

Journal of Anti-Racist Action, Research & Education
TURNING THE TIDE

The People United Will Never be Defeated!

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*20th anniversary year of ARA-LA/PART
20th year of publication of Turning the Tide
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Joint Statement from the San Francisco Eight

We, the San Francisco 8, would like to send this joint statement extending our heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to all our friends and supporters. As many of you know, this COINTELPRO persecution has been on-going for nearly 36 years. However, in the last few years, in accord with the implementation of the Patriot Act, state and federal authorities initiated plans to stifle political dissent, particularly targeting young activists. Similarly, COINTELPRO's objective was to "... expose, disrupt, misdirect, discredit, or otherwise neutralize the activities of Black nationalist, hate type organizations and groupings, their leadership, spokesmen, membership, and supporters, and to counter their propensity for violence and civil disorder ..." (COINTELPRO memo of August 25, 1967).

The FBI not only targeted the Black Panther Party, but according to this COINTELPRO memo: "Intensified attention under this program should be afforded to the activities of such groups as the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, Revolutionary Action Movement, the Deacons for Defense and Justice, Congress of Racial Equality, and the Nation of Islam. Particular emphasis should be given to extremists who direct the activities and policies of revolutionary or militant groups such as Stokely Carmichael, H. "Rap" Brown, Elijah Muhammad, and Maxwell Stanford." By March 4, 1968, COINTELPRO was in full operation, leading to directing its full attention to the Black Panther Party to prohibit the BPP from developing durable long-term political and organizational relationships with various segments of the Black community.

This case represents the continuation of that COINTELPRO objective, to further indicate how the government will persecute today's activists. The government is seeking to rewrite the history of struggle as exemplified by the BPP, venomously trying to define that legacy of struggle as a "terrorist" movement.

support all oppressed peoples fighting against colonialism and imperialism at that time.

This case evolves out of a history of political struggle in this country, and it is our duty to fulfill that mission by expressing what happened then, and COINTELPRO's negative impact on today's social movements. Therefore, while we engage in a legal battle in the courtroom, it is imperative we urge our friends and supporters to extend the political front in the various communities. We must reach out to the various street organizations and youth groups, the animal and earth liberation groups, women's rights and LGBT forums, the immigration rights struggles, and the many ethnic communities who are struggling for a better life in this country.

Hence, the course of the overall struggle to win the release of the San Francisco 8 requires a broad political determination, reaching beyond the important legal issues of the case. For example, the question of torture, COINTELPRO, and matters of reconciliation are essential to this case. Therefore, a successful national campaign in support of the SF8 requires friends and supporters to achieve the following objectives:

1. Anti-Torture Legislation:

In 1909, the Niagara Movement evolved into the NAACP led by W.E.B. Dubois. The principal platform of the NAACP at that time was a struggle to forge an anti-lynching movement. Today, torture in its many forms has become a scourge in America: there is the inhumane use of restraint chairs in jails and prisons, an especially despicable device reminiscent of medieval torture mechanisms; there has been an increase in use of the taser as a weapon to induce confessions and control prisoners, resulting in many deaths, another inhumane torture device. In the case of the SF8, law enforcement officers employed similar torture techniques, including those used in Vietnam and in Abu Ghraib by U.S. military personnel. The use of torture permeates all facets of the so-called "criminal justice system."

Obviously, like the old anti-lynching platform of the NAACP, the San Francisco 8 call for a national campaign demanding anti-torture legislation on local levels (city councils and state legislatures). The SF8 hold that any form of interrogation that employs the use of water boarding, simulated drowning techniques, cattle prods, tasers, restraint chairs, physical beatings, sensory and sleep deprivation, and psychological coercion must be deemed inhumane and criminal. Therefore, the San Francisco 8 call for all progressive and peace loving people to join in a national campaign on city, state and congressional levels for proclamations and legislation outlawing all forms of torture.

2. Reopen COINTELPRO Hearings:

It is well known that the FBI targeted the Black Panther Party for annihilation under the secret counter-intelligence program (COINTELPRO). The FBI COINTELPRO effort resulted in the assassination, criminalization, vilification, and the splitting of the BPP leading to its destruction, with many BPP members today languishing in prisons. The FBI COINTELPRO actions worked in alliance with police departments across the country, and today, the Patriot Act has legalized much of what were illegal COINTELPRO practices. In 1974, the Senate Church Committee investigating the illegal FBI COINTELPRO activities declared such practices unconstitutional. However, the

We vehemently reject that labeling, as the government attempts to characterize the San Francisco 8 as "terrorists," "criminals," and "wanton killers." They will never say the SF8 were political activists and progressive civil/human rights organizers. They will never say they sought to relieve the community of all forms of state sponsored terrorism that is often found in Black, Asian and Latino communities today. They will never admit to the unconstitutional practices of the FBI COINTELPRO activities, despite the 1974 Senate Church Committee findings condemning those practices. Furthermore, they will never seek to establish remedies for those who are victims of the illegal FBI and local police actions under COINTELPRO, and now under the Patriot Act, if we don't demand they do so.

It is with this understanding the SF8 are issuing this joint statement, calling for friends and supporters to organize a national determination to ensure our victory. Ours will be a victory against fear and state terrorism; it will be a defeat against state torture tactics, threats and coercion.

This case and our call for action will teach today's activists what to expect from the state in its efforts to suppress dissent and protest of government repression. Indeed, this task will forward a broader understanding of what happened in the Movement of the 60s and 70s, and how COINTELPRO disrupted and destroyed the most viable Black political party that emerged out of the civil rights movement. Ultimately, what is here proposed will tell of a youth movement and how the government sought to undermine and destroy it. The proposal will expose how the government seeks to retaliate because those youth (who are now Elders) did in fact challenge the system of racist oppression. They not only challenged oppressive conditions in our collective communities, but also worked to

Senate Church Committee failed to create remedies for those who suffered from the unconstitutional practices of the FBI and police departments.

Subject to that reality, the San Francisco 8 hereby call for a national movement for the reopening of COINTELPRO hearings. We, the SF8, urge friends and supporters to phone/fax/write to John Conyers, Chair of the Judiciary Committee in Congress, and appeal for him to conduct public hearings on why victims of COINTELPRO languish in prison over 30 years after it was declared unconstitutional. We, the SF8, ask friends and supporters to contact your congressional representative, Congressional Black Caucus members and other elected officials urging them to enable John Conyers to reopen COINTELPRO hearings.

3. Truth and Reconciliation Commission:

At the conclusion of hostilities in the struggle to end apartheid in South Africa, many progressive forces took a path to resolve potential antagonisms subject to racial, socioeconomic and political strife during the decades of apartheid. That path led to the creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, principally led by the Honorable Bishop Desmond Tutu.

In the United States, people of Afrikan descent suffered the trauma of chattel slavery, Black Codes, Jim Crow segregation laws, political repression and state terrorism under the auspices of COINTELPRO. However, unlike South Africa, at no time has there been a national determination to resolve political, social or economic antagonisms born out of centuries/decades of racial strife. In recent years, as a result of the reparations movement,

some corporations, cities and states have issued apologies for having been involved in the Atlantic slave trade. Despite these apologies, the systemic inequities prevail with devastating consequences on every vestige of life confronting the majority of people of Afrikan descent in America.

The San Francisco 8 understand that these historic dynamics perpetuate social-cultural determinants that inhibit the necessary psychological inducements towards self-reliance and self-determination. Therefore, we are calling for progressive peoples to open dialogue and begin the process towards organizing a national Truth and Reconciliation Commission to address these inequities. We believe such a Commission could serve as a catalyst to forge substantial resolutions to heal America's racial trauma.

In conclusion, it is these three areas of concern we jointly agree will empower a national campaign to virtually expose the negative impact of both COINTELPRO and the Patriot Act. We call for all progressive peoples in support of the San Francisco 8 and all U.S. political prisoners to find the means to organize committees and coalitions to implement this proposal on local and national levels.

Again, we, the San Francisco 8, extend our heartfelt appreciation for your solidarity and support. Let us, together, build a sustainable and durable initiative that redresses civil and human rights violations, as we organize to win the freedom of the San Francisco 8.

Free All U.S. Political Prisoners!
--The San Francisco 8



Profiles & Contact Information of the San Francisco 8 Write to them!

Herman Bell, 59, of Mississippi, a political prisoner since 1973. Cointelpro's "pattern of manipulation and lies, continuing into the present, indicates something more than the ordinary corruption and racism of everyday law enforcement. It can be understood only in terms of the power of the political movement that [we] were part of, and the intensity of the government's efforts to destroy that movement and to disillusion and intimidate future generations of young activists." Write to him - 2318931, 850 Bryant Street, San Francisco CA 94103.

Ray Boudreaux, 64, of Altadena. "Actually for the last 25 years I've lived a pretty peaceful and quiet life. My politics are still the same. It's just that I'm not active. People come to me sometimes as a peace-maker. And all of that has to do with all of my experience." Write to him - 2301300, 850 Bryant Street, San Francisco CA 94103.

Richard Brown, 65, of San Francisco. "For the past six years I have been a Community Court Judge Arbitrator working with the San Francisco District Attorney's office. We place a lot of emphasis on restorative justice, so most of the community service done will be done in our own community where the offender can give back to the community." Write to him - 2300819, 850 Bryant Street, San Francisco CA 94103.

Henry W. (Hank) Jones, 70, of Altadena. "I [have lived] under the constant threat of another ... incarceration. In essence I have been robbed of peace of mind, life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. I am therefore compelled to resist these tactics and inform the public of my recent experience, feeling that something similar could happen to anyone given the climate of fear, paranoia, and abuse of authority that is rampant in our

country today." Write to him - 2301301, 425 Seventh St, San Francisco CA 94103.

Jalil Muntaqim (Anthony Bottom), 55, of San Francisco, a political prisoner in New York since 1978. "The United States does not recognize the existence of political prisoners. To do so would give credence to the fact of the level of repression and oppression, and have to recognize the fact that people resist racist oppression in the United States, and therefore, legitimize the existence of not only the individuals who are incarcerated or have been captured, but also legitimize those movements of which they are a part." Write to him - 2311826, 850 Bryant Street, San Francisco CA 94103.

Richard O'Neal, 58, has worked for the City of San Francisco for 25 years, most recently at the Southeast Community Center in Bay View. "People who work there said they were stunned by his arrest, recalling him as a kind and gentle man who always had a smile on his face and would stay late to fix lights or other things." (SF Chronicle) The dean of the campus noted, "He is a trusted employee who would do anything to help us...He would take the shirt off his back to try to help you." Richard has been charged with "conspiracy." 58, has worked for the City of San Francisco for 25 years, most recently at the Southeast Community Center in Bay View. "People who work there said they were stunned by his arrest, recalling him as a kind and gentle man who always had a smile on his face and would stay late to fix lights or other things." (SF Chronicle) The dean of the campus noted, "He is a trusted employee who would do anything to help us...He would take the shirt off his back to try to help you." Richard has been charged with "conspiracy." Write to him - 2300818, 850 Bryant Street, San Francisco CA 94103.

Harold Taylor, 58, of Panama City. "In 1971, two brothers and I were set up by the FBI. We didn't learn about COINTELPRO until years later. In 1973 I was arrested in New Orleans and was beaten and tortured for several days. In 2003 the detectives that were responsible for my torture came to my house to try and question me. I have not been the same since." Write to him - 2305584, 850 Bryant Street, San Francisco, CA 94103.

Francisco Torres, 58, of New York City. Cisco born in Puerto Rico and raised in this country. He is a Vietnam Veteran who fought for the grievances of Black and Latino soldiers upon his return to the states. A former Black Panther, he has been a community activist since his discharge from the military in 1969. Write to him - 2307534, 850 Bryant Street, San Francisco, CA 94103.

Please support these brothers by sending a donation. Make checks payable to CDHR/Agape and mail to the address below or donate on line:

http://www.cdhrsupport.org/what_to_do.html#donate

Committee for the Defense of Human Rights (CDHR)
PO Box 90221
Pasadena, CA 91109
(415) 226-1120
Freethesf8@riseup.net

To join the L.A. area campaign to Free the Eight and all political prisoners, based on self-determination and revolutionary solidarity, contact:

Unity Mission to Free the SF8
PO Box 8297
Los Angeles CA 90008

Black Community tells Minutemen to Go Home

by Leslie Radford
leslie@radiojustice.net

More than 300 Crenshaw District residents joined 200 migrant rights' supporters and linked arms to keep the minutemen out of Leimert Park, in the heart of Black Los Angeles on June 24. Anti-minutemen protestors, called out by the Mayday Defense Committee and Unión del Barrio, linked arms across the 43rd Place entrance to Leimert Park three lines deep to defend the park against the minutemen. Across the street, "Choose Black America," a front group for the anti-immigrant march sponsors, Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), and Save Our State, a minuteman spin-off, fretted and stewed. The LAPD, obviously sensing the determination of the people and reeling from the public outcry against their violence in MacArthur Park last month, kept the groups apart, eventually moving cruisers in front of the entrance to prevent a minuteman incursion, and refused the minuteman permission to enter the park.

By 1:00 p.m. CBA had mustered its marchers and stepped onto the street at Crenshaw and Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevards to begin their parade down this major artery through the historically African-American neighborhood to Leimert Park, the public platform for Los Angeles Black voices and the center of Black Los Angeles culture. They put together a showing of about 85, 65 African-Americans, twenty white minutemen, and one or two Mexican-Americans. Save Our State has undergone serious internal upheavals and splits because of its support of former self-proclaimed homeless leader Ted Hayes, a pro-police Black republican who now chairs CBA.

As the minutemen assembled on the southwest corner, the counter-protestors, on the southeast corner, shouted at them, 'Minutemen, KKK, racists out of South LA!' The LAPD allowed the swelling crowd of counter-protestors, a mixed Brown, Black, and white group led down Crenshaw by the Black Riders Liberation Party, to spill into the street as they marched fifteen feet away from CBA. Counter-demonstrators proclaimed their support for a community celebration of Juneteenth (anniversary of Black Texans learning of the Emancipation Proclamation) and carried a banner supporting "Reparations! Legalization! Stop the War!" CBA and the minuteman rode and walked beside a flatbed float representing a slavers' ship decked out with signs calling for reparations. CBA supporters held signs for another FAIR front group, NumbersUSA. The white minutemen brought up the rear, saying nothing as the group up front chanted, 'Choose--choose--choose Black America.' They were drowned out, even across the street, by the counterprotestors calling out 'Asesinos!' and 'Down with the Klan, down with the minutemen.'

One Black activist explained, 'They're trying to separate and divide. Ted Hayes is brainwashed. The minutemen will turn their back on him when they're finished with him.' Residents along the march route were heard complaining that the Klan had shut down the buses on Crenshaw, as they drifted off to find alternate routes.

As we reached the park, the cops announced that we were to be penned on the east side of the park. The anger had mounted as we marched, and the call went out when we found ourselves between the park and the minutemen: don't let them in the park. The first arrivals took international flags into the park and stood at the gates, but the police had stopped CBA and the minutemen on the west side of the Crenshaw. The



counter-protestors repositioned themselves across the east sidewalk entrance between the cop cruisers. People from the community, grandmotherly types, young men, shop owners, employees, with quiet and clear fierceness, were pouring through the park and coming north across 43rd Street to the sidewalk. Then the call was 'lock down!' Three lines of people joined arms across the thirty-foot open space between the cop cars at the entrance, discussed how to handle police batons, and determined that the minutemen would not cross. The Aztec danzantes protected the people with ritual dances and guarded the southeast corner of 43rd Street and Crenshaw. The Black Riders alternated between patrolling the other entrances to the park and standing at the front of the defense line. A participant murmured, 'They're using Black Nationalism. I didn't know Black Nationalism sided with the Klan.' Then the triumphant cry: 'Whose streets? Our streets! People united will never be divided!' The police stretched their yellow tape around the CBA and the minutemen, penning them in across the street, and told them that they wouldn't be going into the park today. The counterprotestors roared, 'Leimert, MacArthur, New Orleans: Smash the racist war machine!' and Black and Brown allies called out, 'We are not the minority--we are the majority!'

At 3:00, the cops forced the CBA and SOS onto the west sidewalk, surrounded them, and offered them the choice of leaving or arrest. Hayes and five of his followers stepped into the street in a last-ditch, staged arrest so Hayes, as one observer put it, would 'earn his pay.' And the media ran to film Hayes being escorted into a police van. They were taken to a substation and released.

In a protest in some ways reminiscent of Baldwin Park's first encounter with the minutemen, the Leimert Park defenders had built community unity, and turned hate and divisiveness out of their public space.

PART'S PERSPECTIVE:

WHY DO WE HAVE NO TEETH? HOW CAN WE GET SOME?

by Michael Novick, *Anti-Racist Action-LA/People Against Racist Terror (ARA-LA/PART)* workers' rights May Day rally, firing "less-lethal" weapons at families, elders, children, and journalists covering the event.) Not to mention

Let's look at three recent setbacks or defeats for popular forces, that some (who should know better) professed to be shocked by.

1) Congress, controlled by the "opposition" Democrats, approved -- with no strings attached, no timetable for withdrawal, and no "quid pro quo" (nothing in return from Bush for caving in) -- a massive funding bill for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The main "benchmark" mentioned was Iraqi agreement to privatization (and thus US control) of their oil resources.

2) Democrats in California, in a party-dictated vote, approved a bill calling for the construction more than 50,000 more prison "beds" -- read, cages -- at both the state prison and county jail level. Again, no debate, no discussion, no evident "deal," not a single dissenting vote in the entire Assembly, and only a handful of state senators who dared to vote 'no.' This will not reduced overcrowding, as alleged. It will simply add 50,000+ prisoners to the state's massive system of incarceration (meaning there will be more arrests in every jurisdiction to fill the "beds").

3) The Los Angeles Police Commission unanimously approved an unprecedented second 5-year term for LAPD Chief William Bratton despite the egregious violation of human rights by the LAPD only weeks before. (The cops had, in premeditated fashion, attacked a peaceful immigrant

workers' rights May Day rally, firing "less-lethal" weapons at families, elders, children, and journalists covering the event.) Not to mention Bratton's policy of sweeps of the homeless and plans for a major expansion of the LAPD. Just as more cells means more prisoners, more cops = more deaths.

The list could go on, and need not be particular to the city of Los Angeles, the state of California, or the U.S. government. But these three recent cases will serve to indicate the point. Even as a defensive movement, responding to the policy initiatives of the state and the right, we are toothless. At least on a legislative level, nobody fears our bite.

Even on a national level, the state digested the impact of the enormous outpouring of immigrant protesters last year. The agenda being set for "comprehensive immigration reform" is basically being driven by George Bush, and forces to his right, based around even more punitive and repressive "border enforcement" and workplace raids, business-friendly immigration visas and "guest worker" provisions. Its restrictive and expensive "path to legalization" will leave many without documents. If the bill passes, it will be Bush's victory. If it is defeated, it will be the anti-immigrant, anti-Mexican right, and not the pro-immigrant groups, that will have sunk it.

What accounts for this toothlessness? How can we overcome it?

Strategically, the empire is deathly afraid of the people it exploits, oppresses and colonizes, whether inside or outside the current borders. But tactically, it has no fear of dealing with us by enacting further militarization, further criminalization, further repression.

WHY DO WE HAVE NO TEETH?

First of all, we have no sense of our own strength. We are always in defensive posture, seeking to limit giveaways, takeaways and cuts by going hat in hand to our "friends" in the Democratic Party. Is it finally clear that we have no significant friends on either side of the aisle, and whoever controls the state house or the White House? We have been cowed by the strength, wealth and power of the system. In fact, the rulers are quite clear that all the system's wealth comes from the people and land it exploits, and that all their ruling power comes from the people they colonize and dominate. That's people around the world, but it includes us. Yet we have no sense of our own collective strength and creative power.

Second, we are not even fighting yesterday's battles or trying to win the last war. We have not studied or learned the lessons of previous generations of struggle, what we were able to win when there was a global revolutionary offensive, and how we lost when the Empire was able to exploit our weaknesses and go on a strategic counter-offensive.

Thus, those weaknesses -- racism, sexism, elitism, dogmatism, sectarianism, internalized oppression, neo-colonialism -- continue to plague and divide us.

Third, we in the U.S. who seek to end this system of exploitation and colonialism have little or no fighting capacity. Every other significant social force -- the state, the right, the corporations, the criminal element ranging from the mafia to the street organizations, the fundamentalists whether Christian, Jewish or Islamist -- is armed. Yet the left persists in a self-destructive pacifism, based on the illusion that potential control of the imperial state lies within its grasp if it only amasses an electoral majority.

HOW CAN WE GET SOME TEETH?

We need to recognize that the Empire is in crisis and overextended politically, economically and militarily. The repressive measures they are taking now are based on their understanding of their extreme vulnerability. Although globalization has extended the Empire, allowing it to carry out projects such as gentrification in many domestic locales, it has also heightened and intensified its contradictions.

The US military, as well-endowed as the rest of the world's armed forces combined, has been taxed beyond its capacity trying to fight in Iraq and Afghanistan. Its 137 bases stretch it thin. Thirty-five percent of the world's resources, 25% of its prisoners, and 66% of its savings are required to sustain the unsustainable American Way of Life. What if serious revolutionary struggle erupts in Mexico? We must unify in solidarity with the global resistance of colonized people, including inside US borders.

Second, we need to an assertive, proactive strategy for the world we want to build and the way we want to live, none of which could or will be granted by the powers-that-be because it presupposes their extinction. We must recognize there is an irreconcilable contradiction between a future for our children and the planetary eco-system and the continued rule of imperialism, colonialism and white supremacy.

We must cast off the illusions that bind us to our exploiters and oppressors, whether through white supremacy or neo-colonialism. The left will not take over and run the Empire. Liberation for all will only come through decolonization.

Finally, we need to begin to develop the ability to defend our communities and to make the Empire pay a price for its attacks. This does not mean to stop public organizing, community-building, education or agitation. But it means we need to make efforts to build beyond the eyes and ears of the state. It means we need to develop intelligence gathering capabilities about the strategies, tactics, strengths and weaknesses of the state, the corporations, and the right.

The horizontal rebelliousness of Latin America can be instructive in this regard. But we need to find ways to erode the armed power bases of the state, whether among the poverty-draft military, the armed anti-statist right, or the unconscious criminal element of colonized communities and open the possibility of turning those guns around. And that will take a nucleus of our own to attract and incorporate them to.

A Personal Message from the Editor, Michael Novick

As I was working on this issue of *Turning the Tide*, and preparing to go to the I work on the Jericho Amnesty Coalition to Free All Political Prisoners, US Social Forum in Atlanta, I was struck with a painful attack of shingles. It's which recently helped launched the Unity Mission to Free the Eight. the adult onset of the virus that causes chicken pox. My doc told me it often I moderate the e-list "Stop Police Abuse Now!" I do material aid and strikes when you're run-down or over-stressed, and she prescribed rest, pain solidarity work with the Black Riders Liberation Party. pills and an anti-viral.

In retrospect, it seems I've had a number of attacks over the years, undiagnosed because the sharp nerve pains weren't accompanied by the feverish rash I have on the way. Something had to give and it was me. It's clear I can't continue as I have been. I'll be cutting back in every area. *TTT* may go back to quarterly publication. I need to get more people involved in what has been a one-man band.

In addition to ARA and *Turning the Tide*, I have a full-time job as a schoolteacher, where I was also elected as union rep for my school and have served on several committees and the House of Reps of the teachers union. I am involved at Pacifica radio station KPFK, where I chair the elected Program Council and volunteered to edit a station folio.

I also happen to be 60 years old, married, with two grandkids and a third

I hope readers, particularly the prisoners for whom above all *TTT* has been kept afloat all these years will understand the necessity of these adjustments.

Peace, and Power to the People!
--Michael Novick

Hip-Hop Owes Women An Apology

By Chuck "Jigsaw" Creekmur

APOLOGY:

a-pol·o-gy (-p_l' -j_) pronunciation

1. An acknowledgment expressing regret or asking pardon for a fault or offense.

An apology can mean so many different things for people, both the giver and recipient(s).

So, I've been thinking a bit.

I believe it's high time that Hip-Hop offered an apology to its women, in particular the females of color.

Here we are in the year 2007, a pivotal year for our culture. Music sales are down while criticism of Hip-Hop is up. The culture is under attack, at a creative crossroads and it appears people are acting crazier every step of the way. We have outright, bold misogyny and rampant sexism in our Hip-Hop culture as if it were indigenous to our people. We have our music, which can barely find a commercially viable female rapper. Meanwhile, a host of talented female emcees cannot get a fair shake even

Now, think about this situation in terms of food.

When you eat your typical fast food for an extended period of time, you experience a number of adverse affects. Initially, you might simply gain weight, something remedied with exercise and change in dietary habits. However, if you continue to ingest the bad food, you will begin to suffer ailments that are much more difficult to fix. (Think high cholesterol, obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease.)

I view the music we consume in a similar way. If you listen to music that is always violent, persistently misogynist, you could assume the negativity as your own and over time, it could become a shaper of your perspective. These images are conditioning the way boys see women and the way girls see what they will become. It's a self-fulfilling prophecy that writes and re-writes itself in a vicious cycle. The blatantly, degenerate music is the food we masses feed our minds in every medium that means anything - online, television, musically and print.

I understand that there will be people that will inevitably disagree with my thoughts and even blast the mere thought of an apology. Hip-Hop is unapologetic by nature. Hip-Hop is a victim itself in many ways, if you know of its origins in the Bronx of the 80's. It was considered Hell on Earth. So, in theory, one's environment could be the "fast food" and harsh urban terrain never apologizes. But, playing victim is played out. At some point, mentally we have to raise up and move forward. Who can disagree with that?

An apology is also an admission of guilt, wrongdoing, regret and if properly executed, suggests strongly that the apology marks a imminent change in behavior.

in the underground. We've watched the culture transform from one that was inclusive of WOMEN to one that resembles a gang initiation just to attend the party.

Now consider the parallels in society; because Hip-Hop is nothing but a microcosm of a bigger picture. Congress, one of the U.S. Government's celestial bodies, seeks to apologize for slavery (not without opposition). After 140 years after the Civil War, the government body is considering offering a national apology to African Americans for the racial catastrophe that enslaved millions of Africans and institutionalized racism into our societal fabric. Now, slavery not only oppressed a class of people, but it economically raised another's class and their businesses, aspirations and dreams.

With rap, you have the men - typically Black men - who are using this art for economic gain and then you have the women - typically African American women or women of color who are relegated to the most base role in the culture. I think it's for men this collective apology could mark the beginning of a healing with women and as importantly, themselves. For women, this collective apology could mark the beginning of the mending relations with its men and, most importantly, themselves.

Let's be frank. The masses of people - male and female - hunger for more sustenance from its Hip-Hop.

others have offered their version of real womanhood. They were not a byproduct of a male rapper's negative experience with a few bad apples. In many ways, these femcees' messages balanced the men that were often talking about a "certain type of female." But "The B***h" has now become the prototype for all women in Hip-Hop and mostly are regarded as hoes or some other culturally necessary sex object. Necessary un-desirables, like the slaves.

Enslaved people - even after abolition - were still only confined to the menial jobs and not offered the breadth of opportunity afforded their counterparts. So, yesterday's Salt-N-Pepa's, Sweet-T's and JJ Fad's are today's video vixen and eye candy for your favorite rapper dude. I'd personally appreciate that apology from the U.S. Government on slavery, but I'd much rather that people would just stop practicing racism.

I'm sure the ladies feel the same about their plight.

Chuck "Jigsaw" Creekmur is the co-founder of AllHipHop.com.

--

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<http://www.allhiphop.com/editorial/?ID=352>

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First Public Event of AWARE-LA

the Alliance of White Anti-Racists Everywhere- Los Angeles

By Clare Robbins, AWARE-LA

When members of the Alliance of White Anti-Racists Everywhere – Los Angeles present their first public “Open House” on Saturday July 21st at 1pm, they will be moving through uncharted territory. While white anti-racists have long played supportive roles in social justice circles in Los Angeles, an explicit conversation about the role of white people in the social justice movement has not been had in a long time.

“What are the challenges and prospects for white folks doing this work? How can white anti-racists organize other white people against white supremacy? What does it mean for white people to ‘do our own work’ to end racism? These are precisely the types of questions we intend to ask,” says Hillary Stephenson, an AWARE organizer, “and hopefully offer some ideas and practices that AWARE-L.A. is engaged in today.” The event is called “Transformative Alliances: White Anti-Racism and Its Relevance to the Social Justice Community of Los Angeles,” and will serve as a space for AWARE-L.A. to share its thinking with the larger community and for the community to engage AWARE’s practice.

The focus for the afternoon will be to explore the importance of anti-racist organizing in the white community. Over the last 10 years, many white anti-racists have done and continue to do consciousness-raising work through “white privilege awareness” workshops, and by participating in and supporting organizations led by folks of color. While these strategies are necessary for building effective social change, AWARE’s organizers feel that something crucial has been missing in this work: namely, the work of actively organizing in the white community. They believe it is crucial for white anti-racists to bring issues such as police brutality, the criminal injustice system, immigration, and environmental racism to the white community to build broader support for struggles against these issues- issues that disproportionately affect communities of color.

“We want our work to be understood as an offering to the movement and for individuals and organizations to see AWARE as a resource. For example when people of color organizations have white folks who want to support the work, we as AWARE-L.A. can offer a space for those white folks to work on their racism so that the organizations don’t have to do all the work of educating white folks about racism,” says AWARE co-founder Cameron Levin.

The event is AWARE-LA’s first public, “formal introduction” to the larger social justice community. The organization has grown by word-of-mouth over the last three and half years, and now has a base of 60 white anti-racists who participate in a monthly Saturday Dialogue space to workshop their anti-racist practice and examine and deconstruct white supremacist socialization.

Other major projects of AWARE include its “organizing arm”- Active Resistance to White Supremacy (AR2WS). AR2WS is working to build a white anti racist base in Los Angeles, which will be active in working with local people of color social justice movements as well as engaging in their own campaigns to address racism and white supremacy. The Anti-Racist Consciousness Raising ART workgroup of AWARE focuses on the creation of an anti-racist culture among white people by raising consciousness about white privilege and white supremacy through radical art.

The Open House will also feature a special poetry performance by Luis Rodriguez, other community artists, and speakers from the Racial Justice Alliance- a project of AWARE-L.A., which serves as a multiracial space working to create racial justice dialogue in Los Angeles.

“Transformative Alliances: White Anti-Racism and Its Relevance to the Social Justice Communities of Los Angeles” is on Saturday July 21st, from 1:00PM – 3:30PM. The location is the Shakespeare Festival LA building at 1238 W. 1st Street, Los Angeles, California 90026. The event is FREE, refreshments provided, and childcare available upon request.

AWARE welcomes the whole community for an afternoon of fierce analysis, radical art and conversation on creative strategies to fight white supremacy.

For more information about AWARE-L.A. check out

<http://awarehome.blogspot.com/> or email awarejb@earthlink.net

For questions about this event, please email :

aware.event@gmail.com.

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 INTEND TO WIN!**

ANTI-RACIST ACTION

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SAVE THE DATE!

Message from Oscar López Rivera to the 20th Annual Vigil for Dignity in Isabela, Puerto Rico

Warm and patriotic greetings to all those present.

Why is there so much chaos in the world? Why does the world appear to be upside down? Who is behind this chaos and who benefits from it? Why is there such exaltation for the use of violence and for war?

Let us look at the policies of the U.S. government and its war in Iraq and Afghanistan, supposed to eradicate the terrorism of Islamic fundamentalists and to save the world for democracy. Several years of this war and what has the empire achieved? It has planted and produced violence everywhere. It has assassinated hundred of thousands of human beings and it has mutilated many more. It has created fratricidal struggles and conflicts in neighboring countries and in the region and has destroyed the infrastructures of both countries.

It has installed two puppet governments and has passed the cost of the war to the Iraqis and the Afghans. The only things that it has successfully built are permanent military bases, enormous prisons, waves of conflict and, in Baghdad it has built the largest U.S. embassy in the world. What it has basically done is to implant a political model of permanent chaos that is used by the Zionist Israelis in order to control and dominate the Palestinian people.

The empire has the world on its head and in this way controls, dominates, plunders and exploits as it likes and also does so completely with our people and our sister countries in the Caribbean and Latin America. We are also affected by the politics of chaos. Some of the elements of that policy are the war on drugs, the free trade agreements and the criminalization of undocumented immigrants.

We know that the war on drugs was not created in order to eradicate that plague that has inflicted so much damage and destruction on us. Every day there are more and more drugs, more drug users, more crime, more fear and more insecurity, but the war continues. If we read and listen to the news from Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador or Columbia, we become aware of what it means to be countries besieged by paramilitary forces, drug cartels, gangs and corrupt politicians and which experience daily instability, fear and impotence. The chaos created determines how they live, function and think while that reality is what our peoples live. The empire uses its wars against drugs to maintain its military forces and repressive agencies in the region in order to protect its economic interests and exercise control.

The free trade agreements have nothing to do with commercial freedom or with the elimination of poverty. The empire uses them to strangle autonomous economies in order to squeeze the juice out of them and accelerate the poverty. Everything should be privatized, they ordain, and everything must yield advantage.

It is the Latin American undocumented immigrants in the United States who are the best example of the devastation and poverty that has been caused by the treaties of free commerce. They are workers who have been displaced from their lands and forced to emigrate. More than 12 million do work that Americans do not want to do and for which they are extremely badly paid. They are criminalized, persecuted and often imprisoned and deported. Upon being deported to their countries they face more misery, more chaos and harsh treatment at the hands that U.S. repressive agencies have forced governments to implement in order to repress and silence the poor.

Where is this world of salvation by the empire in the name of democracy? Where are the jobs, the opportunities and the better living conditions? Where are the sane and secure spaces? If we want a free homeland and a better world that is more just, we must struggle for it. If we want peace we have to make it. The good thing is that we have the power to do it. All of us in struggle together and being in much solidarity we can turn the world right side up. Thinking of Filiberto, IN RESISTANCE AND STRUGGLE.

Oscar López Rivera, May 23, 2007

Oscar Lopez Rivera is a captured Puerto Rican independentista who has been a political prisoner/POW in the US for more than 25 years.

Zolo Agona Azania to Face a 3rd Death Penalty Trial

by Howard Emmer

On Thursday, May 10, 2007 the Indiana Supreme Court reversed Boone County Superior Court Judge Steve David's ruling that barred the state of Indiana from pursuing the death penalty in the case of Zolo Azania. Lake County Prosecutor Bernard Carter appealed Judge David's ruling and that prompted arguments before the Indiana Supreme Court on June 27th, 2006. Zolo, who was convicted of murder in 1982, has spent the last 26 years in Indiana prisons, most of that time on death row. Twice the state has had Zolo's death penalty verdict overturned by the Indiana Supreme Court due to: prosecution's suppression of evidence favorable to the defendant, ineffective assistance of counsel, and systematic exclusion of African Americans from the jury pool.

In Judge David's ruling, he argued that the state could not seek the death penalty against Zolo a third time because of the length of time that had passed since the crime was committed (24 years at that time), and that the delay was caused primarily by the state. Many of the witnesses, material and character, are now deceased and much of the evidence is either missing or destroyed. David also found that a jury at a third sentencing trial would be unduly focused on the "future dangerousness" of the convicted, depriving Zolo of an unprejudiced decision by the jury. Judge David concluded that society's interest would be best served by barring the state from a third death sentence.

The majority opinion, written by Justice Sullivan and supported by Chief Justice Shepard and Justice Dickson, tries to blame Zolo Azania for the 25 year delay by having the audacity to file appeals to his conviction and death sentence which ultimately exposed mistakes and misconduct by the prosecution in his trials. As stated above, it was this same Indiana Supreme Court that found there was just cause for these appeals. To now blame Zolo for the delays caused by pursuing them is tantamount to blaming the victim.

Justices Boehm and Rucker both wrote dissenting opinions supporting Judge David's ruling. In his dissenting opinion Justice Boehm found the majority opinion's arguments for attributing the delays to Zolo "both novel and indefensible." Justice Rucker was troubled that the inordinate delay (25 years plus) would affect Zolo's ability to produce character witnesses and cross examine state witnesses.

The state of Indiana has already convicted and held Zolo for over 25 years for a crime in which he has always maintained his innocence. It is only fair that it drops its pursuit of the death penalty that is cruel, inhuman, racist and has no place being used in a civilized society.

Zolo's lawyers are considering a petition for certiorari to the United States Supreme Court.

Contact Howie Emmer for more information: 773-425-6716

Editor's note: Long before invading Iraq, the U.S. was an empire, a settler colonial empire established on stolen Native land. Today, the US is desperately trying to extinguish the claims of indigenous people to their territory, through the increased militarization of the military-imposed border with Mexico, through efforts to impose statehood on Puerto Rico, and through the Akaka Bill to reduce the sovereign Hawaiian people to wards of U.S. 'trust' relationship. We will never overcome US imperial power unless we attack it at its base and roots in this conquest of indigenous land.—Editor

Defend Native Hawaiian sovereignty -- Oppose the Akaka Bill

Brief excerpts from a talk by J. Kehaulani Kauanui

J. Kehaulani Kauanui, a Native Hawaiian professor at Wesleyan University in Middletown, presented a history of Hawaii/U.S. relations and her views of the Akaka Bill in the US Senate in a talk at Yale University on April 4, according to a report by Gale Courey Toensing in *Indian Country Today*. [http://www.indiancountry.com/content.cfm?id=1096414877&print=yes] After acknowledging the land now known as New Haven as the homeland of the Quinnipiatic people, she said the Hawaiian sovereignty movement is split between those who support Sen. Akaka's "federal recognition" bill, and "those who want full independence from the United States based on decolonization and de-occupation under international law."

"At the heart of this division between federal recognition and independence is the and European financiers and colonists who owned sugar plantations. The key statement in debate as to whether or not, and if so, how Native Hawaiians fit into U.S. policy on the apology acknowledges Hawaii's continuing independence: "The indigenous Hawaiian Native American governing entities," Kauanui said. "You have a backlash against tribal people never directly relinquished their claims to their inherent sovereignty as a people or nations in this area who are absolutely entitled to federal recognition and you have the over their national lands to the United States, either through their monarchy or through a state bearing down on them, and the courts continue to erode tribal sovereignty. So the plebiscite or referendum."

challenge for me, intellectually, legally and politically, has been how to formulate my critique of federal recognition for Hawaiians without it ever being misinterpreted as something that can be used against tribes here, because I support the federal recognition of tribes here," Kauanui said. She asserted that the central argument against federal recognition in Hawaii rests on "the particularity of the Hawaiian claims given the legal history of the Hawaiian kingdom."

Those particularities are embedded as facts in *Public Law 103-150*, an apology to the Hawaiian people signed in 1993 by Bill Clinton. The apology acknowledges the illegality of the U.S. government's military-backed regime change of "the sovereign Hawaii nation" in 1893 and its support for the illegally created "provisional government" into private hands. For more information, contact **Aloha First, PO Box 701, Waimanalo, Hawaii 96795, info@hawaii-nation.org** or check out **http://hawaii-nation.org**

End the Racist Death Penalty:

Death Row Inter-Communalist Vanguard Engagement:

DRIVE for Justice

The anti-death penalty movement has seen some major changes in the last couple of months. One of the central emerging themes surrounding the death penalty debate is the cruel and unusual way in which executions are carried out. But the death penalty is cruel and unusual far before an inmate reaches the execution chamber. The people on death row in Texas can attest to the inhumane nature of capital punishment from the time of arrest all the way to the gurney.

At the end of last year, about a dozen brave men on Texas' death row went on hunger strike to protest inhumane conditions on the Polunsky unit where inmates awaiting execution are warehoused. Even the New York Times took note of the protest. "Likening themselves to prisoners at Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo Bay," the New York Times reported last November, "a dozen inmates on death row in Texas have staged hunger strikes over the last month to protest what they call abusive conditions, including 23 hours a day of isolation in their cells." Continued media attention like this could cause the Texas Department of Criminal Justice to change the horrific conditions.

Rob Will explains the sit-in method of protest on the row and the response it is met with, "You're tired of abuse, fed up with oppression, seven officers are towering over you, staring you down and ordering you to get up. In your mind you think, 'I'm tired of this sh*t. I'm just f*cking tired of this sh*t! I don't even want these oppressive cowards to touch me!' Then a CO [correctional officer = prison guard—ed.] suddenly grabs you and his hands feel like the sting of a slavemaster's whip... How would you react?"

The protesters are asking for basic needs to be met such as food that is edible and the proper maintenance of their toilets so that they don't clog and overflow their cell floors. Grievances also include the lack of education and work programs; group recreation; access to adequate healthcare; efficient mail services; arts and crafts programs; televisions; law library supplies; phone calls; religious services; visitation rights; and adequate laundry and hygiene services. Their requests could easily be granted and their humanity upheld. Unfortunately, though, the authorities have an interest in dehumanizing death row prisoners.

The Death Row Inter-Communalist Vanguard Engagement, also known as DRIVE, stands in solidarity with the hunger strikers and continues their own methods of protest. DRIVE is a multi-racial group of non-violent prison activists who are dedicated to bringing change for the entire death penalty population. Their protest tactics include distributing literature, addressing their issues with guards, and occupying day rooms, showers and visitation chambers. Prisoners are encouraged to protest on days when executions are scheduled, and to protest their own executions by refusing to walk to the van that takes

PURE statement in support of Mumia Abu-Jamal

Published May 11, 2007 9:08 PM

Panthers United for Revolutionary Education is a group of revolutionary prisoners on Texas death row. [www.workers.org/2007/us/mumia-0510/]

Comrade Mumia is an ex-Black Panther and our organization, Panthers United for Revolutionary Education, is a product of the Panthers. Thus, it is safe to say that Mumia is our beginning. Living as we do under the most austere conditions of prisons, in what is arguably the most racist and backward state of the union, Texas, we are indeed amongst the most oppressed and repressed. We are poor. But without you, the people, we would be powerless. And without our brother, Mumia, we would be voiceless. So our interest here is clear and direct.

Let us make clear, also, this oh-so-shocking truth: Our brother and comrade Mumia is in the hands of killers! Killers who prefer to do their dirty deeds in the dark and are therefore waiting with the patience of a snake for you to grow tired; tired of turning out; tired of holding vigil; tired of being inconvenienced by sacrificing so much and just plain ole tired of being tired... But we have bad news for those laying in wait. We won't ever get that tired! Y'all hear me? I said, WE WON'T EVER GET THAT TIRED! And those that are waiting will die waiting...

It is often said that Mumia is the most recognized political prisoner in the United States. We have no interest in arguing semantics, but Mumia is a POW. This fact must be recognized for a full appreciation of what the brother is facing. The U.S. government literally declared war on the Black Panther Party. The assassinations, the frame-ups, the forced exiles, the infiltrations and agitation that had Panthers turning on Panthers are all recorded in history. To this day ex-Panthers are still doing prison time, living in exile and being rounded up. Why? What makes them different from other groups?

The difference is that most liberation organizations of those times were mere irritations to the state because they only demanded reforms within the constraints of the capitalist state. But the Panthers attacked the state itself... At the time, the government was fighting against communism everywhere, Asia, Africa, the Soviet Union, in its own backyard of Central and South America, and in its own midst, the Panthers here at home.

Mumia was then, and is now, a soldier for the people. He is our voice, our great inspiration. Our esteemed chairman, Howard Guidry, explains Mumia best: "From the isolation block of Texas' most prided plantation and in spite of all of the artificial forces unleashed to erode and mentally break us, we wish you all to know that our beloved brotha Mumia's voice, image and determination have exemplified the very revolutionary torch that has been passed on from our predecessors." Thank you! Power to the People!

In solidarity,
Muenda, Prime Minister, PURE

them to the Ellis Unit, where executions still take place; refusing last meals; and refusing to walk to the execution chamber. The DRIVE membership has doubled in size in the last couple of months, going from five members to ten, and has expanded to women's death row also. This sends out a signal that more and more death row prisoners are fed up with the inhumane conditions and the struggle is moving forward.

Any type of resistance on the row is met with what can only be called torture. Many times their non-violent protests are met with 37mm gas cannons designed to hurt, not subdue, inmates. Protesters are often refused recreation, food, and showers after being gassed. The guards also use "divide and conquer" tactics to try to dissuade other prisoners from protesting.

Family members are also speaking out against the inhumane treatment of their loved ones. Sister of DRIVE comrade Kenneth Foster, Claire Dube, explains why this struggle is so important to her, "Many of the family members of the inmates and especially DRIVE have concerns about their family member's humanity and treatment. Inmates are still human beings and should be treated as if their family was the one taking care of them."

In response to letters from overseas raising concerns about the conditions at Polunsky, Texas Representative Jerry Madden, the chair of the Texas House Corrections Committee, has said that he will look into the situation at Polunsky. Plus, representatives of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice have contacted the Austin Campaign to End the Death Penalty regarding concerns that have been raised about the conditions at Polunsky. This shows that the pressure is working and that supporters on the outside can help Polunsky's prison activists achieve their goals.

To support the hunger strikers and the members of DRIVE on Texas's death row, activists can send grievance letters to the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ), which runs the state's prisons. It is important that these officials know that the inmates have support from outraged people on the outside, and this will help the prisoners with their struggle. Sample letters can be downloaded from www.drivemovement.org. Supporters also should send solidarity letters to the members of DRIVE. The demands of the inmates will fall on deaf ears unless a movement of support is built on the outside to put pressure on the TDCJ.

"Yet even as we take this drastic step to stand against this injustice, we realize our actions alone will not likely bring the changes we require," write Steven Woods, Justen Hall and Richard Cobb in their statement of intent. "We need your support in this struggle, fighting with us side by side. The administration will try to cover up and misconstrue our efforts, so we're asking you to get involved, to put up as much effort as you're able. Any actions you can take to help vocalize our plight are positive, be it writing to government officials, TDCJ administration, the media, participating in online blogs and forums, protesting if you're able, and encouraging others to get involved. We'll also need your encouragement and solidarity to help keep us from faltering, as even the most stout of heart can waver. The struggle will be long and hard, but in the end, with your help, we hope to succeed."

For more info about DRIVE; to read the journals of death row inmates, and to watch video of the repression they face visit www.drivemovement.org or www.anarchyinchains.com. Send grievance letters to:

Warden Massey and Assistant Warden Hirsch, Polunsky Unit,
3872 FM 350 South, Livingston, Texas 77351,
(936) 967-8082. Ask for the Warden's office.

Representative Jerry Madden, Chair,
Capitol Office Room EXT E1.506, P.O. Box 2910, Austin, TX 78768,
(512) 463-9974—fax

Write to DRIVE members:

Steven Woods, #999427
Reginald Blanton, #999395
Rob Will, #999402
Kenneth Foster, #999232
Gabriel Gonzalez, #999225
Da'mon Simpson, #999370
Randy Greer, #999042
Randy Halprin, #999453
Carroll Parr, #999479

**Polunsky Unit,
3872 F.M. 350 South,
Livingston, TX
77351**

**Carolyn King, OC 7210,
P.O. Box 180 Unit R-B,
Muncy, PA 17756**

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