learned here, only a lone inmate who took a stand and was drowned out by deafening silence.

To contact the Department of Corrections:

Jeffrey Beard, Secretary of Corrections in PA
P.O. Box 598 Camphill, PA 17001
phone- 717-975-4918

George Patrick, Warden - State Correctional Institution - Houtzdale P.O. Box 1000
Houtzdale, PA 16698 (814) 378-1000

Human Rights Coalition-FedUp! Chapter
5125 Penn Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15224
hrcfedup@gmail.com

friends and families of prisoners EMERGENCY RESPONSE NETWORK

These days being arrested, jailed or imprisoned is an all too REAL POSSIBILITY for ANYONE! Anything from a routine traffic stop, to civil disobedience, being held because you fit some agencies' "PROFILE", all the way up to being wrongly charged with murder; the criminal justice system may subject you to its TWO TIER system: one tier for those with money and another tier for everyone else.

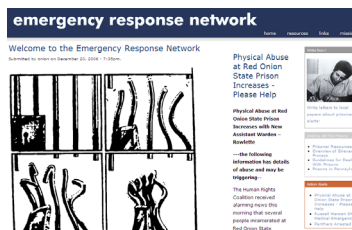
The MISSION of the Families and Friends of Prisoners - Emergency Response Network (FFP-ERN) is to provide immediate help and comfort to loved ones and friends, as well as to hapless prisoners, who find themselves in that situation.

The FFP-ERN will respond to such situations in the following manner:

1. When individuals find themselves needing EMERGENCY help from people while in jail or prison, s/he can activate the FFP-ERN.
2. The family member or friend will in turn work with other FFP-ERN people to find ways to immediately start getting help to the PRISONER, and
3. In return, each request and every effort made to bring relief will expand the NETWORK of people who can work together to stop the criminal justice system from isolating and dehumanizing any of their loved ones and friends.

Check out the new website at emergencyresponse.cc

- ★ Emergency Alerts
- ★ Prison News and news feeds
- ★ Resources for navigating the prison bureaucracies, getting support, how to file grievances and a tool for alerting editors of your local papers of emergency situations going on in the prisons.



JOIN OUR EMAIL EMERGENCY ALERTS LISTSERV

This is a low traffic listserv, strictly about ERN related emergencies. To sign up, go to emergencyresponse.cc/list

<http://emergencyresponse.cc>

Empowerment vs. Humiliation

by Robert Saleem Holbrook

Imprisonment in the United States is distinguished from imprisonment in the rest of the world by one enduring trait: The total and complete humiliation and de-humanization of the prisoner. This trait demonstrates why the U.S. prison system is a total failure and shunned by the rest of the world. While other country's prisoners may toil under brutal and inhumane conditions, particularly in the developing world, these countries "treatment" and "conditions" of their prisoners and prisons owes more to the lack of funds available or an unwillingness to invest in their prisons systems than a misguided government philosophy guiding their treatment of prisoners. So while conditions in Mexican prisons are brutal and inhumane it is not owed to a specific government policy. Rather, it is because, as a developing country, Mexico does not have the funds to invest in upgrading its prison system. But even if Mexico had the surplus money to invest in its prison system it is unlikely, based on regional and international trends, that Mexico would adopt the United States imprisonment model. Why? Because it simply does not work.

Canada, on the other hand, is a nation with money to invest in its prison system. As a result its facilities and treatment of prisoners would be up to or exceed American standards however Canadians shun the American model of humiliating and de-humanizing prisoners, preferring to a model based on punishment, rehabilitation and empowering the prisoner as a individual. Canada does not mass imprison drug offenders and acknowledges drug addiction as a disease, it allows and encourages prisoners to maintain their humanity and promotes family and the institution of marriage. It reserves imprisonment for only the most violent and habitual offenders and even then does not deliberately isolate the prisoner from their family and community. It works actively to reintegrate offenders back into the community and does not use their imprisonment as a "scarlet letter" branded on their backs to forever cause them employment problems. It has abolished mandatory sentences and does something practically unheard of in American "corrections:" It actually holds prison staff accountable for their actions. Families of prisoners in alliance with local legislators recently shut down one of Canada's first private prisons after incidents of abuse and mismanagement surfaced. Such an alliance would be impossible in America's present political climate where the concerns of prisoners' families are disregarded by politicians eager to cater to a victims rights movement that has been hijacked by right wing conservative activists.

The "distinct" model of imprisonment in the United States owes its origins and development to the end of chattel slavery in the United States. The philosophies of corrections and slavery are intrinsically linked by a common objective which is the de-humanization and humiliation of the individual. The institution of slavery denied that the slave was a man and totally sought to strip them of their sense of identity, humanity and individuality. It turned man into a number. It was this denial, that the slave was not human and did not possess a soul, that distinguished chattel slavery in the United States from slavery in other regions of the America's.

With the abolition of slavery in the United States the philosophical underpinnings of the institution was shifted into the emerging prison system. The philosophy of "corrections" denied that the prisoner was a man and sought to reduce him/her to a number. Prisoners were labeled "slaves of the state" and the process of stripping them of their humanity, identity, self-worth, individuality, etc was undertaken not by a class of slaveholders but by the bureaucracy of the state. Although throughout the years there have been different theories on how prisoners should be treated one common trend has endured and that is the de-humanization of the prisoner. From the moment a prisoner enters the Department of Corrections their humanity and individuality is methodically and deliberately stripped and their human rights trampled upon. Our nation's much celebrated 13th Amendment eliminated one class of slavery while legitimizing another class/concept of slavery:

"Section 1. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for a crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction. Section 2. Congress shall have the power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

-13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution
Mass imprisonment is the model of American "corrections". Mass imprisonment of drug offenders and juvenile offenders; drug addiction regarded as criminal; imprisonment of the mentally insane; the severance of prisoners from their families though distant transfers as state policy; imprisonment for profit; child offenders sentenced to life without parole; chain gangs, prisoners as "whipping bags" of society; elimination of educational and vocational programs in the prison system to build more prison beds; the use of mass imprisonment to maintain low unemployment rates, racial/ethnic profiling; prisoners placed in "SuperMax" prisons in isolation for years; disproportionate sentencing guidelines for minority offenders; draconian mandatory sentencing guidelines; the list is endless. What country would want to duplicate this model?

In terms of treatment of prisoners and the protection of human rights under international law the United States has either not signed or completely disregarded international treaties governing the treatment of prisoners such as the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights, Convention on the Rights of the Child, Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhumane or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners, Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention. Declaration on the Protection of All Persons Being Subjected to Torture and Other Cruel, Inhumane, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, Safeguards Guaranteeing Protection of the Rights of Those Facing the Death Penalty, United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of Their Liberty, and the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice.

The inhumane and degrading treatment of Iraqi prisoners the world witnessed at Abu Ghraib prison was merely an extension of the American philosophy of "corrections" and

imprisonment exercised on an international level by a member of the Army Reserve that was a "corrections" lieutenant in his civilian life at SCI-Greene in Pennsylvania. His (Charles Granier's) attitude toward prisoners is the norm within American corrections, he was just able to exercise his perverted attitude toward prisoners unrestrained by legal regulations that otherwise held his behavior in check in American prisons.

A system that is established on the skeleton of a inhumane institution such as slavery should not exist in a just society, yet with over 2 million people imprisoned in the United States prison occupies a central position within American society. Despite the state's attempt to keep prisons on the periphery of society the world regards the American prison system as barbaric in spite of its modern facilities because its philosophy belongs to a era when human bondage and degradation were the law of the land. No amount of doctors or experts presiding over Department of Corrections across the country can change this.

No human being is changed or reformed through humiliation and dehumanization. Humiliation only breeds resentment and reinforces the idea in the mind of the prisoner that he or she is and never will be more than what they already are. You change a human being's character and value system by empowering them. Empowering prisoners, not humiliating them, is the key to rehabilitation and personal transformation. However this very approach is threatening to the employees

of Department of Corrections around the country because it would strip them of the omnipotent power they possess over prisoners and would undermine the philosophical trend that has dominated American prisons over the past 100 years. It would expose the failure of the American model of "corrections" to the public and world.

As the United States continues to push its neo-slavery philosophy in its prison system it continues to create more men and women worse off than before they entered the system. A endless cycle of recidivism and imprisonment are the consequences of this philosophy. The trend appears to be in no danger of being abandoned. Any prisoner interested in change must empower themselves, and individuals in society interested in seeing prisoners change must encourage their empowerment and a shift in the philosophy governing Department of Corrections across the country. As "slaves of the state" the men and women exiting these prisons only reflect the values and standards of the state responsible for their imprisonment.

They are only what the state makes them. In looking at the ex-prisoner or prisoner you are only observing a product of the state.

Robert Holbrook
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175 Progress Drive
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Screening on Prison Abuse Turns Into Reality

by Etta Cetera, HRC-Fed Up!

On November 24, 2007, the Human Rights Coalition- FedUp! Chapter hosted a screening of "Up the Ridge" at the Underground Lounge in the Northside. About 15 people turned out to see this one-hour documentary that offers viewers an in-depth look at the United States prison industry and the social impact of moving hundreds of thousands of inner-city offenders to distant rural outposts.

The idea for the film began in 1999, when filmmakers Nick Szuberla and Amelia Kirby were volunteer DJs for the Appalachian region's only hip-hop radio program in Whitesburg, KY. It was then they received hundreds of letters from inmates transferred into nearby Wallens Ridge, the region's newest prison built to prop up the shrinking coal economy. The letters described human rights violations and racial tension between staff and the prisoners.

The morning following the movie

screening, FedUP! received a disturbing phone call from Red Onion State Prison (ROSP). It was a prisoner calling from his solitary confinement cell with alarming news. The guards were getting bad again, he said. During the past eight months FedUp! has hardly received any reports of physical abuse at ROSP.

The caller proceeded to list names of prisoners who were assaulted, and the guards involved. On November 10, 2007, Corderio Carter alleges he was attacked by Correctional Officers Dutton, Taylor and Brown, when he was taking a shower. There was some confusion and Carter asked to speak to a Sergeant. His request was denied, he was dragged into the middle of the room, and slammed face first into the concrete with handcuffs and shackles still on. In the last month, we received four reports from people who claim that they have been placed in ambulatory restraints for longer than 21 hours without being given food, bathroom breaks or medications if needed. This results in prisoners being forced to

continued on the next page...

screening into reality continued

urinate and defecate on themselves while in restraints.

Over the last month, the atmosphere at ROSP has intensified in regards to racial harassment of prisoners as well as physical abuse. It has become a regular occurrence for prisoners to be called racial slurs when receiving food. If the prisoners responds in any way their food is taken from them and the Sergeant says the prisoner refused the meal. Personal property of the prisoners is also being destroyed. Prisoners believe this upsurge in abuse is related to the reinstatement of Assistant Warden Richard Rowlette. Rowlette was a major at Red Onion State Prison when it was first opened and sited for extreme acts of abuse by Human Rights Watch (www.hrw.org/reports/1999/redonion).

When questioned by prisoner advocates, a Red Onion State Prison officer identified as Sergeant Adams claimed he knew how to do his job and that nothing was going wrong. Adams expressed no interest in investigating the incidents and was hostile and defensive. Another officer of the Special Investigation Unit spoke with me for a half hour. He said that it was almost impossible to “prove” allegations of racism and that the whole time he has worked in the Special Investigation Unit (the Virginia Department of Corrections internal investigation department), he could not remember one time a claim of an officer abusing a prisoner to ever have been “founded” or proved. My jaw dropped. “Not once?” I’ll believe that when politicians start telling the truth.

“Up the Ridge” highlights many perspectives, from the prisoner to the politician. The film shows ex-prisoners testifying to the abuse they suffered, “Not being able to be with your family is punishment. Not being able to be with your mom when she is dying is punishment. Prison is the punishment. We do not deserve to be beaten.” One of the head politicians in the prison town of Big Stone Gap was addressing the comparisons human right advocates were making with the incidents at Wallens Ridge. When referring to the prisoners at Abu Graib he said, “Those people were living in caves before... [they were in Abu Graib],” insinuating that being in Abu Graib was a step up from the way the detainees were living before. My jaw dropped. The whole movie had that effect on me even though I had seen it before. My mouth kept dropping – then my heart – listening to the families who had lost loved ones in the prison. The apparent

injustice is so upsetting and the disregard for even the smallest bit of decency is appalling. William Frazier was electro shocked to death in 2001. Frazier was a diabetic who was having a reaction to the insulin. The guards reacted with stunguns. His body was wrapped in a bloody sheet and sent home to his family in Connecticut.

After Frazier’s death and the suicide of 20-year-old David Tracy things did change in Virginia. Connecticut pulled all remaining prisoners from Virginia, a moratorium on the Utron 2 stun device was instated and Ron Angelone, Director of the Virginia Department of Corrections, resigned on May 9, 2002. Wallens Ridge State Prison even went down a level in security from Super Max to a level 5. These and other changes seemed to indicate progress in Virginia’s compliance with constitutional and international conventions on protection of human rights. Unfortunately, the prisoners say otherwise. FedUp! has been documenting abuse at these high-level security institutions in Virginia since 2005. While there have been very few claims of abuse from Wallens Ridge State Prison during this time, reports of excessive force and brutality continue to pour in from Red Onion State Prison, the sister SuperMax a half hour down the road.

I leave you with the words of Kevin “Rashid” Johnson, co-founder of FedUp! and prisoner at Red Onion State Prison: “The state’s government is using a poor, economically depressed and exploited segregated White community to brutally oppress a vastly non-white prisoner body, exactly as impoverished whites were deliberately used to savagely brutalize Blacks with license and impunity during the chattel slavery process of this same rural Amerikan south. There is clearly no interest and no intent by government officials to reign in such abuses. [In fact, the situation is] created by such authorities.”

If you would like to see or show the movie “Up the Ridge,” contact us at 412-802-8575 or hrcfedup@gmail.com or visit the Fed Up Web site at www.thomasmertoncenter.org/fedup.

Shell to Hell



by Memike

This past November marked the 12th anniversary of the Shell Oil Company’s judicial assassination of Ken Saro-Wiwa and the Ogonii 8, in Nigeria on November 10, 1995. After leading a successful campaign against the problems being caused by oil exploration in the Niger Delta throughout the early 1990’s, the campaigners were arrested and charged with conspiracy to murder. All nine men were imprisoned and the Nigerian government instituted a special no-jury military panel to try them. The trial banned journalists from the court, and placed the defendants’ supporters under armed guards.

While inside the court a representative of the Shell Oil Company was given a reserved seat in the courtroom

to observe all the proceedings. All nine people were sentenced to hang. Baribor Bera, Saturday Dobe, Nordu Eawo, Daniel Gbokoo, Barinem Kiobel, John Kpuinen, Paul Levura and Felix Nuate were hanged one by one at Port Harcourt Prison while Ken Saro-Wiwa was forced to watch the executions before he in turn was hanged.

Then, as now, people across the world stopped to remember, demonstrate, and commemorate, the struggles against Shell in Nigeria and the price paid. The Shell Oil Company, meanwhile, never slowed as it steamed ahead with typical disregard for local people and their environments. As one of the worlds largest and most powerful oil companies there are few places untouched by their mark, and they continue to spread.

The struggle against Shell has not ceased, it too has spread.

One struggle that continues to rise against Shell and its political allies can be found in the Shell to Sea campaign on the Western Coast of Ireland. Shell has been engaged in a project in County Mayo that involves running a risky high-pressure pipeline that would tear through a boggy landscape and cut through lands where many people live. The oil company is also attempting to construct a massive

refinery in the middle of a conservation area, which many people believe will destroy the fishing and tourism industries in the vicinity. It’s important to remember that much of the West of Ireland is a rural, rough, landscape fishing and tourism accounting for much of the year’s income for many of the residents.

On November 9th, 2007, the day before



Ken Saro-Wiwa/Monster African Party day at Bellanaboy and Glenamoy, Ireland - Sat Nov 12th 2005. The crosses bear the names of those killed by Shell. (from www.corribosos.com)

the anniversary of the executions of Ken Saro-Wiwa and the Ogonii 8, local people in Mayo held another demonstration at the proposed refinery site. And once again Shell managed to direct the local police force as its own private army to harass and intimidate its opponents. Hundreds of police clashed with the demonstrators pushing them off the roadway to allow trucks full of building materials to be forced through the crowd. Many demonstrators were injured, with one having to be hospitalized.

The local resistance to Shell may have taken its first steps as a local health and safety issue campaign, but it hasn’t ended there. The movement has slowly grown as the implications of Shell’s refusal to be held accountable to local concerns became entangled with larger Irish political and financial webs. Residents rejected the corporate and government development plans that knifed across their lands and communities. Locals began refusing access to their lands to workers who would begin construction. Roads and gates were blockaded, and neighbors began organizing with one another. The wealth and aggression of Shell, and the politicians that granted the oil company greater “rights” than the very people who lived on the land were

Today We Experienced America

Arresting Indigenous People on the Border

By Brenda Norrell

November 16, 2007

Indigenous delegates to the US/Mexico border running through Tohono O'odham Nation land were outraged by federal agents, hovering customs helicopters, profiteering contractors, federal spy tower, federal "cage" detention center and the arrest of a group of Indigenous Peoples, mostly women and children, by the US Border Patrol on an Indian Nation.

"We saw it all firsthand in America," said Bill Means, Lakota and cofounder of the International Indian Treaty Council on Nov. 8, when an Indigenous delegation visited the US/Mexico border south of Sells to document human rights abuses for a report to the United Nations.

"Now we are going to take this wall down," Means said, after viewing the construction of a border vehicle barrier by contractors and National Guard on Tohono O'odham land.

Speaking a few hours later to the Indigenous Peoples Border Summit of the Americas II in San Xavier, Means called for solidarity of Indigenous Peoples throughout the world to halt the arrests of Indigenous Peoples who are walking north in search of a better life, and solidarity to bring down the US/Mexico border wall.

"One inch of intrusion into our land is not acceptable!" Mohawk Mark Maracle told the Border Summit. "I became very angry when I saw those guys rounding up our people.

"It is a violation of our Great Law to witness what we did today and do nothing about it."

The delegation included Mohawks, Oneida, Navajo, Acoma Pueblo, Hopi and O'odham.

Near the border, at the scene of the arrests of a group of Indigenous Peoples, Mohawks stood before US Border Patrol agents and held their fists high in solidarity, as the Border Patrol packed nearly a dozen Indigenous Peoples into one vehicle.

The delegation also viewed the federal spy tower next to Homeland Security's migrant detention center known as "the cage" on the Tohono O'odham Nation. The first stop, however, was the abomination of the new vehicle barrier wall being constructed on O'odham land.

Kahentinetha Horn of the Mohawk Women Title Holders said she saw the callousness of the Tohono O'odham district official who stood before them and spoke in favor of the border barrier.

"This is completely illegal," Kahentinetha said, adding that it violates human rights legislation. Kahentinetha was outraged at the arrests of the group of Indigenous Peoples, who appeared to be Mayans from Oaxaca, Chiapas or

Guatemala.

"We stood in front of the Border Patrol, we started yelling at them," Kahentinetha told the Indigenous Border Summit. She described how the Mohawks stood with fists held high in solidarity with the Indigenous Peoples being arrested earlier in the day.

"We were passing some of our strength on to them to fight."

The Indigenous delegation documenting the abuses planned to intervene in the arrests, but the Border Patrol crowded the group into a

sovereign nation."

Castro said the buildings near the border on the Tohono O'odham Nation are labeled with signs, "Homeland Security and Tohono O'odham Nation, like they are in partnership."

Maracle said that the same atrocities the United States government accuses migrants of committing, the invaders committed when they arrived on Turtle Island: rape, robbery and murder.

"If you don't stop and grab hold of your destiny, there is not going to be one for your children," Maracle said all the nations need to come together and stop what is happening here. "I know from past experience with the Mohawk Warrior Society where our power lies, it is with the people. The power is in the people, don't ever forget that."

Chris George, Oneida from Canada, said,

"When the Border Patrol came up, they thought we were the enemy," relaying how the Border Patrol asked the summit delegation who authorized this delegation to be at the border.

"No one authorizes us to do anything. It was the Creator who took us there."

"They were packing, we were packing, too, with a good mind and a good heart."

"All of the Indigenous Peoples need to come together. Don't let the United States government tell you who you are. We know who we are. We are Haudenosaunee, People of the Longhouse."

Lenny Foster, Dine' (Navajo) and advocate for Native ceremonial rights for inmates, said what he witnessed at the border was "brutal, vicious

and evil."

Foster said Dine' know that all human beings all have five fingers, but what he witnessed within the district official and federal agents was no internal recognition of being five-fingered people.

"They were robots."

Foster said that the Tohono O'odham district official who led the tour was defending the policies of genocide.

Foster asked who sets these policies in the United States. "Who is running the government? It is the white man, it surely isn't the people of color."

Describing how the Indigenous Peoples were

arrested and rushed into a small vehicle, Foster said, "It reminded me of Gallup, N.M., and how they round up our people, stack them up like stacks of wood."

Foster was at this same place, a dirt path leading to Mexico known as The Gate, years ago when the American Indian Movement protested the violation of human rights here. Foster pointed out that during this day, he viewed the heavy buildup of police and agents. There were police from the BIA, Tohono O'odham Nation, along with US Border Patrol and Immigration and Customs agents. The National Guard were also there, working with the contractor constructing the border vehicle barrier, while a white customs' helicopter hovered overhead.

At the same time, on the Mexico side, two men sat under a tree.

An attorney for the O'odham in Mexico was prevented from crossing into the United States on Tohono O'odham land by the US Border Patrol, even though he held a letter from Tohono O'odham Nation Chairman Ned Norris requesting him to come and meet with him today. In the letter, Chairman Norris stated that the attorney could enter the Nation for the meeting by way of The Gate here.

The Border Patrol officer at the scene refused to allow the attorney to enter, even with a letter from the chairman. Over-ruling Chairman Norris on Tohono O'odham land, the US Border Patrol agent said the attorney must have a US visa to enter, not just a letter from Chairman Norris. The attorney waited there, with a Tarahumara accompanying him who held a US visa.

Foster pointed out that the Mexican federales or federal police, who arrived on the other side, could do anything with the two people left there. "They could even be torturing them now."

Means pointed out that the delegation was "tailed" or followed from the tribal capitol of Sells. Means said that the Berlin Wall had come down, but now there are other walls to divide the people, including the wall between Israel and Palestine.

At the border wall construction at The Gate, Means said one of the workers told them, "The Israelis are helping us put up the fence."

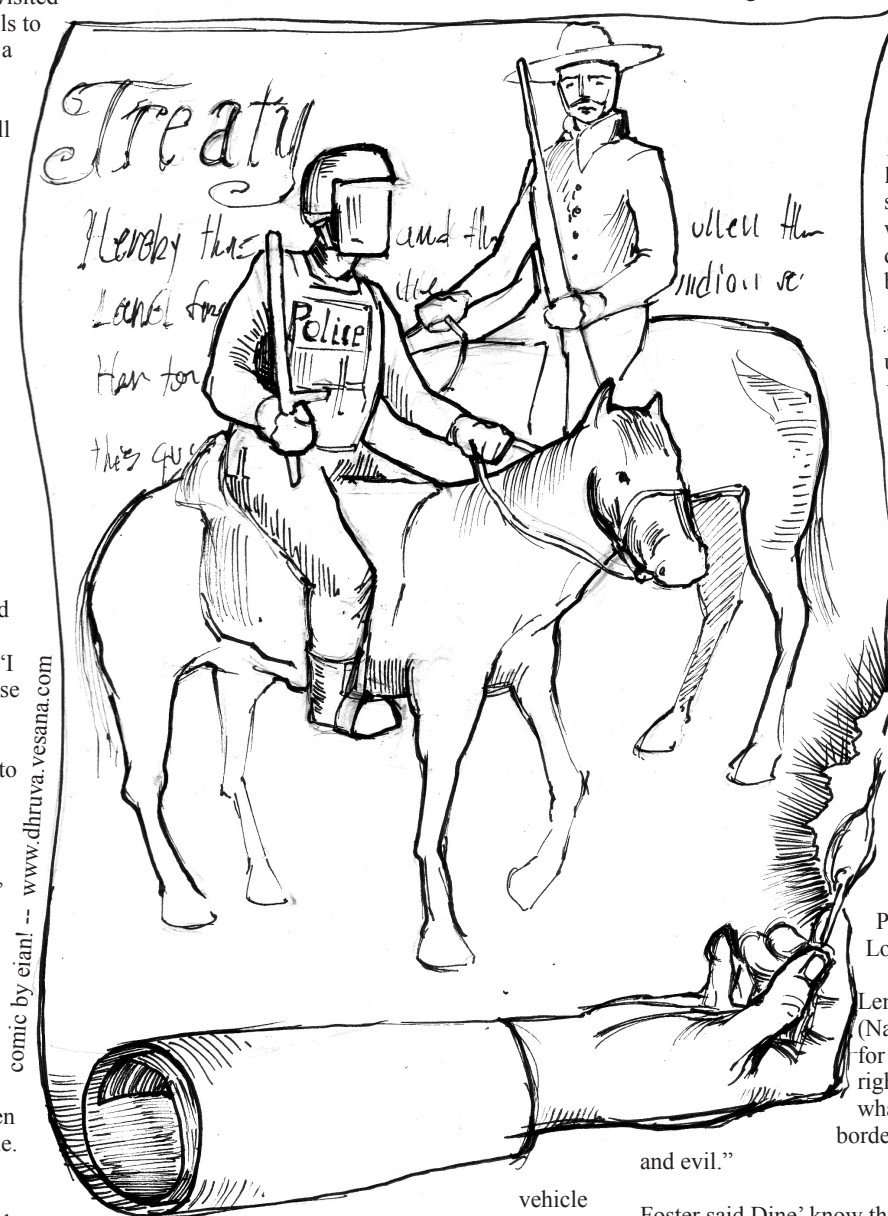
At the US/Mexico border, border wall contractor Boeing has hired a subcontractor Elbit Systems, an Israeli defense contractor, who participated in constructing security at the Apartheid Wall in Palestine.

Speaking of what is happening in the United States now, Means said the "gated communities" of the United States have now expanded into a "gated country." It is a country where the government welcomes the rich. The Indigenous Border Summit witnessed what the United States does to Indigenous Peoples.

Means quoted Black Hawk of the Sac and Fox Nation: "Why is it you Americans always take with a gun what you could have with love. We experienced America today."

Brenda Norrell is human rights editor for U.N. OBSERVER & International Report. She also runs the Censored website, <<http://www.bsnorrell.blogspot.com/>>

She can be reached at: > brendanorrell@gmail.com



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

vehicle and left quickly.

"I came away feeling very frustrated and very discouraged," Kahentinetha said.

Mohawk warrior Rarahkwisere, among those heartbroken to see the arrest of fellow Indigenous Peoples on Indian land, said these brothers and sisters of the people were not drug runners or criminals, these were women and children walking in search of a better life.

Jay Johnson Castro of Del Rio Texas, leading protests against the imprisonment of migrant children at Hutto prison in Texas and the border wall in Texas, was in the delegation.

"I hear 'sovereign nation,' but I didn't see a

The Bourne Ultimatum

Rejecting the CIA

By Hans Bennett

Following September 11, 2001, the corporate news media has almost uniformly supported the US invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as the overall agenda of US imperialism. Simultaneously, the mainstream entertainment industry has produced several movies with remarkably scathing critiques of US militarism and foreign policy. Accompanying recent anti-war films like *In The Valley of Elah* and *Lions for Lambs*, is this past summer's blockbuster action movie, *The Bourne Ultimatum*, starring actor Matt Damon. Just released on DVD, *The Bourne Ultimatum* is the final installment of the Jason Bourne trilogy, based on the book series by author Robert Ludlum.

In the trilogy's first movie, *The Bourne Identity* (2002), Jason Bourne, played by Matt Damon, is mysteriously found by fishermen in the Mediterranean Sea, unconscious, with several bullets in his back. After help from the crew's doctor Bourne regains consciousness only to discover that he has amnesia and a microchip embedded under his skin, which projects the numbers of a mysterious Swiss bank account. After arriving in Switzerland to investigate this mysterious bank account, Bourne sleeping at night in a park is awakened by police officers who begin to bully him. Without thinking, Bourne fights back and sends both cops to the hospital—now realizing that he possesses extraordinary fighting skills.

Bourne soon learns that he is a CIA assassin, and his gunshot wounds and amnesia have stemmed from a botched assassination attempt on an African leader planning to write a book exposing numerous ultra-secret CIA operations in Africa. Bourne soon realizes that the CIA is now trying to kill him, and after he survives several attempts on his life has the inevitable confrontation with his CIA boss, at which point he finally remembers the full details of the failed assassination attempt.

In the second movie, *The Bourne Supremacy* (2004), he is still suffering from amnesia but can remember some fragments of his past, including several assassinations that he performed for the CIA. Disgusted by his assassin past he continues his rigorous physical training and also confronts the intense psychological trauma that continues to haunt him. He is particularly haunted by scattered memories of his very first job, where he killed a prominent Russian politician that was opposing the privatization of oil following the dissolution of the USSR.

As Bourne is hunted once again, this insubordinate former assassin is forced to use the very fighting skills that he has come to despise.

While providing explosive hand-to-hand combat, gunfights, car chases, and a suspenseful plot, the action scenes will satisfy any fan of action movies. But distinguishing this from the typical action film, it explores Bourne's deep psychological wounds resulting from his violent past and his displeasure at having to use violence for his survival. Indeed, the violence is not glorified at all.

This summer's *The Bourne Ultimatum* marked the final chapter of this exciting trilogy. After explosive confrontations with CIA "assets" in London and Tangiers, Morocco, Bourne returns to New York City where he finally confronts the man who created him as part of an experimental training program for the CIA's elite assassins. In the process, Bourne remembers the full details of his "training,"



which entailed treatment shockingly similar to the torture tactics used at Abu Ghraib and elsewhere. Indeed, this is how he was made into an unquestioning trigger-man serving the murderous agenda of US global dominance.

"A Movie For Today" Recently interviewed by CNN about *Ultimatum*, Damon said that movie's similarities to the current war on Iraq were no accident. "All of these movies are very much of the time that they were made, and at a time when we had gone into this war. To have this character aware of what he had done and try to take responsibility for his actions I thought was a really good thing. ...It's this guy who has done these horrible things, but now we see he thought he was doing them for the right reasons at the time he did them, but he realizes he was sold a bill of goods," Damon said. "So that's very much a movie for today."

Having grown up next-door to anarchist historian Howard Zinn, actor Matt Damon is no stranger to radical politics. In his breakthrough film, *Good Will Hunting* (1997), Damon's character (a mathematical genius

reviews.



from Boston's working class) challenges Robin Williams' character to read Zinn's *A People's History of the United States*. Williams then responds by challenging him to read Noam Chomsky's *Manufacturing Consent!*

Recently, Damon narrated the documentary about Zinn, titled *You Can't Be Neutral On A Moving Train* (2004), and also began a project with FOX Television to create a TV mini-series based on Zinn's *A People's History*, before it was cancelled by FOX.

Damon's recent films *The Good Shepherd* (2005) and *Syriana* (2005) also present a radical critique of the CIA and the general objectives of US foreign policy. In Martin Scorsese's *The Departed* (2006), Damon plays a corrupt police officer working for Frank Costello, a real-life Boston gangster with documented ties to the US intelligence community.

Robert Ludlum and the Radical Spy Novel

The recent Bourne movies are based on the trilogy written by best-selling author Robert Ludlum, a WWII veteran who passed away in 2001. The original *Bourne Identity* was written in 1980, so the new movies have been updated to correspond with recent history. The only real similarities in the plot are that Bourne is a wounded CIA assassin, with amnesia, who is being hunted by the CIA. In the book, Bourne is severely traumatized by his experience leading a US death-squad in the killing fields of the Vietnam War.

In contrast to conservative spy fiction authors like Tom Clancy, who glorify the US National Security State, Ludlum's many books presented a profoundly critical view of authoritarianism, ruling class power, the military-industrial complex, violence, and the US intelligence community.

Inspired by the emergence of The Trilateral Commission, *The Matarese Circle* (1979) is Ludlum's Cold War classic. Two arch enemies (one Russian and one US master-spy) both make themselves wanted fugitives of their respective agency, when they unite to bring down a covert international ruling class network which owns most of the media and the world's military industries. "The Matarese" have effectively created and supported global wars (including between the US and the USSR) both for war profiteering and to further their overall power over the global poor.

Many of Ludlum's books focused on US political and economic collaboration with the Nazis, as well as post-WWII Nazi plots to retake power, including *The Holcroft Covenant* (1977), *The Apocalypse Watch* (1995), and *The Sigma Protocol* (2001), whose historically accurate summary of US corporate ties to Nazi

Germany is truly chilling. One of Ludlum's last books, *The Janson Directive*, is a harsh critique of liberalism, arguing that alleged motives of "humanitarianism," often serve as a cover for the sinister agendas of the global corporate elite and the governments that serve their interests.

A movie adaptation of *The Chancellor Manuscript* (1977) starring Leonardo DiCaprio is due out in 2008. Here, Ludlum addresses US industrialists' ties to Nazi Germany, illegal CIA domestic spying, and the US military's murderous racism. The main story is about FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover's extensive blackmailing of other powerful people, which he used to further his own racist and authoritarian agenda. The book suggests that Hoover was assassinated by someone who then stole his extensive files that he had long used for blackmail. Perhaps he finally blackmailed the wrong person?

The Subversive Action Movie

Popular musicians like *Public Enemy*, *Rage Against The Machine*, Bruce Springsteen, and the young Bob Dylan, have garnered the support of major record labels and have subsequently been able to bring very radical political analyses into mainstream US culture. In a similar vein, with the support of big media, exciting action movies like *The Bourne Ultimatum* have been able to present scathing critiques of the status quo to mainstream audiences that simply enjoy a good action movie.

Along with the previously mentioned films, two other post 9-11 spy thrillers are highly recommended. The 2007 film *Shooter*, starring Mark Wahlberg and Danny Glover, is based on the book *Point of Impact*, about the fictional ex-Marine sniper Bob Lee Swagger, written by *The Washington Post* film critic Stephen Hunter. Interestingly, in the beginning of *Shooter*, the disaffected Swagger (played by Wahlberg) is seen viewing the prominently displayed *Znet* website. After Glover's character talks him into doing one last favor for the government, Swagger is double-crossed, and proceeds to use his Marine skills to hunt down the private military contractors and politicians who skillfully framed him for a murder that he didn't commit.

The 2004 version of the 1962 movie, *The Manchurian Candidate*, starring Denzel Washington and Meryl Streep, is a riveting critique of the post-911 climate of fear-mongering, the power of transnational corporations like Haliburton, and the chilling real-life history of experiments in mind-control similar to the CIA's MK-Ultra program.

Check them out!

--Hans Bennett (insubordination.blogspot.com) is an independent photo-journalist and co-founder of *Journalists for Mumia* (Abu-Jamal-News.com).

“Dangerous Woman:

The Graphic Biography of Emma Goldman”

By Sharon Rudahl

Review by James Generic

Emma Goldman is one of the big name names of American anarchists, as well as one of the early contributors to free speech, birth control, and the labor movements. She was an amazing public speaker, something that is lost in this day of television and radio, and her writing still ranks amongst the classics of Anarchist thought.

“Dangerous Woman: A Graphic Biography of Emma Goldman” can be best described as a graphic novel version of her autobiography “Living My Life”, and it’s a real treat. The artist, Sharon Rudahl, does a great job capturing Goldman’s turbulent and unique life, growing from a fiery Jewish peasant girl fleeing Russia to becoming an active Anarchist speaker and organizer hated by the government, to the patron-saint of the then small American Anarchist movement. She spares no detail, especially the parts about Emma’s sex life and her many partners over the years. One of my favorite scenes in the book is when her mentor, Johann Most, sent her on a speaking tour “Against the 8 Hour Day” (it was too little and was too reformist and not revolutionary enough.) She encounters an older man in Chicago who tells her that while he understands why young people would be impatient with small demands, but “I won’t live to see the revolution. Will I never have a little time for reading or to walk openly in the park?” After this encounter, Emma vowed never to let doctrine or ideology get in the way of a good fight that brought real change to people’s lives.

Today the closest we have in the United States to an Emma Goldman are academics in ivory towers. The speaking tours of yesterday are the youtube, internet, music albums and television of today, which is much more controlled than speaking in public used to be, though less prone to violent disruption by people who disagree with the author. It’s hard to imagine a story like hers again where someone from such a humble beginning devotes her entire life to the cause of fighting the existing order, and becoming such an international figure as she did. Maybe a new Emma Goldman of the internet or TV or music like hiphop will arise to become an inspiration to people’s movements everywhere, like Subcommader Marcos in Chiapas has, or elsewhere. Either way, check out Emma’s life in graphic novel comic form, because she’s a real life superhero in a way that Superman never could be.



Lakota Secede

We are the freedom loving Lakota from the Sioux Indian reservations of Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Montana who have suffered from cultural and physical genocide in the colonial apartheid system we have been forced to live under. We are in Washington DC to withdraw from the constitutionally mandated treaties to become a free and independent country. We are alerting the Family of Nations we have now re-assumed our freedom and independence with the backing of Natural, International, and United States law.

Thus begins the Lakota Sioux Indian representatives’ declaration of sovereign nation status made on Wednesday, December 19th in Washington D.C. The withdrawal, hand delivered to Daniel Turner, Deputy Director of Public Liaison at the State Department, immediately and irrevocably ends all agreements between the Lakota Sioux Nation of Indians and the United States Government outlined in the 1851 and 1868 Treaties at Fort Laramie, Wyoming.

“This is an historic day for our Lakota people,” declared Russell Means, Itacan of Lakota. “United States colonial rule is at its end!”

The four member Lakota delegation traveled to Washington D.C. after years of internal discussion among treaty representatives of the various Lakota communities. Delegation members included well known activist and actor Russell Means, Women of All Red Nations (WARN) founder Phyllis Young, Oglala Lakota Strong Heart Society leader Duane Martin Sr., and Garry Rowland, Leader Chief Big Foot Riders. Means, Rowland, Martin Sr. were all members of the 1973 Wounded Knee takeover. (include brief blurb about Wounded Knee takeover?)

“In order to stop the continuous taking of our resources – people, land, water and children- we have no choice but to claim our own destiny,” said Phyllis Young, a former Indigenous representative to the United Nations and representative from Standing Rock.

Property ownership in the five state area of Lakota now takes center stage. Parts of North and South Dakota, Nebraska, Wyoming and Montana have been illegally homesteaded for years despite knowledge of Lakota historic ownership. Lakota representatives say if the United States does not enter into immediate diplomatic negotiations, liens will be filed on real estate transactions in the five state region, clouding title over literally thousands of square miles of land and property.

Following Monday’s withdrawal at the State Department, the four Lakota Itacan representatives have been meeting with foreign embassy officials in order to hasten their official return to the Family of Nations. Lakota’s efforts are gaining traction as Bolivia, home to Indigenous President Evo Morales, shared they are “very, very interested in the Lakota case” while Venezuela received the Lakota delegation with “respect and solidarity.”

Education, energy and justice now take top priority in emerging Lakota. “Cultural immersion education is crucial as a next step to protect our language, culture and sovereignty,” said Means. “Energy independence using solar, wind, geothermal, and sugar beets enables Lakota to protect our freedom and provide electricity and heating to our people.”

The Lakota reservations are among the most impoverished areas in North America, a shameful legacy of broken treaties and apartheid policies. Lakota has the highest death rate in the United States and Lakota men have the lowest life expectancy of any nation on earth, excluding AIDS, at approximately 44 years. Lakota infant mortality rate is five times the United States average and teen suicide rates 150% more than national average. Ninety-seven percent of Lakota people live below the poverty line and unemployment hovers near 85%.

“After 150 years of colonial enforcement, when you back people into a corner there is only one alternative,” emphasized Duane Martin Sr. “The only alternative is to bring freedom into its existence by taking it back to the love of freedom, to our lifeway.”

For more information visit www.lakotafreedom.com.

Border Anarchy continued from pg 9...

"We won the space. We had an area of access around the vehicle barrier freed up where people were gathering, camping and taking the space," Don Kilo said.

Later on that day, a march led by the Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army Boredom Patrol Unit arrived at the ICE detention center in El Centro. Protesters chanted outside of the facility and shook the fence calling for attention of the people incarcerated inside. "I'm hopeful that the many, many detainees heard us or at least knew of our presence, as the response from ICE was obvious fear and standing watching our every move. If we offered the detainees some sense of hope or some sense of solidarity, it was totally worth it," said Lotus, a camp participant.

The action continued that night with an open mic session at the cattle gate which included the ceremonial passing over of a guitar from one side of the border to the other to continue the performance of anti-police revelry as peeved Border Patrol looked on.

"We danced in the dusty dirt, to MIA singing along "All I wanna do is BANG BANG BANG" under the border patrol's floodlights, right at the tip of the barrels of their pepper ball guns, with all of our queer love across borders we kissed over and through their fences, we painted on the barriers, we raised antennas that reached across the lines on the maps, we marched right up to their lines with our bikes as barriers and watched them back off in fear..." Lotus wrote in a blog submission.

Other actions during the camp included a visit to a nearby cemetery where hundreds of unnamed migrants rest in peace after their failed attempts to cross the border. Activists also met up on both sides of the Mexicali/Calexico ports of entry where

they performed die-ins and passed out literature. Mexicali activists traveled to some maquiladoras to pass out literature as well.

As the camp's process unfolded, problems and differences surfaced between the two sides. The Mexican attendance was half the number of the U.S. camp, where many resources, like the media tent, were also concentrated.

Late Saturday morning, campers gathered at the cattle gate for a camp meeting to address these issues and how to improve the interactions.

"Since the beginning of the camp we put into action the valued idea of solidarity. All of the time we were supporting each other with food, structure, ideas, etc. Of course the U.S. side had more resources and better technology, but we all understood that was going to happen," Carlos said.

"I think by the end of the week we had moved pretty towards the stated objective of one unified camp. we had our last meeting across the guards rails, we had the dance party, we were serving food as a unified community. I would have liked it more if everyone had been able to come and go from one side to the other but the oppressive presence of the Border Pigs saw to it that that wasn't going to happen," said Steve from LA.

The camp packed up Sunday morning for the final binational march along the borderwall. Many activists crossed over to march to the port of entry on the Mexican side. Beeping car horns sounded along with the chants of the march, "We want a world without borders!" The slimmed numbers of activists on the U.S. side waited at a small hole in the fence to stage an international kissing booth.

Once the cross border face-sucking began

and chanting united, a bongo-playing protester bumped into a BP agent. The protester was taken to the ground by a number of swarming BP's barking "Get the FUCK back!" Balls of pepper spray shot through the air as terrified demonstrators ran for cover.

Video footage showed Steve from LA shot point-blank with pepper spray balls. "I can't discuss this at this time due to the pending civil suit against the BP, but I was really fucked up by the BP before and during my incarceration," Steve said.

The rearing of the Border Patrol's vicious head was caught on tape by different camera armed activists. In the slow motion reviewing of the tapes, it is shown how BP shot indiscriminately into the crowd with pepper spray ball guns, discharged tasers, slammed people into walls and shamelessly beat on non-violent protesters.

Watching the brutality unleashed on their comrades in the U.S., the protest in Mexico took a lane of traffic, held the space and performed a die-in to stop traffic. Three people were arrested on the U.S. side. The camp's legal and media teams mobilized. Video footage was quickly edited and posted on the Internet.

By the following day, more than 250 articles gave national and international corporate and grassroots coverage. Two of the detainees were released on Tuesday. Juan Ruiz, the bongo-playing protester whose bump into a BP agent set off the attack, was charged with felony assault on a federal officer. His charges were later reduced to a misdemeanor charge of impeding an officer. The outcome of his case has yet to be determined as of press time.

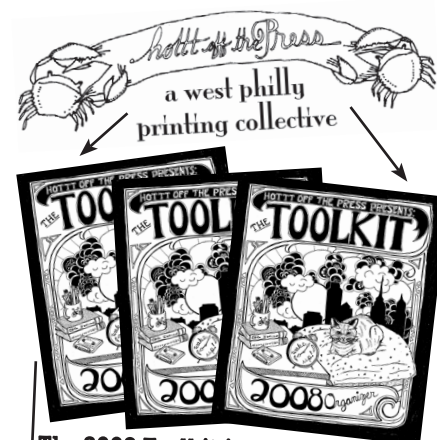
Self-critique followed the camp. Many activists on the U.S. side realized they had committed a big mistake by not doing any local organizing in Calexico and with People of Color groups.

"The whiteness of the organizing process and the lack of local organizing in the Imperial Valley were issues in particular that nearly ended the project many times. Ultimately I am glad that it continued and I hope that we can begin a process of meaningful reflections and thoughtful critiques," said Rich from San Diego.

The Mexicali side struggled with lack of proposals and organization. "Principally we need to have more discussions and more solid structure. I mean to solidify and reach more agreements in respect to the dynamics of the camp. Also, the camp was an autonomous space; I hope more people arrive at the next one with more proposals and affinity groups," Hernan said.

Problems aside, the consensus was to hold another No Borders Camp in the next year. Proposals were already launched for the camp's next location.

While the repression at the end of the camp did not overshadow the rest of the camp's experience, organizers stress that the violence experienced by camp participants is something migrants live every day when they cross the border in search of better lives. "This time they (the Border Patrol) got caught," said a participant.



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The 2008 Toolkit is a yearly pocket organizer which teaches you a different skill or craft each month. Get one and impress geniuses with your knowledge of pinhole cameras, bicycle touring, birds of the city, how to challenge gentrification, how to support survivors of sexual assault, the hanky code, tips for parties, how to make a mix tape, what to do if you find a stray animal, stenciling, time management skills, fun & mnemonics!

There are two ways to get a Toolkit.

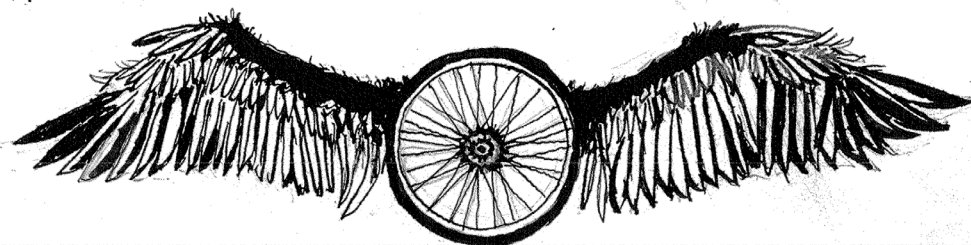
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Shell to Hell continued...

met head on.

One of the main issues central to the campaign, and one that many Philadelphians will recognize, focuses on the lack of control local communities are confronted with over decisions that affect them the most. The hand is stacked against those who dare to say "no." Whether it's to a new nuclear reactor, an oil pipe line, new freeway or a casino -the developers and politicians call the shots. The people of Mayo had been forced to ask themselves, like the Nigerian people before them, who decides what local natural resources should be sold off for corporate profit, and who decides what is "acceptable" development for an area? And like the people of Nigeria, and millions of others across the world, the people of Mayo decided to fight.

Resistance continues to grow. At this point the campaign in Mayo has entered into its eighth year of resistance, despite the heavy handed and obvious political/corporate collaboration to force the development down the throats of the locals. In response to the movements demands Shell has dug in and refused to move their operation offshore, claiming it would be too expensive. Of course, Shell makes a profit of over \$553 million dollars every week, and the cost of moving their operation offshore would be close to \$530 million dollars...Go figure.

The successes of the Shell to Sea campaign and their supporters have been hard fought. Massive resistance in 2005 forced Shell to abandon their original pipeline route,

and in September of this year Shell announced a shortlist of three new potential pipeline routes for the project. But as the raw gas pipeline is opposed in any form by the movement, no route is acceptable.

Four years after the refinery was intended to be fully operational, the spirited and effective in Ireland has prevented the project from even getting on its feet. Local community driven organizing of diverse methods of direct action, education and confrontation prove to be strong and effective. Shell has been repeatedly confronted with national days of action, met daily on the pickets in front of the proposed refinery site, and faced in the roads as local blockades prevent trucks from entering and leaving. The Shell offices in Dublin have been blockaded, solidarity actions have occurred across the country and the international scene. The struggle in Mayo is a direct link to the history of struggle against Shell and its like, a history that demands that the past be remembered.

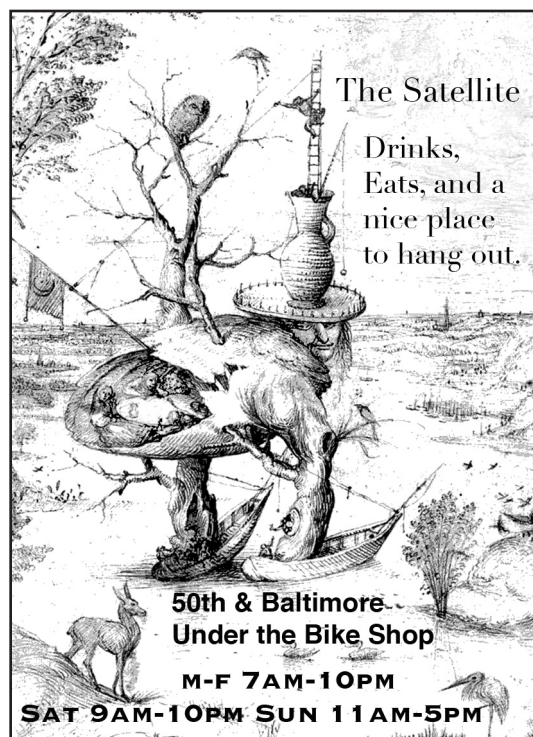
The struggle continues.

More information, links, and how to get involved can be found at:

<http://wsm.ie/story/3104>

http://www.indymedia.ie/features?topic_id=®ion_id=12&filtersubmit.x=9&filtersubmit.y=6

<http://www.corribsos.com>



REBEL CALENDAR

Friday, February 8

ARA benefit show
Hostile City Street Beat presents an Acoustic Unity Benefit show to benefit Philadelphia-based Anti-Fascist and Anti-Racist organizations, including the Love Park 4. Featuring: JOE JACK TALCUM, DARREN "DEICIDE" KRAMER, CUOMO! and ALARM CLARK
7pm at The A-Space 4722 Baltimore Ave.

Saturday, February 9

Opening Reception: Breaking the Silence
Exhibit of over 100 photographs and video testimonials with guided tours by former Israeli soldiers.
7PM at the Rotunda 4014 Walnut St

Wooden Shoe Movie night: 10,000 Black Men Named George
7:30pm at Wooden Shoe Books

Monday, February 11

PROTEST THE RNC IN 2008! anti-rnc info session
Come to the LAVA space to learn about (and help create) plans to protest the Republican National Convention in Minneapolis/St Paul in 2008. Three members of the RNC Welcoming committee, a Minnesota-based anti-authoritarian coalition, will be in town to talk about the strategy for this summer's convergence. Come and share your experiences from the 2000 rnc in philly and network with others from the region who are interested in going to the twin cities to protest the convention.
location lava zone, 4134 lancaster ave

Wednesday, February 13

Fiidla presents :Mood for Love Part II
an evening of world soul and lovin' rhythm that will feature selections from Fiidla's new album FIIDLA AND THE CHOCOLAT WIREWORKS featuring Odysy, along with special guest Rabiyyah. FIIDLA is a London born-NYC raised virtuoso, who plays 10 instruments, especially 1 very funky 5 string violin. He is also a former member of Spaceman Sun Ra's -Arkestra
7 pm at the Rotunda 4014 Walnut St.

Wednesday, February 15

Mothership Connection Blak History Month/ For the Luv of HipHop Valentine Jam
7pm at LAVA

Wooden Shoe Movie night: Deacons for Defense
7:30 at Wooden Shoe Books

Friday, February 22

The City of Photographers
Chile 2006 Photographers who documented the repressions of the Pinochet Regime and "Suffering and Smiling" Nigeria 2007 - focuses on "legendary singer and activist Fela Anikulapo Kuti...who used his songs to speak out against the country's corrupt leaders giving voice to Nigeria's disenfranchised underclass..."
7pm at International House, 3701 Chestnut St
info: www.ihousephilly.org

Vision and Resistance, benefit for the KWRU with Therapist, Capital X, Enki, Blak Madeen and Welfare Poets
7pm at the Arts Garage, 1533 Ridge Ave.

Saturday, February 23

Strange Culture
This film chronicles the breathtaking miscarriage of justice that befell Steve Kurtz, a college prof, artist and member of the politically charged art and theatre collective Critical Art Ensemble."
2pm at International House, 3701 Chestnut St
info: www.ihousephilly.org

Wooden Shoe Movie night: Murder of Fred Hampton
7:30pm at Wooden Shoe Books

March 7-9

National conference on organized resistance (NCOR) - workshops
panels and skillshares
about local and int'l social justice issues at American University in Washington DC, www.ncor2008.org

March 13-16

Winter soldier testimony in Washington DC. Veterans of and Afghan war will testify about their experiences.

Saturday, March 15

Benefit for Movement for Justice in El Barrio
6pm at LAVA: Food, Raffle, Entertainment, DJ's and more!
info: http://lavazone.org/MJB_benefit

March 17 through May 18

60 days of action to commemorate the 60th anniversary of al-Nakba, the Palestinian

catastrophe.

Wednesday, March 19

5 Years Too Many!
Civil Disobedience in DC against the Iraq war
Start organizing affinity groups and local meetings now. For more information about the DC actions on March 19th contact: www.5yearstoomany.org or email dc@5yearstoomany.org.

March 22 - 30

Palestine film festival
all over town

Friday, April 4

Oil and Politics in the Gulf of Guinea
lecture by Ricardo M. Soares de Oliveira
12:30-2pm University of Pennsylvania, Williams Hall 639

Saturday, April 12

NYC ANARCHIST BOOKFAIR 2008
11am-8pm Judson Memorial Church, 55 Washington Square South, Manhattan, NYC
info: info@anarchistbookfair.net

May 30 - June 1

National STOPMAX Conference
Organizing to Abolish Solitary Confinement and Torture in U.S. Prisons
Temple University Philadelphia
info: http://www.afsc.org/stopmax/

September 26-28 in Oakland, California

Critical Resistance 10
10 years of Critical Resistance against the Prison Industrial Complex! Don't miss it!

STRATEGY AND STRUGGLE TO ABOLISH THE PRISON INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX: TEN YEARS AND COUNTING

CR10



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

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.

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

Defenestrator Movie Night

Last Thursday of every month at Firehouse Bicycles at 8pm
50th & Baltimore to benefit the defenestrator prisoner mailing
Call for info (215)727-9692 or info(at)firehousebicycles.com

International Concerned Family & Friends of Mumia

Interested in being involved in the campaign for Mumia's release either email icffmaj@aol.com or call 215 476 8812

PRAWN (Philadelphia Regional Anti-War Network)

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

The Philadelphia Icarus Project: A Radical Mental Health Collective

Philadelphia Icarus holds its meetings the 2nd and 4th Sunday of every month from 6-8 pm at the A-Space Anarchist Community Space.
philadelphiaicarusproject@msn.com

Wooden Shoe Books People's movie night

Free movie screenings held every Saturday at Wooden Shoe Book Store. 7:30 PM, 508 south 5th street -- 215 413 0999

Liberated Spaces

LAVA

The Lancaster Avenue Autonomous space is a center for radical media and organizing located at 4134 Lancaster Ave. in the Belmont Neighborhood of West Philly. 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

The Friends Center - American Friends Service Committee HQ. Contains meeting spaces and offices for a gazillion different entities.
1501 Cherry Street

the defenestrator

PO Box 30922
Philadelphia, PA 19104

to: