

General T.A.C.O. Speaks: On the Watch-a-Pig Program, Armed Self-Defense, the Panther Eight and the Brutal Government Assassination of Tookie

by General T.A.C.O., Black Riders Liberation Party

When the LA rebellion exploded mainly because of the savage brutal beating of Rodney King by the racist LAPD, it revealed that young black people trapped in the poverty stricken ghettos had finally come to their African senses, united in a “gang” truce, and rejected taking their frustration out on each other that stemmed from white racism and capitalist oppression. In the past, the outcome of such negative self-hatred resulted in a severe non-violent posture towards the racist police and other government agents of repression. Brothers and sisters who were considered hardcore on the streets would literally start running from just the sight of the racist police. On April 29, 1992, the LAPD started running! After the rebellion, black unity was very strong, so the LAPD began to openly carry M-16 military rifles to try to further intimidate the Black community and tried to destroy every peace gathering in every “hood” in LA!! The times were changing, and the Black Riders were in tune. In 1996 we circulated in Watts, South Central, Inglewood, hawthorne, Compton and Long beach, talking to young black brothers and sisters on the need to unite and push our constitutional and human rights, especially our right to have weapons and defend ourselves. Many of them could identify with what the Black Riders were saying, because they had experienced and witnessed so much outlaw gang behavior by the police.

of attack dogs, forced to put one’s hands on top of hot police cars, armored vehicles, battering ram tanks, and suffering humiliations public strip searches all have become part of life for young Black people all over racist AmeriKKa, especially in L.A.

We named our organization the Black Riders Liberation Party and we selected as its symbol the Black panther, in honor of the first Black revolutionary vanguard, the Black panther Party for Self Defense. We chose to resurrect the Black panthers in retaliation, when we learned that our parents and elders were murdered, imprisoned, drugged, brainwashed and exiled in the first Black revolution by the wicked FBI and local police through an evil government secret war program of Counter Intelligence (COINTELPRO). The Black panther is an animal that when it is pressured it moves back until it is cornered, then it comes out fighting for life or death. We felt we had been pushed back long enough and that it was time for poor Black people to come out and take over. During the recruitment periods, we clarify that the party is not racist. We actually oppose all forms of racism, especially when institutionalized to benefit the capitalists.

We wanted to ensure that poor Black people viewed our patrols as positive and helpful to the community. We didn’t want people to see the Black Riders as thuggish, gun toting brothers and sisters without an organized political agenda. We came up with the idea that all Black Riders would wear an updated model of the old Black panther uniform – black berets, and black, gray and white camouflage fatigues, and big black boots! We chose this uniform to make sure that we would not look like or appear to be any black street organization or “hood” in L.A. One of the main goals was to unite all these hoods or groups into fighting for positive revolutionary goals. We want to help establish peace and unity between young Black people still caught up in the Blood and Crip war going on in our community, so we tried to pick a “neutral” color for our New Generation Black panther organization. We also knew that many racist police agencies were directly responsible for the ongoing Blood and Crip war by picking up brothers and sisters in patrol cars and dropping them off in the middle of a “hood” that the individual didn’t get along with. In order for us to be an effective organized force of peacemakers, we realized that we would have to first deal with the historical peace breaker! The Watch-a-pig program was also created to deal with this issue. That is why we continue to seek to confront the real enemy of poor Black people and move the struggle to a higher level, to remove the fear that black people have of the racist police and show them that the enemy is really scared of us as a people.

We began the patrol in 1997 armed with law booklets, video cameras, para-military camouflage fatigues, black berets, bats, knives, black karate skills and any other legal weapon we could get a hold of. We began to monitor the police radio calls, observing arrests as they questioned black people, educating our people about their armed self-defense rights, and offering our services to people who needed a witness against the police in a law suit. Sometimes, we even received urgent cell phone calls from Black people and we would send out a car to the troubled location to watch the pigs. If necessary, we would even follow the racist pigs in their car around the community, bumper to bumper, just to make sure that they would not hurt anyone. We made it clear to all the comrades involved in the program that they should be prepared to do battle only if a racist police officer drew his or her gun or tried to attack us unjustly. We knew that once it started, we may wind up in jail or dead standing up for our people’s rights. This activity captured the hearts and minds of the people. Many young

Black people who used to fight each other in the streets united and went out to patrol the demonic police together. That’s what we call real Revolutionary Black Power. We all felt the compelling urge to finally risk our lives for something positive as opposed to something negative. We launched the first patrols of the police armed with weapons since the original Panthers started in 1966!! Without a doubt we had to overcome the life threatening reality associated with the patrols. It took an extreme love for our people to have the heart and courage to police the police. The police killed Black people in cold blood all the time in LA and get away with it calling it “justifiable homicide.” We felt the pigs were a gang of cowards and busters when confronted by organized Black people with knowledge of the law and who were ready to defend themselves by any means necessary. Many of these patrols resulted in bloody combat or confrontation with the pigs and our comrades were framed and sent to jail on trumped up charges. This did not stop our patrols as more people joined our ranks once the police exposed themselves to be nothing but common criminals acting under the color of law. The second Black Revolution had begun and the genie of Black revolutionary violence had once again been let free in Babylon. It would only stop when total freedom was had.

Many old O.G. (original) Black panthers from LS to New York joined our ranks or supported our programs. They were anxious to get another shot at the oppressor and they wanted



to prove that the Black Panther will always live in the hearts and minds of the people. A few of the recently imprisoned Black Panther Eight supported our program while they still prowled the streets. They were framed and arrested Jan. 23, 2007 for a 36-year-old trumped up alleged retaliatory murder of a white police officer. The pig was corrected seven days after the vicious murder of the great Black panther leader General George Jackson by racist San Quentin prison guards on August 21, 1971. This new critical government attack on these aging O.G. Panther elders will never be forgotten and will be met with an extremely massive political consequence. The Panther Eight must be set free by any means necessary.

We patrol the pigs at random and link it with our other daily movements doing other dangerous political work like trying to educate and raise the African consciousness of young Black people on the street corner to stop tribalism and Black on Black violence. We were careful to keep our patrols within the bounds of the law and this pissed off the pigs even more. Pig brutality was extremely reduced in areas we patrolled. Black people in the community were deeply impressed. The police tried to turn the community against us but it had the opposite effect. The community was proud to see disciplined young Black men -1- and women defend their

Many of them donated and gave us their legal guns and other self defense weapons to help us begin the first watch-a-pig program patrols to move against the racist pigs. The fascist police act as an imperialist occupying army like they’re working overseas in Iraq or Afghanistan, monitoring the actions of the neo-colonial poor Black people and swooping in at will, with high-powered guns, to trap and leave as quickly as they came, yet never responding to the real safety needs of the community. Harassment, terror, torture, brutal beatings, drive-by shootings, stop and frisk, and verbal abuse are the standard operating procedures for the police. Regular and sometimes massive sweeps through the Black communities are launched by the various pig forces (including the FBI) and authorized by the racist European ruling class and corrupt high public political officials in the name of trying to fight “crime” and “gangbanging.” Whole blocks have been cordoned off and anyone entering and exiting are questioned. The police consider any Black person, including our children, as a typical criminal suspect or “public enemy!” When it is the paramilitary police who have contributed to the problem of crime and violence through their gang-style responses and their involvement in smuggling drugs and guns into our community. Thus, tight hand cuffs, being shoved into a police car, being slapped with a billy club, kicked between the legs, maced, the use

rights and stand up to the wicked racist Amerikkan Empire. Our reputation as fearless freedom fighters grew everywhere. By the year 2007, ten years later, we had successfully grown more sophisticated, and by then patrolled the pigs in Watts, Compton, Long Beach, Inglewood and even Oakland!

We grew more sophisticated mainly because of the support of the poor Black people throughout LA donating everything an oppressed people can to fight back. Our people donated time, advice, rides in their own cars, and pennies, nickels, and dimes to support our programs. Some people literally jumped in line while we watched the pigs and brought their own video camera or camera phone to participate. This happened many times, especially along Crenshaw Blvd. In LA. We bought a **Black Power Van** equipped with high-tech walkie-talkies, video cameras, scanners, lap top computers, binoculars, tasers and other technical equipment needed to fight against police terrorism and educate our people about the need for security against the pigs with an advanced four-wheeled mobile security system operating 24 hours a day, for free!!

Some petty-bourgeois people fail to understand why we collect donations. They are completely stupid to the fact that in the early 20th Century, the great Black leader Marcus Garvey created black owned enterprises by collecting donations of nickels and dimes. More than a hundred thousand black people came out in 1919 in New York to see Garvey launch the Black Star Steam Ship Line. We as a people all collectively owned those gigantic ships and that was a beautiful thing in the past. Now we as a people must prepare and be ready for the future.

We have helped to create many positive food, clothing, shelter survival programs, and many small “gang” truces around Los Angeles and in many jails. We have also been to many speaking engagements, unity meetings and demonstrations for the people in the last 11 years of our existence as a new Black panther organization. Yet the brutal government assassination of Stanley “Tookie” Williams had a serious impact on our grass roots organizing efforts to bring the masses of our people back into political life. Through his book and other articles he wrote, Tookie taught us that Black on Black violence must be prevented on the spot before it happens through conflict resolution by a respected, reasonable, revolutionary African minded mediator. It is impossible to count all the times our organization has stood between two armed hostile factions and helped to bring about peace and Black on Black love. Tookie’s message of Black Unity had ultimately struck a chord in the hearts of young Black people so the government moved quickly to silence that message. I led a delegation of 20 militant Black Riders soldiers to City Hall and to Schwarzenegger’s office at the Ronald Reagan building in downtown LA in the fight to save him from execution, and helped to bring national and international TV and media attention to his case. We exposed to the world that the racist death penalty was being used by corrupt politicians as a weapon of assassination. Governor fake terminator Schwarzenegger has gone on record saying that one of the main reasons why he murdered Tookie was because he dedicated his book to many different O.G. Black panther leaders, especially general George Jackson. We also launched a militant demonstration outside of Tookie’s funeral when the racist LAPD tried to set up military barricades around the proceedings. We felt this was the height of disrespect, so we engaged in numerous tense clashes and confrontations with the pigs to clear a path for Black people to enter the funeral and pay their respects. Many Bloods and Crips showed up at the funeral to show their support for Tookie.

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The Black Riders Liberation Party was born in a period of stress when black people were moving away from the philosophy and strategy of non-violent actions being pushed by neo-colonial puppet fake black leaders who encouraged us as a people to hold in our anger and pain from white racist oppression. This causes us to take out the explosive frustration on each other through tribalism instead of unleashing it on our real enemy. We dare to believe that we could offer the community a permanent political vehicle which would serve their needs and advocate their interests. We have met many foes; we have seen many enemies, we have been slandered, kidnaoped, gagged, jailed, raided, and murdered. When the enemy strikes out at you blindly, crushing you right and left if he possibly can, then you know you are doing everything right! We now know more than ever before, that the will of the people is greater than the technology and repression of those who are against the interests of



the people. Therefore we know that we can and will continue to serve and educate the people. Bullet proof love, thanks and appreciation goes out to all the brothers and sisters on the block who have supported the struggle. Hollow point bullets are sent to all the snitches, sell-outs, pig boot licking house nigga’s, especially the ones that roam the streets. THE RACIST DOG POLICEMEN MUST IMMEDIATELY WITHDRAW FROM OUR COMMUNITY, OR FACE THE WRATH OF AN ARMED PEOPLE!!

He who does not fear the death of a thousand cutts will dare to unseat the emperor! Long Live the Guerrilla! Power to the People who Don’t Fear Freedom!

--General T.A.C.O., Black Riders Liberation Party

Editor’s note: Turning the Tide recently received this article from a prisoner, a former white supremacist. Although we disagree with a lot of what he has to say, including his use of a capital-W on “white,” we are printing and commenting on his letter in the interests of further dialogue. The author asked to write anonymously for security reasons, and we have honored that.

--Editor

From a White Male’s Perspective: An Opinion

By The Fly

I’ve seen a lot of complaining in TTT about the lack of unity among groups, organizations and races on key issues. Besides complaints of political in-fighting, there are concerns about the lack of support among Whites for anti-racist activities, an inability to educate and integrate new members or sustain veteran activists. I was involved with racism for a number of years. It wasn’t til recently that I shook myself of that delusion and awoke to reality. Having spent time on the other side, I thought I’d impart my opinion, from a White perspective, in hopes of shedding light. For 13 years, I’ve been imprisoned at close quarters with every possible race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation and human difference imaginable. I’ve gained thereby insight into my own existence and that of those around me. It hasn’t come easy.

We’re so often caught up in our own desires we forget to respect others’ wants. When conflicting needs cross paths, trouble ensues if level heads don’t prevail. In a nation that prides itself on individuality, it’s sometimes necessary to put our views to the side and consider others’ opinions in a neutral mind set.

I’m European by descent. Some of my ancestors began arriving from Ireland in the 1840s fleeing famine. One was executed for trying to free his comrades from an English prison. My family continued to immigrate legally and illegally into the 1980s. I remember sitting at dinner as a youth with family from Ireland whom I could hardly understand. I had no idea where they got their accents. I figured it was near Texas, as that’s where folks with accents came from. Seemed logical.

Minority people often speak of losing their cultural ties to their native lands, often blaming it on “white man’s oppression.” Often that’s true. But stop for a minute, and think about all the white people you know who claim ancestry to Irish, Norwegian or German immigrants. How many speak their ancestral tongues or practice their cultural observances? Having grown up in town 98% White, I can say it’s almost nil. I wonder if minority people think about the struggles and discrimination my Irish ancestors faced and have been subject to, as much as they want me to think about their struggles.

Recently in the local paper, I came across an article buried in the Metro section about four African American teen girls who beat and robbed a 16 year old White girl because of her race. The paper claimed such Black-on-White bias crimes were rare. I know that’s untrue. I wrote one of my daughters and asked what she thought of the attack. Her response: “Dad, the black kids at school hate white people. They’re real racist!” That’s coming from a 14-year-old. Before you conclude she’s just a biased White woman, you should know she’s Jewish and native American on her mother’s side, and a member of the Warm Springs tribe. She can’t afford to be racist.

There was no outcry from the White community over the racist attack. Nobody suggested the girls be re-educated. It went away with no comment from the world. What would the result have been if four White girls attacked a Black girl? Most Whites today, including myself, regard such incidents as a sign of Blacks failing to address their communities’ own bias and prejudices, or condoning them as a “reaction to white oppression.” My daughter, who’s the epitome of the ‘American race,’ ain’t buying that foolhardiness. “Racist is racist no matter who you are,” she said. Wise words for a young girl.

In response to her comments, I wrote this: “You know your ol’ dad hasn’t been perfect. I walked that path of hate so long I was blind to reality. I know the symptoms all to well. Sweetheart, those black girls committed a vile racist act. It’s a shame not only for them, but for the Black community who should not be associated with such vile actions. Whatever you do in life, don’t equate the dishonorable acts of those girls or the racism you hear at school with all Black folks... You know well the struggles the Native Americans, Jews and irish have been through. No people have a monopoly on hurt. Take a moment to think about the struggles Blacks have had to face as well. You have the right to hate whom you wish, especially regimes that oppress. But never let hate consume you so you act violently on it. That shows weakness. Separateness and fear have caused White people to oppress and harm other races in the past. That same separateness and fear in other races causes them to react with bitterness and hatred. Those girls and the racist kids at school have fallen prey to hatred, anger and bitterness.

“You have many people in your blood,” I wrote her. “You are the future of the world, the Eve of a new race, a race which will be created from the mixing of all the peoples of the world. Sometimes they may feel conflicting, but your heart and actions are the most powerful medicine for healing the wounds that inflict our world. It’s about seeing how things are and not condoning racism no matter what. Hold Black racists as accountable as you would a White racist. Do right, and harm no one.”

If you want White support for your cause and struggles, you have to earn it the same way you would your own people. What you want for your own people, you should want for all people. The anti-racist movement will gain its greatest support from the White community and youth when they start addressing the issues of their own inner-racism.

I’m new to the anti-racist movement. Maybe my opinions aren’t acceptable to some or kosher to others. But it’s what I’m coming to the table with. My views are not likely to change. I hope TTT will share some of my writing in the future. Until then... Peace.

Editor’s response to the Fly:

You raise many important issues and considerations we would like to address. First of all, it is very heartening to see someone like yourself, who was deeply imbued with racism and who lives within a highly racist institution such as prison, grappling with these issues and attempting to free yourself and others. It is a service to the struggle and to the future not only of your daughter, but all humanity. You are one of many former racists and boneheads, many of them imprisoned, who have been writing to us recently about their “waking up” and becoming anti-racists, and this is tremendously encouraging. It speaks to the fact that a self-critical grappling with reality is a tremendously powerful for positive change. That is what we were trying to do, from a somewhat different position, with the self-critical examination of two decades of anti-racist practice in the last issue. Many people, perhaps you included, misunderstood it, and I guess that is on us for not being sufficiently clear. Those were not complaints, as you characterize them, or despair, as others took them. They grew out of the belief that the anti-racist movement must first and foremost be a self-critical movement. If we cannot identify and correct our own weaknesses, we can never win. And as

the ARA points of unity declare: “The object is to win.”

Probably because you have seen only a couple of issues of “Turning the Tide,” you seem to be operating under the misconception that TTT is a Black publication, or comes from communities of color. This is not the case. Although there are people of color in Anti-Racist Action internationally, much of its base has always been among European-descent youth concerned with uprooting racism within their own scenes and communities, and confronting institutionalized racism and organized white supremacy and fashion. We print the self-determined expressions of Black/ African, Mexicano/indigenous, Asian and other comrades struggling against colonialism and imperialism because we believe they are essential to the reconstruction of a liberated and environmentally sustainable society for all humanity.

Like you, I am of European descent. In fact, my father came to the U.S. from Poland as a teenager in the 1930s, so my “European-ness” is a much more immediate reality. In your letter, you capitalize “White” as if it is a nationality, and in a separate letter, you asked why TTT capitalizes Black and Asian, but not “white.” The reason is simple. Although we prefer the terms African or New Afrikan (which are non-racial, national designations) and European (which we do capitalize), Black and white are more commonly used (obviously inaccurate) racial/national designations. The differences between the historical processes through which a “white nation” and a Black people were forged in the US are like night and day. Although the stripping of ancestral language, for example, might appear common, it didn’t occur in the same way. White language minorities were slowly amalgamated into a substantially English-speaking “white” majority through a mixture of bribes, coercion, cultivated historical amnesia and inducements, a primarily ideological and economic process of integration. The languages, religious practices, beliefs and family ties of Black people brought to the Americas as chattel slaves were exterminated and eradicated to the extent possible through brutal methods, a primarily military process of separation and subordination. In Puerto Rico, a US colony since 1898, the US tried to eliminate Spanish and make English the official language. Nothing comparable took place with the Germans, Italians, Irish, Swedes, Poles, Greeks, Russians etc. who were amalgamated into “white” America.

Another key difference is the relationship to Native land. Black people for the most part integrated or escaped to and were given refuge by indigenous peoples. There were exceptions, of course; some Black people were held as slaves by the Cherokee. Later, some Black freed slaves were used as shock troops in the US war on the Native Nations of the center of the US. But the Lumbee, the Seminoles and others, as well as the mixed lineage of many people of African descent in North, Central and South America and the Caribbean reflects a certain shared historical relationship. “White” Americans, on the other hand, created their sense of nationhood and entitlement as settlers, taking the land of the indigenous away and exiling or exterminating the people on that land. The Irish, for example, who first migrated to the US, swiftly set about breaking the compact between the original English colonists and the native people of Pennsylvania, in order to seize the native land and farm it as private property. This is a fundamental, and consequential, distinction. It is not, however, a matter of “blood” or “inbred racial characteristics.” It is a matter of social, political and economic practice and reality, of a system created and sustained intergenerationally until an illegitimate “white” national identity based on exploitation and oppression is created. In another letter, you said it’s a sign of trouble when people

stop identifying with their country, and start identifying with a sub-group. To the country, it’s a sign of sanity when “white” people break out of the privilege-induced identification with “America” and white settler nationalism, and start identifying with humanity.

I want to briefly address the question of Black “racism,” because it seems central to your worldview. I’ve never agreed with the formulation that Black people can’t be racist. In a society based on racism, settler colonialism, chattel slavery, and genocide, racism is inculcated in everyone. Professing that “racism = prejudice + power,” and concluding that oppressed people cannot be racist (because, presumably, they have no power) is a formula for powerlessness, victimization and despair. If oppressed people had no power, they would have no hope. But of course, the wealth and power of the oppressors and exploiters in fact is derived from the people they oppress and exploit. Oppressed and colonized people DO have power, including the power to change the world. They are also capable of misusing and abusing their power. Anti-racism and anti-imperialism must be self-critical undertakings not only for ‘white’ people, but for all people.

That said, there are still distinctions to be made. You say, “Separateness and fear have caused White people to oppress and harm other races in the past. That same separateness and fear in other races causes them to react with bitterness and hatred.” However, you let Europeans off far too lightly in that assessment. The primary motivating factors in explaining European aggression have been greed and colonialism (the theft of land, labor and resources). Racism and fear emerged as ideological and psychological justifications after the fact. The first form of racism Black people internalize is anti-Black racism and self-hatred. Black self-love and some degree of Black separation from “whiteness” are not manifestations of “racism” but a necessary antidote to how racism has been internalized. Europeans also need to disidentify with “whiteness,” and appreciate and respect Black cultural, intellectual, artistic and scientific developments, in order to redress the balance of centuries of “white” expropriation and over-valuation.

Although you claim that Black-on-white crime is minimized, that’s hardly the case. The very fact that you could send me the clippings you did attests to the fact that media pay much more attention to white crime victims (whoever the perpetrators) than when crime victims are Black, Mexicano/indigenous, or Asian. There was another case recently where several white girls were beaten by a number of Black youth in Long Beach, and I can assure you, the outcry from ‘white’ communities was quite intense. The defense of the Black children and their families, including the fact that the main actual perpetrators were never caught or tried, was dismissed as ‘playing the race card’ or ‘callousness to the white victims.’

It’s sadly true that nationalism still interferes with a universal morality and identification with humanity. For example, most responses to police brutality are carried out primarily by direct family members and friends of the victims, and secondarily by other members of their ‘racial’ group. This is part of what allows such crimes by oppressive authorities to continue. The day Black, white, Asian and Mexicano/indigenous people rise up as one to demand an end to police abuse of power, or mass incarceration, or the despoliation of the environment by greedy corporations and the imperial state is the day those ills will cease.

You say to your daughter, “You are the future of the world, the Eve of a new race, which will be created from the mixing of all the peoples of the world.” Actually, this new race already exists. It is the only race, the human race, which has been intermixing for millennia and certainly at a rapidly increasing pace for the past half-

Free Trade and Globalized Femicide

by Swaneagle Harijan

The global profit system jams its agenda punitively down the throats of all living beings. As one who has been witnessing termination of ancient land-based cultures as well as those reclaiming human connection to earth, simplicity and survival, i see a replication of techniques in full-blown colonization around the planet. I see this in the way women and girls are brutalized in senseless ways all over the world, in how such mistreatment escalates during genocidal campaigns and in their aftermath.

Femicide assures the disruption of trust, of sane and loving community. The scars deepen with the birthing of babies shaped by rape and mothers who have few ways to heal. Often, they must survive outside their communities in shame. In Pakistan, raped women are jailed for adultery.

In the US, we live in a climate of fear where the dollar is wagged as the ultimate carrot. Uncertainty, rapidly spreading poverty, hunger, joblessness, addiction, illness, and violence suck down the most vulnerable. Those better off reside in negligent amerikkan apathy. Corporations have successfully wrangled away the dreams of millions aspiring to basic dignified survival. Increasingly, most of us will die early from lack of preventative health care, sufficient nutrition, or safe and thriving communities. All of these divisions contribute to the groundwork that insures the growth of femicide.

I think of indigenous leader Pauline Whitesinger refusing forced relocation and opposing coal extraction and my young back-to-the-land neighbors conscious of living lightly while opposing poisonous corporate road side spraying. The profiteer wants us out of the way. I think of a raped, pregnant mother in Dafur struggling for firewood or a raped, mutilated, tortured to death teenage girl, Silvia Elena Morales, in Juarez; the blueprint of total takeover is the same. We do the oppressor’s dirty work destroying ourselves and each other while the death squads operate elsewhere. Globalization’s framing of fascist theft as “Free Trade” leaves no rock, leaf, creature or human unturned. Thus, the age of Free Trade ecocide, femicide, and genocide has been ushered in.

In the wee hours of the morning, i heard a report on BBC about globalization in India. Importing amerikkan consumer values and jobs has given thousands of Indians a chance at cell phones and techno fashion in all its forms. India strives to be a global military/economic superpower.

But tens of millions of Indians benefit not at all from “Free Trade.” 130,000 farmers have committed suicide as the essential craft of growing food is being eliminated by massive multinational monoculture. Millions have been relocated due to the flooding of their land by dams. Millions more face relocation so steel mills can be built. Outsourcing is multifaceted, far-reaching.

For every 800 boys born in India, there are only 600 girls, due to gender selective abortion. Boys, part of the global illusion of success, are valued more than girls, men over women. As materialism takes root, women and girls experience more bride-burning, enforced prostitution and rape.

So we see the globalization of femicide riding on the heels of ecological devastation as industry replaces customary agrarian cultures, with refugees fleeing to slums by the millions. There they often are employed as gun runners, thugs, drug dealers, human traffickers or enslaved in the sex trade. The population of the planet has shifted for the first time in human history from over half agrarian to a majority dwelling in cities.

Meanwhile, the collective bubble where so many in the US reside has recently been dented by brutal hostage-taking of female students at school. Sick dude number one (i decided not to repeat their names, as they do not deserve to be remembered) struck on September 27, 2006. i will call such men what they are: Suicide Child Rapists. At a high school in Bailey, CO, six petite blond girls were taken hostage in a classroom, and males told to leave. All were sexually assaulted, two possibly raped, one was killed as she tried to run away when SWAT approached the scene. The assailant then turned the gun on himself. A hostage survivor told how the suicide child-raper told all the girls to face the chalkboard while he could be heard unbuttoning and unzipping their clothing. Shortly afterward on Oct 2, 2006, sick dude number two struck, taking ten 7- to 13-year-old girls hostage in an Amish school near where he lived. He told teachers, adults and boys to leave the room. He wounded five girls and killed five others before turning the gun on himself. Suicide raper? KY Jelly was found, but he apparently did not molest any of the girls whom he imprisoned in the

school. In suicide notes to family members, he wrote of molesting female relatives when they were 3 and 5 years old, and that he dreamed of molesting again. The relatives say he never molested them.

As i read the articles describing what happened, i felt sick to my stomach. Despair penetrated my feelings, emotions and remnants of hope. This is a mini Juarez right here in peaceful Colorado and Pennsylvania communities. I wondered about the extent of trauma suffered by the surviving girls. I could only imagine the hell that criminally ill wannabe rapist put those children through....

How do such heinous acts relate to Free Trade? I lay it at the feet of the elite manipulators of human fate, the perverted images eye-raping all who are forced to see them -- the pro rape entertainment industry, the pro rape military industrial complex, the athlete bully rapist who operates with impunity if rich enough, the School of the Americas cultivated paramilitary death squad rapists and pillagers, the entire fabric that utilizes such disgrace for its own immediate ends, whether pleasure or profit or both.

Suicide child rape may be unique to amerikka: White men willing to die acting out abuse fantasies on very young, vulnerable girls who meet media standards of beauty, infantile sexuality, and accessibility requirements in real time. Worth dying for, to one of many jerked around by institutionalized brutality. How strange that it can happen twice in one week and become known. So many other horrors to girls and women of color never cease, yet are barely noticed.

It was nearly 7 years after the killings of girls and women in Juarez began before i first heard about it. Cecilia Rodriguez, the US spokesperson for the Zapatistas, told an audience in Olympia, WA in 1999 that 100 young women had been horrifically raped and murdered. Not long after, Cecilia was gang raped by four Mexican soldiers and retired from her prominent position. I miss her strong, inspiring voice.

I do wonder if the femicide occurring in Juarez, Guatemala, El Salvador, Colombia, Dafur, and many other places, isn’t carefully crafted by colonizing globalization. I believe destroying the healthy place of women and girls in societies assures the plowing forward of “progress” that wipes out entire ecosystems and peoples. All men must take a stand against misogyny for their own well being and that of their families.

Yet, as an anarcha-feminist woman, frontline mother, activist, gardener, graphic and performance artist, i know how rare men are who consider stopping rape as a priority. I count as precious friends such men. Far too many silence and marginalize those of us who dare speak up. Sadly, it is hardest of all when the perpetrators are known activists themselves.

One of my most harrowing stands among my own people occurred when a self-described anarchist told me “in a perfect world, adults could have sex with children.” Needless to say, i went off about it and later had to deal with a male activist roommate calling me a Stalinist cause i did not want the “perfect world” dude living in our collective household. He also said i might as well call both him and his friend child molesters. One never moved in and the other moved out.

Another time, i spoke out against the presence in a peace vigil of a man who had molested a child i know. An activist friend, who was a woman, doubted the truth of the child’s experience, even though several other young women we knew had been preyed on by this man. An activist man also doubted the child’s nightmare. It was only years later that these people reconsidered their positions.

My first experience in addressing rape brought me death threats. My own **-3-** experiences with

rape have been either never talked about or when i did, i was blamed for it by men in a rural community where it happened. Unfortunately, many women take the patriarchal position that has been inculcated among most people on earth and point the finger at the victim.

The attitudes instilled to keep people oppressed wherever we live in these times assist in shaping the atmosphere essential to cultivating theft, rape and murder as tools of genocide. As i study the circumstances shaping the fates of so many, especially girls and women, i see the repetition of behaviors that grease the way for the loss of healthy, vibrant culture and community. Such loss fuels pirating profiteers who stop at nothing to obtain everything they want. How easy when resistance is fragmented...

So we must seek ardently the activators of inspiring solutions, nourishing to our spirits. Such are the women of the Zapatistas who will be out in full force in Oaxaca, Mexico City, Chiapas during International Women’s Day, March 8th, in their unending stand for the dignity of women. The Ten Revolutionary Zapatista Women’s Laws were integral to the uprising that emerged the day the North American Free Trade Agreement, called the “death knell to the Indigenous,” went into effect. On January 1, 1994, the magical and poetic words of these colorful resistant peoples carried across our fragile globe. They reached my heart as i wintered in these mountains giving a surge of relief to this battered heart. To this day i honor this vision of egalitarian inclusion.

In July 1997, i went on a human rights delegation to Chiapas after the massacre of 45 Maya in Acteal, mostly women and children the previous December 22. One of the victims was a pregnant woman whose belly was opened with a machete and the baby hacked to pieces. The killers included graduates of the School of the Americas as well as Kaibeles, notorious students of CIA Special Forces who are known for such treatment of pregnant Mayan women in Guatemala. It seared my soul.

We met with many of the resisting communities. Over and over again, we heard the stories of women raped by their husbands, by paramilitaries and the Mexican Army. Workshops were being organized by the civilian support organizations to assist men in reclaiming authentic manhood. The scope of the rape problem was staggering. The nonviolent community of Las Abejas had taken a stand against all alcohol due to the violence it instigated among their own men. The corn alcohol had lost its ceremonial place and had become as tainted as the much stronger rum. These women were part of the same community targeted in the Acteal massacre.

Whenever we entered resistance communities, we had to go through Mexican Army road blocks where they took down all our passport information, took photos and videos before allowing us to go on. We could see young Guatemalan Mayan prostitutes in the compounds of the army. Many of the women of Chiapas have been forced into prostitution as their crops, homes and lives were destroyed. The raw relationship of rape, war and genocide screamed out in the quiet stories told to us by these lovely, tiny, strong women.

Yet, theirs is one of the most vital and powerful resistance movements on earth. The Zapatista’s Other Campaign has sent representatives all over Mexico to document the unheard voices of the most silenced and invisible ones. It is to take place for ten years and bring the voices back to be considered in the ongoing shaping of humane, participatory solution.

Over the past year, hundreds of thousands of Mexican people have been protesting and forming powerful encampments in Oaxaca to stand for the teachers’ strike and in Mexico City for Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador’s questionable loss of the presidential election to “Free Trade” aligned Felipe Calderon. One million turned out to support Lopez Obrador in the Zocalo of Mexico City July 16th.

The most downtrodden in Mexico are standing up in stark opposition to the elite, demanding decent pay for teachers, decent education for children, a living wage for workers, and the right to determine their future without the threat of globalized destruction of land, life, culture and dignity. And the voices of women are very much a part of this movement.

Let's build an anti-racist culture of resistance!

AR-15: Anti-racist white hip-hop

TTT Interview with Jus Rhyme of AR-15

How did AR-15 start? What is the musical and activist history of members and your circle of supporters?

The seeds of AR-15 were planted in 1998 when Raw Potential and I met in AmeriCorps in San Diego, CA. We were right out of high school and we were doing community service projects around the West Coast and Southwest U.S. as a way to earn money for college. A Filipino cat from Oakland, who was on our AmeriCorps team, taught us to freestyle rap to pass the time while we worked on a variety of community projects. So we began rapping together while we were literally serving the community. Raw and I went our own ways for about 4 years after that and we reconnected in Oakland in 2003 and formed the rap group that became AR-15.

During the 4 years apart, Raw honed his rap skills in the battle circuit in the Bay Area, CA and took some classes in college with an interest in Black Studies. I went to college at the University of Minnesota in the Twin Cities for Ethnic Studies and cut my teeth in hip-hop organizing, connecting rappers and activists in causes ranging from immigrants' rights, police brutality, welfare rights, and anti-war activism.

When we reconnected in Oakland in 2003 the convergence of rap and politics happened for us. I had been trained by the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond in anti-racist politics and Raw and I both went through the Challenging White Supremacy workshop in San Francisco supporting various racial justice initiatives in the Bay Area. These experiences focused our activism as rappers on anti-racism and support for racial justice work led by people of color, and generally social justice work led by people that experience social injustice.

In terms of the people that support our music nationally, their activist involvement varies. We meet people where they are at in terms of social change and social justice and welcome all new fans and friends that want to get down with a movement for justice.

How do you try to or succeed in engaging your fans and listeners, who may be attracted primarily by the energy or artistry of your work, into a dialogue about the content and ideas you express?

We try to make music that allows people to enter and enjoy it on a number of levels. Metaphors and similes are our best friends, and we use language to make multi-layered songs. One person might listen to our music and hear dope, gangsta music. Other people might hear a militant or even revolutionary message. It all depends. Our job is to create a musical space where that can happen. We don't force dialogue, we create the artistic and physical spaces where dialogue can happen. At the end of the day, it's really up to the people how far we take this, as artists and as a movement.

When we are on tour we partner with local, racial justice organizations led by people of color to speak at our shows and sit on a panel with us after the show for an audience Q&A. It's brief and not heavy-handed, and creates a space for dialogue. It also plugs audience members into supporting local racial justice work led by folks of color. We also donate 25% of every paid show to local and national racial justice work. Our panels and donations show two examples of what solidarity between white people and people of color against racism and for justice could look like.

I have done many benefits for Anti-Racist Action, even with explicitly political bands like Aztlan Underground, where most of the audience streams out during the breaks between groups, rather than listen to political speakers or even watching a video or slide presentation, or where speakers get heckled by the crowd. Have you had experiences like that? How do you deal with them?

If people come to one of our hip-hop shows, they're coming for music. So we're sensitive to that. We give them a good show. We do have speakers during our set sometimes, but they talk for 2, maybe 3 minutes max during. We've seen speakers heckled at our shows, and so we and the speakers keep it movin'. As we say, we've got bigger fish to fry. The panel at the end of our shows is where people that want a

clear social justice message will get it. And not everyone that comes to our shows stays for the panel. We don't feel like it's our job to make people listen. We do what we do and if we're doing our job right people will want to get down and build with us after the show, or follow up on our suggestions for getting involved in local work. We're real about the fact we are only one piece of a huge puzzle of social change work, and we can't do everything. That's what coalition work is for. It's like a sports team— everyone plays their own position, but we're still on the same team coordinating plays and strategizing together to win the game.

What mechanisms have you come up with for an on-going dialogue with listeners and fans, or for moving them from buying music or going to a show, which are more or less passive or receptive activities, into activism of their own, or even organizing?

Our obvious hope is that every person that buys a CD or comes to a show leaves ready to get down and do something. But that's just not how it goes. We reach the people that are ready for the message. But the cool thing is when we come back to a city a second time, or a fan checks out our press or web-site, they may think twice about getting active. We do much to shine the light on books, organizations, films, resources, and fans and away from AR-15. We tell people that they have what it takes to change their own communities for the better. And we also make ourselves available for support and guidance on that path.

In terms of our company, AR-15 Entertainment LLC, we run a street team that gives people a way to support our work and to make money for themselves at the same time. People interested should hit us up on our website: <http://www.AR15hiphop.com>. We use capitalism against itself in this way. Sure, some people wanna street team for us just to make cash, but if that's where they're at, cool. In the meantime, they're helping us spread anti-racist politics and getting money doing so. It's a for-profit strategy for social change. The right wing's doing it, why can't we? Like Talib Kweli said, we're "revolutionary entrepreneurs." And yo, who doesn't want to get paid making the world better? We'll have senator and congressman's kids running CD's to the Oval Office soon. Haha!

But, for real, we hire street teamers to sling CD's and sell tickets to shows in their hometown and they keep a percentage of their sales. They're learning business skills, but also organizing skills. The street team becomes a vehicle for mobilizing study groups, political activism, and conscious community on a local level. It is a tool that creates community around politics and it's effective because it satisfies people's basic needs— cash in pocket, food on the table, being able to pay rent.

You have probably heard criticisms of "cultural expropriation" when white people take up hip hop or rap, and have certainly been aware of how the music industry "bleached" other Black, Mexicano or Puerto Rican musical and cultural expressions to make them palatable to a white audience. On the other hand, many hip hop performers and recording artists today are finding the bulk of their audiences and of consumers -4- buying their



recordings are white. How do you see these issues, or deal with them? Do you address them directly in your music or your shows?

I remember I was in a class on rap poetry taught by Alexis Pate (author of *Amistad*, the Steven Spielberg flick) and there was a debate about white kids in hip-hop acting black. Alexis asked, "What would you rather they do—act white?" America's racist. We know that. White supremacy exists. Check. Now whether or not AR-15 is in the rap game or on TV (Ego Trip's "*The (White) Rapper Show*"), or in film ("*Mirrors of Privilege: Making Whiteness Visible*", World Trust, 2006), or in books ("*Other People's Property: A Shadow History of Hip-Hop in White America*," Bloomsbury Press, 2007), white people are going to be appropriating culture and getting privilege. We don't always know we're doing it, it's the way the system is designed.

So what do we do about it as white artists or white people? Do we say, "Screw it, everything's so racist! I'm done with America!?" Meanwhile we are still receiving white privilege and still appropriating, whether we mean to or not. Or do we deal with the contradictions, the messiness, the craziness and take a stand and get out there? AR-15 chooses to take a stand. Are we perfect? No. Are we part of the gentrification of rap? Yes. But we figure at the end of the day, we'd rather have white folks speaking truth to power and building solidarity with people of color while appropriating, then white folks ignoring racism, ignoring privilege and always cashing in at the expense of other people.

In terms of the whitewashing of rap, we prioritize working with other politically conscious artists of color, women, and queer artists as a way to use our privilege to balance out the music industry when and where we can. Ultimately, it's about building coalitions that make demands on the music industry. Hip-hop is an amazing art form, however, because its marketability actually relies on its blackness. Hip-hop pioneers talk about this as a lesson learned from blues, jazz, and rock-and-roll. As a way to help ensure the blackness of hip-hop, many early artists in rap formed their own record labels and became the middleman between artists and major labels. This system still operates today, and is a way for the big labels to have street credibility, as well as a way for the black community to maintain some control over hip-hop's face to the world.

For many white consumers, even, the music is not "real" if it's not black. We know this, and we also know that as white anti-racist artists we will most likely not be looking at a record deal with a major label anytime soon. But we work with the fact that there are a lot of white fans of hip-hop out there, and we reach them through the fact that we look like them AND we have street cred with communities of color because of our politics and track record in the community. We're showing white kids that there's another way to be down in hip-hop, and that street cred in hip-hop can come from racial justice work as well as from skills on the mic.

How do you assess the state of popular consciousness among white young people about white supremacy or white privilege?

It's not cool to be openly racist in most white communities today, but the understanding of white supremacy and white privilege as institutions and systems is lost to most whites, in our opinion. The fact that in hip-hop you're lame if you're racist

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All of Us or None

Women’s Liberation Key to Uprooting Racism and Overthrowing Imperialism

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

Around the world today, women are the principal creators of wealth, responsible according to some estimates of nearly 70% of all productive labor, paid as well as unpaid. But even more importantly, women are leading in struggles for physical security, cultural survival, environmental sustainability, and against war, colonialism and exploitation. At the same time, women are the targets of individual and collective violence, as well as of reactionary attacks on women’s autonomy, their control of their own bodies and reproductive capacities. At least in the US, women are the fastest growing group in terms of incarceration. Simultaneously, fascist forces of various stripes, both racial and religious, put themselves forward as defenders of womanhood or motherhood, and appeal to women themselves to join the fascist ranks.

Despite massive economic and social changes that tend towards freeing women from subordination, women’s oppression has in some ways deepened over the last decade because efforts to deal with women’s liberation and related issues of sexism, sex role oppression and homophobia have often fallen short of the mark. Girls growing up “post-feminism” have greater pressure to conform to highly sexualized stereotypes than at any time since the 1950s. Bourgeois feminists and liberals see the question of women’s rights and equality as one of reform, of access to “opportunity” and the pre-existing corridors and levers of power. Many doctrinaire Marxists and anarchists believe the liberation of women is a subsidiary issue, contingent on first doing away with private property relations in the sphere of production and distribution, or on abolishing the state. Many self-proclaimed radical feminists have failed to recognize, let alone overcome, contradictions among women based on nationality, class and other forms of privilege or accommodation to imperialism. In these regards, feminism in all its variants, and the broader “women’s movement,” suffer from the same drawbacks and errors that have plagued other efforts at human progress and liberation.

But it’s especially crucial for us to get it right this time, to go all the way, not to settle for half-measures and partial understandings in the sphere of women’s liberation. The price of failure is too high, and the centrality of the issues to a successful philosophy, strategy and practice of revolutionary social transformation is too great. A theory of social reality and history that does not adequately take into account women’s oppression and liberation is doomed to stumble around in the dark, incapable of either grasping the

real world or changing it. The example of past successes and current fertile experiments in resistance also make clear that the liberation of women and the leadership of women are integral to any possibility of revolutionary social, political and economic transformation. We need a movement that addresses, in a hopeful yet self-critical way, the real, material contradictions that exist between men and women, as well as among women, based on their positions within the hierarchies of imperialism, colonialism, capitalism and the system of white supremacy and privilege. Only in that way can we build on past successes and overcome past failures.

What are some hard won lessons of past social struggles, or of recent scientific research and analysis? Some can be summed up in slogans that have moved millions: Women hold up half the sky. The personal is political. Not the church, not the state - women will decide our fate. Where the broom does not reach, the dust will not vanish of itself. Wages for housework. End violence against women. Men against rape. Our Bodies, Ourselves. Midwifery, menstrual extraction, and grassroots women’s health promoters and practitioners.

Others are more complicated and nuanced and require a close examination of biology, history and sociology. Some speak to the very nature of humanity and our place within the biosphere. It is generally the case for most gendered organisms that the female IS the species. Chromosomally, men are part-women, sustained by evolution because two-gender reproduction favors the mutation and adaptation necessary for species survival. In terms of the development of primates and humans, the liberation of the female from estrus created the realities of sexual activity for its own pleasurable sake, and laid the basis for free will and free choice that are at the heart of human consciousness. At the same time, it created the basis for sexual violence and male domination, impossible when the female and her cycle control sexual activity and mate selection. Human liberation from the constraints and restraints of instinctual behavior is the ground on which human liberation through conscious, organized social behavior and a moral code must develop. The centrality of sexuality and reproduction to human behavior escapes many Marxists and anarchists, who are trapped in the conception that it’s productive labor which played the key role in the evolution from ape to “man,” as Engels termed it. But in fact, human life is and always will be organized in large part around a sexual economy, around the length of human gestation, the fragility of human offspring, and the necessity of a lengthy period of physical, mental and social inculcation and development of human young.

Misconceptions about the relative roles of hunting and gathering, and their degree of sexual assignment in the creation of a sexual

HARRIET TUBMAN: A WOMAN CALLED ‘GENERAL MOSES’

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She has been gone for almost a century, and still her name is on millions of lips; her memory sacred among those who love freedom. Her parents named her Araminta, the daughter of Black slaves in the Tidewater area of Maryland, perhaps in 1820 (or 1821 -- no one is sure). As a baby, the slaves shortened her fancy name into the nickname, “Minty.” History remembers her by her married name: Harriet Tubman, freedom fighter.

She began on the road to freedom as a child, for she wasn’t even 10 years old when she ran away from cruel slaveowners, people who used naked violence against babies and children to force them to do their will.

Harriet was a tender 5 years old, when she was forced to take care of a white baby, to keep house, to work day and night for others. She was all of 7 years old when she got caught eating some sugar, food that only white people were allowed to eat. Threatened with a beating, the girl fled, and running so fast that her little legs gave out, she fell into a hog slopping sow. Hunger forced her to return to the house of her ‘mistress’, where she was promptly and viciously flogged by the ‘master.’ This child no doubt learned an important lesson by the violence, but doubtless it wasn’t what the slaveowning class wanted her to learn. They wanted to instill the seed of terror into the child, so that she never thought of running away again. Instead, it appears she learned that if she ran, there would be no return.

She married a ‘free’ man, John Tubman, who was free in name, and in law, but hardly in mind. When she talked about freedom, he shouted at her to stop it. “You take off and I’ll tell the Master. I’ll tell the Master right quick,” he threatened. As she looked at her husband, a feeling of disbelief washed over her, “You don’t mean that.” But, in her guts, she knew. He *did* mean it.

Yet, she meant to be free. No doubt she learned another important lesson. Everybody can’t be trusted. She must be watchful, attentive, and observant. When the time came, she

left, walking through thick forests, over rivers, and over hills. She avoided open roads. She followed the North Star, and when she got to Pennsylvania (a so-called ‘free’ state), she noted:

“I had crossed the line. I was ‘free’: but there was no one to welcome me to the land of freedom. I was a stranger in a strange land; and my home, after all, was down in Maryland; because my father, my mother, my brothers, my sisters, and friends were there. But I was free and they should be free! I would make a home in the North and bring them there!”

She said it. She meant it. She did it. She returned repeatedly to the Tidewater, and carried folks off, with cleverness, courage, and determination. She returned to the plantation 2 years after her escape for John Tubman, but the ‘free Negro’ had remarried, and thinking himself free, didn’t want to leave Maryland! Still, this wouldn’t deter her from her sacred mission: freedom.

She carried a pistol, and once, while leading some 25 captives North, came within a hair’s breadth of using it. One of the men, bone-tired, hungry, and scared, decided that nothing was worth this scampering through the swamps. He refused to be persuaded to move on, until she moved close to him, and aiming the weapon at his head, said, “Move or die.” He moved. In several days they were in Canada. Harriet knew that a returned slave would be tortured until he told all he knew, thus endangering all who wanted to be free. To her, it was freedom or death. That simple.

She would later say, of her upbringing, and of slavery itself: “I grew up like a neglected weed -- ignorant of liberty, having no experience of it. I was not happy or contented: every time i saw a white man I was afraid of being carried away. I had two sisters carried away in a chain gang -- one of them left two children. We were always uneasy I think *slavery is the next thing to hell.*”

Her raids into the

division of labor and thus the beginnings of a class hierarchy are being cleared up by recent discoveries. For example, chimpanzees have been observed using tools, sharpened sticks, to kill and capture food, and it’s primarily the females who have been so observed. Notions that so called “primitive” peoples are unaware of the connection between sexual intercourse and reproduction, or the role of both genders in producing offspring, have generally been proven false. The great variety of social arrangements on the planet regarding the nature of the genders and their respective roles make clear the great flexibility and fluidity of human behavior, and leave open the question of how we are to organize ourselves in the future. What is the interplay between the individual and the social, between need and desire? Humans are capable of finding ways to live together that will create a sustainable future and allow for the fullest individual freedom and collective responsibility.

What we do know is that patterns of male domination, deeply embedded in the imperial models of so-called Western civilization, are in part responsible for the massively destructive social and environmental consequences of the current world order. We know that women, in numerous societies, are the slaves of slaves, with calamitous results for humanity and the planet itself. Women do the overwhelming majority of the world’s work, and are responsible for an ever-increasing share of the world’s production. But because such production is for profit, its “externalities” are destroying the air, the water, the soil and the web of life that sustains itself and the very atmosphere. There is no hope of reversing global warming without the fundamental transformation of this unequal division of labor and system of exploitation. Any accurate grasp of the real world proletariat in the 21st Century must begin with the recognition that it is predominantly female.

Questions of womanhood and sisterhood are also at the center of issues of colonialism and decolonization. Women continue to lead in the struggle against cultural and physical genocide and for self-determination. Women have led in resistance against the imperial war machine and the encroachment of militarism into every sphere of daily life, in the schools, at the border and in policing. Anti-racists and anti-fascists must recognize and enhance such leadership. At the same time, anti-racists must be involved in developing grassroots community self-defense efforts that provide an alternative to the fear-mongering efforts of fascists to portray themselves as the solution to sexual assault, violence against women, or alleged social decay and family disintegration. Men and women alike have a potential and a responsibility to fight rape, to fight for reproductive rights for all, and to create new forms of non-hierarchical social organization and political action to achieve liberation.

led to the freedom of literally hundreds of Black people -- including her own aged parents, Harriet and Benjamin Ross. It is thought her family originally came from the Ashanti people, a tribe which hails mostly from the West African coast. (The central region of Ashanti life would be modern-day Ghana.) Her life, from beginning to end, was one of resistance and struggle in freedom’s cause. There may have been 15 to 19 raids led by her into the South to free Black captives. In these raids, she liberated between 300 to 500 people.

Recruited to aid the Northern forces during the U.S. Civil War, Tubman organized and led the Combahee River raid in South Carolina, which netted some 800 slaves, and caused thousands of dollars damage to Southern installations. She reported with glee the sight of so many people escaping bondage. Tubman would later recall the scene:

“I never saw such a scene. We laughed and laughed and laughed. Here you’d see a woman with a pail on her head, rice-a-smoking in it just as she’d taken it from the fire, young one hanging on behind ... One woman brought two pigs, a white one and a black one; we took them all on board; named the white pig Beauregard (a Southern general), and the black one Jeff Davis (president of the Confederacy). Sometimes the women would come with twins hanging around their necks. It appears I never saw so many twins in my life; bags on their shoulders, baskets on their heads, and young ones lagging behind, all loaded [From Butch Lee, *Jailbreak Out of History: The Re-Biography of Harriet Tubman*] (Brooklyn, NY: Stoopsale Bks., 2000), p. 78]

Harriet Tubman left this life in 1913, living into her nineties.

Her name has come to mean freedom fighter. It is a holy name, high on the altar of freedom.

Sources: Lee, Butch. *Jailbreak Out of History: The Re-Biography of Harriet Tubman* (Brooklyn, NY: Stoopsale Bks., 2000). Petry, Ann, *Harriet Tubman, Conductor on the Underground Railroad* (NY: Harper Collins, 1955 [1983]; unpubl. sources].

AR-15 Continued from pg. 4

is an amazing starting point to politicize the next generation of white anti-racists. We capitalize on that fact. Many young white people’s favorite musical artist is black, their favorite movie star is black, their favorite sports star is black, and many white youth have black friends or other friends of color. Broadening the analysis for youth of all colors in terms of what systemic oppression is and what it looks like, and what social justice is and looks like is what our work involves. Making this process fun is the tough part, but the advent of multimedia like digital film and music can go a long way if properly harnessed by anti-racist and racial justice activists, artists, and creative-thinkers. We feel blessed to be doing what we do in this historical moment. It’s an exciting time to be an anti-racist!

The racist right appears to have a much more seamless integration of its ‘cultural’ activity with its political organizing strategy than is true among anti-racist forces. That is, white power bands and labels generally have had close organizational ties to white supremacist and/or Christian fascist organizations, funneling money into those efforts and attracting supporters. How do you see your relationship to membership-based anti-racist organizations and networks? How can we create a closer connection between cultural and political efforts against racism and white supremacy?

I think a big part of the “success story” of the racist right in using culture to put their message out there is that they have no qualms about using capitalism and money-making as a way to recruit and politicize. Because of the history of what money has done to poor people and people of color, the tendency on the left to shy away from business moves is understandable. However, the time, money, and access that many white people on the left have (whether they are honest about it or not) can play an important role in galvanizing some of this cultural power to put out a conscious message.

I’d like to see more anti-racist white people work to infiltrate the areas of music, entertainment, media, law, medicine, business, government, etc. and use their personal or professional contacts to help build the movement from inside the ivory towers, as well as from outside. This, I think is the charge to the next generation of white folks in the movement. Instead of shying away from privilege and access, I’d

like to see more white folks work to obtain privilege and access consciously and flip it through accountable relationships with racial justice organizations led by folks of color.

I’ve already mentioned that we donate 25% of our income to local and national racial justice work. I think galvanizing more money for anti-racist work in the white community has to come from white people doing grassroots fundraising in white communities (among family, friends, co-workers, and acquaintances). Integrating fundraising as part of the each one/teach one process of anti-racist culture is crucial. We can’t be afraid to ask for money for social justice work!

In terms of white anti-racist organizations, AR-15 works closely with the White Anti-racist Community Action Network (<http://www.wacan.org>) in New Jersey, the Alliance for White Anti-Racists Everywhere (<http://www.aware.revolt.org>) in LA, Y-STEP (YSTEPbayarea@gmail.com) in San Francisco, and the White Privilege Conference (<http://www.whiteprivilegeconference.com>) in Colorado Springs this year, and now Anti-Racist Action (hope this is the beginning of on-going work!) as a means of building a national white anti-racist coalition that is in lock step.

Creating a closer connection between cultural and political efforts against racism and white supremacy and for justice, I believe, is about staying in each other’s lives, reaching out, breaking bread. If you are a white anti-racist artist, are you connecting yourself to anti-racist and racial justice political work? If you are a white anti-racist activist, are you connecting yourself to anti-racist and racial justice cultural work? If not, why not? We need to become part of each other’s lives. We need each other. White anti-racists can learn much from people of color doing racial justice organizing, where integration of community, culture, and coalition is a basis of the work— many times as a means of survival! We as white anti-racists need to push ourselves to reach out and connect. AR-15 says, “Come get your hugs!” [smile]

Have you had to deal with attacks or threats from white power groups, either to your group or to shows you have appeared in?

We have had no organized resistance to our work, yet. We’re hoping for some. [smile] I guess that will be a sign we’re doing good work! We’ve received individual death threats and hate mail, some of which can be seen on the Internet as a response to my video submission to “The (White) Rapper Show.” Check out: <http://youtube.com/watch?v=nGIItc-ej9P8>. But we don’t

spend time and energy on the hate, though. We’ve got too many positive white folks and people of color who are feeling our message to connect with!

The white ‘pride’ group Woodpile has been seeking a following among white (and other) prisoners. How do you see AR-15 appealing to or reaching working class white kids in juvie, jail or prison?

Neither Raw Potential nor I have been incarcerated. We’ve played gigs in juvie halls and the youth were feeling us. Raw grew up on Section 8. I always had enough growing up. We’ve played for rural and working class audiences that were predominantly white and have received tremendous support. We play wherever people want us. We hope our work inspires more white anti-racists to take a stand and reach out to their own constituencies within the white community, whether their constituency is working class or youth in juvie, jail, or prison, or another community.

In terms of Woodpile, they actually are on an anti-racist trip and a lot of people have it twisted. Check their interview with MurderDog Magazine on the blog on their homepage: <http://www.myspace.com/woodpile>. They say, “There is going to be the people that don’t like what we are doing, promoting hardcore white boys without racism uniting with black dudes. For as many of them who have a problem with it, there will be just as many, if not more, who respect what is going down and see it as a positive movement.” They were signed by West Coast Mafia Records run by Sacramento-based rapper C-Bo, who has a lot of street cred in hip-hop, and most people assume would not sign a “white pride” group.

The name Woodpile actually refers to the prison term “wood” given to white dudes in prison who don’t affiliate with the Aryan Nation and who kick it with Black and Brown folk behind prison walls. Woodpile’s message is less explicitly anti-racist than ours, and as far as I know they don’t have a focus on social justice and community organizing. But obviously, any time white people get on the mic and spit about race (including us) people are going to talk.

Anti-Racist Action has had to learn some hard lessons about the persistence of male supremacy and other forms of oppression within the ranks of anti-racists, and struggles hard to connect anti-sexism and support for queer rights into our work. Criticisms of sexism within hip-hop have certainly been

extensive, profound and justified. How do you see such issues playing out in your music and the development of AR-15?

We see sexism, heterosexism, classism, and racism and other oppressions as interconnected, and so we connect our work against white supremacy with work against patriarchy, heterosexism and capitalism. As I said before we proactively choose to work with artists of color, women, and queer folk in order to be accountable to these politics. We also pay attention to the lyrics rappers are saying and have a pretty strict policy of not working with artists that spit degrading lyrics. Battling the system and battling people are two different things in our minds. Recruiting and paying street teamers who are poor people, women, people of color, or queer is also a priority for us. Their involvement in the company and as part of our work in local communities definitely helps guide AR-15 and ensures that as an entertainment company and rap group we are accountable, inclusive of all struggles against oppression, and seeking to unite rather than divide.

Any last words of wisdom, information, or questions you would like to raise with readers of Turning the Tide?

Turning the Tide readers should know that AR-15 stands for Anti-Racist Fifteen, fifteen principles that guide our rap group and company. These principles came out of our own mentorship by the Center for Third World Organizing (<http://www.ctwo.org>) in Oakland, CA and the Challenging White Supremacy workshop (<http://www.cwsworkshop.org>) in San Francisco, CA. The principles are explained in more depth on our website, but here they are in short:

- 1. Practice non-violence.
- 2. Learn anti-racist history.
- 3. Study legacies of resistance.
- 4. Research your family history.
- 5. Respect leadership of color.
- 6. Stand in solidarity.
- 7. Challenge oppression.
- 8. Listen actively.
- 9. Create anti-racist culture.
- 10. Act on your principles.
- 11-15. For future generations to define.

Also people should consider this an open invite to connect with us, come to a show, or join the street team. Let’s build an anti-racist culture of resistance! Check out: <http://www.AR15hiphop.com>

Peace,
Jus Rhyme, AR-15
ar15hiphop@hotmail.com

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Another International Women’s Day, another seventy-seven cents on the dollar Beyond Wage Disparities

By Susan Galleymore

It’s still true: for every American man earning \$1, a middle class, married American woman earns 77 cents – and many women of color earn less than that.¹ But such a quantitative view rarely indicates the day-to-day lived experience behind the numbers. And wage disparities between American men and women are meaningless in developing countries. Even in countries that have minimum wage regulations – such as South Africa – these are easily ignored. The desperate are forced to accept whatever they’re offered rather than stand on principle ... and go hungry. After my recent travels to South Africa, Iraq, Israel, and Palestine I can report that, on International Women’s Day 2007, overall opportunities for women in these countries have shriveled. In Johannesburg, Baghdad and West Bank villages even a quick look around shows women’s lives are more hazardous than ever -- and wage rates are only a small factor in the decline.

South Africa has one of the largest income inequalities in the world. The average income of the richest 20% of South African households, largely white, is 45 times more than the average income of the poorest 20% of households, largely black and African. The majority of this nation’s poor are rural African women whose incomes -- between R400 and R700 per month (\$1 = R7) -- derive mainly from pensions and remittances from relatives.² But the bleak picture for South African women doesn’t end there. This country holds the dubious honor of “rape capital of the world.” In 1999, one in three of the 4,000 women questioned by the non-governmental organization CIET Africa, said they had been raped in the past year. In a related survey conducted among 1,500 schoolchildren in the Soweto Township, a quarter of all the boys interviewed said that ““jackrolling” – vernacular for recreational gang rape - was “fun.” Rape in South Africa frequently culminates in death – by stabbing, by bludgeoning, by strangling, or by a combination of these – and disemboweling is a common coup de grâce. Babies as young as nine months are “jackrolled,” too, often by groups of adult men attempting to cure their HIV/AIDS via the mythical “sex with a virgin” prescription. In 2003, the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in South African adults was 21.5%. Over 5.3 of 44 million South Africans carry the virus; life expectancy for women is 41.2 years.

Up close and personal: Eleanor is a middle-aged, working class, Xhosa woman with two grown children. The end of Apartheid in 1994 made her life easier: the demise of Apartheid’s in-flux laws, for example, allowed her to work legally in Kwa-Zulu Natal where she’d spent her adult life hiding her ethnic origins so as to earn a living as a live-in domestic worker. Apartheid, however, had worked its poison on her children whose economic opportunities were stunted by a system that instilled a view of themselves as good only for menial labor. Eleanor’s son, Lucky, found crime paid better than the below minimum wage he earned as a gas station

attendant or working for tips as a parking lot attendant. His luck ran out, however, when a young woman he’d raped spotted him in the street and called the police. Lucky is currently awaiting trial in a local jail notorious for inmate-on-inmate rape and an excruciatingly high rate of HIV/AIDS transmission. Eleanor intuitively understands Lucky’s future but feels she can’t do anything about it: Apartheid may be gone but women’s view of the state as omnipotent lives on....

Iraq: Since the United State and its coerced “coalition of the willing” invaded Iraq in March 2003 only the most intrepid statisticians collect data in that unfortunate country... and that data presents a ghastly view. Johns Hopkins researchers estimate that more than a half-million Iraqis have died as a result of the U.S.-led invasion and its bloody aftermath. Researchers for the online edition of a leading British medical journal, The Lancet, estimated that 654,000 more Iraqis died of various causes after the invasion than would have died in a comparable period before. About 600,000 of those deaths are attributed to acts of violence, with gunshots emerging as the leading cause of death (56 percent of the total). Air strikes, car bombs and other explosions each accounted for 13 percent to 14 percent. Almost 60 percent of the deaths were among males 15 to 44. “To put these numbers in context, deaths are occurring in Iraq now at a rate more than three times that from before the invasion of March 2003. In this conflict, like all other recent conflicts, it’s the population that bears the consequences,” said Dr. Gilbert Burnham, lead author and co-director of the Center for Refugee and Disaster Response at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

Up close and personal: Anwar Jeward’s husband, son, and two daughters were shot to death when a U.S. patrol opened fire on the family car. Today Anwar lives in her brother’s home with her surviving daughter, Abir, and Hassan, the son with whom she was pregnant when the shooting occurred. With marriage one of the few

options for some sort of independence and respect for women with Anwar’s traditional background, as an over-35-year-old single mother and a widow, her chance at a second marriage is about zero...even if enough marriageable men existed in Iraq. Between half a million and 1.5 million people died in the eight-year war between Iraq and Iran and, with the death toll in current war, Iraqi men are a dwindling portion of the population. So Anwar will live in her brother’s home and Abir and Hassan will not even benefit from the social programs that Saddam Hussein offered during his tenure as the U.S.-defined and supported “Butcher of Baghdad.” Those programs – free education, a decent and cost-effective national medical plan, and enlightened laws and programs to up-lift Iraqi women and their children -- disappeared with Saddam and the ascendancy of U.S. privatization schemes. Prior to the sanctions imposed upon Iraq during the 1990s, women’s salaries had been among the highest in the Arab world. But the fundamentalism and sectarianism generated by the US occupation have dramatically worsened women’s situations economically and socially.

Israel and the Occupied Territories are so closely intertwined in the politics of pain that it is difficult to present one without the other. Women in these regions face major differences in access to resources that go far beyond wage disparity. Israeli/Palestinian unemployment rates -- respectively 8.6% to 20.3% in 2006 -- indicate that about 79% of Palestinians are employed. These percentages include Palestinians engaged in agricultural work but don’t indicate that many Palestinians farmers and agricultural workers are *not working*. Instead, they are cut off from their workplaces – orchards and fields – by the 30-foot tall concrete wall or wire fence that cuts farmers off from their agricultural lands. Israelis claim the wall is a vital “security barrier” that prevents suicide bombers from entering their towns. More to the point, though, is that just about every action that alleviates an Israeli woman’s daily chores – driving a car or catching a bus or taxi, taking a child to a medical facility, assuming relative safety for a child returning home after school – aggravates a Palestinian woman’s chores. Some roads in the West Bank, for example, are prohibited to Palestinian cars, buses, and taxis so these travelers are forced miles out of their way to cover short distances.

Up close and personal: Israeli Dorothy and Palestinian Amina present two sides of the same contradictory coin. Dorothy, born in the U.S., went on *Aliyah*³ to Israel in her teens when the state of Israel was

actively encouraging Americans to settle in that land. (Jews from all over the world are still encouraged to immigrate and settle -- despite the hardship this brings to indigenous people.) Dorothy married a first generation Israeli and brought up her children there. She lives a privileged middle-class life in a safe, north Tel Aviv suburb and is active in anti-militarism groups although her grandchildren will almost certainly serve in the Israeli military -- likely in the Occupied Territories where indigenous Palestinian Amina has her home. Ironically, while Amina has ancient roots in Palestine she is barred from accessing much of her ancestral land and its resources available to Dorothy and her family. Amina’s three-year-old daughter, Lena, suffers from kidney disease and requires regular dialysis. Dorothy drives on roads closed to Palestinians when she escorts Amina to hospital when Lena’s kidney’s failed. But, when Dorothy cannot smooth Amina and Lena’s way over closed roads, or through Israeli check points, or hospital security systems, Amina and Lena are on their own. Then Amina must carry the child in her arms through the checkpoints where Israeli soldiers arbitrarily refuse to allow her to carry the medical equipment the child requires -- or even the right to travel to a hospital at all. After such refusals, Amina has, alone, in the dark, and in the rain, carried Lena over rock-strewn mountains for emergency medical care in Palestinian hospitals. Without Dorothy, getting the child to an Israeli hospital under these conditions would be impossible. Amina said, “Please understand that most Palestinian women do not have an Israeli ally such as Dorothy to rely on for help. Most Palestinians families struggle against far greater obstacles than I do....”

It is a tough to say whether women are struggling more in 2007 than we were on March 8, 1908, when 15,000 women marched through New York City demanding shorter workdays, better pay and voting rights and inspired IWD. But, it is significant that the comparison can even be made almost one hundred years later -- and that women – and their families – are *still* at risk. Today, the risk is *still* man-made – exploitation and war are *still* primary culprits – but as our climates change and our planet’s health declines, wage disparities may come to be seen as small potatoes. It is time, *now*, to stand up for women’s rights – and for the planet’s health.

(Endnotes)

¹ Institute for Women’s Policy Research released on April 20, 2004. <http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpswom2003.pdf>

² Gender Inequality. [Http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Urgent_Action/apic_82299.html](http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Urgent_Action/apic_82299.html)

³ *Aliyah* describes the migration of Jews from the Diaspora to Israel.

Unity Mission to Free the 8



Former Black Panthers target of new COINTELPRO attack: Hank Jones, the late John Bowman, Ray Boudreaux, Harold Taylor and Richard Brown. Survivors of torture-based political prosecution were indicted on 35-year old charges. Help free them!

Stop the War Against the Black Liberation Movement!

In a political case based on the Bush strategy to legitimize torture of “enemy combatants” in the “War on Terror,” the FBI and CA police recently arrested 8 elders, former Black Panthers, charging them with murder and an alleged conspiracy to kill cops 35 years ago. ***The truth is there was a real conspiracy by the cops and FBI to kill Black Panthers!*** Known as COINTELPRO, this clandestine ‘dirty war’ was carried out inside the US through assassination, torture, frame-ups, mass arrests and military-style assaults against the Panthers, like here in LA

on 41st & Central, still on the logo of LAPD’s SWAT team. Now, as the Black liberation movement is pushing the Democratic majority in Congress to reopen hearings into COINTELPRO, prosecutors trot out a totally discredited case. It was already thrown out of court once because it’s based on the documented torture of the Panthers carried out by the New Orleans police under the supervision of the San Francisco police and federal authorities. Several of the defendants were themselves tortured, and the only testimony against them comes from another torture victim, who told the police what they wanted to hear.

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TURNING THE TIDE

Women Hold Up Half the Sky! Free Our Sisters, Free Ourselves!

*Volume 20 Number 2 *ISSN 1082-6491* March-April 2007*

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