

Prairie Fire Organizing Committee

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Prairie Fire Organizing Committee called this press conference to make a statement concerning the November 19 FBI arrests of five "alleged" Weather Underground Organization members in both Houston and Los Angeles.

Of the five arrested, two are women, and one of the men includes Clayton Van Lydegraf, a leader of Prairie Fire Organizing Committee. The Houston arrests were made during the International Women's Year Conference that took place over the week-end.

PFOC went to Houston to show and give our support to the militant struggles of women in this country. This past weekend thousands of women approved planks supporting gay rights, abortion, and the Equal Rights Amendment. These were victories for women. At the same time however, the right wing is being organized to combat these gains in any way it can. The Klan, Anita Bryant and Phyllis Schlafly are all banding together as part of an overall offensive against the rising time of women for liberation.

At the same time that the Klan organized against the right to abortion, it sent thousands of its members to patrol the border against so-called illegal aliens. The Klan has been known as terrorist throughout the world for the past 100 years. PFOC went to Houston to help protect and defend women against this form of terrorism.

The last ten years has seen the US empire defeated all over the world. From Southeast Asia to Africa, the U.S. and its allies are being challenged as the rulers of the world. In Vietnam, people who defended their homelands were called terrorists. In Southern Africa, Steven Biko is murdered in his cell under the guise that he is conspiring and is a terrorist. In Germany, members of the Red Army Faction are murdered in their cells-- so called suicides justified by the government because they were terrorists. Thousands of Africans in Southern Africa are demanding their independence and freedom. Carter and Vnrster, the true terrorist conspirators, defend white supremacy against the so called terrorism of the African people. Here at home too, actions of Black, Puerto Rican, Native American and Latino peoples against the US state are denounced as "terrorist." The massacres at Attica, Wounded Knee, the murder of Fred Hampton are stood on their head. In Chicago and New York 9 Puerto Rican and Mexicano/Chicano people are locked up without trial in witch-hunting grand juries because they might have some knowledge about the FALN.

And now PFOC is being charged with "terrorism". The timing of these Federal and California state-coordinated arrests come at a very serious time, and PFOC wants to state clearly that we see this series of arrests as one part of the government's growing attempts to smash rising political dissent and movement. The use of conspiracy charges have always been a state tool to smash and contain revolutionary anti-imperialist politics. This is not a criminal case or primarily a legal matter, or an isolated event. It is a calculated political attack and conspiracy by the US state against a leading member of our organization and other forces fighting for revolutionary change.

It is clear that our beginning efforts pose a threat to the US government: The US rulers who commit genocide against Third World people, who are responsible for forced sterilization of Native, Black, Latina, and Puerto Rican women have gone too far to try and cop a plea of innocence and non-violence. The US state and Carter's Human Rights" stand exposed in the eyes of the majority of the people of the world; and revolutionary mass struggle and revolutionary violence have shown themselves to be the only way to win liberation and justice.

These wars which to the media remain hidden until the peoples forces grow in size and strength to the point where their struggles cannot be denied, are wars for survival and national liberation. What you the media rarely do, what the rulers will not allow is that the truths be told about the way things are in the world. That the US state maintains its power and wealth through force, violence and terror from Soweto to Harlem, from Chile and Puerto Rico to Attica and Wounded Knee. And that people of oppressed nation are rising up for independence and fighting for freedom. Freedom fighters are not the so-called "terrorist" monsters and demons you try to frighten people with. The warriors of Wounded Knee, of Black liberation, fighters for Puerto Rican independence do not fall from the sky but emerge through struggle from the real life conditions of oppression that they and their people face every day.

Revolutionary and freedom minded peoples do not recognize the legitimacy or the right of the US and its fascist puppets like the KKK and FBI to rule and lord it over them. Women do not and will not stand for the state's sterilization of Third World women, denial of rights to abortion, sanction of rape, and attacks on lesbians and gays.

PFOC affirms and stands in solidarity with the struggles for national and women's liberation. The old Weather Underground Organization (WUO) never took on these issues in a consistent way. Instead they hid behind their reputation. In our history of struggles with the WUO, we have united with those who want to make revolution and want to change from the wrong ways. We have continued to expose the wrongness of the WUO strategy and politics. Our support and solidarity definitely falls on the side of the women and men who are "alleged" members of the Revolutionary Committee--not Mark Rudd, who after surfacing from the underground turned himself into the police and was released with no bail.

We are in firm solidarity with the people arrested and framed up in Texas for allegedly doing armed defense of IWY women struggling against right-wing fascist mobilization there. We are in solidarity with the people arrested in Los Angeles. We express our unshakeable commitment to free our comrade Clayton Van Lydegraf and all political prisoners and prisoners of war of the US government; and we are confident that the struggle of progressive and revolutionary people will break all the oppressors chains, and tear his prisons down.