

PART's PERSPECTIVE:

LOOKING BACKWARD, LOOKING AHEAD: BUILDING A CULTURE OF POWERFUL RESISTANCE!

by Michael Novick, *Anti-Racist Action-Los Angeles/People Against Racist Terror (ARA-LA/PART)*

New year's is a time for taking stock and making resolutions. 2007 is the 20th anniversary of the founding of People Against Racist Terror (now Anti-Racist Action-LA) and begins the 20th year of publication of *Turning the Tide*. So it's a good time to reflect on what history and past practice can teach us about how to move ahead at this critical moment.

20 years ago, as today, Democrats had just regained control of the US Senate in mid-term elections. They faced a lame-duck president exposed in lies about illegal war (Iran-Contra, US selling Iran weapons for funds to replace Congressionally-prohibited aid to the Contra war in Nicaragua). Congress had the backbone, under

Culturally, punk still had energy as an alternative to the mainstream with a political edge, and hip-hop was breaking out into mass appeal with groups like Run DMC. The so-called "New Right" seemed to be running out of steam. The Moral Majority folded, and Jerry Falwell was forced to pick up the pieces of Jim Bakker's scandal-ridden PTL ministry. But covertly, the CIA was protecting drug-dealers associated with the Contras who were helping flood LA and other cities with crack. The "War on Drugs" was beginning a dramatic run-up in the US prison population, accelerating a climb that had begun earlier. Simultaneously, nazi boneheads were making their emergence in the US. Skrewdriver and No Remorse, and Blood and Honour became vehicles for nazis to recruit white youth. Metzger of White Aryan Resistance in San Diego assigned his son to the WARskins.

Those were the conditions under which PART came to be, as a direct action anti-racist group, opposed to white supremacy, committed to solidarity with liberation forces among African, indigenous/Mexicano, and Asian people in the US. It was one among many small, grass-roots efforts to fight back, to concentrate fledgling anti-racism among youth into an organized force. For example, the Baldies from Minneapolis were traveling the Midwest and East Coast hooking up with other anti-racist skins to beat back the Nazi menace.

Our first action was a rally against a speech in Glendale by Birmingham church bomber J.B. Stoner. Several thousand turned out, resulting in the cancellation of his appearance at the library. Protesters marched on the Holiday Inn, where local racists had booked a meeting room to hear Stoner. Several young boneheads got a licking from people in the crowd. The cops declared it an illegal assembly, brought out a water cannon and shut local freeway off-ramps to prevent others from joining in.

But the groups that arose at the time, concerned about racist violence, boneheads, and racism in police and prisons diverged over a period of a few years. Those like Portland's Coalition for Human Dignity that chose non-profit status and identified the problem as "extremism," briefly grew larger and well-endowed, but faded into irrelevance, corporate domination and eventually disappeared. Others, like Skinheads Against Racial Prejudice and ARA (Anti-Racist Action Network), took a more confrontational, dissident stance. ARA has stayed true to its mission, despite ups and downs. PART was involved with ARA from its inception, participating in the first conference (in Portland for the civil trial of Metzger for the bonehead murder of an Ethiopian). We eventually changed our name to ARA-LA (retaining PART as a kind of subtitle).

But the high hopes we had for a mass anti-racist movement among white youth failed to pan out. Congressional hearings on Iran-Contra amounted to a cover-up. Reagan, deserving impeachment, was allowed to plead forgetfulness, and Bush was let off the hook to run for president, using racialized fear of Willie Horton to win. Reforms (what George Jackson described as the operative form of fascism) took the steam out of the anti-apartheid movement. "Low intensity" conflict in Central America and the war in Panama blunted movements for liberation and rendered peace and solidarity forces in the US ineffectual. Amnesty for undocumented divided the Mexicano indigenous population between those born here, legal residents, naturalized citizens and the undocumented.

The Rainbow Coalition of 1984 and '88 kept people wedded to the Democrats as a vehicle for the presidential ambitions of Jesse Jackson. It stifled a more radical opposition to racism and empire that had been reasserting itself. The prison movement struggled ineffectually against the push for mass incarceration and the prison-industrial complex, as prisoners climbed above one million, and then above two million. The first Gulf War marked the ability of the state to overcome the "Vietnam Syndrome" of domestic opposition to overseas invasions.

pressure from the anti-apartheid movement, to override a Reagan veto of sanctions against South African. It blocked his nomination of Robert Bork to the Supreme Court.

Many things hung in the balance. Though COINTELPRO and an imperialist counter-offensive had destroyed many organizations, liberation struggles in Central America and South Africa persevered, and popular movements were reasserting themselves in the US. The Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement was launched in Peru. ACT UP formed to combat AIDS and the criminal negligence of Reagan-Bush in fighting it. Millions of undocumented were qualifying for legalization.

The peace movement collapsed once the "Desert Storm" invasion started and was unable to link itself up with the movement against racist, militarist law enforcement in this country. Eventually, the LA rebellion of 1992 (over the unpunished police beating of Rodney King), and the inability of George H. W. Bush to put across NAFTA, led to the elite anointing of Bill Clinton.

ARA had some noteworthy successes in that period, when many were fooled by Clinton's rhetoric.

ARA activists were instrumental in a confrontation that embarrassed Secretary of State Madeline Albright at OSU and helped forestall military action against Iraq. Locally, ARA-LA/PART helped build such efforts as the Pro-Immigrant Mobilization Coalition against Prop. 187 in 1994, the Crack the CIA Coalition, the Jericho Amnesty Coalition to free political prisoners, a 6000-strong protest on "criminal injustice" themes at the 2000 Democratic Convention that attracted mostly local young people, and a Campaign for Community Control of Police at the time of the Rampart cop scandal. But lack of consistency, political infighting, and internalized racism damaged or destroyed most of those coalition efforts. Locally and internationally,



ARA has been unable to build on its successes or to translate them into an operational form and growth strategy that attracts new and sustains veteran members, or turns a wider cultural influence into an organic, accountable organization.

Internationally, ARA has been repeatedly damaged by political immaturity, sexism, and an inability to move beyond a reactive strategy focused too exclusively on street-level confrontation with open nazis. ARA lacks a proactive strategy to take on all fascist forces in this society or establish an affirmative solidarity with liberation forces among colonized and racially-stigmatized peoples. ARA has no clear work-plan or accountable implementation mechanisms for attracting, educating and integrating new members and chapters, or sustaining veterans.

Clearly, the times demand more of us. 20-odd years ago, peoples' movements forced Congress to cut off funding for the Contra/death squad wars in Nicaragua and Guatemala, blocked reactionary anti-choice Supreme Court nominees, won legalization for millions of undocumented. But our inability to build off those victories – rooted in white supremacist, class-collaborationist illusions about the nature of the imperial system and its irreconcilable contradiction with all people it colonizes, oppresses and exploits -- left us paradoxically weaker, demoralized, and incapable of resisting new initiatives by the Empire.

So today, we face a war in Iraq where US casualties at over 3000 exceed those over the first four years of the war in Vietnam, where Iraqi civilian casualties are at genocidal proportions. Current hostilities have lasted longer than US involvement in World War II; US aggression in Iraq since Desert Storm has lasted longer than Vietnam. Yet the response to an electoral rejection of the war is a proposed escalation, even after all the lies and crimes have been exposed.

We face a situation where a court ruling against detention without trial resulted in passage of a law, the Military Commissions Act, with bipartisan support, that "legalized" such detentions and made them possible for domestic dissent by "citizens." We see incarceration increasing past 2 million, and imprisonment of Black women at record disproportionate levels. Serial killings of indigenous women are spreading throughout NAFTA. Militarization of the border and federalization of local police to hunt immigrants have emboldened nazis to participate openly in vigilante actions and in widespread political action. War crimes and state terror by the Empire go unpunished.

In southern CA and elsewhere, nazi boneheads again pose a growing threat of racist violence, and commercial record labels are beginning to merchandise white power music like "Woodpile." Nazis coming in to LA to demonstrate in memory of Robert Mathews, the founder of the racist underground "Order," (who died in a shootout with the Feds) stabbed two Black men in Claremont recently. And open nazis have participated in local anti-immigrant provocations waving swastikas and Confederate flags.

We face an environmental crisis so extreme that the damage to polar and glacial ice, the climate, and the entire marine eco-system may already be irreversible. The empire has destroyed and ethnically dispersed a major US city. And in response, we produce videos, publish blogs, hold ritualistic marches and write letters to Congress.

What can turn this around, and begin the process of anti-racist, anti-colonialist forces taking the offensive? First, we must recognize and align with the priorities and strategies of anti-imperialist forces among people of color. These include resisting the dispersal of Black people from New Orleans and the Gulf Coast; defending the rights of migrants; and challenging the militarization and privatization of the police, the prisons, the schools and the border.

As fundamental is recognizing that the contradiction between us and the Empire can't be reconciled or reformed. Worse, that contradiction is reflected and recreated within us as well, a contradiction between our commitment to a future of human liberation and solidarity and our identification with the Empire and the oppressor. The struggle against racism and colonialism is first of all a self-critical struggle.

For Europeans, identification with the oppressor takes the form of class collaboration, individualism, elitism and in particular acceptance of white privilege, the poison pill that condemns us to half-measures and self-defeating tactics of reformism and accommodation. In oppressed and colonized communities, it takes the form of defeatism, neo-colonialism or attraction to reactionary models of development.

Steven Biko taught us that the greatest weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed. By breaking that grip, we unleash our real power and expose their true weakness. The liberating power of Malcolm X and ML King Jr., of Huey and Assata lay in their ability to combine loving self-criticism of the oppressed with uncompromising criticism of the oppressor, unrelenting resistance to oppression with a sense of the people's power when we stand up. If liberation among the oppressed relies on self-criticism of collaboration and a call to sacrifice, how can these be less necessary to drive a wedge into the reactionary base of Empire among the privileged?

Recognize that privilege is also a form of social domination and control, a form of discipline. A privilege is not ours by right; it's conferred for good behavior and can be taken away. The price of privilege is dignity, autonomy and the capacity to shape a free and sustainable future. The fight for such a future goes hand in hand with a fight against privilege, elitism, and authoritarianism, and for international solidarity.

New Claims of Abu-Jamal Confession Surface After 25 years as Mumia Nears his Final Appeal

by Hans Bennett

Twenty five years ago, Black death-row prisoner and journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal was arrested for the murder of white Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner. He was later convicted in a 1982 trial that Amnesty International has declared a “violation of minimum international standards that govern fair trial procedures and the use of the death penalty.”

In the weeks leading up to Dec. 9 (25th anniversary of Abu-Jamal’s 1981 arrest), there were numerous stories in the Philadelphia press. Future Philadelphia mayoral candidate Chaka Fattah (currently a US congressman) came under attack by the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) because he has long supported a new trial for Abu-Jamal. Despite the FOP threat that they would actively campaign against his mayoral bid, Fattah stood by his support for a new trial. However, just days later, he voted for a congressional resolution condemning the French city of St. Denis for naming a major street after Abu-Jamal (passed 368-31).

Fattah said in a statement that despite being unconvinced that justice was served in the case, he voted for the resolution because “anyone who stands convicted of so terrible an offense is an affront to those who risk their lives on a daily basis to serve.”

“The House action,” said Pam Africa, chair of the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal, “is designed to weigh in on and promote an atmosphere in the U.S. judiciary that is prejudicial to Mumia’s receiving any form of justice today.”

Also noteworthy was a public concession from Joseph McGill (who was the prosecutor at Abu-Jamal’s 1982 trial) in the Philadelphia Inquirer that Abu-Jamal could have been convicted of a lesser homicide charge if he had waged a “true defense.”



Two More People Say Mumia Confessed?

While these two news pieces were important, perhaps the most shocking story to emerge was a Dec. 8 NBC 10 story reporting that two more people now say that they heard Abu-Jamal confess at the hospital before treatment for his gunshot wound.

NBC 10 reports that on Dec. 9, 1981 William Colarulo (now a Chief Inspector for the Philadelphia police) was a “rookie cop assigned to guard the door to the emergency room.” Colarulo told NBC 10 that after Abu-Jamal arrived at the hospital, he confessed to his then partner Tom Brady.

“He said to my partner something to the effect, ‘I’m glad I shot the M-F’. That’s what my partner said (Abu-Jamal) told him,” Colarulo said (apparently relegating his remarks to hearsay; he is claiming his partner told him Mumia confessed, not that he heard Mumia confess.

The second new account from that morning comes from Kathleen Gerrow. Now an executive producer at NBC 10, Gerrow was a radio reporter in 1981 covering the story at the hospital. “I distinctly remember a very distinctive voice shouting, ‘I shot the mother f---er, I shot the mother f---er,’” said Gerrow.

Pam Africa argues that these two new accounts show that the pro-execution lobby “is getting desperate. While these new accounts are supposed to strengthen the case against Mumia, they actually further expose the confession story as a fraud. In 1982 it was unbelievable that police forgot about the confession for two months, Now we’re supposed to believe that it took 25 years for these new people to remember it?”

Africa emphasizes that these new accounts come just months before the Third Circuit Court of Appeals will hear oral arguments and then decide if Abu-Jamal deserves a new trial. The FOP and other pro-execution forces “are scared that Mumia will get a new trial and years of injustice will be exposed. This is a desperate attempt to sway public opinion against Mumia.”

The Hospital Confession: a Contentious History

Arguably the strongest evidence presented against Abu-Jamal in court, the “hospital confession” has long been one of the most contentious issues in the debate between the pro and anti-Mumia factions, and has been cited by Amnesty International as one of the reasons the organization calls for a new trial.

The first report of Abu-Jamal confessing to the murder of Faulkner came from the high-ranking Inspector Alfonso Giordano (former Captain of the Civil Defense unit). Arriving at 13th & Locust within minutes, Giordano claimed that Abu-Jamal confessed to him while lying in the police wagon. While the Philadelphia Bulletin immediately reported that Mumia “admitted shooting the police officer in a brief comment to Police Inspector Giordano,” the prosecution did not cite this during the 1982 trial, likely because of credibility issues. Shortly after Mumia’s arrest, Giordano resigned after learning that he was under federal investigation for corruption. Years later he pled guilty to federal charges of tax evasion for not reporting at least \$55,000 earned from extortion in 1979 and 1980.

The first official police account of the “hospital confession” was suspiciously introduced two months after Abu-Jamal’s arrest. When interviewed (in February, 1982) by the police Internal Affairs Bureau investigating Mumia’s police brutality complaint, Officers Wakshul, Bell, and hospital security guard Priscilla Durham then reported Mumia’s supposed “hospital confession” for the first time.

Mumia allegedly declared (in the presence of 15-20 other cops who have never confirmed it): “I shot the motherfucker and I hope the motherfucker dies!”

Testifying in 1982, Bell (Faulkner’s partner and “best friend”) claimed the two-month-long mental lapse resulted from being so upset about Faulkner’s death.

At trial, Durham contradicted her statement to police and testified that she reported the confession to her supervisor the next day. While neither her supervisor nor the alleged hand-written statement was presented in court, the

DA sent an officer to the hospital -- returning with a suspicious typed version of the alleged report. Sabo accepted the paper (not signed or dated) despite both Durham’s disavowal of it (because it was typed and not hand-written) and the defense’s protest that there was no establishment of authorship or authenticity.

Unfortunately, the jury never heard the most explosive evidence discrediting the confession. While the DA called Bell and Durham to testify, Wakshul was suspiciously absent. On the final day of testimony in 1982, Mumia’s lawyer discovered Wakshul’s statement from Dec. 9 the morning of the shooting. After riding with Mumia to the hospital and guarding him until his treatment, Wakshul’s official report stated: “the negro male made no comment.”

When the defense immediately sought to call Wakshul as a witness, the DA reported that he was on vacation. On grounds that it was too late in the trial, Sabo denied the defense request to locate him for testimony. Consequently, the jury never heard from Wakshul or about his written report. When an outraged Mumia protested, Sabo cruelly declared: “You and your attorney goofed.”

Gary Wakshul Publicly Beaten

Wakshul’s “negro male” report was key evidence at the post-conviction appeal (PCRA) hearings, and it was well-known that he would have to testify to defend his “confession” story. Unknown to Mumia’s lawyers, on July 13 (days before his PCRA testimony) Wakshul was savagely beaten by undercover police officers in front of a Judge in the Common Pleas Courtroom where he worked as a court crier. Almost two years later, the two attackers (members of Philly’s Vice Squad) were suspended without pay as punishment. With the motive still unexplained, the beating was likely used to intimidate Wakshul into maintaining his “confession” story at the PCRA hearings.

On the stand, Wakshul defended both his Dec. 9 report and the two-month delay as just being a bad mistake. Further discrediting the “confession” story, he repeated his incredible statement given to the IAB investigator in 1982: “I didn’t realize it had any importance until that day.”

The original trial’s injustice was further exposed when Wakshul testified to being home for his 1982 vacation in accordance with explicit instructions to stay in town for the trial so that he could testify if called.

The “confession” story has been thoroughly discredited. As Amnesty International concluded: “The likelihood of two police officers and a security guard forgetting or neglecting to report the confession of a suspect in the killing of another police officer for more than two months strains credibility.”

25 Years of Lies

Advocates of Abu-Jamal’s execution say the “hospital confession” reveals Abu-Jamal to be an unrepentant killer--more than just proof of guilt. On the other end of the spectrum, supporters of Abu-Jamal argue that holes in the police account expose fabricated testimony. In a recent essay contextualizing these new accounts within the 25-year execution campaign, longtime Abu-Jamal supporter Kevin Price has written that “these two new stories are weak attempts to piece together a fabricated confession that has long since crumbled. A quarter century later the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) are still desperately attempting to complete the task that they failed in 1981: the execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal.”

“In 1981, Mumia Abu-Jamal was shot with a bullet through the lung, and had his head repeatedly rammed into a steel pole. In this critical condition he was driven around Philadelphia in the back of a police paddy wagon for nearly an hour (even though the hospital was within a few blocks) as the police waited for him to die. Since Mumia did not die, the state’s next best option was to fabricate evidence and railroad him.”

Hans Bennett has been documenting the movement to free Mumia and all political prisoners for over five years. Please check out his new website:

insubordination.blogspot.com

This article is the latest installment in Bennett’s series on Abu-Jamal focusing on Abu-Jamal’s upcoming oral arguments before the Third Circuit Court of Appeals. Check out the new series at:

hbjournalist1.googlepages.com/ms

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The Taming of The Democrats

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Since the recent Democratic wins in the U.S. House and Senate, there has been a concerted effort from the corporate media to evoke from them pre-installation promises of moderation, and a mass denial that there are any plans to impeach a widely unpopular President, George W. Bush. There has been equally aggressive attention paid to House Speaker-elect, Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), who makes history as the first American woman to reach what is essentially the third most powerful office in the nation

With few exceptions, most outspoken legislators have pooh-poohed the idea of impeaching the President, even before there have been hearings into the events that led to the ruinous disaster in Iraq. Columnists lecture, "It would be too divisive." Others decry such talks as 'radical.'

What is More Radical than War?

Why are the same voices and institutions that led the cheer-leading squad to war now setting the parameters of acceptable political debate and activity?

Perhaps the most influential newspaper in the U.S., the *New York Times*, used its front pages as a virtual billboard for the Bush administration. High-ranking people like Vice-President Dick Cheney, and Secretary of State (then National Security Advisor), Condoleezza Rice quoted the *NYT* incessantly in the run-up to the Iraq War. Pulitzer Prize-winning *Times* reporter, Judith Miller essentially served as a scribe for the White House.

It was press scrutiny that led to the recent downfall of outspoken anti-war figure, Congressman John Murtha (Dem.-Pa.) in the race for House Majority Whip, using grainy tapes from almost 3 decades ago -- the FBI ABSCAM attempts to bust corrupt politicians. It certainly appears like the so-called 'Washington consensus' was unilaterally opposed to Murtha in the Whip post, for it would have provided the critic with a platform that could not be easily ignored. It was precisely this so-called 'consensus' that lined up to support the Iraq adventure, virtually without a whisper of dissent.

It very well may be the case that these same forces wanted to humble the House Speaker-elect. And yet it was this same alleged 'consensus' (driven, to be sure, by the mad neocons in the White House, the Defense Dept. and the corporate think tanks) that led to this mess.

Consensus, here in the US, is actually the agreement of a fairly narrow slice of the US (and sometimes foreign) elite. In the brief but brilliant book, *Behind the Invasion of Iraq* (N.Y.: Monthly Review Press, 2003) written by the Humbai, India-based Research Unit for Political Economy, this theme is argued quite strongly:

"Typically apart from legislators and the press, a proliferation of research institutes, semi-governmental bodies, and academic forums circulate proposals voicing the case of one or the other lobby (leaving the administration free to deny that they constitute official policy). These proposals elicit objections from other interests, through similar media. Other powerful countries press their interests, directly or indirectly; and the entire discussion, in the light of the strength of the respective

interests, helps shape the course of action finally adopted and helps coalesce the various ruling class sections around it. (This process, of course, has nothing to do with democratic debate, since the *people* are excluded as participants, and are included only as a factor to be taken into account)."

We shouldn't haggle with theory here. One need only recall the unprecedented mass pre-war protests, all around the nation, and abroad. The experts and think tank types decried the ignorance of the masses, but time has proven that the mass demonstrations were right. Now, the Democrats, being seduced by the lobbyists, the media, and the know-it-alls (who might best be called 'the know-nothings') are being persuaded to be bipartisan; to take impeachment off the table; to cool that rap about ending the war.

That, like before, is the recipe for disaster, for it ignores the people who turned out to vote, largely disgusted with Bush's war. People are sick to the soul about Iraq.

If they ignore the public mood, they will, once again, be digging their political graves. For this war, from beginning to now, has been an unholy disaster, causing the deaths of at least a half-million people. That ain't impeachable?

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Abu-Jamal's recent book features a chapter on the remarkable women who helped build and defend the Black Panther Party: *WE WANT FREEDOM: A Life in the Black Panther Party*, from South End Press, 1-800-533-8478 (<http://www.southendpress.org>).

The campaign to kill Mumia is in full swing and we need you to contact as many publications and information outlets as you possibly can to run Mumia's commentaries (on-line and in print). The only requirements are that you run them *unedited*, with every word including copyright information intact, and send a copy of the publication to Mumia and/or ICFMAJ. THANK YOU! Keep updated by reading ACTION ALERTS at <http://www.mumia.org>, <http://www.onamove.com/> and their links. To download Mp3's of Mumia's commentaries visit <http://www.prisonradio.org> or <http://www.fsrn.org>

The Power of Truth is Final -- Free Mumia!

PLEASE CONTACT:

International Concerned Family & Friends of MAJ

P.O. Box 19709

Philadelphia, PA 19143

215-476-8812/ Fax - 215-476-6180

icffmaj@aol.com

Send our brotha some LOVE and LIGHT at:

Mumia Abu-Jamal

AM 8335

SCI-Greene

175 Progress Drive

Waynesburg, PA 15370

Appeal for Support for Boots and the Coup

by Boots Riley

So, we got on the bus after doing a show at The House of Blues San Diego as part of The Coup/Mr. Lif tour. As the bus took off, I thought that I would go lay in my bunk, listen to my Ipod, and write. But then Zhara, Mr. Lif's friend and the tour's merchandise seller, announced that she had "Anchorman" on DVD. Oh Shit. Will Ferrell or writing? Hot 16s would have to wait tonight. Good Night San Diego! So I stayed up in the front lounge of the bus and, even though I've seen this movie twice, commenced to laugh my ass off.

Almost literally, because of what happened next. Shortly after the acapella singing of "Afternoon Delight" by Ferrell et al., a big bump, then another, then plummeting down as the whole bus tipped over to the left.

I was sitting in the diner-like booth that many of these buses have in the front. I held on to the table with one hand and tried to guard my head with the other, all the while thinking that I was probably about to die.

I don't remember seeing everyone flying and flipping around me as it was happening, but Carter's (the road manager) and Wiz's faces were covered in blood, and everybody seemed to be lying around hurt. The bus was on its side, with the entrance door up. I called for people to say their names so we could get a head count of who was conscious or not.

Silk E, Q (drums), Riccol (bass), and Metro (Lif's hype man) were trapped in the back lounge because the doors connecting the front and back lounges to the bunks were electrically powered and didn't move with no power on. They ended up ripping and squeezing their way out of a tiny little window and jumped down off the bus as the rest of us got out the front. If anyone had been sleeping in the bunks, they would not have been able to get out.

I was the third person to jump off the front of the bus, as I hung down to make the jump shorter, I saw that the front of the bus was on fire. I yelled to everyone, saying to get off the bus immediately because the bus was on fire and it could blow up. We all did. No one was killed. The bus was totally engulfed in flames. For a while no one stopped to help, supposedly because the thought we were "illegal aliens" crossing the border. Eventually some great folks stopped and helped.

Silk E has two broken ribs and a punctured lung. Wiz has a broken nose, two deep lacerations to the head, and a shattered knee. Zhara has injuries to her hand and had to undergo surgery. Carter had to get stitches to his head and lip. The driver, Glenn, has a broken jaw. All of the first three will be in need of follow-up treatments. We all have aching backs, legs, heads etc. Many of us are on pain killers.

We lost everything in that crash and fire. We were packed to live and do shows on that bus for a month. Most of us had every stitch of clothing we owned on there. We lost clothes, computers, recording equipment, cameras, IDs, phones, keys to cars and homes. We lost cash. We lost all our damn instruments and equipment to perform with.

We were and are happy to walk away with our lives. But now we're home. Most of the band touring with The Coup has kids, rent that won't quit, bills, and holiday expenses coming. We need money, because like I said the band doesn't have the tools that they make a living with. Not only did we lose cash and material things on the bus, but we also were depending on this tour for money to make it through. It may take a year for us to see any money from the insurance company.



Boots Riley and Pam the Funktress of the Coup

I have set up a Paypal account so people can make donations for The Coup. The money will be split between me (Boots Riley), Silk E, Q, Steve Wyreman (guitar), and Riccol. Mr. Lif is setting one up on his site and when I have that info, we'll let you know. <http://www.myspace.com/thecoupmusic> To make a donation, hit button in the "about" section on the front page of this profile, right below the paragraph and above the "We Are The Ones" video. This allows you to donate even without a paypal account. If you have an account, ours is thecoupbuscrash@gmail.com. Thank you in advance to anyone who does this, this is a really crazy situation. I never thought I would be doing something like this. I also never thought that we would almost die like like that. We're grateful for anything you can do.

Thank you, Boots Riley

P. S. Thank you for the messages of love and warmth we've been receiving. It makes a difference.

Defend Toledo Anti-Fascist Protester Donell Summers!

by Noah Learned, *ARA Network Toledo Defense Working Group*

Donell Summers, a North Toledo resident, is now locked in a legal battle over charges stemming from his arrest in the course of the Anti-Nazi demonstration that turned into the historic October 15th Uprising, after a police riot was initiated by the Toledo Police Department. Donell sought to peacefully protest against the genocidal menace that was attempting to parade through his community.

While he was exercising his right to publicly protest against the Nazis, police on horseback charged into the demonstration. As Donell attempted to avoid a charging horse, Toledo Police arrested him. Of the 110 people arrested that day, most of them community members, Donell is the ONLY one to take his case to trial. Many other members of his community were essentially railroaded into bad plea bargains, where they were given unofficial promises that were never delivered on. Among these many examples was a close acquaintance of Donell's who was sentenced to 60 days in jail, after being given the informal impression by prosecutors that he could expect community service.

The Anti-Racist Action Network is currently trying to raise \$3500 to help with Donnell's legal fees. It's very important that all those who support the right to protest, community self-determination, and just due process, contribute to Donnell's legal defense in any way that they can. We must support the idea that we have a right and responsibility to resist hate.

We are also asking that people write and call the Toledo Prosecutor's office and ask that Donnell's charge of aggravated riot be dropped.

A victory for Donnell will go a long way toward securing the rights of all those Toledo residents arrested for daring to challenge the message of Nazism. Lasandra Burrwell, a wife and mother, was cruelly sentenced to 5 years in prison for her

opposition to Nazism. She received this sentence as a part of a plea bargain. A victory in Donnell's case, could set a precedent in favor of other members of the community who are pursuing justice in the courts. It also develops that Lasandra is eligible to appeal and a victory in Donnell's case will establish momentum to press for her release.

It is important to consider the case of the people of North Toledo. If the world had seen more communities like this one, perhaps the Holocaust and World War II would never have happened. It is communities like these that battled the Nazis in the Warsaw ghetto, fought against Jim Crow, and brought down Apartheid in South Africa. Those of us on the side of freedom, dignity, and equality should defend their efforts.

Donell Summers was peacefully engaging in his legal right to public protest. The Toledo police suppressed this right with an illegal arrest, and the court system is trying to suppress his freedom with their railroading plea bargains and kangaroo courts.

The Anti-Racist Action Network urgently requests that you contribute any sum that you can, however small to Donnell Summers' legal defense fund and show your solidarity with political prisoners all over the world. To donate please visit:

<http://tinyurl.com/ydk585> (www.arastore.com)

Please contact Lucas County Prosecutor Julia R. Bates and politely demand the immediate dismissal of charges against Donnell Summers. By mail: Lucas County Courthouse, Adams and Erie Streets, Toledo, OH 43604, or call (419) 213-4700

Communiqué from Somewhere in the State of Oaxaca, from the State Council of the Popular Peoples' Assembly of Oaxaca (CEAPPO)

December 3, 2006

PEOPLE OF OAXACA! PEOPLE OF MEXICO!
PEOPLE OF THE WORLD!

From somewhere in the state of Oaxaca, as the State Council of the Popular Peoples' Assembly of Oaxaca,
WE DECLARE:

FIRST: The APPO is more alive than ever in the hearts of the workers, indigenous people, campesinos, housewives, students, youth, children, and all the exploited and oppressed in Oaxaca and Mexico. The State Terror that has been unleashed on the people of Oaxaca and the international community with increased brutality since November 25 has not weakened our desire to be free men and women.

Nor has it made us change our minds about whether our struggle should continue to be a political, peaceful and mass movement, despite the fact that 17 people have been killed during this stage of the struggle, dozens of people have disappeared and hundreds are political prisoners; we consider this toll to consist of crimes against humanity.

SECOND: The APPO continues to act permanently; although we are not visible at sentries or heard

over the radio 24 hours a day, we still live and communicate with the same indomitable spirit which we have inherited as exploited people. We are fighting and will continue to fight intensely for the fall of the tyrant and his dictatorship, the dictatorship of capital.

This new stage of struggle that we have named the Stage of Peace with Justice, Democracy and Liberty without Ulises Ruiz Ortiz is, at the same time, a novel exercise to continue the struggle that the APPO is learning to build with patience, perseverance and wisdom.

Our original peoples taught us this on November 28-29, at the Forum of Indigenous Peoples of Oaxaca, when they told us that "the path must be taken slowly." This is what we are doing now, without losing sight of the common objective, which is the profound transformation of living, working, academic and recreational conditions for our people. As the faithful puppet of the wealthy and the drug traffickers who he defends and represents, URO (Ulises Ruiz) stood in the way of this path. As representatives of a people who decided to embark on the route to their own emancipation, we will remove him from this path that belongs to us.

THIRD: The Council is calling all people of Oaxaca from now until December 10 to organize and carry out mobilizations and protest actions to spread the "Stage of Peace:" the call for the release of political prisoners, the return of the disappeared, the cancellation of orders of apprehension, an end to illegal arrests, an end to gag orders, the withdrawal of the Federal Preventive Police (PFP), and what brought us all together: the departure of the murderer Ulises Ruiz from Oaxaca. We call for this to happen in all regions of the state through our regional, municipal and sectorial Popular Assemblies.

We do so because on December 10 we will hold a Grand Concentration, meeting at 10am at the monument to Juárez, located at the Crucero de Viguera in Oaxaca City, to express our condemnation of and opposition to the baton and rifle policy to which this group of murderers and thieves who call themselves the government in Oaxaca want to subject us.

Fraternally,

**ALL POWER TO THE PEOPLE!
STATE COUNCIL OF THE APPO**

The APPO Lives

<http://www.narconews.com/Issue44/article2440.html>

A.R.A. ANTI-RACIST ACTION NETWORK FOUR POINTS OF UNITY

1) WE GO WHERE THEY GO: When fascists are organizing or active in public, we're there. We don't believe in ignoring or staying away from them. Never let the nazis have the streets!

2) WE DON'T RELY ON THE COPS OR THE COURTS TO DO OUR WORK: This doesn't mean we never go to court. But we rely on ourselves to protect ourselves & stop the fascists.

3) NON-SECTARIAN DEFENSE OF OTHER ANTI-FASCISTS: In ARA, we have different groups and individuals. We don't agree about everything and we have a right to differ openly. But in this movement, an attack on one is an attack on us all. We stand behind each other.

4) We support abortion rights and reproductive freedom. ARA intends to do the hard work necessary to build a broad, strong movement against racism, sexism, anti-Semitism, homophobia, class exploitation, repression, and discrimination against the disabled, the oldest, the youngest and the most oppressed people. We want a classless society. **WE INTEND TO WIN!**

The Gas Chamber:

A Venice Beach Pepper Spray Horror Movie

by Peggy Lee Kennedy venicesantamonica@fastmail.fm

Roll the video: Officer David Guiterman casually leans to his left, pulls out his pepper spray from its holster, shakes it deliberately, leans forward into the opening of the patrol car and sprays Benjamin Barker right in the face for four or five seconds. Count it out: 1-1000, 2-1000... as Mr. Barker is handcuffed in the back seat pleading, "Don't spray me, please!" The officers then shut all the doors – creating a gas chamber of pepper spray inside. Barker appears to convulse and struggle to breathe while Officer Guiterman, two other officers, and LAPD Venice Beach Sub-Station Supervisor Sgt. Burrus, all stand outside as if nothing is happening.

Calvin Moss, Food Not Bombs activist and co-founder of our Venice Justice Committee, captured that Feb. 2005 LAPD Venice Beach pepper spray incident on tape. The video was seen recently with a flurry of other police abuse episodes on CNN, ABC, etc. as if part of a transitory epidemic of police abuse.

The pepper spray tape and our Justice Committee grew from our Food Not Bombs activity. We were trained in non-violent resistance by the National Lawyer's Guild to oppose anti-feeding, anti-homeless laws passed by the Santa Monica. We sought further training in CopWatch and video advocacy to document the human rights violations happening around us. This included training by Paul Mills of Police Watch LA and Michael Zinzun, former Black Panther and co-founder of the Coalition Against Police Abuse (CAPA). Zinzun (may he rest in peace) suggested we form a Justice Committee.

That February night, we watched the video over and over, reliving the incident, trying to get the victim's name or the number he was calling out and trying to figure out what we should do. We thought the victim's name might be Parker, but he wasn't in good shape even before Guiterman pepper sprayed him. Barker was crying and appeared disabled and disoriented, which made the excessive force more egregious. He had hospital bandages on both wrists and kept sobbing loudly about how he was hurting: his leg, his rib, his wrist. Also upsetting about the tape was how many people just walked by on the Boardwalk, as though it was OK, or he must deserve it.

We called Paul Mills and talked about what we should do with the tape. The decision was to contact John Raphling, an attorney at the LA County Public Defender's office, assigned to the LAX (Airport) Courthouse. Raphling had previously helped our Justice Committee by successfully defending a Venice woman LA prosecuted for living in her vehicle. Raphling reassured us that he would try to get this man justice. He located Barker, who was being arraigned at the LAX Courthouse, and used our tape to defend him. The officers present when Barker was pepper sprayed and arrested - Officers Guiterman, Thusing, Eguez, and Sgt. Burrus – had all lied on the police report.

Officer Guiterman said that he ordered Barker "to sit down and he did, he sat in the rear of the car with his feet out." Close review of the video shows Officer Eguez apparently pulling Barker in the car from the other side by the handcuffs, which must have been painful. Barker cried in pain while this was happening. It's possible Barker's feet were out of the car, but he was not combative and was answering Guiterman's questions.

Guiterman said Barker took a deep breath and began to spit on him, but the video doesn't show this. Guiterman wrote, "I moved my head to the left and avoided the spit." Definitely, this head movement never happened in the video. At no time that Barker was seated in the car does Guiterman or any officer make a sudden move or reaction to avoid something Barker did or might do. He wrote Barker continued to be aggressive and combative, which is also untrue. Barker sits in the car whining and crying. He wasn't physically doing anything when Guiterman pepper sprayed him.

Officer Peggy Thusing was standing next to Guiterman. She wrote she saw him move to avoid being spat on, that he took a step back, and was four feet away from Barker when he sprayed. In the video Guiterman leaned in - face first - and was nearly on top of Barker when he sprayed him. The fact he leans in face first contradicts his claim that the spraying was done in defense against spitting.

Officer Eguez said he seat-belted Barker in the car and by the time he came around the other side, he learned of the pepper spraying. In the video, he seems to know what's happening before he comes to the other side. As Eguez walks around the back of the car he is commenting about the spray and was smiling or even laughing while the spraying happened.

Sgt. Burrus, the commanding officer, was standing a few feet away. He wrote Barker was standing outside the car, spat at Guiterman, and refused to get in until after Guiterman used the pepper spray. The videotape clearly shows Guiterman pepper spraying Barker while he was sitting down in the car. If Barker ever spat on Guiterman, it could only have happened well before the spraying, which makes the spraying an act of revenge.

The truth in our videotape did help Benjamin Barker find some justice. We helped get him out of jail. Raphling was able to show the tape to the prosecutor who dismissed charges for resisting and battery on a police officer. People abused by the police frequently get charged with crimes such as resisting arrest or battery on a police officer.

If there's evidence or even a credible witness to an excessive use

of force violation committed by law enforcement, calling the local Public Defender's office should definitely be considered, especially if the victim can not be contacted
Barker choking inside sealed squad car filled with pepper spray.

directly. The Metropolitan area courts, jails, and public defender's offices are all arranged together in jurisdictions. For example, when a person is arrested in Venice, they are arraigned at the Airport (LAX) Courthouse.

Raphling now has a private practice as a civil rights and criminal defense attorney in Venice and is no longer with the Public Defender's office, but contacting him proved fruitful to our pursuit of justice. Those who have had negative experiences



with Public Defenders may be surprised to learn that most of the attorneys in the LAX PD's office watched our tape and took an interest in the case. Having strong evidence can help any attorney mount a defense.

Other options are to go straight to the press (like with Rodney King and KTLA) if the evidence is sensational enough; to file a complaint with internal affairs against the officer(s) for excessive use of force or other misconduct; or to contact a reputable civil rights attorney who may be able to get the victim compensation and apply pressure for departmental reform. The central factor for this kind of evidence or documentation is letting victims benefit from the evidence.

We consider the pepper spray tape one of our Justice Committee successes. It's no real surprise to us the police report conflicted with our video, but some lingering sober questions regarding our so-called justice system still remain. Where does a poor person get justice without such a video? Are all police reports full of these kinds of discrepancies? How many defenseless people are in prison based on lies? Can these systemic problems be resolved in the existing police culture?

These questions may be too hard to address in an article about one police abuse incident, but there should clearly be independent monitoring of the police and more accountability. According to Raphling, "This case illustrates ...that LAPD is not capable of policing itself and that we need real, independent civilian monitors with a real investigative budget, real investigative powers and authority to discipline." He showed our tape to the head prosecutor for the City Attorney's Office at LAX Courthouse and suggested charges be filed against the officer for a violation of P.C. 147: "Every officer ... guilty of willful inhumanity or oppression toward any prisoner under his care or in his custody, is punishable by fine not exceeding four thousand dollars, and removal from office." The City Attorney's



LAPD Officer Guiterman (leaning in behind door) pepper sprays prisoner Benjamin Barker handcuffed inside patrol car.

--Photo from video tape taken at the scene by Calvin Moss, Venice-Santa Monica Food Not Bombs

office declined to file charges and appears to have done nothing to discipline these officers.

Sergeants Pape and Adams from the LAPD Professional Standards Bureau, Internal Affairs Group, and Criminal Investigation Division (that's what was on the business card) did come and interview Calvin and me regarding the tape. Calvin told them the pepper spraying was inappropriate, sadistic behavior. He told them the officer was torturing Barker. When Pape interviewed me, I told him that not only should Guiterman be disciplined, but so should the other officers who just stood there and did nothing to stop the abuse.

When he talked to us, Pape kept bringing up things Barker had allegedly done - things not on the tape, things we did not see - implying Barker deserved to be pepper sprayed. At the time we didn't know the content of the police report and the lies about Barker spitting, but we had been there. We witnessed the incident, Calvin videotaped it, and we knew what was on the video. What I assumed to be an LAPD investigation of excessive force by Officer Guiterman went more like an investigation of us.

John Raphling sent the video and the false reports to the agency contracted by the federal court to monitor the consent decree overseeing the LAPD. He was told that the video had made its way to Chief Bratton, and he was assured that they would discipline the officers, but nothing happened.

In April 2006, Raphling and Carol Sobel, president of the NLG-LA showed the video, along with another showing similar brutal police abuse on the Venice Boardwalk, to Connie Rice for her report on the progress of LAPD reform under the consent decree. The other video was my neighbor's son being pepper sprayed on the Boardwalk after being handcuffed and subdued by LAPD. Though this second video indicated

a pattern, and Raphling believes the videos were again sent to top people in LAPD, the department took no action to discipline officers or tighten policy.

In Nov. 2006, our pepper spray video was released to the media after a sensational police abuse incident in which a beating taped on a cell phone camera was posted on a popular web site. At the press conference that followed, Bratton admitted he'd received our videotape 15 months earlier, but hadn't made a determination of whether the police had acted "within policy." The chief defended his officers' actions and later announced the evidence was "inconclusive" as to whether these officers violated LAPD policy. In the words of Attorney John Raphling, "Chief Bratton, by his actions, has shown that he approves of these abusive and cruel policing tactics."

We hope more people will document, report, and complain about police abuse. A few things to know when witnessing police incidents:

- **Ask officers for their cards.** You do not have to tell them why. In LA, they're supposed to give you their name, badge number and supervisor.
- **Take names and numbers** of witnesses and, if possible, get the name of the victim.
- **You have a constitutional right to witness**, but use common sense about your distance.
- **Know your rights** and learn about dealing with police. Midnight Special law collective is a good place to start: www.midnightspecial.net

Bear in mind the abusive use of pepper spray on Benjamin Barker happened in broad daylight, with plenty of witnesses, and the police knew they were being filmed. What happens when no one is watching and no one is there who cares enough to do something?

Peggy Kennedy is a founder of Venice-Santa Monica Food Not Bombs and the Venice Justice Committee, and an activist with ARA-LA. For more information on the web, check out: www.justice.wetnostril.net

Call for Congressional Hearings on COINTELPRO

By Joan P. Gibbs and Mani Gilyard, *Jericho Amnesty Movement*

In January 2007, Congressman John Conyers will become the new chair of the House of Representatives Committee on the Judiciary. The House Committee on the Judiciary jurisdiction includes the following areas: (1) the judiciary and judicial proceedings, civil and criminal; (2) civil liberties; (3) claims against the United States; (4) national penitentiaries and (5) Revision and codification of the Statutes of the United States.

Herman Ferguson, on behalf of The Jericho Movement, has written a letter to Congressman Conyers requesting that he schedule hearings on "COINTELPRO: Its Legacy and Continuing Impact." It is our hope that these hearings, if held, will not only further expose the FBI and local law enforcement crimes against the Black Liberation Movement and many of those involved it, but also result in legislation addressing some of these injustices.

Of particular concern to the Jericho Movement is the release and treatment of our political prisoners. Though the United States steadfastly denies it, presently there are many political prisoners in the US, the majority of them Black/New Africans who were targets of the COINTELPRO "Black Nationalist Hate Groups" program. Many of these brothers and sisters have been incarcerated for decades.

For example, Jalil Abdul Muntaquin, has been incarcerated since 1971, Sundiata Acoli and Herman Bell since 1973. It is critical that the human rights and constitutional violations surrounding their arrests, trials, sentencing, conditions of their confinement and continuing incarceration because of their political histories--all were members of the Black Panther Party--and continuing commitment to the liberation of Black/New Afrikan be brought to the wider attention of the public. Sundiata Acoli, now 70 and with a near exemplary record, has twice been denied parole.

If nothing else, congressional hearings on "COINTELPRO: Its Legacy and Continuing Impact" would go a long way towards achieving this result.

To this end, we are calling on all supporters of political prisoners--defense committees; revolutionary nationalist, radical, and progressive organizations, elected officials, community, religious, spiritual leaders, etc.--to write, fax, or call Congressman Conyers to urge that he schedule hearings on COINTELPRO. Congressman Conyers' address is:

The Honorable John Conyers
2426 Rayburn Building
Washington, DC 20515
(202) 225-5126, (202) 225-0072 Fax

Your support of Jericho's call will help ensure that it becomes a reality. Please mail or email copies of your letters to Herman Ferguson:

National Jericho Movement
P.O. Box 340084
Jamaica, NY 11434
lyaluua@aol.com

For more information about The Jericho Amnesty Movement and political prisoners in the US, visit The Jericho Movement website www.the.jerichomovement.com. Please also do not hesitate to contact Herman or us if you have any questions about this campaign.

In solidarity,
Joan P. Gibbs, Esq. 718-270-6296 or 718-757-4093
Mani Gilyard, Chair, Malcolm X Commemoration Committee

December 7, 2006
Dear Congressman Conyers:

Congratulations on your pending ascendancy to the chair of the House Committee on the Judiciary. We write to request that you schedule hearings on COINTELPRO: Its Legacy and Continuing Impact. For more than a decade, many of us have been requesting hearings on COINTELPRO, and hopefully, legislation that begins to address some of the injustices committed against the Black movement and activists as result of COINTELPRO. We hope that one of your acts as the new chair of the Judiciary Committee will be to schedule these hearings.

As I am sure you are aware, COINTELPRO is an acronym for a series of FBI counterintelligence programs against, among others, the Communist party, and so-called "Black Nationalist Hate Groups." The August 1967 FBI memorandum announcing the Black Nationalist Hate Group program describes its goals as:

1. Prevent a coalition of militant black nationalist groups;
2. Prevent the rise of a messiah who could unify and electrify the militant nationalist movement;
3. Prevent violence on the part of the black nationalist groups;
4. Prevent militant black nationalist groups and leaders from gaining respectability by discrediting them;
5. Prevent the long range growth of militant black nationalist organizations especially among youth.

The targets of the Black Nationalist Hate Group program included a wide array of Black organizations and individuals, among them the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), the Revolutionary Action Movement, the Republic of New Afrika, Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., Kwame Toure, formerly known as Stokely Carmichael, and countless others. Though the Black Panther (BPP) was not among the original targets of the program, in September 1968, then FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover labeled the BPP "the greatest threat to the internal

security of the country." Thereafter the BPP became the primary focus of the program, and was ultimately the target of 233 of the believed total authorized "Black Nationalist" COINTELPRO actions.

As the Final Report of the 1976 Select Committee To Study Government Operations With Respect to Intelligence Activities states: "Although the claimed purpose of the Bureau's COINTELPRO tactics was to prevent violence, some of the FBI's tactics against the BPP were clearly intended to foster violence, and many others could reasonably have been expected to cause violence." In its pursuit of the BPP, the FBI, often together with local law enforcement officials, knew no bounds. BPP members and supporters were not only spied on and harassed but, in blatant violation of the both the US Constitution and International law, falsely accused of crimes that they had not committed. Many were wounded and murdered by police and FBI. December 4, 2006, marked the 38th anniversary of the assassination of Fred Hampton, one of the leaders of the Chicago chapter of the BPP, by local Chicago police thanks to information from an FBI informant, while he slept in his bed. Hampton was shot twice in the head, once in the arm and shoulder; while three other people sleeping in the same bed escaped unharmed. Mark Clark, sleeping in a living room chair, was also murdered while asleep. Hampton's wife, who was eight months pregnant, was also shot but survived. Four Panthers sleeping in the apartment were also wounded, while one escaped injury. Fred Hampton was 21 years old when he was assassinated; Mark Clark was 17.

While the true impact of the COINTELPRO Black Nationalist Hate Group Program on the Black Liberation Movement will probably never be known because the FBI never recorded all of its activities, has destroyed many of its files, and many of the architects and participants are now deceased, it is crucial that the impact and continuing legacy of this program be investigated and remedies developed to repair the damage it has done. This is particularly true with respect to the many members of the Black Panther party, the Republic of New Afrika and other organizations that today languish in jail as a result of their having been targeted by the FBI and local law enforcement officials as part of the counterintelligence programs.

We urgently request that you schedule hearings on "COINTELPRO: Its Legacy and Continuing Impact" in the near future. Thank you in advance for your prompt attention this matter. We expect that you will give our request the serious attention that it deserves.

Yours truly,

Herman Ferguson
Co-Founder, The Jericho Movement



Former Black Panthers still fighting government harassment, L to R: Hank Jones, the late John Bowman, who just passed, Ray Boudreaux, Harold Taylor, and Richard Brown. Decades after their involvement with the Black Panther Party and in some cases torture by agents of COINTELPRO, these men were subpoenaed to appear before a grand jury witch-hunt last year. They remain committed to resisting grand juries and, for the first time in years, are sharing their stories of harassment and torture at the hands of the police.

Photo by Scott Braley

Legacy of Torture: the war against the Black Liberation Movement

<<http://www.freedomarchives.org/BPP/torture.html>>

ARA will show this video in LA in Feb. Call 310-495-0299 for info.

"The same people who tried to kill me in 1973 are the same people who are here today, trying to destroy me. I mean it literally. I mean there were people from the forces of the San Francisco Police Department who participated in harassment, torture and my interrogation in 1973 ... none of these people have ever been brought to trial. None of these people have ever been charged with anything. None of these people have ever been questioned about that." -- John Bowman, former member of Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, who passed in Dec. 2006.

Order this new 28-minute DVD directed, produced, and edited by Andres Alegría, Claude Marks & The Freedom Archives, ISBN 978-0-9790789-0-3
Available now for a donation of \$15 + \$2 shipping (in the US)
Please contact us for review copies or bulk orders.

The Freedom Archives
522 Valencia Street
San Francisco, CA 94110
(415) 863-9977
www.freedomarchives.org

An Appeal for Redress from the War in Iraq

Many active duty, reserve, and guard service members are concerned about the war in Iraq and support the withdrawal of U.S. troops. The Appeal for Redress provides a way in which individual service members can appeal to their Congressional Representative and US Senators to urge an end to the U.S. military occupation. The Appeal messages will be delivered to members of Congress at the time of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day in 2007. The wording of the Appeal for Redress is short and simple. It is respectful in tone.

“As a patriotic American proud to serve the nation in uniform, I respectfully urge my political leaders in Congress to support the prompt withdrawal of all American military forces and bases from Iraq. Staying in Iraq will not work and is not worth the price. It is time for U.S. troops to come home.”

The Appeal for Redress is sponsored by active duty service members based in the Norfolk area and by a sponsoring committee of veterans and military family members. The Sponsoring committee consists of Iraq Veterans Against the War, Veterans For Peace, and Military Families Speak Out.

Members of the military have a legal right to communicate with their member of Congress. To learn more about the rights and restrictions that apply to service members, contact us. Attorneys and counselors experienced in military law are available to help service members who need assistance in countering any attempts to suppress this communication with members of Congress. Members of the military have rights under the U.S. Constitution, laws passed by Congress, and the military’s own regulations. Military regulations give you important ways to voice your opinion about what’s going on in Iraq. They also impose important limitations. People in the military don’t have the same constitutional right to express themselves as civilians do. But military members do have the right to possess newspapers, books and other personal informational materials.

The military regulation that covers protest and dissent by members of the military is DoD Directive 1325.6 “Guidelines for Handling Dissident and Protest Activities Among Members of the Armed Forces.”

The command may prohibit members from distributing written materials on base, other than through “official outlets,” without prior approval. However, the command may not prevent you from distributing printed material simply because it is critical of government policies or officials. DoD Directive 1325.6 says it is DoD policy to preserve military members’ “right of expression... to the maximum extent possible, consistent with good order and discipline and the national security.” Members of the military may attend demonstrations but only in the United States and only when they are off base, off duty, and out of uniform.

The Right Of Service Members To Complain And Request Redress

Article 3.5.7 DoD Directive 1325.6 provides the right of service members to complain and request redress of grievances against actions of their commanders. (IMPORTANT NOTE: A redress is not to be confused with a petition. The action taken here by individual service members is an Appeal for Redress to End the War in Iraq.)

DoD Directive 7050.6, “Military Whistleblower Protection Act,” provides for the following rights:

Article 4.1 -- Members of the Armed Forces shall be free to make a protected communication to:

Article 4.1.1 — A Member of Congress

Articles 4.2-4.4 -- Military members are protected against reprisals for such communication.

Call to Action for Resistance Against the War in Iraq, March 19-20

This call to action comes from a number of different organizations and individuals involved in the anti-war movement. Our organizing experiences have left us feeling disappointed in ourselves and in the movement as a whole. Organizing against the war in Iraq has led us to believe that marching and chanting has not made enough of an impact nor done enough to end the brutal realities of the occupation. This has got to change.

On March 19 and 20th 2007, we call for worldwide days of resistance to the imperialist, racist and senseless war in Iraq. We propose occupations, acts of civil disobedience, and direct action. We propose that these acts of resistance be directed towards governments, military recruitment centers, corporations, and other institutions that perpetuate American empire and war.

We call for the support of any and all actions people take against the war and for people to respect a diversity of tactics. This means standing in solidarity with all forms of resistance to the war. Although people may not always agree upon every course of action, we should not actively oppose other people’s forms of resistance.

We call for people to organize and take action at the local level and to make decisions democratically. We need to be organizing from the bottom up, not putting time and resources into another top-down permitted March in Washington. Anyone involved in this day of action deserves the right to make their own decisions as they are in the best position to know what can and can’t work in their own cities and states. By coordinating our efforts through communication, regional *consultas* and statewide meetings, we will maintain local autonomy while building important connections and relationships.

We call for this day of action to be used as a catalyst for community outreach and organizing around the war. We need to start talking with people in our neighborhoods, not just the same old crowd. In using this day as something to build towards, we won’t just be taking action for the sake of action; we will be using that action to build a stronger resistance to the war.

It is time to confront the failures of the anti-war movement by planning ahead, taking risks, making demands, and creating consequences. March 20th, 2007 will be a day to show the world that we recognize how deep the blood of imperialism runs in Iraq and to demonstrate that our rising resistance will run deeper!

direct action! Lansing, Michigan
Youth Against War and Racism -northern California
ACTIVATE -Grand Rapids, Michigan
The United Resistance -California
Copwatch -Sonoma County, CA
Petaluma Food Not Bombs -Sonoma County
Students for a Democratic Workplace



Iraq Veterans Against the War demonstration in San Francisco, CA.

If the command tries to retaliate against you for exercising your free speech rights, get some legal assistance. Talk with a civilian military counselor and/or a civilian attorney familiar with military law. You may be able to file a complaint under Article 138 of the UCMJ. You may be able to file a complaint under the Military Whistleblower Protection Act. There may be other legal channels. An attorney or counselor can help you file a complaint or communicate with your command about the problem.

See also DoD Directive 1344.10 (August 2, 2004) Political Activities by Members of the Armed Forces on Active Duty

This Directive reissues the earlier Directive 1344.10, “Political Activities by Members of the Armed Forces,” that was issued June 15, 1990, and implements previously proposed guidelines on “DoD Personnel Security” and “Guidelines for Handling Dissident and Protest Activities among Members of the Armed Forces.” This Directive states that, while members of the Armed Forces are prohibited from engaging in certain political activities, “It is DoD policy to encourage members of the Armed Forces to carry out the obligations of citizenship.”

You may also call the G.I. Rights Hotline at (800) 394-9544 or (510) 465-1472 (also international calls)

Appeal for Redress
PO Box 53052
Washington, DC 20009-3052
<http://www.appealforredress.org/>
info@appealforredress.org
360-241-1414

To add your organization to the list of endorsers or to join the listserve for this day of action, contact d@direct-action.net for more information:
<http://www.direct-action.net>

Defend Women's Right to Choose!

In 2001, the government of the United States declared a "war on terror" and began rounding up Muslims and carpet bombing the Middle East. Their terror dragnet has expanded to include animal rights and environmental activists facing long prison terms. And yet a three-decade-old terrorist war continues to rage inside the United States beneath the radar of the national media, hurting people and ruining lives. It is the war of terror waged by the Christian Right against women and those who believe women should be able to control their own lives and reproductive health.

Since 1977, this terror war has claimed at least 7 lives, and also included 17 attempted murders, 152 assaults, more than 300 completed or attempted bombings and arsons, and literally thousands of threats and thousands of acts of vandalism. There have even been letters with real anthrax mailed to abortion rights groups, as well as hundred of fakes.

Despite this overt terror campaign, the government did not respond by bombing the Bible Belt or even subjecting segments of the anti-abortion movement to grand jury investigations or lock-ups. Instead, they slowly, quietly and steadily acquiesced to the terrorists' demands. The Supreme Court upheld mandatory waiting periods during which many states require women receive anti-abortion propaganda. Federal legislation banned Medicaid funding for abortion services, and those services were cut from medical for federal employees. Bans on providing information about abortions were written into international family planning assistance by the US. State legislation across the country has further cut funding for groups that provide abortion services, like the recent cuts to Planned Parenthood funding in Texas. Presidents like Reagan and the Bushes have given their seal of approval to anti-choice rallies on the anniversary of Roe v. Wade. Even the Democratic Party has considered abandoning reproductive rights as part of their platform, and ran anti-abortion candidates for congressional, gubernatorial and Senate seats in the last election.

Between the terror war being waged by the Christian Right and state bowing to their demands, access to abortion across the nation has been severely restricted. In Mississippi, which at one time had seven clinics offering abortions, only one clinic remains, making abortions inaccessible to many women in the state. In Kentucky, which has only two abortion-providing clinics remaining, state law prohibits hospital staff from offering abortion counseling or referrals to survivors of sexual assault. That state, along with Tennessee, also makes extra money from selling special anti-abortion license plates. Arson and bombings of clinics resulted in many losing insurance coverage and being forced to shut down. Abortion providers have been criminally charged, like Dr. Tiller in KS. The list of obstacles and regulations could go on, but the point is clear. The government that is charged with protecting women's rights is colluding with terrorists to deny them.

In July, 2006, Anti-Racist Action and other pro-choice activists from across the country converged on Jackson, Mississippi to confront the enemies of reproductive freedom head on. This January 19-26, during the week of the 33rd anniversary of the Roe v. Wade decision, Anti-Racist Action chapters across the continent are organizing actions and events. We assert and defend the rights of women to have full control of their bodies and lives, and the rights of all of us to defend those rights from attack. We call on all people who support women's reproductive rights participate in local pro-choice events in your area or to organize your own event. -James, CenTex ARA

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TURNING THE TIDE

When the Prison Gates Are Opened, the True Dragon Will Fly Out!

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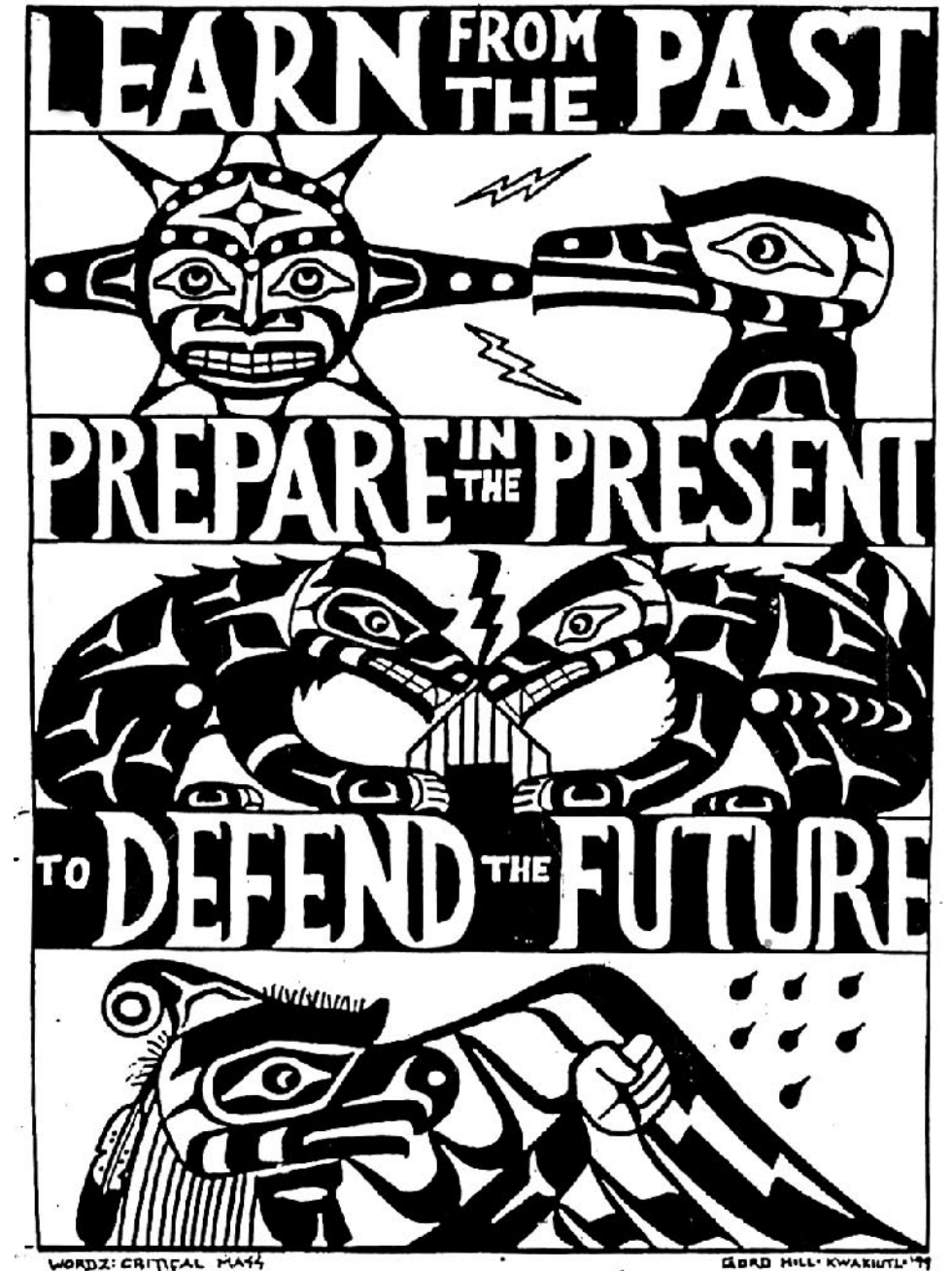
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Anti-Racist Action-LA/People Against Racist Terror
PO Box 1055 *Culver City CA 90232 *310-495-0299
www.antiracistaction.us *antiracistaction_la@yahoo.com