

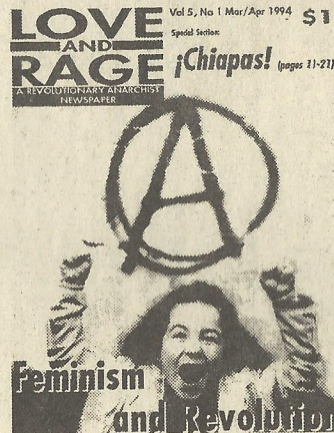
Love & Rage Back Issues

Aug/Sep 1997: Welfare Cuts, Haitians Resist Neoliberalism, Geronimo Pratt Free, Living Wage Campaigns, Nike, Biotech, Forest Defense, Fascist Networks, Friends of Durruti & Anarchist Revolution...

June/July 1997: ACT UP 10th Anniv., Building Multiracial Organization, Revolution in Congo, Puerto Rican Cultural Center in Chicago, CUNY Student Movement, Indigenous Autonomy, Young Lords...

Mar/Apr 1997: International Women's Day, Bo Brown Interview (part 2 of 2), Luisa Capetillo, Women in Zapatista Territory, Women and Welfare, Judi Bari, Neoliberalism and World Revolution, UDC Student Movement...

Jan/Feb 1997: Anti-Prison Movement, Bo Brown Interview (part 1 of 2), CIA Deals Crack, 1996 Elections, Police Brutality, Strikes in Toronto & Quebec, Spirit of Magon in Mexico, Mario Savio, Robert Williams...



Oct/Nov 1996: Workfare, Zapatista Encuentro, Tupac Shakur, Active Resistance Counterconvention, EPR, Summer Anti-Convention Activism, Abortion, Kurds...

Aug/Sept 1996: Attica commemoration, Revolution-ary Anarchist Tradition, SUTAU Interview, review of *How the Irish Became White*, Riot in Quebec City...

Aug 1996: Special Edition Summer Broadsheet, with Convention protests, reproductive freedom, Lessons of Chicago 1969/1996, 2-color "voting victim" poster...

Apr/May 1996: Palestine, Control Units in MD, Nigeria, Ron Tabor's Anarchist Critique of Marxism (part 4)...

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LOVE & RAGE

REVOLUTIONARY ANARCHIST NEWSPAPER

REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM!



In This Issue ☆ Roe v. Wade 25th Anniversary ☆ Police Torture in Brooklyn ☆ IRA Cease Fire ☆ UPS Strike ☆ Menstrual Extraction ☆ Kenya ☆ Zapatistas ☆ Mexico's Elections ☆ Iran's Elections ☆ Lotsa Letters ☆ and more!

VOLUME 8, NUMBER 5

NOV./ DEC. 1997

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25th Anniversary of Roe v. Wade

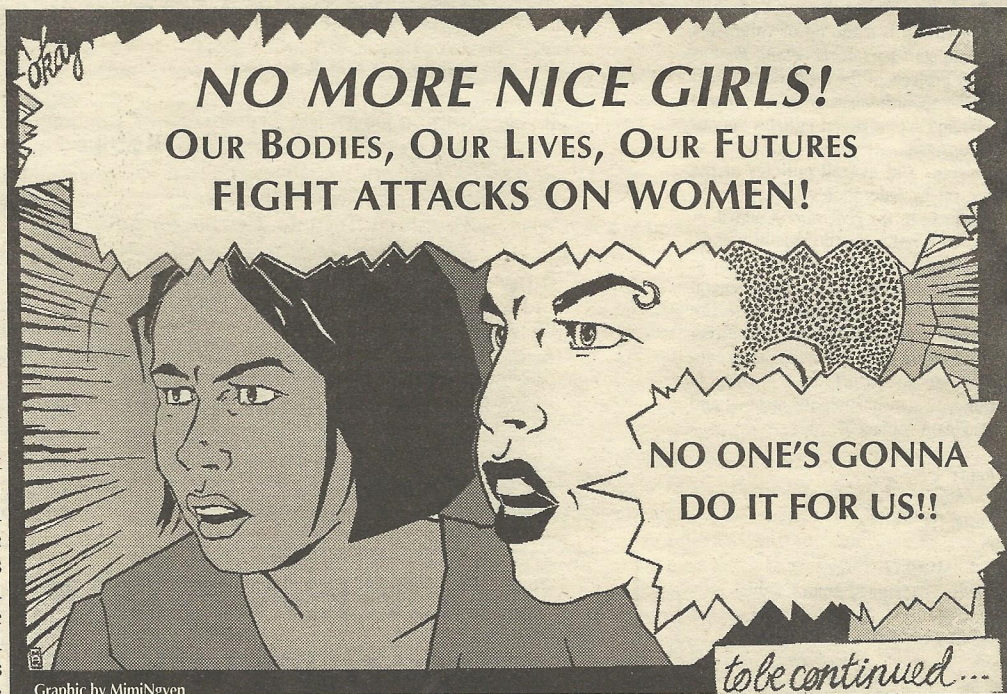
BY LAURA W.

January 22, 1998 marks the 25th anniversary of legal abortion in the US. A quarter century after women won this basic right on paper, the ability to control our reproductive lives is not a reality for most women. Cutbacks on welfare, lack of child care, dead-end jobs, lack of healthy birth control alternatives, men that won't use condoms, lack of health insurance, lack of access health services including abortion and prenatal care, harassment and violence at our clinics, in our homes and in the streets are just a few of the obstacles to this critical aspect of women's freedom. In anticipation of January's anniversary I look forward to an ongoing dialogue about how to take back this battle, reframe it in terms of women's lives and health—and win.

The media will certainly play this silver anniversary as a significant one. The fact that the majority of folks in the US still support legal abortion has been eclipsed in part by the much publicized conversion of Norma McCorvey. (Jane Roe, of Roe v. Wade, became a born again Christian and Operation Rescue member last year and recanted her pro-choice views as well as her lesbianism.) We can expect two things from the mainstream media on the anniversary of Roe. First, they will most likely take their cue from Operation Rescue and Christian Coalition press releases and use McCorvey's "switch" as an invitation to question the morality of abortion. And they will legitimize the voices of anti-abortion

leadership who have spearheaded violence, harassment and assault of women and doctors around the country as respectable, family-oriented, 'non-violent' fetus lovers.

The tepid "pro-choice" response, which the mainstream feminist leadership will broadcast at press conferences, will most likely focus on the need for more laws on the single issue of abortion. Will they defend abortion as an inalienable right for women and proclaim that women should be able to have an abortion without apology or hassle? Probably not. Mainstream pro-choice voices can sound foggy "anti-abortion" as they talk about abortion as the lesser of two evils—"a sad necessity." Abortion can be emotionally hard for some women who are already mothers or who want to be. Having an abortion can also be an incredible relief and an exercise of personal power over one's life and one's future. Long-time clinic workers have told me that they have observed a significant shift in women's reactions to abortion over the past 25 years a shift they believe was induced by anti-abortion harassment and the mass cultural backlash on women's rights. These reactions have moved from profound expressions of relief at receiving good health care—instead of a potentially deadly illegal abortion—to varying levels of guilt and anxiety.



BEYOND CHOICE

This notable anniversary is ripe to reignite a movement for women's freedom. Many activists I know on the abortion rights and other fronts have resigned themselves to the paltry and apathetic response to their organizing efforts. While we can not simply conjure the spirit of mass resistance, we can start dialogues,

create propaganda and actions that better involve communities and speak to peoples' experiences.

As a movement that has successfully mobilized against anti-abortion assaults at our clinics, I think we are fairly good at articulating what we are fighting against. Motivating people to stay mobilized and

(Continued to page 13)

Police Brutality Plunges to New Depths

BY KEITH MITCHELL

On August 29, over 10,000 demonstrators closed down southern Brooklyn in support of Abner Louima who was allegedly assaulted in the basement of Brooklyn's 70th precinct. Marchers packed the trains in the early morning hours on the way to the rally's starting point. An eclectic bunch of nuns, priests, whites, Latinos, and African-Americans broke down the barriers that partition everyday life in New York's transit system, and spoke of a common disgust of the details of the Louima case and the high level of police abuse under Mayor Giuliani.

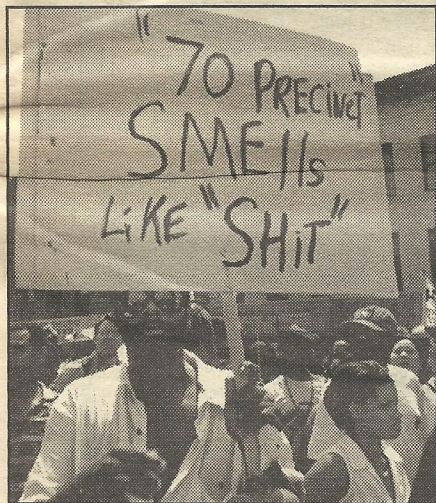
Among the groups participating in the rally were the October 22 Coalition, Refuse and Resist, Forever In Struggle Together (FIST), and ACT-UP! Tim, an activist in

ACT-UP!, expressed the common ground between different groups in the city in reaction to the police "Brutality is often times used against our community as a means of intimidating, especially those who begin to speak out."

Even with the strong presence of activist groups, the majority of protesters were everyday people. A group of women spoke of how they called in sick from work to attend the demonstration. Edna, an elderly Haitian immigrant draped with an oversize banner reading "Giuliani Time = Police Brutality Time" told *Love and Rage*, "There's no solution under Giuliani, only with the people can we force him to change." This appeared to be the general mood of the participants. As they moved from the steps of the Main Branch of the Brooklyn Library to the arc on the thruway in Grand Army

Plaza, hundreds shouted "No Justice, No peace!" and "NYPD, KKK, Same thing, Different day!". Many wore shirts condemning police brutality, adorned with caricatures of the infamous toilet plunger that was allegedly used to sodomize Louima. As the rally got under way, it became obvious that the traditional electoral channels did not have much appeal. Brooklyn Borough President Howard Golden received a cold shoulder from the crowd, as did City Councilwoman Una Clarke, and House Representative Mary Pickens. Eric Tam, coordinator of the Committee Against Anti-Asian Violence drew cheers when he condemned both Democrats and Republicans for the rising tide of police brutality. Also under scrutiny was the effectiveness of the

(Continued to page 12)



Demonstrator at mid-August Brooklyn march vs. cops

IRA Cease-Fire: The Politics of Peace

BY CAROLYN

On July 19, 1997 the Irish Republican Army (IRA) announced, "the unequivocal restoration of the cease-fire of August 1994." The renewed cease-fire came soon after the Orange Lodge (a Protestant cultural organization loyal to the British government) canceled some and rerouted two of the four Orange Order parades scheduled for July 12. Nationalist outrage at the beginning of the Loyalist marching season (Loyalists, also called Unionists, support the enforced "union" of Ireland's six northern counties with Britain), forced the Orange Order to cancel the parades. The widespread demonstrations, protests and rioting caused an estimated \$30 million of damage in the first week in July. This massive show of resistance followed the July 6 Drumcree Parade which thrust its way through Republican neighborhoods accompanied by the RUC (Royal Ulster Constabulary) and the British Army.

The 1994 IRA cease-fire now being restored was ended by the IRA after 17 months because Loyalist political parties refused to meet with Irish nationalist political party Sinn Fein, and the British government (under former Prime Minister John Major) demanded that the IRA begin disarming at the start of all-parties peace negotiations. The IRA resumed its military

campaign on February 9, 1997 with the bombing of the Docklands in London. The IRA and Sinn Fein both believe that all-party disarmament (including that of Republicans, Loyalists and the withdrawal of the British Army) should begin only after significant progress has been made in the political negotiation process.

The current IRA cease-fire is timed to increase the pressure on Loyalist forces. It came on the heels of more than a week of nationalist rioting, and just days before the July 23 deadline for all parties to respond to the British and Irish governments' proposals on the process for negotiations and the timing for disarmament.

ANTI-CATHOLIC TERROR

In the past few years, Loyalist terror campaigns and parades celebrating British imperialism have become a focal point for Republican resistance to the British occupation of the six northern counties of Ireland. This year Republicans began gathering days before the Spirit of Drumcree parade through the small nationalist town of Portadown. The Spirit of Drumcree and other Loyalist forces engaged in a campaign of anti-Catholic terror; for weeks they attacked church-goers and tried to burn down at least one church in the village of Dunloy in the months preceding the march-



Mural in the north of Ireland supports the Peace process.

ing season. In response to last year's nationalist rebellion, Mo Mowlam, the newly-appointed British Secretary of Northern Ireland, held more than 20 secret negotiations, feeding speculation that the new British Prime Minister Tony Blair's administration was going to cancel all parades through Republican areas. On July 6, the RUC, British Army, and over a thou-

sand Orangemen invaded the town of Portadown attacking peaceful nationalist protesters. Instead of forewarning nationalist forces, as Mowlam had earlier promised, the government ordered all Catholics to stay in their homes. The Republican movement went on the offensive against this pattern

(Continued to page 13)

What is Love & Rage?

Love and Rage is the English-language newspaper of the Love and Rage Revolutionary Anarchist Federation, an organization made up of groups and individuals in Canada, Mexico and the US who share a set of common politics and who work on political projects together. *Love and Rage* is produced by a Production Group in New York City. The Production Group is made up of volunteers and one full-time staff person. *Love and Rage* is one of the many projects of the Federation, which also produces the Spanish-language *Amor y Rabia* in Mexico City, and supports and initiates various actions and campaigns.

Major decisions and overall policies of the Federation are set by federation conferences, or between conferences by the Federation Council.

The Federation is not a closed circle of friends. You can join Love and Rage and participate fully in the decision-making process. If you are in general agreement with the stated politics of the Federation and are interested in getting involved, contact the Federation Office or your local contact. Even if you do not wish to be a member of the Federation you can participate in Love and Rage projects. Please contact us.

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Boring Disclaimer

The articles we print do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Federation or of any member of the Federation, unless specifically marked. Sometimes we print articles we don't agree with, because we believe that they are interesting, provocative, or raise important issues for the revolutionary movement. Some articles represent one view among many views held by Love & Rage members on a topic.

Submit to Love & Rage

We encourage you to submit material for publication. Shorter articles are more likely to be printed. 1,750 words, a full newspaper page, is a long article. We will not accept submissions over 3,400 words in length. Submissions will be edited. Please include a phone number and address or email address so we can consult you on editing. Articles not printed may be sent to our internal bulletin unless otherwise noted. All letters will be considered for publication unless there is a request that they not be published. Letters will not be edited.

About Our Politics...

The Love and Rage Revolutionary Anarchist Federation is in the process of developing a statement of our common politics (yeah, it's a long process). The following introduction to our old Political Statement gives an idea of where we are coming from:

Love and Rage is a bi-monthly anarchist newspaper intended to foster revolutionary anti-authoritarian activism in North America and build a more effective and better-organized anarchist movement. We will provide coverage of social struggles, world events, anarchist actions, and cultures of resistance. We will support the struggles of oppressed peoples around the world for control over their own lives. Anarchy offers the broadest possible critique of domination, making possible a framework for unity in all struggles for liberation. We seek to understand the systems we live under for ourselves and reject any pre-packaged ideology. Anarchism is a living body of theory and practice connected directly to the lived experiences of oppressed people fighting for their own liberation. We anticipate the radical and on-going revision of our ideas as a necessary part of any revolutionary process.

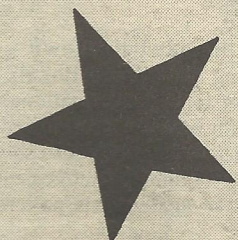


Table of Contents

- | | | | |
|---|---|-------|--|
| 1 | 25th Anniversary of Roe v. Wade
Police Brutality Plunges to New Depths in Brooklyn
IRA Cease Fire: The Politics of Peace in Ireland | 7 | Kenyan People's Movement Gains Ground
Against Ruthless Moi Regime
African Anarchism: Book Review |
| 2 | Letters to Love & Rage | 8-9 | The Zapatistas Live and On Tour:
The Second Occupation of San Cristobal |
| 3 | Shutting Down Big Brown:
An Anarchist Take on the UPS Strike | 9 | Update on the Anarchist Project in Chiapas |
| 4 | Anti-Racist Action Reports:
Hamilton, Toronto, Detroit, Fargo | 10 | Report from Iran: Presidential Election |
| 5 | Public Cervix Announcement:
Learn Self-help Menstrual Extraction! | 11 | Report from Chiapas, Mexico:
The Zapatistas and Mexico's Elections |
| 6 | Legal Settlement in Women Prisoners' Lawsuit
Italian Anarchists in Prison, on Trial
Ten Things You Can Do To Help Free Mumia | 14-15 | Letters to Love & Rage. Continued |

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Letters to Love and Rage

AMOEBAS OF THE WORLD UNITE!

Dear L&R,

Against multi-ethnic, multi-racial organization? Any moment now I expect dear old Noel Ignatiev to come out against multi-cellular organization! One pseudo-pod forward, two back. Harumph! Amoebas of the world unite!

Love,
Mitchel Cohen
Red Balloon Collective

P.S. "chill pill"? How about a multi-vitamin?

L&R MULTIRACIAL EDITORIAL AND ITS DEFENDERS WRONG

The editorial "Building a Multi-Racial / Multi-National Revolutionary Anarchist Organization" in the June/July *Love and Rage* and the defense of it in the August/September *L&R* by eight New York L&R members may give readers the impression that the Love and Rage Federation has a unified position on questions of race and activism, and that the editorial accurately expresses that opinion. This is not the case. The editorial unfortunately presents only one perspective within the Federation, a perspective that I, as a long-time member of L&R, believe is fundamentally wrong. The editorial suffers from three crucial political errors.

First, it has the relationship between fighting white supremacy and building a multiracial organization backwards. Second, the editorial was published without significant debate by the membership. Finally, the politics expressed in the editorial lead us away from revolutionary action. The editorial attempts to address several important questions: How can we overcome the problem of a working class disastrously

divided by the tragic history of white supremacy? What is the appropriate role of mostly-white revolutionary organizations in relating to communities and revolutionaries of color (who aren't already members of these organizations)? How should a mostly-white revolutionary organization proceed if it is to smash its whiteness and effectively tremble the pillars that prop up this evil system?

Unfortunately, the solution the editorial provides for these questions—build a multi-racial organization—is a disastrous one. It is disastrous because despite its good intentions, it objectively promotes a policy of white vanguardism. In making a call for people of color to join L&R, the editorial essentially calls for a tiny, mostly-white organization to provide leadership for communities of color, particularly the Black community. This is vanguardism, which as anarchists we should absolutely avoid.

We shouldn't be scrambling to put together a multi-racial organization to fight white supremacy but rather the reverse: struggling relentlessly and unceasingly against white skin privilege. Once we have proven ourselves as serious opponents of white privilege we make it possible for L&R to become thoroughly multi-racial.

I disagree that L&R is a mostly-white organization for "cultural reasons." Look at the rest of the American left: is it disproportionately white for "cultural reasons," too? Obviously not, but if other left groups have political problems that explain their general whiteness, how have we managed to avoid such errors while still remaining largely white?

I agree that L&R's political and social culture is not that comfy for many people

Oops!

In the last (August / September *Love & Rage* Vol. 8 No. 4), we somehow mistakenly lopped off the last few lines of Tom Burghardt's centerspread article, "Fascist Networks and the Oklahoma City Bombing." Sorry!

The last paragraph should read as follows:

And so we come full circle. In the two intervening years since the deadly blast, many troubling questions cast doubt on the government's premise that McVeigh and Nichols "acted alone." Some of the evidence strongly suggests that federal prosecutors and the FBI have not pursued promising investigative avenues that point to a wider conspiracy, one fueled by the genocidal fantasies of Adolf Hitler's heirs.

of color (nor for some of its other present members!), but claiming that culture is the main obstacle preventing us from becoming multi-racial is a weak attempt to avoid the responsibility of examining the political principles that help keep us majority-white. If we prove ourselves as reliable fighters against white privilege, L&R may someday grow to become a group with a significant Black, Latino, Asian, and/or Native American membership. If this happens, then we can decide, as a group, whether, when, and how to participate in the affairs of communities of color. But this is my second criticism of the editorial: we need to decide this democratically, after a full and free debate among all the membership, but this has never happened.

Now, as a former member of L&R's coordinating committee, I know how hard it is for a directly-democratic organization to publish editorials. They have to reflect the

(Continued to page 14)

Shutting Down Big Brown

An Anarchist Take on the UPS Strike

By K-Dog

For fifteen days this August 185,000 Teamsters shut down United Parcel Service, forcing the world's largest package delivery company to concede to all the union's major demands including wage increases, expansion of full-time job opportunities and union retention of the workers' multi-million dollar pension plan.

The strike, which pitted the largest union in the US against its biggest employer, was the most significant labor struggle in decades. It was widely seen as an attempt by organized labor to become a major player in society again after decades of concessions to corporations, shrinking membership, and declining influence with the rulers.

Over 80% of the parcels delivery business travels in UPS's brown vans, which translates into 8% of the US gross national product. The strike had an immediate impact on the economy, especially the massive retail chain stores.

The nature of UPS's business, especially its highly profitable "Next-Day Air" and "Second-Day Air" service made the company particularly vulnerable to a strike. UPS lost millions of dollars as packages sat in warehouses and customers had to look to other package shipping services.

Despite the pinch on deliveries, the strike was very popular among the working class. By highlighting the issue of UPS's increased use of lower-paid, part-time workers, while earning over a billion dollars annually, the teamsters successfully struck a chord among many who've been forced into this kind of work. The union presented the strike as a crusade for all working people, not just UPS Teamsters.

LIFE AT BIG BROWN

Working for United Parcel Service is no joke, especially for the 60% of the workforce that labor part-time in warehouses loading, unloading, and sorting packages. Under UPS's management-by-stress, workers are expected to move packages that can weigh up to 150 pounds at a pace of 1,200 per hour. Not surprisingly, UPS has the highest injury rate in the industry; over a third of all employees were hurt in 1996 according to company reports.

The turn-over rate for these highly physical jobs is 400%, and those who stick it out average less than half the hourly wage of UPS full-timers; most bring home less than \$200 a week. The starting wage at UPS has been frozen since 1982 when the company successfully pushed through this two-tier system. Many workers have even taken on two UPS part-time jobs to make ends meet: full-time work under the same part-time pay.

United Parcel's turn towards lower-waged, part-time employees has brought about a change in the composition of the UPS workforce. More and more Black, Latino, Asian and immigrant workers are being employed as are increasing numbers of women. In Chicago UPS has brought in dozens of welfare recipients, largely Black women, as part of President Clinton's "welfare-to-work" scheme. Media coverage of the strike made the new look of the UPS workforce quite evident; Multi-racial/multi-national picket lines were the rule.

These workers face, in addition to the daily grind, racist and sexist harassment and discrimination. In California, dozens of African-American drivers have filed a lawsuit charging the company with systematic discrimination. None of these aspects of exploitation and oppression were taken up by the union during the strike.

THE STRIKE

All across the country, UPS workers kept picket lines solid. The Teamsters' bureaucracy ordered members not to interfere with management's meager attempts at running things, but in several cities workers' rage at UPS boiled over into fights with management and police. At no time was the strike actually under the control of the oppressed who labor for Big Brown. At all times the Teamsters' bureaucracy retained control and never had their authority challenged

from below. The only network within the Teamsters that exists separate from the bureaucracy is Teamsters for a Democratic Union (TDU), a union-reform movement started by socialists years ago. TDU has tied itself completely to the Teamsters "reform" president, Ron Carey, and has no goals further than a "strong union," least of all the liberation of the oppressed masses.

THE STRIKE AT THE TOP

Big strike victories are rare for unions these days but the stars, planets and moons were perfectly aligned for the International Brotherhood of Teamsters. Of course a convergence of more material factors could also explain its victory.

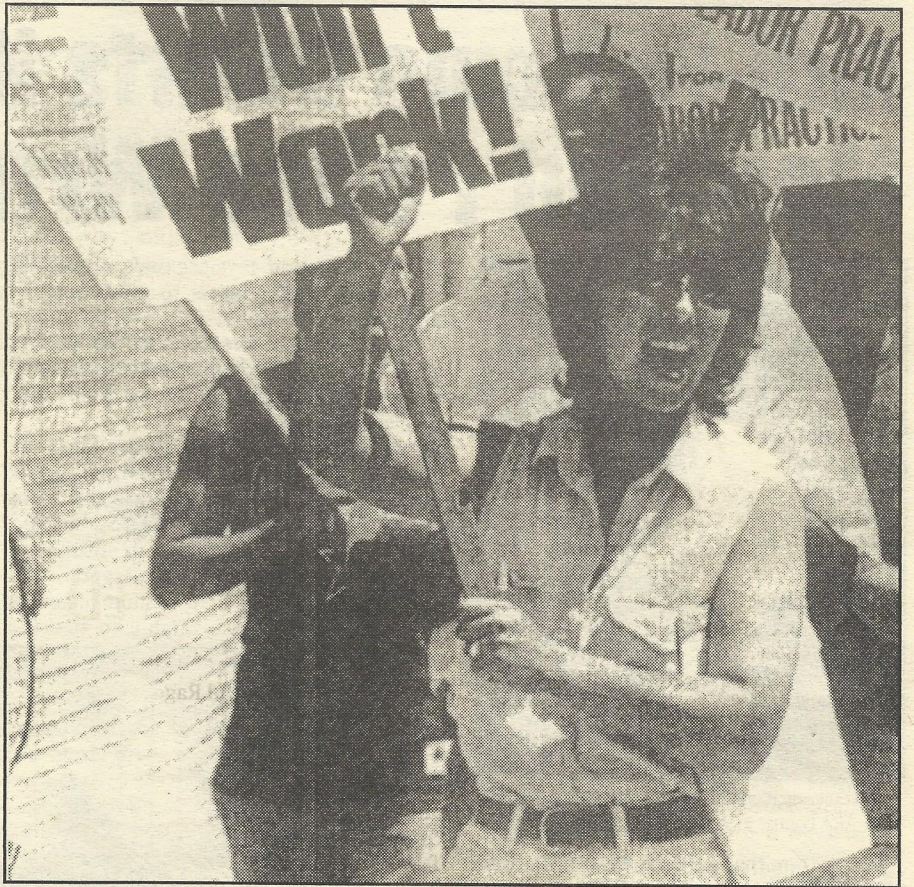
Besides UPS's vulnerability, the solid support of the ranks and the popularity of the strike, two other major factors brought on the victory: The union bureaucracy's willingness to wage a struggle and the position of Clinton's federal government.

The fact that the Teamsters' bureaucracy was willing to wage a struggle at all stands out, and there are a number of reasons for this, though the plight of the part-timer played a much smaller role than the labor lords and the left would have us believe.

The Teamsters' president, Ron Carey, has been in a difficult spot. His reform slate barely won re-election over the notoriously corrupt and pro-company "old-guard" led by Jimmy Hoffa Jr. The old guard's control of many locals and district councils has kept the union divided and limited Carey's authority. Carey needed a big win to solidify and strengthen his position.

Ron Carey, along with the new AFL-CIO leadership, is also ideologically committed to rebuilding the labor movement, engaging in struggle and winning reforms. Carey and the new breed of bureaucrats would like to establish the unions as a "left pole" in society to keep things balanced and to head off more disruptive forms of resistance to capitalist restructuring such as riots and wildcat strikes. A revitalized union movement would obviously also increase the influence and power of the labor lords.

Another interesting aspect of this strike was the role of the US state. Hours after Teamsters first set up picket lines, UPS chiefs were pleading and demanding that the White House declare a national emergency and forcibly end the strike. It would take weeks for UPS to hire and adequately train scabs, and since the teamsters' lines seemed solid, the only way for the company to put pressure on the union was the threat of government intervention. Despite UPS' pleas and requests from the National Association of Manufacturers and the retail



UPS strikers in Chicago

giants, Bill Clinton didn't budge; he refused to move against the Teamsters' strike. There are divisions among the oppressors about the best way to rule, and Clinton represents a section of the elite that has some concern that the push to downsize and disempower the US proletariat is too much, too fast and could have a destabilizing effect in the long run. Just as union leaders seek to channel peoples' resistance into their structures, Clinton needs to reinforce labor's ties to his Democratic Party.

LESSONS FOR THE REVOLUTIONARY ANARCHIST MOVEMENT

The strike at United Parcel Service was a good thing. A new generation got to witness the strength and leverage working people have when they withdraw their labor from the machine.

UPS is a particularly strong and arrogant corporation, and it felt good to give them a slap. But this struggle did not produce any autonomous workers' forms or movement, let alone any revolutionary ones.

A revitalized union movement that actually engages in real struggles for reforms will provide openings for anarchists to build a revolutionary movement. But as of

right now there is no organized anarchist presence at UPS, or in any other industry. This needs to change. In the 1970s young radicals in the US sought to connect with the exploited by taking jobs in factories and other mass workplaces and trying to organize among militant workers. They brought with them the arrogant, authoritarian, Marxist-Leninist outlook that dominated radical circles back then and their experience was decidedly mixed. Still anarchists in North America should try to draw what lessons we can from that history, as well as from the current attempts by anarchists in Europe and Africa to participate in working-class struggles.

Anarchists could initiate or help build networks of independent, direct action groups in different industries, extra-union organizations that could relate to the unions when that made sense, without getting trapped in the reformist logic of trade unionism. Such organizations could have an independent radical life of their own, fighting around issues the unions won't touch (sexism, racism, speed-ups, harassment) using methods the unions won't consider (sabotage, slow downs, occupations, wild cats) for goals beyond the bureaucrats' boundaries (international anti-



This UPS tractor-trailer ran off a ramp on Interstate 65 in Tennessee in August. It was being driven by a UPS manager during the strike. The manager died in the crash. Work aint so easy, huh?

anti-racist ACTION reports

Anti-Fa Demo Dwarfs KKK in Ohio Mounted Police Wreak Havok



ARA Louisville member uses her nurse's training and an ARA banner to stop Alice Massey's bleeding.

Four hundred police officers from over 34 departments were called into Hamilton, Ohio at taxpayers' expense on Saturday, September 20 to provide security for neo-Nazis who rallied on the courthouse steps there. Similar rallies by white supremacist groups were held across the midwest this fall. In Hamilton, about 50 neo-Nazis and KKK members attacked

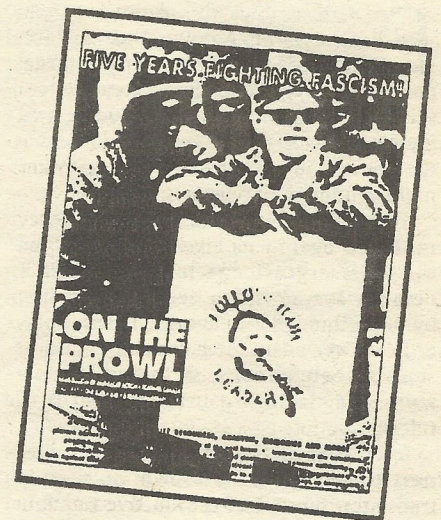
Blacks, Jews and Homosexuals during an hour-and-a-half address to around 30 of their supporters.

In a fenced-in area erected by police, some four to five hundred anti-fascist protesters gathered to oppose the Nazis and their message of hate.

After the rally, the police surged into the crowd of protesters on mounted police and instigated a violent confrontation. Riot police marched into the crowds beating their clubs on their shields to intimidate the activists. The order to disperse was immediately followed by random mactings and beatings of those unable to flee the area quickly enough. Those who did escape the concentrated area were followed, some for several blocks, where they were then beaten and maced by the cops. An ARA Columbus member was arrested when she demanded an officer who

was taking part in the brutality give her his badge number. Meanwhile, 16 people were arrested, some after receiving brutal attacks by police officers.

Alice Massey, 50, was in downtown Hamilton not to protest, but to shop. She made the mistake of walking in the path of a mounted police officer. When he ordered her to move, and she was unable to do so quick enough for his taste, the cop lunged his horse. The horse struck her head, cracked it open and caused her to fall. Three of her relatives, one a minor, were maced and arrested when



Toronto ARA: Five Years On the Prowl

On September 12, ARA (Toronto) celebrated our birthday. Five years before, to the day, the nameless group that became ARA held its first demonstration outside a downtown Courthouse to prevent a Nazi march.

The group has gone through many changes since the early days of constant demonstrations. The fascists have retreated from downtown Toronto and we have become more involved in extending our solidarity to community struggles against racist policing and in support of native sovereignty. But we're still on the prowl against neo-Nazi bullshit!

We've maintained and built on our kick-ass spirit and base of support. 700 people showed up to party with us for our birthday bash, almost half of them under 19 years of age. Eleven bands shared their talents; it was a genuine ska, punk, hardcore and Oi! jamboree. To mark our anniversary, we also published a special 24-page issue of On the Prowl —just one buck for our accumulated experience and even some analysis.

We are always facing new challenges. Most recently, local racists of all stripes have targeted Roma refugees (mistakenly known as Gypsies) fleeing discrimination and neo-Nazi violence in the Czech Republic. The media created bigoted hype and elected officials made blatantly racist accusations. Immigration authorities have used scare tactics to discourage Roma people from entering Canada, even telling some that neo-Nazi boneheads here would attack them on the street.

And sure enough, about 20 neo-nazis took the hint from the immigration creeps and held a little march against Roma people in front of a their temporary refuge in Scarborough, a suburb of Toronto.

On September 14 we held a community BBQ with the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty to welcome the Roma people and to denounce this racist provocation. The picnic was amazingly successful with about 100 people, along with lots of Roma people, on what was probably one of the last sunny summer days of the year. We made solid connections with the community as well as good friends. We have also gathered enough intelligence to ID the perpetrators of the cowardly nazi protest and will be organizing an action against the "leader" of that bonehead posse in the second week of October.★

Toronto ARA
PO Box 291 Stn. B
Toronto, ON
M5T 2T2 CANADA

Whose Detroit?

On Monday, September 22 Detroit ARA protested the planned construction of a new youth jail as part of their *Whose Detroit?* campaign. ARA's *Whose Detroit?* campaign challenges the city's redevelopment plans which favor big business and the wealthy and leave the city's youth and poor behind (or behind bars). The project to build a new youth jail is the only project for youth included in the redevelopment scheme. Around 30 Detroit ARA members rallied and handed out hundreds of leaflets attacking this lousy plan.

ARA also staged a rally in downtown suburban Royal Oak, MI

on October 10 in response to a racially-motivated attack on one of their members there by neo-Nazis. Joey was hanging out with friends in this lily-white suburb when a gang of neo-Nazis chased him, beat him and damaged his vehicle.

Upcoming actions in the *Whose Detroit?* campaign include protesting the outrageously poor conditions and budget cutbacks in the Detroit public schools, and targeting a symbol of gentrification, the Fox Theater, which is owned by Mike Illich, local millionaire, aspiring city planner and owner of restaurant chains and two Detroit professional sports teams.★

Detroit ARA
PO Box 321211
Detroit, MI 48232

Anti-Racists Confront Neo-Nazi in Fargo, ND

Amber, an anti-racist activist from Fargo, North Dakota wears a souvenir around her wrist of her resistance to organized white supremacy: a red cloth strip from a Nazi flag she and her ARA buddies tore into shreds at a rally in front of white supremacist leader Michael

Hansen's house on October 6. ARA Fargo-Moorhead, in existence for about a year, rallied along with Fargo South High School students in response to an incident the previous week when Hansen, host of a weekly "White Power Hour" cable access TV show and self-proclaimed member of the "National Socialist White Revolutionary Party of the Midwest," distributed flyers on South High's campus. Hansen's flyer supported students' "absolute right to display the confederate flag..." under which, he boasted, "Southern White People of the Ku Klux Klan battled to have their civil rights restored." Hansen pulled a knife on a student who confronted him while he was flyering.

Students had recently revived the South High practice, begun in 1980, of waving confederate flags to represent "South" at homecoming football contests. After an assistant principal confiscated the flags at the game, Hansen proclaimed this an act of anti-white bigotry. The assistant principal took the flags because they violated a four-year-old law banning flags at any area athletic event.

After a lunch time rally called by South High students, ARA members among them and some of the other protesters (60-70 in all) headed over to Hansen's apartment/TV studio where he broadcasts his weekly show against the backdrop of two paintings of Hitler.

In response to the crowd's jeers, Hansen emerged from his apartment onto his balcony and began to unfurl a swastika flag. Before he could do so, a student leapt onto the second floor balcony to grab it. Hansen struck the student in the head with the flag pole and broke his jaw; still the anti-racist held on and they exchanged blows. The flag fell to the ground and was shredded by the crowd. The anti-racist was arrested and charged with assault, disorderly conduct and incitement to riot. Another protester was arrested for breaking one of Hansen's windows and a woman was also picked off by the cops after she scored a direct hit with a half-full two liter soda bottle. ARA members distributed flyers opposing not only organized white supremacists but institutionalized racism in police departments and elsewhere. Their flyer also proudly proclaimed "we believe the only way to smash racism is to do it ourselves! We are also anti-sexist and pro-queer."

After four hours of harassment, Hansen slinked out his back door and drove away. He was later evicted from his building.★

Fargo-Moorhead ARA
PO Box 1445
Fargo, ND 58102

New chapters of the Anti-Racist Action Network are forming constantly; the number of groups has quadrupled since last year to 85! Contact Columbus ARA for addresses and info:

Columbus ARA
PO Box 82097
Columbus, OH 43202
614-424-9074

or check the ARA Network links list at
<http://www.aranet.org/links.html>



ARA takes the struggle to a bigot's front yard.

Public Cervix Announcement: Learn Self-Help Menstrual Extraction!

BY SCARLET OS

By the conservative estimate of the World Health Organization, 100,000 women die globally from unsafe illegal abortions every year. Fewer and fewer women in the US have access to safe, legal abortion. Women in 85% of counties in the US have no abortion provider in their county. Women living in twelve US states have to cross state lines to get an abortion. If they can afford one, in all likelihood they then have to contend with any number of the following: traveling far for services, wading their way through verbal and physical anti-abortion abuse: antis harassing them at home as they sit through demeaning 24-hour waiting periods, parental consent laws, and state-scripted anti-abortion counseling that clinic personnel are forced to read.

While movements for liberation need to step up our battle for reproductive rights in the streets, women can also learn how to provide basic gynecological care, including how to end early term pregnancies safely with a group of friends. Getting involved in a self-help group rather than waiting to see what awful things the anti-women/anti-abortion forces come up with next is a potent offensive move in the battle for women's freedom.

Self-help groups are small groups of women (as small as four to as large as twelve) who get together regularly to study and practice lay women's health care. Women teach each other how to check their cervixes for irregularities (potentially detecting precancerous cells), study and practice identification and treatment of basic infections and STDs, do self-breast exams, check ovaries and uteruses for growths or cysts. Group members learn to detect their own fertility patterns. Some groups study herbal treatment and herbal abortion. Some groups learn menstrual extraction (M.E.) and regularly practice it on each other. It takes a commitment to meet regularly for six months to a year to build up the skills to safely practice M.E. You cannot perform this technique on yourself (i.e., it is not a "self-abortion" technique) or with one other person—the practice of M.E. requires a trained group.

M.E. is not a substitute for legal abortion. There are some gynecological problems that do need more highly-trained medical personnel, and there aren't nearly enough groups around to meet the need of 1.6 million abortions per year that are performed in the US. M.E.'s most significant limitation is that its technology is useful only to eight weeks past a woman's last menstrual period. One of the goals of the self-help movement is to educate women about their fertility, enabling them to both control fertility and recognize pregnancy earlier on. But there is no substitute for accessible clinical abortion for women who are late in their first or into their second trimester of a pregnancy they want to end. But just imagine how different the political terrain would be today if over the past 20 years the women who pioneered self-help continued to share and develop self-help skills and organize groups across the country!

M.E. HISTORY AND POLITICS

Self-help and the lay women's health movement in the US were born out of the 60s and 70s feminist consciousness-raising movements when a section of radical and socialist feminists realized that lobbying the government to save women from back alley abortions was not enough. Even with abortion's legalization women would remain dependent on a medical system that delivers health care only to those who can pay, underfunds all research pertaining to women's bodies (whether it be breast cancer, safer contraception or HIV) and keeps women ignorant about their own bodies. At the root of the self-help philosophy is a criticism of hierarchical, for-profit, western medicine.

With a speculum she 'liberated' from her doctors office, Carol Downer convened a group of her friends to figure out how to control their fertility. They soon realized

that the equipment needed to put together a vacuum aspiration kit and to sterilize instruments could be found in their own kitchens.

These pioneering women organized others into small self-help groups, often formed out of already-existing consciousness-raising groups and then founded feminist clinics. Their efforts changed the way women's health care is administered. Over-the-counter pregnancy tests, mirrors in exam rooms, the range of at-home practices from home birth to home treatments like using yogurt to treat vaginal yeast infections, and the notion that people should have information and control over their health care were results of this early activism. The clinics some of these women set up ran on a self-help model and worked to break down authoritarian doctor/patient relationships by teaching women how to take an active part in their own basic health care.

The Federation of Feminist Women's Health Centers formed out of these clinics. They arrived at a fundamentally different understanding of women's physiology and sexual response through their own research. In so doing they exposed the deeply-entrenched sexism in common medical

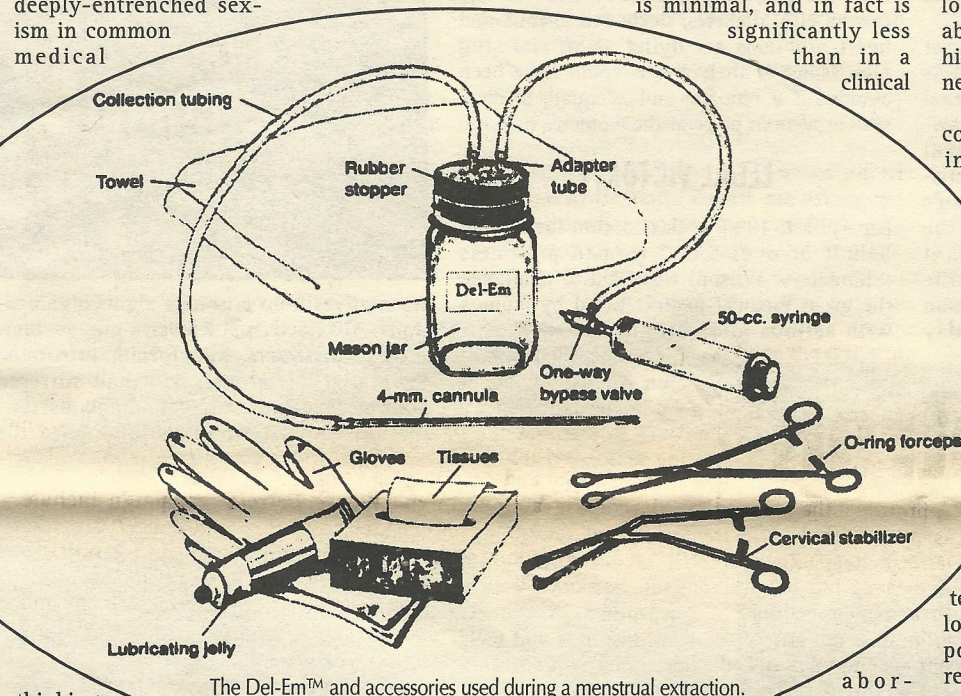
charge", but it means that greater care is taken than in clinical settings everything is double checked.

Any group spends the first six months mastering/mistressing cervical and pelvic exams and practicing sterile technique. By practicing on non-pregnant uteruses group members learn the range of their variation and develop their ability to visualize the shape, placement and size of the uterus in the abdominal cavity. (Self-help groups spend at least six months developing this skill while medical students get one or two lessons on performing pelvis before they are practicing in the field!)

Again, this process can only be performed in a group and only with people who are trained in uterine sizing and all aspects of the process and use only sterile instruments, gloves, and sterile technique.

COMPLICATIONS & RISKS

The potential complications from M.E. are the same as those from an abortion. However, the likelihood of perforation, infection or hemorrhage occurring with a practiced group is minimal, and in fact is significantly less than in a clinical



thinking about women's bodies. For example, most thought that the vagina was an open canal, open for the entry of penises or the exit of babies. It just takes inserting a finger or a speculum to know that the vagina is not an open passageway as it is portrayed in every high school biology and medical text, but it is a potential one, requiring lube, sexual arousal or labor to accommodate a range of dilation.

Their books, *Staying Out Of The Gynecologist's Office*, and *New View Of A Woman's Body* (Speculum Press) are invaluable resources. *A Woman's Book Of Choices: Abortion, Menstrual Extraction and RU486* (Four Walls Eight Windows, 1992) contains the most comprehensive discussion of menstrual extraction. (All three are available from Feminist Women's Health Center 106 East "E" St. Yakima, WA 98901 509-575-6473 x112.)

WHAT'S AN M.E.?

M.E. is a home health care technique to remove the content of women's uteruses around the time of their expected period. When performed in a group of women who have been practicing the technique, using sterile instruments and sterile technique, this method can be used as early abortion up to eight weeks from a woman's last menstrual period.

The woman having the procedure gets to be at home, or a safe place of her choice. Unlike a clinical setting, she is in control. If she wants to put in her speculum or needs to take a break, she can. What a difference from any clinical medical procedure!

One or two women serve as support. Their job is to help the woman maintain deep breathing patterns and keep track on how she is doing. A couple women are involved in the technical aspect—this not only breaks down the authority of having one person "in

tion. Because with M.E., the instruments used are bendable, the uterine walls are thick when women are not pregnant or are early on in pregnancy, less powerful suction is used, and the practice of having women check on each other ensures completion. A Woman's Book Of Choices also provides an excellent discussion of complications that can arise in clinical abortions and how to contend with them.

Women with unwanted pregnancies will find ways to end them, even if it means resorting to unsafe, life-threatening methods. M.E. with sterile technique is simple and it is safe. The biggest risk posed from practicing M.E. is not a potential health risk for the woman receiving the M.E. but a risk for the women performing it. Women have not actually been busted for performing menstrual extraction. In fact, menstrual extraction when practiced in small groups of women for themselves with out diagnosing pregnancy has not been determined to be illegal because it has never gone to court. But legal risks are involved. In 1974 Carol was arrested and charged with practicing medicine without a license for spooning plain yogurt in her friend's vagina to help her with a yeast infection. And currently the state and federal governments are spying on, arresting lay midwives and charging them with practicing medicine without a license. Self-help groups that are practicing M.E. thus take security precautions to protect themselves, such as protecting the identity of group members (i.e., you've got the right to talk about your own experience, but not anybody else's).

The laws vary from country to country and women using the same techniques to help women where abortion is illegal will need to figure out how best to protect themselves. The self-help model has been practiced by hundreds if not thousands of women in the US since the 70s. Variations on the self-help model span from extending

groups to women who are known and trusted, to the formation of underground abortion networks that use M.E. technology to provide abortion services. Obviously, the farther out groups go from their circle, the greater legal risk they undertake. Groups that are providing service are no longer practicing self-help.

STARTING A GROUP

Most likely you won't become a member of an already existing group. Security concerns keep most groups closed. To ensure a trusting and secure atmosphere in your group, consider using the same criteria you'd use in building an affinity group.

Many women want to learn M.E. but feel they need to include an experienced person in their group to teach them. Most women who have M.E. skills don't want to "out" themselves. This makes the self-help movement rather inaccessible or so the criticism goes. But I think there are ways that women who have the skills can extend their knowledge and experience to communities of women who have the least access gynecological care. If you are an old hand, talk about the politics of M.E., talk about the history and the potential, consider helping new groups get started.

Also a group of lay women, with some commitment and willingness to seek out information can learn how to practice M.E. using *A Woman's Book Of Choices*. If your group continues to have questions or concerns as you study and practice self-exam, pelvis and sterile technique, some members might want to consider upping their basic medical knowledge by taking an EMT class or medic training.

**IT'S NOT THE TECHNOLOGY,
IT'S "HOW" AND "IF" WE
USE IT!**

No technology is inherently liberatory—it's all about how we use it. The technology of menstrual extraction, simple, low-tech vacuum aspiration, is used in the population-control practice of menstrual regulation in some areas of India. There, women are required to come into the clinic on or around the time of their periods to have the content of their uterus removed (if there was a pregnancy beginning to develop, it is no longer). Food, access to resources, community pressure, are all used to coerce women in communities where menstrual regulation is practiced to keep them coming back to the clinic. The contrast between this repressive practice and self-help is obvious—women are not freely choosing to remain non-pregnant, the recipient is not in control of the process, and there is less safety and care involved as one hurried medical person and not a group of women checking on each other.

CONCLUSION

Self-help, like all community-based, lay health movements, highlights the total failure of the system to meet basic human needs. Rather than simply making demands on a system designed to reap profit off of women's needs, self-helpers are involved in developing women's abilities to begin to actually meet some of them.

Without control of our fertility, women cannot function equally in society. And in most places women are subject to unreasonable threats to their health and lives when choosing to end an unwanted pregnancy. Self-help liberates women insofar as it increases women's knowledge and concrete control over our bodies.

Reproductive freedom involves a lot more than access to abortion; it involves free sexual expression, safe contraceptive methods, basic gynecological health and knowledge about our fertility cycles, freedom from sexual violence, quality prenatal care and safe birthing practices. Controlling our bodies means women being able to actually be mothers if they want to and provide quality lives to our kids. The battle is a big one, and we need to redefine it to take on reproductive freedom—not just abortion rights. In the mean

Legal Settlement in Women Prisoners' Lawsuit Activists Keep Fighting Medical Neglect and Torture



BY JUDY GREENSPAN

Chants of "Women Prisoners Under Attack—What do we do? Act Up! Fight Back!" echoed outside the California's two largest women's prisons on Saturday, October 4, as more than 100 people from all over the state protested against the medical neglect and abuse of women prisoners.

Organized by the California Coalition for Women Prisoners (CCWP), the protest was called to demand the enforcement of a legal settlement reached in the class action lawsuit challenging the criminal medical neglect, abuse, and torture of women prisoners at the Central California Women's Facility in Chowchilla (CCWF) and the California Institution for Women (CIW) at Frontera. The protest also targeted the newest California prison, Valley State Prison for Women (VSP) which opened in May

1995 right across the street from C C W F. Together both CCWF and VSP hold hostage nearly 7,000 poor women of color. Nearly four years ago, the serious abuse suffered by these women was brought to the attention of prisoners' rights and AIDS activists. The first demonstration in Chowchilla was held in January 1994 in front of the world's largest women's prison—CCWF. Unfortunately, while the names may have changed and the prisoners may have aged, the story remains the same. Women prisoners with chronic and serious diseases like cancer, HIV, diabetes, sickle-cell anemia and heart problems are dying at an alarming rate. Many of their deaths could have been avoided if a humane and adequate medical system were in place at the women's prisons.

LEGAL VICTORY?

On April 4, 1995, a class action lawsuit on behalf of over 5,000 women prisoners (Shumate v. Wilson) was filed to challenge the gross medical neglect faced by women with serious and chronic illnesses. This lawsuit was settled out of court on August 11, but it has yet to be certified by the court. In fact, the court hearing will not take place until December. In the meantime, the California Department of Corrections (CDC) is continuing its business-as-usual torture of women prisoners. Women prisoners and their supporters in the California Coalition for Women Prisoners have no faith in the ability of the CDC to live up to its legal obligations. The October 4 demonstration was held to expose the lies of the CDC while women die.

This past Labor Day weekend, Minerva Gonzales,

an HIV+ woman, died at CCWF. She had been very ill for two weeks and was totally dehydrated. Every time she went to sick call, she was told there was nothing wrong. Instead, Medical Technical Assistants (who are really only prison guards who have taken a few nursing courses) told her if she could still walk there was nothing wrong with her. Minerva, who was HIV+ but asymptomatic, died in her cell after enduring weeks of incredible pain and discomfort. Although the prison has labeled her death "AIDS-related," activists on the outside believe it was medical neglect that killed her and are demanding an investigation of her death.

Speaking at the demonstration were rep-

resentatives from prisoners' rights organiza-

tions, AIDS activists, women's groups, families of prisoners, and former prisoners. Several HIV+ women who had suffered poor medical care, segregation and discrimination while incarcerated addressed the protest. Lawyers who are currently conducting an investigation of the abuse suffered by women prisoners at Valley State Prison talked about their visits inside with the women. A statement by Linda Field, one of the plaintiffs of the class action lawsuit (Shumate v. Wilson) was read.



The next day, California Coalition for Women Prisoners members and legal representatives from the HIV/AIDS in Prison Project and Women's Positive Legal Action Network met with women inside both the Central California Women's Facility and Valley State Prison for Women. The women were very happy about the demonstration. In fact, some of the women from CCWF actually saw and heard part of the protest. Most of the women, however, were locked down in their cells. The protest was carried

on a major television station that evening. If vigorously enforced the settlement reached on August 11 could vastly improve medical care delivery at both CCWF and CIW. But the second largest women's prison in the state, also located in Chowchilla, Valley State Prison for Women, is proudly dubbed by its warden, the "Pelican Bay for Women." The medical care at this prison is not covered by the Shumate settlement because the prison opened in May 1995, a month after the lawsuit was originally filed. Several prisoners there have already died of neglect and abuse.

There are some indications that women prisoners inside CCWF are facing retaliation

for their role

in the lawsuit.

The CCWF

prison admin-

istration is

also manipu-

lating the lan-

guage of the

settlement to

limit and

weaken the

HIV peer edu-

cation pro-

gram. Clearly

nothing will

change unless

people on the

outside con-

tinue to

expose the

criminal treat-

ment of women in prison, a majority of

whom are poor women of color, victims of

the US government war against the poor.

The words of Charisse Shumate, the

lead prisoner in the lawsuit, expressed the

sentiment of many women inside, "We

won part of the battle but we are losing

the war. Their attitudes are changing

slowly for the better. . . The state still will

not admit to their lack of knowledge of

women's medical needs, their outright

neglect that caused us to watch each

other die behind these walls, who were

not sentenced to death by a judge. But

our death is on the hands of those who

want to put on a band aid cure and call it

adequate care."

The California Coalition is making plans

to intensify its support for the women

inside and to advocate loudly against the

prison system's abuse and neglect of

women prisoners.★

For more information on CCWF call (415) 255-

7036, ext. 4 or (510) 834-5656, ext. 3150.



Ex-prisoner Gwen Patton addresses the crowd at Chowchilla Oct. 4.

Italian Anarchists in Prison, Trial Starts

Today in Italy, scores of anarchists languish in prison. Laws of "criminal and subversive association" codified in the early part of the century, perfected in the Mussolini-era and given new teeth during the armed struggle period of the 1970s, have been dusted off to lend credence to the fiction that an invisible, "mafia-like" entity of subversive criminals organized into a secret society wage a criminal battle against the "democratic society."

Over the last three years, Italian police forces have repeatedly raided anarchist homes and squats all over Italy and arrested activists. Of 68 initially arrested, 58 are still imprisoned. Their trials began in mid-October of this year. They are accused of such crimes as "subversive association," "participation in an armed band," and "subversion of the democratic order." These charges have been used to neutralize scores of unconnected but dedicated revolutionary anarchist militants.

Those imprisoned include Alfredo Bonnano, author of numerous books and articles and Jean Weir, publisher of Elephant Editions and a well known purveyor of classical and new anarchist titles.

Evidence against them is non-existent and centers around one informer, a young girl who was once the girlfriend of one anarchist. After enlisting her services to implicate several anarchists in a bank robbery in late 1994, Italian police began a campaign of raids and arrests for these "crimes of association." This is not the first time anarchists have been subjected to a huge repression and frame up. In the 1980s, the Italian state tried but failed to convict most of these same individuals for "subversion" on four separate occasions.

Anarchists and other supporters of the prisoners held demonstrations at Italian consulates around the world on Oct. 20, when the trial began.★

For further information:

CDA c/o El Paso

Via Paso Buole 47 - 10127 Torino Italy

<http://www.ecn.org/zero/anarchy.htm>

Ten Things You Can Do to Help Free Mumia Abu-Jamal

1 Mobilize for the December 6 rally in Philadelphia. Join the call and go to the Peoples International Tribunal for Justice for Mumia Abu-Jamal. Contact: International Concerned Friends and Family of Mumia Abu-Jamal P.O. Box 19709, Philadelphia, PA 19143, Tel (215) 476-8812, Fax (215) 476-7551 E-mail: Mumia@aol.com, <http://www.Mumia.org>. December marks the 16th year of Mumia's imprisonment.

2 Contribute to Mumia Abu-Jamal's Legal Defense Fund. Send a check or money order payable to the Black United Fund/MAJ Defense and mail to BUF, 2227 N. Broad St. Philadelphia, PA 10132.

3 Call, write or fax the Pennsylvania Governor to demand a new and fair trial for Mumia. Tom Ridge, Main Capitol Building, Rm 225, Harrisburg, PA 17120. Tel 717-787-2500, 717-772-8284 fax, or 717-783-1198.

4 Call or write Chief Justice P. Flaherty to demand a new and fair trial for Mumia! Supreme Court of PA, Six Gateway Center, Suite 6161, 11 Stanwix St. Pittsburgh, PA 15222 Tel 412-565-5525. In session: PA Supreme Court Philadelphia, Rm 560 City Hall, 19107. Tel 215-560-6365.

5 Call or fax National Public Radio (NPR) affiliates and all radio stations and tell them that you want to hear Mumia's insightful commentaries. NPR 1-800-235-1212; fax: 202-414-3025; President/CEO Delano Lewis dlewis@npr.org

6 Contact Prison Warden Ben Varnum and let him know you are aware of Mumia's case and the horrific human rights violations at SCI Greene, 1030 East Roy Furman Highway, Waynesburg, PA 15370. Phone 412-852-2902, Fax 412-852-2909.

7 Write Mumia and let him know that you care and you will struggle with him for justice. Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM 8335, 1040 East Roy Furman Hwy, Waynesburg, PA 15370.

8 Call 1-800-VISIT-PA to say you won't visit Pennsylvania or support Pennsylvania corporations until Mumia has received a new trial and all executions are halted.

9 Counter media disinformation by confronting the networks, writers, and broadcasters who publish lies and police propaganda. Read and listen to Mumia's books and radio essays: Live From Death Row; From Death Row This is Mumia Abu-Jamal (Tapes); Death Blossoms; and Race for Justice. See the brilliant

fast-paced film "Mumia Abu-Jamal: A Case for Reasonable Doubt?" available at your local video store distributed by Fox Lorber and Movies Unlimited 800 466 8437. Also available from Prison Radio/Quixote radioqc@sirius.com. 415-648-4505.

10 Join your local Mumia organizing group, or start a new one.

LEGAL UPDATE

Currently Mumia awaits a decision from the Pennsylvania Supreme Court on his Post Conviction Relief Application, his final state appeal. If this is denied, as many are predicting, the Governor of Pennsylvania Tom Ridge has promised to immediately sign a death warrant. Mumia would have 30-90 days (the length of the execution warrant) to file his only federal habeas corpus petition, and get a stay from a federal judge.★

For info on planned protests and ways to get involved in your city contact:

Concerned Friends and Family of Mumia Abu-Jamal

PO Box 19709, Philadelphia, PA 19143 Tel (215) 476-8812 Fax (215) 476-7551

Email: Mumia@aol.com <http://www.Mumia.org>

Kenyan People's Movement Gains Ground Against Ruthless Moi Regime

By MATTHEW QUEST

After a year of protest, bloody clashes, and demands for reform by the people of Kenya; a diverse, battle-tested mass movement has emerged in opposition to the ruthless, neo-colonial police-state that rules this east African country. Grassroots forces who long clamored for long-promised democratic elections have now made uncompromising demands for, at the very least, sweeping constitutional reform before voting takes place. Daniel arap Moi, billionaire dictator of Kenya for 19 years, has refused to set a date to elect a new government, that is due to take office in January 1998, and has defied numerous demonstrations of thousands with tear gas and bullets.

Current laws dating from the British colonial era allow detention without trial, arbitrarily restrict freedom of speech, media, assembly, the freedom to build independent political organizations, and give broad powers to local traditional ethnic leaders.

International and local human rights advocates have singled out police brutality as a major abuse legitimized by these laws. Two of the more prominent attacks have been against student activist Solomon Muruli and Rev. Timothy Njoya. In February, Muruli was discovered burned beyond recognition. He was blown up in his residence hall at Nairobi University. Two months earlier he was abducted, tortured and left for dead. In July, Njoya was beaten bloody and left unconscious in his church, All Saints Cathedral, which was invaded and desecrated by police. The church was reportedly giving refuge to fleeing demonstrators.

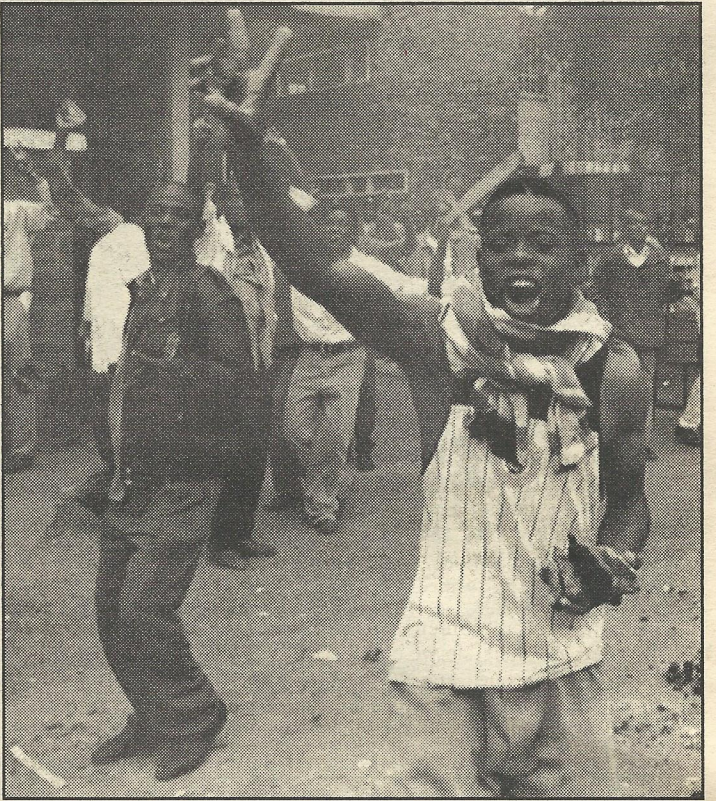
After an early August rebellion by ethnic groups that traditionally oppose Moi in Mombassa, a resort city on the Indian Ocean coast, the state threatened to cancel talks planned with opposition leaders seeking reform. The police force's body count was especially high. However, after a general strike in Nairobi, in which the air traffic controllers prominently participated, crippling tourism for a couple of days, interna-

tional capitalist forces told Moi to go back to the negotiating table. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has begun to withhold much needed loans promised to insure the Kenyan state bureaucracy runs smoothly. Kenya is considered a relative "success" story by the international capitalists who profit from their economy and exploit the Kenyans' labor.

The overthrow in May of Moi's ally Mobutu Sese Seko, former long-time billionaire dictator of Zaire (now Congo-Kinshasa), by armed forces led by Laurent Kabila, has inspired ordi-

nary people to chant "Moi-butu" at demonstrations. Some are talking of a "Kabila solution," and are planning for a possible insurrectionary armed struggle on the horizon. The IMF, UN, and multinational capitalists, and their bureaucratic bidders, are also eyeing that possibility, like foxes; "Kabila solution" just might suit their needs as well.

If Moi's neo-colonial government does not administer Kenya more efficiently he will become expendable to his Big Business overlords. Reaping profits for himself and imperialism is not enough; Moi must minimize the frequency of rebellions that can't be crushed without massive exposure by the international media. The possibility exists, just as in the Congo, that if the present Kenyan regime can not be reformed, imperialists will be happy to sponsor its overthrow by uniting with and if necessary, inventing, a more conservative faction of the movement for liberation like they did at



Anti-Moi protesters rock Nairobi



Moi's boys

the moment of Kenyan "independence" from British colonialism in 1963.

The Kenyan parliament is preparing to adopt a package of constitutional reforms that should give more space to this freedom struggle. While armed struggle will continue to be illegal and necessary, maintaining and broadening mass democratic participation among the people in the struggle against Moi's regime is paramount. Only through mass education and debate can ideas such as the abolition of capitalism, the state, and neo-colonialism be raised so they can be fought for. An armed struggle in the absence of mass democratic institutions and participation is much easier for imperialist forces to co-opt or if necessary initiate. In the coming days, ordinary people and international capitalists will make decisions in struggle which will determine the immediate future of Kenya. Moi will follow or be removed—one way or another.★

African Anarchism: The History of a Movement

African Anarchism
By Sam Mbah and I.E. Igariwey
Trade Paperback, 119 pages, \$8.95
See Sharp Press, PO Box 1731
Tucson, AZ 85702-1731

By BILL MEYERS

Since the fall of the "communist" regime in the Soviet Union, anarchists have attempted to claim the predominant role in the world's revolutionary politics. Early hopes of speedy advancement of the anarchist cause, notably hopes for an anarchist revolution in that same Soviet Union, faded as capitalism and imperialism marched triumphantly over the world's working people. In spite of this there is evidence that anarchists are capable of successfully confronting capitalism, now that we don't have communists stabbing us in the back, continues to accumulate. One of the most hopeful signs is the emergence of a strong anarchist trend both in Africa and among African Americans. *African Anarchism* portrays the current state of the movement in Africa and shows how African anarchists are continuing to develop both theory and practice. From African anarchism, North American anarchists have much to learn.

The book begins with a chapter on anarchism in general, followed by the development of anarchism in Europe over the last two centuries. Most anarchists will already be familiar with this material and want to skip ahead to chapter three, "Anarchist Precedents in Africa." It is here that the book really takes off, show-

ing how some pre-European invasion African communities functioned according to anarchist precepts. The period of European colonization, with its introduction of the modern state and imperialist exploitation, is described along with its effects on African societies.

Chapter five covers the failure of socialism in Africa. This chapter is crucial because it paints a picture of African

governments and societies in recent times, and provides the insight necessary to advance

an anarchist theory and practice. It is followed by a chapter specifically addressing the impediments to a stronger anarchist movement and ultimately, an anarchist society, in Africa. Problems include the military, religious influences, and ethnic divisions. Much of this chapter applies equally well, with variations, to the United States and probably most of the rest of the world. The final chapter is a plea to do what is necessary to take anarchism forward in Africa.

Anarchist organizations, present and historic, are presented as



occasion arises in the book. Perhaps the most prominent among them is the Awareness League of Nigeria. This began as a student study group with a wide mixture of political trends in the 1980s. The collapse of Marxist Socialism elsewhere, combined with criticism of Marxism within the group, led them to an anarchist position. Particularly important to the group's development was the critical analysis of Marxism in *The Torch* (A Trotskyist paper produced by the now defunct Revolutionary Socialist League) by Ron Taber titled "A Look at Leninism." [The authors appear to be unaware that some former *Torch* people joined Love & Rage.] In 1991 the Awareness League declared itself a libertarian socialist organization. The League operates primarily in Southern Nigeria, has about 1,000 members, and in 1996 affiliated with the International Workers Association, the anarcho-syndicalist international.

Since much of Africa consists of former British colonies, many African anarchists speak English. Therefore communication and solidarity between Americans and Africans should be relatively easy to practice, despite the physical distance involved. Combined with the ongoing uprising in Chiapas and the emergence of an African American anarchist trend [as exemplified by the publication *Black Autonomy* (323 Broadway Ave. E. #914, Seattle, WA 98102; send \$2 for a sample)], the emergence of African anarchism onto the world stage offers a promising hope for international revolutionary anarchism.

I believe this book is important and inspiring reading for serious anarchists. It fills an important gap in our knowledge.★

The Zapatistas

By Christopher Day and Jessica Esther

First there was the waiting. The 1,111 Zapatista delegates to the Founding Congress of the FZLN (The Zapatista National Liberation Front) in Mexico City were supposed to arrive in San Cristobal de las Casas between two and five in the afternoon. A small crowd huddled under a tarp in the pouring rain to meet them in the cathedral square. Gradually the crowd grew. By eight o'clock the Zapatistas still had not arrived, but the rain had cleared and now about 2,000 people waited in the square. Music was playing from the stage; a few hot air balloons with "EZLN" painted on the side were released into the night sky, but still no Zapatistas.

Finally at ten o'clock, the Zapatistas entered the city of San Cristobal for the first time since they took over the city in the uprising of January 1994. This time though, they were not armed. The whole town lined up along Avenida Insurgentes to watch them come in. The Zapatistas marched down the street chanting "El pueblo unido, jamas sera vencido!" (The people united will never be defeated!) and "El pueblo armado, jamas sera callado!" (The people armed will never be silenced!). Women carrying babies, little girls with no shoes, old men and young boys all wearing scarves or ski masks over their faces marched into the center of the city. The crowd watched in almost complete silence, with a smattering of applause here and there. The population of San Cristobal is largely made up of "coletos" who trace their roots back to the old Spanish colonial elite and are generally not supportive of the Zapatistas or any other Indigenous struggle.

As the Zapatistas continued to pour into the city, it became clear that this was not simply a parade of the 1,111 delegates. Fourteen thousand other Zapatistas had traveled from their remote communities to San Cristobal to see their delegates off. It took two hours for all of the Zapatistas to enter the square. On the stage, the leaders of the delegation were presented with a baton, representing the authority of the indigenous communities; the Mexican flag representing the indigenous demand to be a part of the country that has historically

marginalized them; and the EZLN flag. Afterwards, hundreds of Zapatistas made makeshift beds and slept under the arches of the municipal building, while others danced the night away, leaving the city before the first light. The next day, walking around the city, it was hard to believe they had actually been there.

RECENT EVENTS

The EZLN's march on Mexico City occurred in the midst of a deepening political crisis for the ruling Party of the Institutionalized Revolution (PRI). On July 6 the PRI suffered a number of major electoral defeats. (see article p. ??) The alliance of opposition parties that defeated the PRI drew support from people disgusted with a number of unpopular PRI initiatives. The privatization of much of the social security system, a colossal bail-out for investors in an ill-fated system of toll roads, and the loosening of price controls on a number of essential commodities have all inflamed public opinion against the PRI. (In the state of Tabasco, as if to demonstrate their complete lack of contact with reality, the PRI-controlled legislature passed a law against the sale of cold beer—predictably provoking a wave of protests).

As the EZLN's march drew closer to the capital the government responded erratically. In mid-August the Mexican Federal Army dismantled their fortifications and withdrew troops from a number of communities in Chiapas. This surprise move stirred speculation about a broader demilitarization of the region that the military promptly quashed when they first explained they were only moving the troops around and then proceeded to re-establish themselves in one of the communities from which they had just withdrawn. On the day the Zapatistas left San Cristobal the bodies of three young men were found who had apparently been executed by Los Jaguares, an elite unit of Mexico City's police. The executions took place amidst a series of massive police raids on poor and working-class neighborhoods on the pretext of attacking organized crime, in which large numbers of innocent people have been beaten and arrested.

OAXACA

The Zapatista's march route took them through several historical and contemporary centers of popular resistance in Southern Mexico. The march's second major stop was the city of Juchitan in the state of Oaxaca. Where indigenous communities have risen up against a proposed canal that would connect the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans and run through their lands. The Zapatistas were warmly welcomed by over ten thousand people who had waited for them for over ten hours in the rain. The crowd included the municipal leadership of Juchitan which is under the control of the popular organization, COCEI (The Worker, Student and Campesino Coalition of the Isthmus). In Oaxaca the Zapatistas were joined by 500 people from eight different indigenous ethnic groups in Oaxaca. Another thousand members of 500 Years of Indigenous Resistance from the neighboring state of Guerrero also joined the march.

THE SAN ANDRES ACCORDS

While the ostensible purpose of the march was to enable the Zapatistas to attend the founding convention of the FZLN and the second National Assembly of the National Indigenous Congress (CNI), the march also served to put pressure on the government to comply with the San Andres accords signed almost two years ago between the government and the EZLN. The San Andres accords committed the government to making a number of changes in the law and in the constitution to guarantee indigenous communities a much greater degree of self-determination including the recognition of their own forms of self-government, and most crucially, control over land and natural resources. The government's failure to comply with the accords led the EZLN to break off negotiations with the government last September. Compliance with the Accords has become the main demand of Indigenous Mexico and the Zapatista march has made the accords fiasco the primary example of the undemocratic character of the Mexican state.

MORELOS

By the time the Zapatista caravan rolled into Tepoztlan in the state of Morelos, it included over a hundred vehicles and stretched out over 9 and a half miles. Passing through the night they were greeted by crowds of people with flags, torches, and bonfires. Morelos was the starting point of the 1911 uprising led by Emiliano Zapata from whom the modern Zapatistas take their name.

BUILDING THE FRENTE

The process of organizing the Zapatista National Liberation Front (FZLN) began with the EZLN's Fourth Declaration of the Lacandon Jungle. In the period leading up to the founding convention of the FZLN, the leadership of the EZLN asserted with increasing frequency that the FZLN was not to be "the political arm" of the EZLN in the sense that, for example, Sinn Fein is the political wing of the Irish Republican Army.

Instead the Zapatistas envisioned the FZLN as an independent "political force of a new type" that explicitly rejected the pursuit of state power. The base of the FZLN was to be the hundreds of Civil Committees for Dialogue and Peace that had been set up across the country at the EZLN's initiative.

In their best effort to make lemonade out of lemons, government spokesmen effusively "welcomed" the Zapatista march on Mexico City as an indication that the Zapatistas were preparing to become a peaceful political force by participating in the FZLN. The spectacle of 1,111 EZLN delegates going to the FZLN convention no doubt reinforced this view. Imagine the shock when the EZLN declared that they would not be part of the FZLN and furthermore, that if the government did not comply with the San Andres Accords they were prepared to launch another uprising.

NUNCA MAS UN MEXICO SIN NOSOTROS

A popular slogan along the march "Nevermore A Mexico Without Us" challenged the official mestizo mythology of the Mexican state and the national consciousness of the Mexican people as a

Live and On Tour



whole. Under colonial rule Mexico was governed by a strict racial hierarchy. Popular participation in Mexico's long struggle for independence and finally in the Mexican Revolution discredited the ideology of European supremacy. In its place emerged another mythology of the Mexican people as a homogenous mixed race of European and indigenous origins. But, this mythology excluded the large minority of indigenous peoples who were never fully integrated into the old colonial order and who have continued to occupy a marginal and precarious position in Mexican society. The Zapatista uprising and the following wave of political defiance on the part of indigenous peoples across Mexico has shaken the myth of a homogenous "raza" and forced Mexican society to confront not just its diversity but its criminal treatment of indigenous peoples. The struggle of indigenous Mexicans for their inclusion in Mexican society, but also for their autonomy as distinct cultures within Mexico has taken on a the moral force similar to that of the 1960s Civil Rights movement in the US.

MEXICO CITY

The Zapatistas' arrival in Mexico City preceded Mexico's independence day by two days. The Zocalo (the main plaza of the capital) was decked out in red, green, and white flags and lights draped over all the surrounding buildings and main streets. 100,000 Mexico City residents filled the plaza and spilled over into the streets chanting "Zapata vive! La lucha sigue!" and singing the Zapatista hymn while waiting for over four hours for the Zapatistas and the delegations that had joined them along their five-day, 750-mile journey to the capital.

When the march finally arrived in the center of the city, the crowd was ecstatic. People cried, blew kisses, chanted, "No estan solos!" (You are not alone!) and thrust their fists or the V for victory symbol in the

rate ceremony on the ancient pyramid of Cuicuilco near University City on the southern edge of Mexico City. The leading Zapatista delegates and those of other indigenous organizations inaugurated the conference atop the pyramid with a three hour ceremony. Along with members of indigenous organizations from all over the country and other parts of North America, artists, intellectuals, students, religious people, activists, and ordinary folks attended the ceremony to show their solidarity with the struggle of Indigenous people for dignity and autonomy and to welcome the Zapatistas once more to their city.

INDIGENOUS AUTONOMY

The Assembly of the National Indigenous Congress (CNI) was meant to prepare for the upcoming convention of that organization in October. Unlike the FZLN, the CNI is a relatively strong organization with a determined sense of mission. The CNI is the broad national umbrella organization of the various local, state, and regional indigenous organizations of Mexico. It was formed during the recent upsurge in indigenous resistance in the wake of the Zapatista uprising. While there is a lively debate within the CNI on many questions facing the indigenous movement the organizations generally agree that the Zapatista uprising put indigenous issues on the national agenda and that militant direct action is crucial to winning any serious victories.

UNAM

On September 15, on the campus of the Autonomous National University of Mexico (UNAM), the people of Mexico City and the Zapatistas finally got a chance to sit down and talk. Instead of the ceremonial formality that had marked all previous events on the Zapatista tour circuit, at UNAM the Zapatistas divided themselves into about



THE SECOND OCCUPATION OF SAN CRISTOBAL

air. The Zapatistas, obviously weary and slightly overwhelmed by the size of the crowd and the city itself (some looked up warily at the buildings towering above them) returned the people's show of love by waving and chanting back. Once they arrived at the stage, the Zapatistas called on the government to comply with the San Andres accords and to remove troops from Zapatista communities in Chiapas. The ferocity of the Zapatista demands in the Zocalo contrasted starkly with their purpose in the city, to participate in the founding of a peaceful and civil grassroots organization. Commandante Claribel declared, "If the government wants war, let's go to it. We Zapatistas will fight with valor because we have one weapon the government does not. It is called dignity." This was the first sign of many throughout the week that despite their dedication to creating peaceful civil and political space, the Zapatistas have no intention of putting down their arms.

DOUBLE MEMBERSHIP?

The FZLN convention was divided into small groups, each charged with the same task of working through a number of proposals for the FZLN's principles of unity, structure, and program of action. The positions of the small groups would then serve as the basis for formally establishing the FZLN. While there were many heated points of discussion, and a certain amount of general chaos, the central issue that emerged was the question of double membership. Would the FZLN be open to members of political parties? While it is still difficult to determine the ultimate shape of the FZLN, the convention made two crucial decisions. First, they rejected double membership but opened the FZLN to members of non-party social movement organizations and did not exclude the possibility of alliances with political parties in certain circumstances. Second, the convention decided on what it called a "horizontal structure" without a centralized leadership. The Civil Committees are to be transformed into local cells of the FZLN; a body composed of delegates from every state will make decisions on national direction. Finally, the FZLN chose as its program of action a national campaign for peace and demilitarization and compliance with the San Andres Accords.

CUICUILCO

The Second Assembly of the National Indigenous Congress began with an elabo-

seven different groups under the shade of scattered trees in the main quad.

Within these large groups, Zapatistas and Mexico City folk sat down in small groups to talk and it was a beautiful sight. People from vastly different circumstances spoke to one another about their families, their lives, their homes, their dreams. A soccer match developed between the students and the Zapatistas; the students won twelve to two. (You try playing soccer in a ski mask!) These two reporters were especially excited to meet the delegates from Santa Rosa El Copa, the base community of the Anarchist Project in the Mexican Southeast that we have been supporting for the past year.

Jokingly called the "Picnic with the Zapatistas," this event allowed the people of Mexico City to see the Zapatistas not just as symbols of resistance, but as real people. And it gave the Zapatistas who come from tiny, remote pueblos in the mountains and jungles of Chiapas a chance to learn more about the people and the life of a city they could barely comprehend.

The next day on the site of the 1968 slaughter of student protesters by the Mexican government, Zapatistas and locals performed a cleansing ritual; they took each other by the hand and danced the night away to the sounds of cumbia and salsa. Without the slightest sign of shyness or trepidation, smiling, laughing couples quickly filled Tlatelolco plaza.

REVOLUTIONARY PROSPECTS IN MEXICO

The Zapatista uprising in 1994 initiated a period of intense political struggle in Mexico. Ever since the 1968 student massacre at Tlatelolco there has been considerable pressure for democratization and an end to the PRI's one-party rule. In the early 1980s, in response to the struggles generated by a deep economic crisis, the PRI took the tentative first steps toward opening up the system. These resulted in the first opposition victories in local elections. This process accelerated rapidly under the pressure of the Zapatista uprising and the massive popular support it generated. Now it is massively evident that the PRI can not continue to rule in the old way; some sort of dramatic restructuring of Mexican political life is inevitable. The Mexican business class and foreign economic interests there are clearly committed to making a transition to some sort of multi-party "democracy." Accordingly, the PRD and the PAN are rapidly filling up with

ex-PRIistas, many of whom are no more than second-rate political hacks who felt thwarted within the PRI. The national leadership of the PRD has made it clear that while it is willing to use popular outrage at neo-liberal policies as a battering ram against the PRI's political intransigence, it has no intention of seriously obstructing the imposition of neo-liberal policies. Cardenas's term as Mayor of Mexico City is clearly a test of whether the PRD is capable of carrying out the ruling elites' directives while simultaneously cooling the militancy of the popular movements that are a significant part of their electoral base.

The weak link in this plan are the indigenous communities, particularly in the poorer states of Southern Mexico. They have demonstrated quite clearly their willingness to turn towards revolutionary means to ensure their rightful place in Mexican society. It remains to be seen whether the sympathy they have in many other sectors can be transformed into effective political solidarity and whether they have the organizational capacity to fight and win. The Zapatista march on Mexico City was an important development in both these areas. It dramatically broadened the Zapatistas' base of support and threw at least some of

that support behind the FZLN and the CNI. Rather than coming to Mexico City to declare their eagerness to negotiate with the government or to transform themselves into a peaceful political force, the Zapatistas came to demand compliance with earlier agreements and reaffirm their determination to wage a revolutionary war if that compliance was not forthcoming.

RETURN TO SAN CRISTOBAL

The Zapatista delegation returned to San Cristobal on September 19 from their trip to the capital city exhausted but obviously excited and moved by the open-armed reception they received in Mexico City. The positive response from the people of their country throughout their journey reaffirmed the belief that "no estan solos" in their struggle for liberty, justice and dignity. While the chants of "Zapata vive! La lucha sigue! were a little less ferocious because of fatigue, the determination in their voices was even stronger. As they eagerly climbed into their trucks and busses to return to their villages, one could imagine the lively tales, reports and stories the Zapatista delegates would share with their communities over the coming days.★

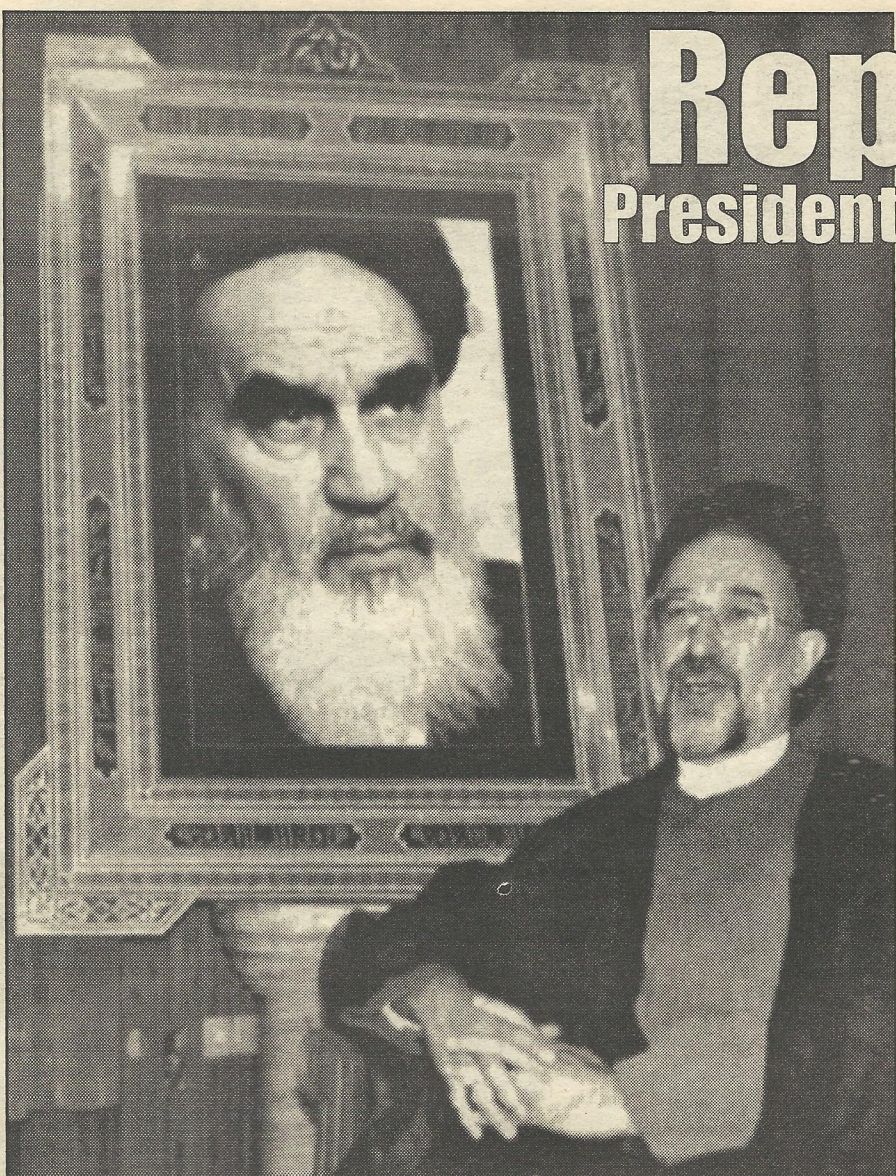
Anarchist Project in Chiapas

A few important changes have occurred with the anarchist project in Zapatista Territory that have significantly altered the nature of the project. The most serious change has been the closing of the First of May Anti-Authoritarian School, in the village of Santa Rosa El Copan. After fourteen months of existence, the school has been closed for two major reasons. For one, at present, we have been unable to organize a group of people with enough teaching experience who can commit an extensive period of time to working in the school. Also, the community has not placed a big priority on schooling, participated in running the school or determining its direction. The community's involvement was a major objective of the educational project. Because it was the school that required a constant physical presence of encampment workers in the community, at present there is no such need. Therefore, the Martyrs of Chicago Direct Solidarity Encampment no longer exists as an encampment. However, we continue to be involved in direct solidarity with the community of Santa Rosa El Copan and other aspects of the Anarchist Project are moving forward. The Health Center which is staffed by two local health providers is to be enlarged and provided with electricity and equipped with supplies. The Women's Center will also be enlarged and provided with electricity. Women of the community have used the space to start a collective store which has been in operation since May. Plans to install a gynecological clinic in the Women's Center have been delayed. The clinic is meant to serve a larger area than one community, and it may serve its purpose better in a more accessible community. (Santa Rosa El Copan is a six hour hike from the closest road.) As of this writing, it has not been determined what the best loca-

Update on the

Report From Iran

Presidential Election Increases Struggle



Khatami under Khomeini's shadow

By BEHZAD YAGHMAIAN

On May 23, 1997, more than twenty million Iranians poured into the voting stations and defeated Nategh Noori, the favorite presidential candidate of Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, and of the dominant political circles within the Islamic Republic. The unprecedented victory of Mohammad Khatami in the latest presidential election was primarily the result of spontaneous grassroots efforts of ordinary people who, after eighteen years of apathy and hopelessness, defied all expectations to organize an energetic and vibrant campaign. The election created a new sense of activism, hope, and trust in the Iranian people's power to change the existing order.

Across the country, heroic tales of selflessness, courage, and defiance abounded. There was the eighty-year-old grand father who voted for the first time in his life, and the paralyzed woman who was carried to the voting station to voice her outrage over eighteen stolen years. Tens of thousands of elementary school children handed out Khatami's posters on street corners and discussed the politics of the election during their school break. And teenage boys and girls plastered the walls with campaign posters, adding new political graffiti to their praise for Axl Rose and Pink Floyd.

The informal grassroots coalition responsible for Khatami's electoral victory included millions of women and youth, intellectuals, journalists, writers, artists, clergy, technocrats and propertied classes, and the left—a broad spectrum of individuals advocating democracy and social justice. Despite their different economic, political, and ideological perspectives, diverse and antagonistic social forces and classes united around Khatami's political platform: the creation of civil society and the government of law in Iran; freedom of association and political parties; more active involvement of women and youth in society; citizens' right to privacy; and protection against the widespread lawlessness and the violence of the police and government-supported armed gangs and pressure groups.

The presidential election was a quiet revolution for rights. It was a revolt against eighteen years of violence, of random attacks on youth and women by bands of bearded men armed with clubs and knives, of public gatherings ambushed by armed gangs, of teenage boys and girls randomly rounded up and detained, and of frightened mothers searching for their disappeared children.

Despite the electoral victory, the struggle for rights and law is far from over in Iran. A period of intense struggle is underway. The obstacles to building a civil society are formidable and numerous. Organs of

repression are, for the most part, in the hands of the forces behind the defeated candidate of the regime. Nategh Noori, who had been packaged and presented to Iranians and foreign diplomats as the future president of Iran, remains the Speaker of the Parliament. Noori enjoys the backing of the army and other traditional armed forces, the Revolutionary Guard, the Security Force, and armed urban gangs known for brutalizing women and youth and viciously attacking critics of the regime.

Efforts to intimidate the supporters of Khatami have increased after the election. The Security Force and men holding automatic machine guns patrol public places and sites where people gather for temporary

"Women are increasingly testing the limits of the government by challenging the Islamic dress code, showing their hair by wearing their scarf further back, and using brighter and more cheerful colors."

respite from the pressures of everyday life. Road blocks reminiscent of wartime were erected in coastal cities of the Caspian Sea. Couples are randomly stopped by plain-clothed men, asked for their marriage certificate, harassed and insulted, detained, and sometimes only released after payments of heavy bribes.

Since the election, urban pressure groups have launched a renewed and escalating campaign of terror. The headquarters of *Iran Farda*, a liberal monthly magazine was ambushed and a number of bookstores were attacked by gangs of armed men a few days after the new president's inauguration. In an attempt to embarrass Tehran's mayor, a known liberal and a staunch supporter of the new president, four top city employees were arrested and taken away from Tehran's Municipal Office by armed men not belonging to the Security Force, the Ministry of Justice, or other official organizations of the state. The arrested employees were later imprisoned and held for trial on variety of charges, including fraud and corruption.

The creation of civil society and the government of law is also constrained by organic limitations of the Islamic Republic. Khatami's campaign called for a rationalized bourgeois (civil) society within the premises of the Islamic Republic. The feasibility of this endeavor remains a fundamental question. The contradiction of the Iranian state is held in its constitution: It recognizes free elections and the concept of a Republic, while rendering absolute and unlimited power to the supreme spiritual leader. Powerful constituencies within Iran have called for the creation of a

Society of Islamic Justice (ruled entirely by religious leaders) in place of the Islamic Republic. The recent election was, to a large extent, a struggle over different interpretations of the constitution and the role of Republic in Iran.

The coalition for rights and the government of law also faces serious contradictions from within. Khatami's supporters include various factions of Iran's bourgeoisie, the working class, parts of the clergy, and the nascent social movements (of youth and women) that have emerged as a potential force in Iran. The conflicting social and class interests of these forces, and their different interpretation of rights and law will indeed be manifested in various forms of open struggle, negotiations, and the formation of new political blocks and alliances. The call for the freedom of associations and political parties by the clergy and propertied classes excludes, for the most part, the parties of the left and those who challenge the fundamental premises of the Islamic Republic. Despite the possibility of their increased involvement in the society, women are expected to remain subject to the repressive Islamic dress code and laws. Equality between sexes will be defined within essentially unequal boundaries of the Islamic Republic.

The future also depends on the new government's ability to successfully confront Iran's endemic economic problems. Khatami's coalition included the well-to-do and millions of poor and economically disenfranchised Iranians. The recent presidential election revolved primarily around the issues of rights and civil society. Despite their persistence and significance in the lives of the majority of the voters, candidates only marginally addressed inflation, unemployment and other economic problems. The burning issues of privatization, the state's role in the economy, trade policy, and commitment to full employment and social justice were for the most part absent from the presidential campaign.

The average rent in Tehran is twice the monthly salary of even college graduates and the educated work force. Most wage and salary earners receive incomes less than the state-defined poverty line and are forced to work two or more jobs in order to main-

advocates of privatization, balanced budget, unregulated trade and foreign exchange market, the dismantling of state subsidies, and the reduction of state's role in the economy. By most accounts, the implementation of Kargozarans' neoliberal policies in the past eight years has led to a transfer of income and resources from the most vulnerable sections of the society to the propertied classes and speculators. Khatami's coalition benefited from the selfless participation of millions of unorganized wage earners who, despite their deteriorating and insecure economic status, energetically supported his presidency on the basis of his political and social platform. They are, for the most part, the victims of neoliberal policies of President Rafsanjani and the Kargozarans.

Khatami's supporters also included Mr. Abdol Karim Mousavi, Iran's prime Minister during the Iran-Iraq War, the Association of Radical Clergy, and various influential Islamic groups committed to a vague notion of social justice and equity. Mr. Mousavi and the Association have been ardent opponents of privatization and the implementation of Structural Adjustment Policies in Iran. The Association supports state regulation of the foreign exchange market and international trade, centralized planning, commitment to "social justice," and the creation of a mixed blend of Keynesian and Soviet-style welfare state in Iran. As prime minister, Mr. Mousavi created an elaborate system of state subsidies, rationing of scarce basic necessities, and populist economic policies that were later adopted by President Rafsanjani's team.

The economic and social policies of Khatami's government will be determined by the intense struggle that is underway within and outside his electoral coalition. At present, all forces are carefully trying to fortify their positions. Those defeated in the election demand the inclusion of their supporters in the future cabinet, and at the same time threaten to defeat the approval of Khatami's nominees in the parliament. Differences between the supporters of the new president are bound to heighten. People's frustration with economic problems are on the rise.

Despite these obstacles, a new process and the potential for positive change has emerged in Iran. The results of this transformation will, for the most part, depend on ordinary people's participation and involvement. The creation of the government of law (albeit bourgeois law) rests on people's ability to sustain their energy and translate their recent experience into existing organizations and institutions of power. The possibility of a sustainable movement for rights is constrained by the tiring burden of economic problems and the everyday struggle for survival, and people's past experience with the savagery of the armed urban pressure groups. But there are scattered signs of people's willingness to break away from the status quo in order to further strengthen and advance their victory.

The president of Esfahan University, who is a former member of the Revolutionary Guards, was locked out of the university by the students for more than two weeks after the election. Women are increasingly testing the limits of the government by challenging the Islamic dress code, showing their hair by wearing their scarf further back, and using brighter and more cheerful colors. Iran's newspapers and magazines are now filled with bold articles about rights and freedom. Open criticism of the state abounds in the print media. A new political discourse has emerged in the country. Public spaces have become sites of intense political discussions and the campaign for rights continues on all fronts.

Will the young and fragile electoral movement for rights lead to powerful and sustainable social movements and political associations? Will political prisons be demolished under the government of law and leftist intellectuals escape imprisonment, torture, and death? Will the repressive Islamic laws for women be replaced by new laws based on secular equality? The answer to these questions will depend on the results of the unfolding struggle between diverse forces and blocks within and outside Khatami's electoral coalition. The future is unclear. ★



Khatami being sworn in as Iran's new president

Mexican Elections

A View From Chiapas



"anomalies" affected more than 20% of the voting booths. But they overturned the decision a month later due to what PRD state president Gabriel Gutierrez Avila describes as "an intervention of the state and federal government to continue favoring the PRI."

ZAPATISTAS ON THE ELECTIONS

Curious about the "rank and file" Zapatista's opinion of the strategy of boycotting the elections and of destroying the ballots, I interviewed people from several communities in the vicinity of Chanal, between San Cristobal de las Casas and Comitén. Everyone basically agreed about why they didn't vote. A catechist (a lay leader in the Catholic Church) from one of the communities told me, "We used to be with the PRI.

BY TRAVIS

The biggest news of the June 6 Mexican election was the victory of Cuauhtemoc Cardenas, a representative of the Partido de la Revolucion Democratica or PRD, the left opposition party, who became the governor of Mexico City, the most populous city in the world. The other main event of June 6 was the loss by ruling Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) of its absolute majority in the lower house of Congress for the first time in its 68-year reign. The elections were hailed as a "victory for democracy in Mexico" (a country previously known for its large incidence of electoral fraud) by practically everyone in Mexico. Even president Ernesto Zedillo tried to play his party's defeat to his own advantage by claiming responsibility for the democratic changes that made plurality possible in Mexico.

Then there's Chiapas. Even before the elections were held advisors to the federal electoral institute (IFE) predicted "difficulties" installing voting booths in several districts in the state of Chiapas. Campesino groups, non-governmental organizations, the Catholic Church, even PRI senators raised concerns that free and fair elections would not be possible in many parts of Chiapas due for the most part to the presence of over 20,000 soldiers and paramilitary in certain areas.

Rather than admit to the military's likely obstruction of democracy in Chiapas, the IFE decided to go ahead with the elections as scheduled. It's not hard to imagine why. The EZLN announced a boycott decided upon by indigenous communities, Zapatistas and non-Zapatistas, in a communiqué a couple of days before the elections. The protest ranged well beyond a simple boycott. Some autonomous social organizations active in Chiapas decided in the end to participate in elections. Zapatistas and non-Zapatistas went to the other extreme in some areas of enforcing a boycott by blocking highways, preventing the installation of voting booths, stealing or burning ballots. As for government forces, they had a military presence on election day in 30 communities of Ocosingo, 9 of Las Margaritas, 3 of San Andres, 4 of San Cristobal, and 6 communities of Angel Albino Corzo. Direct military intimidation of voters was also reported in the municipalities of Altamirano and Ocosingo.

The opposition parties called for the annulment of elections in three districts, those of Ocosingo (the so-called "conflict zone"), Palenque, and San Cristobal de las Casas. The IFE ruled in favor of annulment in Ocosingo where they found that electoral

Someone would come around at election time to bring us t-shirts, but they never did anything else for us. So then we joined the PRD but it was the same. We decided not to vote.

vote to show that we are in disagreement with the government." This man explained to me that catechists from many different communities in the region met together to discuss why they were not going to vote. They returned to their communities and discussed the issue among parishioners. In his words, "We talked about places in the Bible where God tells us not to vote, but to struggle."

In another community they told me how the PRD got elected to the leadership of the nearby town of Amatenango, but there was no change. He claimed things are even worse than before: "The government only cares about the elections. It doesn't care about the people."

What, I asked, were the Zapatistas hoping to achieve with their actions during the elections? One community leader suggested, "Before 1994 [year of the uprising of the Zapatistas] the government had forgotten about us. Then they woke up a little and began the dialog, but now they've forgotten about us again."

As he put it, with this spectacle, the burning of the ballot boxes, they were hoping to "wake the government up a little." In response to criticism that many will find this practice undemocratic the community leader replied: "These people don't have the necessary information to understand our situation here because the mass media is full of lies about us."

THE SITUATION IN CHIAPAS

It's been eleven months since the Zapatistas broke off negotiations with the government. Before the process can continue, they demand that the government needs to honor the agreements that have already been made.

In the meantime, the order of the day in Chiapas has been government-backed violence, repression and increased militarization, also known as low-intensity warfare. A sampling of events reported in *La Palabra* issue #17 during the last two weeks in June (immediately before the elections) should give a good idea of the political climate in which the elections were held:

☆ In Angel Albino Corzo two campesino leaders were arrested and tortured by police and local landowners.

☆ The community 20 de Noviembre has complained that the army has them practically under siege because they suspect some community members to be involved with the Zapatistas.

☆ Also under siege by military and paramilitary patrols are the 35 communities belonging to the rebel municipality of San Andres Sakamch'en de los Pobres.

☆ Members of the Organization of Campesinos Emiliano Zapata are asking the state attorney general to investigate the systematic violation of individual liberties by the police in and around Chicomuselo.

☆ A clash between rival political factions in Busilja resulted in the death of a twelve-year-old child, six people injured, sixteen families displaced, two people arrested, and another four kidnapped.

☆ Another inter-campesino dispute in La Libertad left two dead and four injured.

☆ Community authorities from the municipality of Sabanilla are asking the government to help remove a roadblock to the community of El Paraiso which was put up by the paramilitary group Paz y Justicia and has been in place since January 19. They also demand the return of all the families who have had to flee their communities due to violence and threats of violence in the area.

☆ Similar demand were being put forth by the 300 person sit-in at the government palace in Tuxtla. They denounced the violence of the paramilitaries in the northern zone and said that they live under constant threat of eviction, aggression, arrest, and torture.

ZAPATISTA STRATEGY MISTAKEN?

The success of the Zapatistas' strategy and actions around the elections is questionable. The results of the action were not what the Zapatistas were hoping to achieve. The little press that they got was bad press, especially with respect to the burning of the

ballots. A good number of their Mexican supporters did not agree with their actions and the Zapatistas were unable to explain their intentions to the population at large. A communiqué from Subcomandante Marcos appeared in *La Jornada*, but apart from a few leftist intellectuals nobody heard anything except how the Zapatistas obstructed elections which a lot of Mexicans felt were a real victory for democracy and the left.

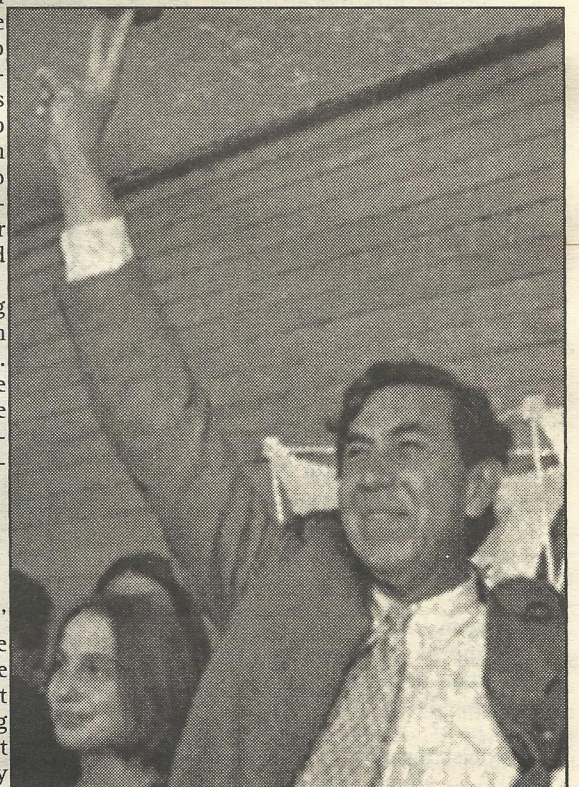
PRI's loss of the majority in congress along with Cuauhtemoc Cardenas' victory in Mexico City were such big news that a few burnt ballot boxes in Chiapas didn't get much coverage. Nobody heard about the military keeping certain communities in a virtual state of siege or the political prisoners or the displaced families in the Northern Zone, victims of paramilitary violence.

Although many of the Zapatistas' international supporters may have understood and supported their actions, the average Mexican did not. The Zapatistas have always made an effort to get their message out to all Mexicans. They want a dialog for all of Mexico, not just among indigenous people and not just in Chiapas. Burning ballot boxes alienated many people whom they hope to reach.

However, the Zapatistas were put in an extremely difficult position. To vote would have been to go along with the idea that Mexico is now a democracy. The irony is that, if anything, it was the Zapatistas who spearheaded the change that allowed this "victory for democracy." Their uprising opened the eyes of many Mexicans and brought international pressure to bear on the Mexican government. Even if people don't necessarily agree with them, no one can deny that they have brought a lot of questions about the way Mexico is governed to the public's attention.

WHAT IF THE ZAPATISTAS HAD VOTED?

If the Zapatistas had voted they probably would have elected a few more PRD candidates and life would have gone on as before. I think that Marcos described their position well in a letter directed to the EPR (Ejercito Popular Revolucionario, a guerrilla group which operates in central and southern Mexico) on August 29, 1996. "You fight to take power. We fight for democracy, liberty, and justice. It's not the same. Even if you are successful and take power, we will continue fighting for democracy, liberty, and justice. It doesn't matter who is in power, the Zapatistas are and will be fighting for democracy, liberty, and justice."★



Cuauhtemoc Cardenas, "left-wing" Mayor of Mexico City.

Abner Louima

(Continued from page 1)

Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB). The Board functions as a part of the mayor's office, without any independent powers to investigate or question officers in incidents of police brutality. Hector Soto, the former head of the CCRB, remarked "The CCRB was set up to fail. We need a stronger CCRB, not only that, not someone who only reviews complaints, but someone at the head of the police department who watches everything the cops do, from training to what to do when they go outside the bounds of the law."

Motivated and confident in its tone, the crowd proceeded down Flatbush Ave., in a sea of red and blue Haitian flags and banners. The crowd, which tripled since the early morning hours, overflowed the wide sidewalks of Flatbush and swelled at points with the addition of contingents numbering to 1000. At the march's height, 10,000 defiantly yelled "No Justice, No Peace!" and rocked this usually quiet area of Brooklyn.

Store keepers and patrons on the route ran out of their places of businesses to view the marchers, while some stores shut their steel gates, fearing a possible disturbance. Workers from the Human Resource Administration put up fist signs and shouted support, and in a slight case of irony, workers from a clothing store that specializes in selling civil service uniforms (including NYPD blues), came out and cheered with the protesters. In addition to toting the now traditional toilet plungers, protesters also performed various acts of

guerrilla theater. A protester dressed in a police uniform reenacted the incident between officers and Louima, while a coffin pasted with pictures of the accused officers and topped with a plunger made its way through the crowd.

Despite their long walk from Grand Army Plaza to the Brooklyn Bridge, no one complained, and the old were assisted by the young. Recalling the Civil Rights marches of the 1960s, children were carried on adults' backs. Marchers also clapped and sang to Haitian protest and folk songs. Conspicuously absent were the police. Their only visible presence was three surveillance helicopters flying overhead. The only intervention by the NYPD occurred when they attempted to box the marchers into the infamous "pig pen" (where police cage demonstrators with steel barriers), and divided the contingent. But the steel barriers were rendered useless, as hundreds jumped, or simply pushed them over. Even the attempt to form a police line to section off the crowd was futile, as the crowd overpowered them, and the police had to call a tactical retreat. Both the walkway, and the roadway of the Brooklyn Bridge were filled. Truckers, though stuck in traffic due to the protest, honked their horns in support of the cause. The energy reached such a high point that some wondered whether or not the Bridge was swaying on its own or because of the noise generated.

Upon leaving the bridge, marchers gathered inside City Hall Park to listen to more speeches. Like the rally in the morning, the meeting inside City Hall Park stressed Democratic politics.

The main speaker, former Mayor David Dinkins, blasted mayor Giuliani's plan for a

task force on police brutality. Dinkins pointed out that the mayor plans to spend \$15 million on the new task force, but only spends \$5 million on the CCRB. While condemning police brutality Dinkins, however, hedged his remarks and reminded the crowd of "the 38,000 police officers who do their jobs correctly". This appeared to particularly be the sentiment of the clergy, like James Forbes of Riverside Baptist Church who said of Louima's attackers, "they are a few bad apples in the bunch."

The organizers began to liquidate the militancy of the march. But as in the morning, the protesters had their own agenda. As the sun began to cool, hundreds sang Haitian folk songs and slogans; with their backs defiantly turned away from city hall.

UPDATE AT PRESS-TIME

Louima was able to return home October 13, after spending more than two months in the hospital. He is expected to return to the hospital in December for his third abdominal operation in order to reattach a piece of his colon. FBI investigators who joined the Internal Affairs investigation have concluded that there has been no cover-up of the incident by the NYPD, and praised the department for cracking the so-called "blue wall of silence." The Giuliani Administration



Abner Louima in the hospital after being tortured by Brooklyn's finest.

Ireland

(Continued from page 1)

of harassment, to the marching season, and to the persistence of British occupation and discrimination.

The Blair administration has made a number of concessions to the Republican movement including maintaining a public dialogue with Sinn Fein despite continued IRA military actions, and proposing a process of parallel discussions on issues of disarmament and peace negotiations. The cease-fire succeeded as a well-timed political tactic, forcing Loyalist parties to the negotiating table and winning concessions from the British government.

After meetings with Tony Blair, the main Loyalist political parties rejected the disarmament proposal brought by the British and Irish Governments. To avoid looking like the only ones who will not negotiate, the Ulster Unionist Party, the largest Loyalist political party by far, announced its willingness to enter some sort of parallel negotiations process. The Loyalist call for the IRA to disarm before negotiations on the future of Ireland even begin is basically an insistence on a symbolic surrender; it serves only to subvert the process of British military withdrawal from the north of Ireland. The British know that they cannot defeat the Irish national liberation movement.

In the days after the IRA announced a cease-fire, international journalists proclaimed that Sinn Fein has softened its commitment to a united Ireland. The IRA and Sinn Fein have thus far been clear and consistent in their goals of a united Ireland. Martin McGuinness, chief negotiator for Sinn Fein, said on July 22 that the IRA would not surrender "a single bullet" before British troops are out of Ireland and that "Sinn Fein will enter any negotiations as an Irish republican party seeking national self-determination for the Irish people and an end to British rule. ...It is our view that an independent Ireland achieved by agreement offers the best and most durable basis for peace and stability." Despite lofty pronouncements, Sinn Fein has suggested that with some form of interim agreement the IRA would probably be willing to begin disarming before the completion of British withdrawal. It is unclear how much the IRA will be willing to compromise as negotiations continue.

LEGACY OF "PEACEFUL" SOLUTIONS

More than a few people who participated in or witnessed the massive outpouring of opposition to the Loyalist marching season are now asking themselves, "A cease-fire? Why now? We've got 'em on the ropes, let's finish them off." Negotiations with the British government that include unclear references to interim agreements and parallel

negotiations evoke the specter of Michael Collins and the 1921 partition of Ireland. [Michael Collins was a member of the Irish Volunteers in the 1916 Easter Uprising and the director of organization and intelligence for the IRA until 1921. He played a central role in negotiating the partition of Ireland, and was one of the signatories of the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921. The Treaty partitioned Ireland into the 26 counties of the Republic of Ireland and a six-county statelet under direct British rule. In the civil war that followed, Collins commanded the government forces against the IRA. He was killed in an ambush in 1922.] Many committed revolutionaries for good and bad reasons reject this negotiation process especially when it becomes bogged down in confusing details. But while abstaining from all negotiations might hold the moral high ground, it doesn't grasp the current conditions of struggle.

ARE ALL NEGOTIATIONS EQUAL?

The left in Palestine and elsewhere points to the example of "the peace settlement" in Palestine and Arafat's and the PLO's bankrupt leadership as proof of the futility of negotiations. The current negotiation process in Ireland does differ slightly from the situation that brought the PLO to the negotiating table. Sinn Fein and the IRA are in positions of relative strength. While the IRA's military power may have declined

compared to its height in the early 1980s, the Republican movement as a whole is growing, particularly those forces that are closest to the IRA and Sinn Fein's politics. For example in the recent Irish elections Sinn Fein won its largest electoral victory ever. The British Labour Party's electoral victory also adds pressure to Loyalist parties in the north of Ireland who almost uniformly support (and are supported by) the Tories.

A more fitting comparison for the Irish than Palestine, might be the EZLN (Zapatistas) in Mexico. While upholding negotiations with the Mexican ruling class, the EZLN have put the majority of their energy into building mass resistance to Neoliberalism and mass support for indigenous rights and autonomy—and they have an army to back them up. In both cases, the revolutionary movements have used every tactical military option at their disposal while continuing to develop and rely on the mass movements that brought them to their current position. Of course an important distinction between the IRA and the EZLN to note is the Zapatistas' rejection of taking state power.

In recent weeks the Republican movement, including Sinn Fein, has continued to emphasize substantive political issues, demonstrating for the release of Republican political prisoners, and against police brutality, state repression, and job discrimination. This emphasis on mass social movements is more than just another means to a negotiat-

ed settlement; it recognizes that even in the best case scenario, negotiations will not solve all of Ireland's social problems. This contrasts markedly to current-day Palestine, where the PLO, and now the Palestinian Authority (PA) strives to manage social protest and mass mobilizations to use solely as a bargaining chip against Israel. Yasir Arafat and the PA have at times banned public protests and detained political organizers when negotiations with Israel seemed to be going well. Arafat and members of the PA have even arrested Palestinian journalists and activists who have simply questioned policy decisions or challenged their leadership. Sinn Fein and the IRA have not engaged in this type of activity and stand against such sectarian politics.

While emphasizing mass protest and resistance, Sinn Fein has continued to build a Pan-nationalist alliance with more moderate and middle-class political forces, such as Fianna Fail, the Social Democratic Labour Party (SDLP) and segments of the Catholic Church. The Workers Solidarity Movement (WSM), a libertarian communist organization in Ireland has sharply criticized Sinn Fein for this Pan-nationalist, united front approach. WSM argues that building a united front submerges the class struggle for broader unity. This is certainly a real danger, and has no doubt happened at specific times in Ireland. But this effect is not an inevitable result of the united front, but dependent on the relationship of forces in the united front and in Ireland as a whole.

RECENT BOMBING CHALLENGES THE PEACE PROCESS

Since the opening of the September 15 Stormont talks (without the participation of the main Loyalist parties), the situation has changed rapidly. Protestant paramilitaries considered to be significantly dominated by British intelligence agencies are now talking of a renewed campaign of murder in Catholic areas. And more importantly, the Irish National Liberation Army (INLA) and the Continuity Army Council-IRA (CAC), two small Republican military organizations have both declared their intention to challenge the Stormont talks with renewed military activity.

On September 16 an RUC station was bombed in Markethill, a small town just outside of Belfast. A few days later the INLA launched a failed grenade attack in Derry. The IRA has denied the Markethill bombing, and denounced the two attacks. Recently the CAC took responsibility for the bombing. The CAC is an armed organization that may be linked to the political party Republican Sinn Fein, a 1987 split from Sinn Fein. Republican Sinn Fein differs from Sinn Fein in (1) their refusal to take seats in or recognize governmental bodies in the northern counties while Ireland is partitioned, and (2) their demand that Britain declare its intent to withdraw



(Continued to page 13)

Roe v Wade

(Continued from page 1)

engaged for the long haul involves much more. We must include a clear vision of what we are fighting for. We are fighting for women's freedom. "Choice" just doesn't cut it.

Roe was never enough. Roe v. Wade itself was a compromise, an effort to co-opt the powerful women's movement that was demanding an end to all laws that regulate abortion. Roe made abortion a matter of privacy rather than an essential human right. It also left the decision not entirely up to a woman, but as a matter decided "between a woman and her doctor." So much for "a woman's choice."

A movement hinging on the single issue of abortion and the notion of "choice" does not speak to the reality of most women's lives. While abortion is one of many significant issues women deal with, it is lack of access to all health services. Racism, inability to control fertility, a discriminatory, dead-end labor market and poverty are some of the real issues restricting women's free exercise of choice in their lives—not simply the legal status of abortion. "Choice" is a middle-class construct that presumes women have the economic ability to "choose."

On the question of abortion alone, the women's movement failed to maintain access to the vital service for all women. In 1977, a few years after abortion was legalized, Congress passed the Hyde Amendment, which took "choice" away from women who couldn't afford clinical abortion by cutting federal money for Medicaid abortions and allowing states to do the same. Did the women's movement organize en masse to oppose this assault on women's right to "choose"; did millions of women take to the street, recognizing that an assault on the ability of poor women to get abortions was an assault on the rights of all? Nope. Today only eight states cover Medicaid abortion services. Most states have parental consent laws on their books and other restrictive measures which disproportionately impact the ability of young and poor women to access abortion services.

It has been said, but is certainly worth repeating, that the anti-abortion forces give more rights to fetuses than they do to children. When we actually take a look at the family-related policy supported by the "pro-family" herd, we get a pretty clear picture of whose families they "value." While middle-class women with substance-abuse

issues go to the exclusive Betty Ford clinic, poor pregnant women are being thrown in jail on substance-abuse charges and their newborns taken away. One in four women entering prison is pregnant or has recently given birth, while 80% of women inside are mothers. Are the "pro-family" forces working to create drug treatment programs for poor women, or working to stem the rising tide of homelessness amongst women and children?

The US ranks second to South Africa in infant mortality rates in a survey of 21 industrialized countries. This is in part due to the fact that only one in five pregnant women in the US receives pre-natal care. Current welfare "reform" has nothing to do with helping families—it forces women to work without providing benefits or child-care for measly checks at sub-market wages. Examples of "pro-family" and "pro-child" hypocrisy abound. While proclaiming that "the womb is the most dangerous place for a child," the forces led by Operation Rescue that attempted to shut down the Delta Women's Clinic in Baton Rouge in 1992 at the same time aggressively opposed a Louisiana state law that would have made corporal punishment illegal in all schools (including private religious schools). The antis argued, blind to the irony, that such a law interfered with the separation of church and state.

While I'm not proposing that we claim the 'pro-family' title as our own, I think we should expose the hypocrisy of those who claim to champion family values as they make it increasingly difficult for families to survive. We need to refuse the notion that the nuclear patriarchal family is the universal norm. It means mobilizing, as reproductive rights activists, against the assaults on welfare, supporting single motherhood, and launching opposition to the broad range of anti-queer attacks that deny basic civil rights and recognition to queers and queer families.

It is hardly just the Christian Right that we need to target for denying reproductive freedom. The US state has controlled women's reproductive lives through policies of sterilization abuse and population control, within and across US borders. In government policies institutionalized racism and sexism are most apparent. The feds will not pay for Medicaid abortions, but they will pay for sterilization. Poor women, especially women of color, are blamed for poverty in the US. Similarly global economic and environmental crises are blamed on overpopulation "created" by third world women. Often, international aid organizations make food and economic aid contingent on women's steriliza-

tion or their use of dangerous birth control methods.

Congress has recently passed a bill forbidding international family planning organizations from offering abortion services. This harkens us back to the days of Reaganism, when International Planned Parenthood et al. were refused family planning money unless they cut the abortion rap.

ACTION IDEAS

✓ We need to keep our focus on women's lives and health and avoid the pitfall of focusing all our effort on the shitty nasty things the anti's do. While it is important to document and expose their actions and hypocrisy, let's not be constrained by this.

✓ A tip to East Coast activists: Representative Smith of New Jersey sponsored a bill to deny funds to international family planning organizations. The Population Council (the agent of population control in the US) is located in New York City. Taking on policy makers responsible

PRO-CHOICE & PISSED OFF!!!



for restricting the reproductive rights of women world wide would be an excellent commemorative activity!

✓ Demonstrate in support of women's clinics that keep the focus on women's lives and women's health. Create harassment-free zones and celebrate women's lives at the places we get our health care. Bring folks back to the clinics that are being harassed as a reminder that their escorting efforts are needed. It's pretty outrageous that it takes people getting shot and killed at clinics to pull out a mass pro-choice demonstration these days.

✓ Let young women lead in shutting down fake clinics. The religious right is on a roll to take back what gains women have made towards sexual freedom. Sexual autonomy and reproductive autonomy are inherently linked. It's hard to have great heterosexual sex if you are worried about bleeding to death from a back alley abortion.

Operation Rescue began a national campaign this year to target high school girls with gory fetus photos, abstinence pro-

grams and calls to renew virginity (whatever that means). Since the mid-80s federal funds only go to school based sex ed. programs that teach abstinence.

There are four fake clinics to every one real women's health care clinic. Fake clinics, run by anti-abortionists, pose as real clinics to lure young pregnant women and scare them into carrying their pregnancies to term. They advertise as Crisis Pregnancy Centers, and fail to mention their anti-abortion politics in their ads. They often set up shop near high schools or real clinics, lie about fetal development, and make empty promises of "help." Many of these anti-abortion centers are linked to profit-making adoption agencies and have an economic interest (as well as a patriarchal one) in coercing women to bear unwanted children.

✓ You can shut down your local "crisis pregnancy center" through consistent exposure, demonstrations and direct action. Make it costly for them to put out their lies. Steer women to real clinics where they can get full information about abortion, birth

control and health care.

These are just a few ideas. In the Bay Area members of BACORR, Refuse & Resist and others involved in social-justice struggles have been meeting to plan a week of action around the anniversary. We are proposing a conference that will bring together groups and individuals who are working on the range of issues that impact our lives; from those working on the front lines against welfare cuts and other forms of economic assault on poor women, against domestic violence, against racism, to those working on women's health (from abortion clinic defense, to self-help health care and battling breast cancer and HIV, to getting prenatal care). We plan to culminate the organizing skills and network building conference by taking the streets to demonstrate for women's freedom on the anniversary of Roe.

The struggle for reproductive rights has been on the defensive since 1977. Now is as good a time as any to turn the fucking tables. What will you launch in your area?★

Ireland

(Continued from page 12)

from Ireland before any negotiations take place. As for the INLA, they have repeatedly stated that the IRA has conceded too much too soon. The Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) offers an interesting model for such a consultation. The EZLN has held locally-based meetings in southern Mexico where their supporting communities decide on political and military questions. In 1995 the EZLN circulated a series of questions in their base areas as well as nationally and internationally on what general direction the Zapatista movement should go. Who knows whether a similar process could work under conditions of the "hot" war in northern Ireland. Nevertheless the IRA cease-fire, the Stormont talks, and their outcome are momentous events that all Republicans should have a voice in. Some sort of consultation process is in order. Even so, the INLA has recognized that the cease-fire has popular support, and have

gone as far as to say that negotiations could move the liberation struggle forward.

The INLA is the armed wing of the Irish Republican Socialist Party (IRSP), a left-wing split from the Official IRA which halted operations in 1972 to become the Provisional IRA. The INLA, and the IRSA are explicitly republican socialists who fight for a united, democratic socialist republic. Neither the INLA nor the CAC are not against negotiations in principle; they simply reject the particulars of the Stormont talks. While the CAC and the most recent incarnation of the INLA have much less active support now, some independently-minded Republicans who are uneasy with the IRA and Sinn Fein's strategy of a negotiated settlement seem to be looking to these other groups to keep Sinn Fein on the right path. And if the IRA and Sinn Fein do "sell-out," the anti-negotiation Republican organizations might see a rapid increase in support.

Meanwhile all of the Loyalist political parties have seized upon the recent bombings as examples of IRA deceit, and have called, unsuccessfully, for the expulsion of Sinn Fein from the Stormont talks. The

Loyalist parties have suggested that the (Provisional) IRA and the CAC and the INLA are somehow linked organizationally and politically, even though British intelligence sources quoted in the mainstream press acknowledge



that there is no working relationship between the organizations.

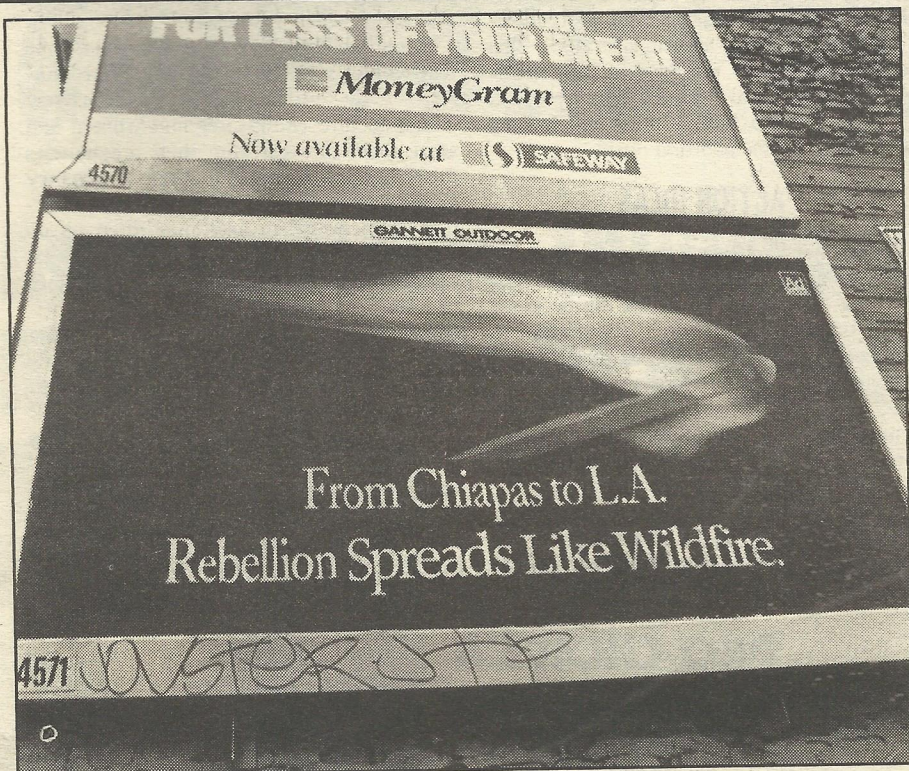
The recent bombing and calls to resume armed struggle may short-circuit the negotiations process and in turn divide and demoralize the Republican movement. Right now the Stormont talks seem to offer the best possible solution to the colonial occupation and partition of Ireland. The IRA and Sinn Fein have seized on this opportunity with massive support from the Republican community. While different organizations committed to uniting Ireland should continue to struggle politically with each other and in the broader society, military actions by the more marginal groups that have no chance of winning the liberation of Ireland can only cause a major division in the Republican movement. At this time a deep division in the Republican movement can only serve the interests of the Loyalists and the British government. So far Sinn Fein has conceded nothing. If Stormont were to lead to a settlement similar to the Treaty of 1921, then revolutionaries would have a responsibility to push forward by whatever means possible.

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD?

What the negotiations will bring is unclear. Sinn Fein and the IRA have always been clear that freedom for all of Ireland requires both military and political struggle; and that in order to win, negotiations are a tactic Republicans need to employ. The tragic history of national liberation struggles that have led to neocolonialism illustrates that there are no easy answers and that a healthy dose of skepticism is crucial. But this should not lead us to dismiss the Stormont talks out of hand. The route of a just peace and its form must be worked out in practice. A massive assault on the British Army occurred in response to a Unionist parade held the previous day. Thousands of Irish nationalists chanted "no cease-fire, no cease-fire." Sinn Fein seems to understand that nationalist demands for justice and a free Ireland cannot be negotiated away. Time will tell if they truly understand.★



Gerry Adams (c) leads the Sinn Fein delegation alongside Caomh  n O   Caoil  n (l) and M  artin McGuinness (r), into Stormont Castle for the start of all-party talks.



Billboard improvement by California Department of Corrections

(Continued from page 2)

politics of a group whose principles and positions are still being developed and whose members are a pack of stubborn sons-of-bitches. I don't expect all members to proofread every editorial before it goes to print, but I do expect there to be prior federation-wide political discussion on questions of strategy before we commit something to print, and that the positions we take are unquestionably majority positions.

I also expect our editorials to reflect our debates, including noting dissenting opinions when they exist. As it stands, the position the "Building" editorial takes is undemocratic because it presents itself as L&R policy when the L&R membership has not significantly debated nor voted on the issue.

Finally, I worry that the politics of the editorial will lead us away from our commitment to revolution. As an organization of revolutionaries, the main point of our collective work should be to develop and encourage campaigns and activism that work toward the building of a dual power. Dual power means that our strategies, tactics, and programs must directly challenge the existing institutions of power in this world and in some way prefigure the new society we want to build. I believe that any campaign or working group L&R builds should be based on a dual-power strategy and that if a campaign or working group

isn't it should either be corrected or abandoned for another project.

Strategies that are not based on a dual power may achieve important social reforms, such as protecting welfare, establishing civilian review boards for police, etc., but they don't threaten the system itself. As revolutionaries we want to win reforms, of course, but they should also somehow bring us closer to total human emancipation. We have to resist liberalism and the state at every moment and treat them as enemies just as much as the right.

I'm afraid that spending our time "building a multi-racial organization" rather than smashing the institutions that prop this evil system up—particularly the white race—will only continue our tendency to avoid the task of coming up with dual-power strategies. In what ways do our three current working groups (anti-austerity, anti-fascist, anti-police) work to build a dual power? Do they work to abolish white skin privilege, or threaten the patriarchal family, or seek to disrupt other such institutions which are so crucial to the maintenance of this system? Or is their goal to make L&R "multi-racial"? These are the key questions we must ask ourselves in all of our work. For these three reasons, I believe L&R needs to reject the politics of the "Building" editorial and replace them with the following principles:

- 1) One of the key tasks, if not the key task, of L&R is to smash white power and white privilege wherever it appears, particularly in "normal" society.
- 2) A multi-racial organization is a product of uncompromising struggle against white supremacy and white skin privilege in society and within the organization—not the prerequisite of such struggle.

3) As an organization that is largely white and living in a white supremacist society, we often unintentionally reproduce white power even as we fight against it. Therefore, L&R must recognize that, at this time at least, our task is to abolish the white race and not to provide leadership for Black people or other communities of color.

After a free and lively debate, I urge the Federation to elect to reject the politics of "Building," print a retraction in the newspaper, and commit ourselves to grounding our activism in strategies of dual power.

In solidarity,
Joel Olson
Phoenix

CONNECT THE ISSUES AND KNOCK ON DOORS

Dear L&R,

The editorial "Fight Back Against Austerity" (Love & Rage Vol. 8 No. 4) left out a few very important things. Although the editorial notes that austerity policies affect all working people, it concentrates almost exclusively on those receiving social services, education assistance and welfare. Don't get us wrong—it's very important to fight back against austerity policies. But the changes currently occurring in the economy are so important precisely because they are affecting the vast majority of North Americans. For example, 80% of American families have seen their standard of living decline since 1976. So it's very important

not to conceive of what Love & Rage calls "the movement against austerity policies" as just a movement against austerity policies but as a much broader movement including those being downsized, fighting to unionize and to increase wages.

As the broad public support for the UPS workers showed, this is a key moment to help build class consciousness that unifies the many against the wealthy few. Our activities have really surprised us by letting us see a lot of support between welfare recipients, workers seeing their jobs privatized, union members and low wage workers. It seems really important (at least to us) that anarchists work to link struggles very practically and not just on a theoretical level. The editorial rushes to focus on activism around a particular set of policies without taking time to really consider the practical ways the bigger picture can impact organizing.

The other thing we want to differ with is the almost rote reliance on direct action put forward in the editorial as the major tactic anarchists should use in organizing around these issues. When dealing with political ideas, the editorial states, "We should be patient with the processes by which people develop their own politics..." At the risk of stating the obvious, the same thing is true for tactics. Taking over an office or a building can be a huge deal for many people—especially those of us who are risking real things with social service and immigration agencies, and employers. As much as we would rather just do direct action, we have to start with where people are at. By any means necessary should mean not just dramatic and exciting actions but also packing school board meetings, using petitions, and knocking on doors.

Amy Lester, Jason Winston, Paula Emery, and Tanya Walter—Members of #10 Collective / Central Vermont Love & Rage

GENOCIDE IS HAPPENING

Revolutionary greetings comrades in struggle. I just finished reading an article in the Mar/Apr 1997 issue entitled: "Prison Not Genocide" that compelled this response.

My objective is not to convince the author of that article, Wayne Price, that

throughout de Diaspora. Amerikkka is a prison house of many nations. Nations that are in a protracted struggle to regain their independence. For those of us freedom fighters who should dare stand up and challenge de system of neo-kkkolonialism, we pose a direct threat to their powah. As a consequence, we are systematically murdered by kolonial occupational personnel (kops) and locked down in political prisons (maximum kkkontrol units ie. prisons within prisons) under extremely oppressive and repressive konditions.

As more New Afrikans—particularly those in street organization—become aware that they are being politically oppressed, economically exploited, and socially degraded de prison population in this kkkountry grows astronomically! And so does de number of pig beatings and lynchings. Oppression breeds resistance! They cannot continue to commit genocide against us without a fight. De beast knows this. Therefore they are passing kkkcrime bills specifically targeting a disproportionate number of our babies, weakening de warrior branch of our nation. New Afrikan males and females from de ages of 13 to 25 fills de prisons to capacity with 25-100 years under their belt. Wayne Price can go talk that shit to somebody else! It don't take a rocket scientist to see that we are at war!

This busta claims that there is no proof that this Fascist US government aimed to weaken de New Afrikan Nation with kkkrack. De scars on my peepoe's backs, de number of New Afrikan babies born addicted to this shit, and those who never made it out of de womb; de outrageous drug wars taking place in de hood by lumpen elements, COINTELPRO, etc. is enough proof for me. We don't need to see shit in writing, we see it in reality! We don't need some European coming to us and saying it's truth before we accept it as such and act upon it. We ain't so stupid, Price, as to think that our shit-u-action is a "coincidence." Afrikan peepoe are number one on every evil under de sun from homelessness to homicide. That's no accident.

Beautiful Blak peepoe, listen: We charge Amerikkka and de Kkkolonial imperialists running it with invading Afrika with de sole intent of exploiting de labor powah of our peepoe; with de murders of millions of



Billboard design and photo courtesy of California Department of Corrections

New Afrikans (Blak Peepoe in Amerikkka) are victims of genocide b'cuz im not only convinced that he knows this, but also that his dialogue was a deliberate attempt to undermine de New Afrikan (Blak) Liberation Struggle taking place in this Empire. I merely wish to counter his kkkounter revolutionary vibe before some growing seed becomes affected with that cancerous rhetoric.

First, let us properly define "genocide" as adopted by de United Nations Dec. 1946: "Genocide—killin, causing serious bodily harm or mental harm, deliberately inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about physical destruction in whole or in part, imposing measures intended to prevent births, or forcibly transferring children of de group to another group, with intent to destroy in whole or in part a national, ethnical, racial or religious group."

There is no question that this definition applies historically and presently to New Afrikans and other Afrikan nations

Afrikans who lay dead at the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean, with over 100 years of free labor; with de murders of Nat Turner, Marcus Garvey, Denmark Vesey, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, de members of "Move" and countless other Blak men and wymyn; with kriminalizing our youth and portraying them as monsters; with raping our wymyn; with dividing our community with their Willie Lynch program; with putting drugs into our communities in order to keep it weak and subjugated ... in other, Blaker words, we charge Amerikkka with G.E.N.O.C.I.D.E.!!! And we will charge anyone who gets in our way to achieving national liberation, self-determination and socialism.

Uhuru Sasa!

Mangwiro Sadiki
New Afrikan Revolutionary nationalist held captive at de Indiana State Prison

A LOOK AT LENINISM

A Look at Leninism is a book by Ron Taber that exposes the authoritarian core of Leninism. Taber's critique is a valuable weapon in the hand of all revolutionary anti-authoritarians. Originally written as a series of articles, *A Look at Leninism* introduces the reader to the key concepts of Leninism and then demolishes the claims of Leninism as an ideology of liberation.

A Look at Leninism was the declaration of Taber's complete break with Leninism, and set the stage for his subsequent series of articles in *Love & Rage* critiquing Marxism.

A Look at Leninism is available for \$5.00 from:

Love & Rage
PO Box 853
Stuyvesant Station
New York, NY
10009

MORE LETTERS TO LOVE AND RAGE

WAYNE PRICE RESPONDS

Like many people I respect, Uhuru Sasa believes that "genocide" is a useful label for the oppression of African-Americans in the US, and he disagrees with my criticism of its use. Unfortunately, he chooses not to have a comradely discussion but to charge that I am consciously "kkkounter revolutionary" and deliberately trying to undermine the Black Liberation struggle. That is his privilege, but I do not find it helpful in analyzing our differences. (It is true that, as an anarchist-internationalist, I disagree politically with New Afrikan nationalism as a program for Black Liberation.) Being angry at oppression is good, but it is also necessary to take a cold, clear-eyed look at how oppression works in order to know how best to fight it. Name calling doesn't do it.

For about 300 years African-Americans have been horrendously mistreated, first dragged here into slavery and now kept at the bottom of society as the most exploited of the poor. Black people are under heavy attack, with the destruction of the welfare state (limited as it was), loss of jobs, and undermining of affirmative action. Young people are channeled into prison. Plagues sweep the community, including drugs and AIDS. The Black minority which had "made it" into the middle class is being pressed back. Is this genocide?

The term "genocide" was invented after World War II to deal with a relatively new and rare phenomenon. Not the oppression of a people, nor the exploitation of a workforce, nor killing some members of a people in order to better exploit the rest. All that was, alas, very common in history. But the German Nazis deliberately aimed to kill off the entire Jewish people (and others, such as Gypsies/Romany). They even injured their own war effort by not using the Jews as slave laborers but instead diverted war material for the purpose of mass killing. Therefore the 1948 UN convention defined genocide as attacking a people "with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group," as Sasa quotes. Or, "Genocide [is] in international law, the intentional and systematic destruction, wholly or in part, by a government of a racial, religious, or ethnic group" (The New Columbia Encyclopedia 1975).

The "in part" clauses do not mean killing some to terrorize the rest into obedience. They mean that the deliberate destruction of a part of a people is genocide even if the state does not succeed in exterminating the whole people. These definitions also make clear that the destruction, to be "genocide" is not caused by the forces of the market or by a lack of government care but must be "deliberately...calculated... with intent to destroy"—"intentional and systematic destruction."

Forget definitions for a moment. Does Uhuru Sasa, and those who agree with him, believe that what the US rulers are doing to US Blacks is the same as what the Nazis did to the Jews or the Turks to the Armenians? Is there an attempt to wipe out the African-American population? Yes or no?

Sasa answers this question correctly when he charges the US "with invading Africa with de sole intent of exploiting de labor power of our Peepoe." That is, African-Americans were not brought here with the deliberate intent to kill them. They were intentionally dragged here to be exploited as workers. The killings were a horrible side aspect, done out of lack of concern for people-as-property or with the deliberate aim to terrorize the rest into submission. This is bad enough, but it is not genocide.

And this is still the case. African-Americans serve two functions in the US today. They are a super-exploited work force, last hired and first fired, a pool of labor paid the lowest wages for the worst jobs. Not only exploited in themselves, they are used to hold down the wages of the rest of the work force, so long as European-American workers are subject to racist prejudice. For example, the attack on social services can be seen as an attack on Black people and accepted, even though it is really the cutting edge of an attack on the living standards of the vast majority.

Therefore the capitalists and the state are prepared to beat down the Black population, to terrorize it, to tear away the protections of welfare, to undermine affirmative action and anti-discrimination laws, to let the schools and neighborhoods rot. All this with the aim of controlling the Black community, making it more docile, and using it as a scapegoat for the worsening conditions of the white population. But they do not

intend to exterminate it.

And this is important in determining strategy. If the rulers had decided on genocide, this means that they regard Blacks as completely irrelevant, marginalized, and expendable. They have not turned to genocide because African-Americans remain important to the economy, in key positions in work and in the cities. Black people can use these positions as leverage for building a multi-racial movement of rebellion.

Sasa believes that there is a government plan to channel crack into the ghetto. Where I see oppression by a social system, he sees a deliberate conspiracy. But there is no need to imagine one. The misery of the Black poor, caused by their oppression, creates a market for drugs. African-American, Hispanic, and European-American criminals see an opportunity to make money. They could care less whether this damages the Black community or serves the US state. The CIA has long been shipping drugs, for its own reasons (a source of extra-legal funds beyond the control of Congress, and a way of allying with various right-wing/criminal forces). All this is unspeakably evil but it is not done with the deliberate intent to exterminate the Black community. Similarly, on a legal level, tobacco and liquor companies target African-Americans because they are an available market, not as part of a conspiracy to wipe out their customers.

For the sake of strategic analysis, it is important to see the difference between a racist / capitalist / patriarchal system and a conspiracy. If it is a conspiracy, then the conspirators could change their minds or could be replaced by good people. The government could decide to not send drugs into the community or not super-exploit Black people. The people could vote out the bad guys and elect good politicians who will rein in the CIA and the other conspirators. Liberalism would be right. But if it is a social system, then Black oppression will continue no matter who is elected. Revolution is needed.

Would it make a difference if the US Nazis, Klan, and far-right took state power? Apparently Uhuru Sasa does not think so. He says we already have a "Fascist US government" which is committing genocide. But if this were true, he would not be reading, and writing to, an anarchist paper even while in prison; more likely, he and I would both be dead.

It is true that this society is run by a small layer of rich white men—not a conspiracy but the leadership of a ruling class. They rule whether there is a totalitarian fascist dictatorship or a bourgeois democracy, with elections and (relatively) free speech. But the form of rule makes a great deal of difference to revolutionaries in terms of their ability to organize and to reach the people. And if radicals cannot tell the difference between bourgeois democracy and genocidal fascism, they will not be able to prepare the people to fight fascism when it really threatens.

In short, African-Americans face vicious oppression by a vile social system. But to call this "genocide" by the deliberate plotting of a conspiracy is to misunderstand what is happening. It misdirects the struggle and disarms the people in the face of the enemy.

Wayne Price

CUNY STUDENTS NEED REAL UNITY WITH WORKING CLASS

The activities of Love and Rage at the City University of New York were discussed in 'The Politics of Race and Class at CUNY' by Chris Day (*L&R* June/July 1997). Noel Ignatiev, of *Race Traitor*, has denounced this article, and much else, on the basis of his "white skin privilege," race-is-everything, class-is-nothing, approach. Yet it seems to me that the article shares too much of that very viewpoint.

After discussing, correctly, how tuition cuts affect poorer Black and Hispanic students more heavily than relatively better off European-American students, the article says it is wrong to be "simply opposing the tuition increase." Then it states, "...white students... need to acknowledge the way that white privilege operates within CUNY and the larger society and commit themselves to fighting it even when it goes against their own immediate interests." What on earth does this mean in practice? Should white students not fight against the tuition increase until it affects them as badly as it does students of color? Have we

in fact raised demands against the immediate interests of white students? Surely the important point is that the struggle of the most oppressed students against tuition hikes is in the interest of all students, including middle class whites.

The article argues against an orientation toward unionized workers by saying, "The currently unionized sectors of the working class are for the most part a relatively privileged minority...." This may be more or less true nationally, but it is not true in New York City. Here the unions include the hospital workers, social service public employees, and postal workers, a mostly Black and Hispanic work force. Even the union bureaucrats have to be people of color.

It should be obvious that CUNY students, by themselves, cannot reverse the cutbacks. They do not have the leverage. Yet the tuition increases are part of a general attack on working people and people of color. There should be some way to spread the struggle to broader sectors of society. The article denounces the various Trotskyist groupings for the wooden, dogmatic way they advocate reaching out to unions. But what is our strategy for spreading the struggle to working people? Except for relating to welfare recipients, the article has nothing to say. Surely there are nonwooden, undogmatic ways of advocating relating to the working class, organized and unorganized, whose youth are attending CUNY? And if it cannot be done now, we should at least be educating students about the need.

Wayne Price

CUNY ARTICLE ADVOCATES WHITE GUILT NOT CLASS ANALYSIS

To the Editors of Love and Rage,

In the article, "The Politics of Race and Class at CUNY," published in your June/July 1997 issue, and in a previous *L&R* article, reprinted in the *CUNY Spheric*, vol. 10, no. 1 entitled "Still Loving, Still Raging," Chris Day has asserted or implied the following:

1) "Every year," "ever since open admissions," CUNY has been producing an enormous number of highly skilled graduates-of-color, who are thereby successful in obtaining high-skilled jobs.

2) This success in obtaining high-skilled jobs on the part of CUNY's graduates-of-color is perceived as a threat by white working class students and their families at CUNY. They view CUNY's historic policies of open enrollment and relatively low tuition purely as a threat in terms of their competition with workers-and professionals-of-color for the jobs on the job market.

3) This threat is real and objective—it is not merely a subjective, racist will-of-the-wisp in the minds of white racists (or only in the mind of Chris Day).

4) Thus, white CUNY students have a "material interest" in raising rather than lowering tuition. They can, allegedly, afford such tuition increases easily. If tuition raises go through, competition on the job market will be reduced.

5) Thus, there is no economic basis for working class unity and solidarity at CUNY between white working class students and students-of-color. Only by making white students feel guilty about their relative privileges can such solidarity at CUNY be built.

Have I misinterpreted Day? If so, where, how, and to what extent? If I have not, upon what evidence does Day base the premises (nos. 1 through 4) and thus his conclusion (no. 5)? Finally, does he seriously believe that "white guilt" is an efficient and reliable mechanism for building solidarity between working and poor people? Where has this worked in the past? How is it possible to guilt-trip racist workers out of their racism, as opposed to appealing to their material interests?

Please have Mr. Day respond publicly, at least in writing, thank you.

Tom Smith
TGSCUNY@aol.com

CHRISTOPHER DAY RESPONDS

Tom Smith's letter raises the right questions (even if we find ourselves on different sides on the answers). But his efforts to root multi-racial working class solidarity in a crude economic common interest is typical of the Marxist disregard for the ethical dimension of revolutionary politics.

In response to his questions I'll start with

the last one. No, I don't think "white guilt" is an efficient or reliable method for building solidarity between workers. But neither do I think hollow slogans like "black and white, unite and fight" speak to the complex issues involved here.

I do think that white supremacy provides white workers with certain material and psychological benefits and that multi-racial working class unity depends on white workers acknowledging those benefits and committing themselves to the elimination of such relative privileges. Obviously its damned difficult to organize anybody on the basis of giving up something. That's why it is also important to emphasize the things that are to be gained (a world free of injustice and all the hateful distrust and suspicion that is created by the racist division of power and privilege in this society).

But, in the final analysis we have to confront the unfortunate fact that, on the whole, white workers in the US are among the most privileged in the world, and consequently, the least predisposed to revolutionary politics. And just because "guilt" isn't the best basis to organize people on doesn't mean that white folks aren't guilty of some serious shit. To the degree that white people fail to take on the system of white supremacy while they obtain benefits from it, they are at the very least complicit in the crimes of that system against people of color.

"High-skilled jobs" is a relative term. Every year CUNY produces more degree-holders of color than any other institution of higher education in the United States, including all of the traditional Black colleges combined. Without overstating the value of a CUNY degree I think it is safe to say that most of those folks are not flipping burgers and have obtained some real economic benefit from their college degrees.

White workers aren't monolithic and don't necessarily view open admissions and low tuition "purely" as a competitive threat from college graduates of color. But the white working class backlash against affirmative action can not be understood without reference to the very real upheaval in the racial divisions within the job market that have resulted from the entrance of large numbers of people of color (relative to the past) into institutions of higher learning.

Without depreciating the insidious influence of ruling class sponsored racist ideology on the white working class, there are, in fact, material divisions within the working class along racial lines that give white workers a material interest in the maintenance of white supremacy. Consequently the material interests of many white CUNY students are contradictory. If tuition increases result in decreased competition for "decent" jobs from people of color (and more generally the reinstitution of the color bar in certain job categories) white students stand to benefit at least in a crudely material sense. (The world they'll live in will be impoverished, but they will obtain a personal advantage.) This benefit is reflected in the widespread sentiment among white students at CUNY that "raising standards" will increase the market value of their degrees whereas students of color are generally more cognizant of the fact that the push to "raise standards" is really about pushing students of color out of school.

None of this means that there isn't any economic basis for working class unity. It just means that there are also economic contradictions within the working class, particularly in wealthy countries like the US, and that working class unity can not be built simply on the basis of a common economic interest but must appeal to a broader human interest in a just and decent world in order to overcome those contradictions.

White workers are torn between their interests as workers and their interests as white people. And because they obtain real benefits from whiteness, a genuine workers solidarity must be based on more than a crude appeal to economic self-interest. Real working class unity must start from a commitment to righting the most grievous injustices in the world—namely the legacy of 500 years of conquest, genocide, slavery and colonialism—even if this is at the short-term material expense of a layer of relatively privileged workers.

I have sufficient faith in the ethical instincts of people to believe that the majority of white workers can ultimately be won to such a commitment without either appealing to "white guilt" or, as Tom Smith and other Trotskyists seem inclined to do, papering over the real divisions that exist within the working class.