

the
defenestrator

issue 43 January 2009

inside:

Philly Budget Cuts * Attacks on Gaza * The Grassroots Politics of Harvey Milk * Was the HIV/AIDS Epidemic Caused by Government Neglect? * Ruth Gilmore interview at Critical Resistance * Retaliation against Prisoners at SCI Camp Hill * G20 Summit in Washington D.C. * Global Bank Users Strike * Chicago Workers Occupy Window Factory * Greece Riots Against Police Repression



The defenestrator is Philly's sporadic newspaper for resistance, creative revolution and action. To defenestrate Power means total refusal of its tools and tentacles. Like the Hussites who had their oppressors thrown down from the Prague castle into the angry mob below, the defenestrator wrestles power and privilege from its highest and most protected strongholds and casts the beast out of the window and down into the angry hands of the people.

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We send out announcements for demonstrations, emergency mobilizations, benefit events and defenestrator events. If you want on, send a blank email from your address to defenestrator-subscribe@lists.riseup.net or click the link on our website. The list is low traffic (usually about 1 message a week) and easy to get off if you so choose.

the defenestrator
PO Box 30922
Philadelphia PA
19104 usa
rosa@defenestrator.org
www.defenestrator.org

Labor Justice Radio

Labor Justice Radio is a monthly radio program that advocates justice for all working people. This program addresses issues that affect Philly's union members, working families and their surrounding communities. The show is produced collaboratively by members of **Unite Here, SEIU Local 32 BJ, the United Taxi Workers Alliance of Pennsylvania** and **Media Mobilizing Project**. Labor Justice Radio provides news and analysis from the perspective of working people.

First Tuesday of the month
1-2 pm
or online:
www.laborjusticeradio.podomatic.com

WPEB 88.1 FM
West Philly

International Week of Solidarity Held for Mumia, As He Appeals to the US Supreme Court.

By Hans Bennett, Abu-Jamal-News.com

Death-row journalist Mumia Abu-Jamal is currently asking the US Supreme Court to consider his case for a new guilt-phase trial. Abu-Jamal's death sentence was somewhat overturned in 2001 when the US District Court ruled that he needs a new sentencing-phase trial if the DA still wants to execute. The US Third Circuit Court affirmed this 2001 ruling in March, 2008, but Abu-Jamal has still never left his death-row cell, and the Philadelphia DA is appealing this 2001/2008 ruling to US Supreme Court. If the DA wins their appeal, Abu-Jamal could then be executed without a new sentencing-phase trial. A decision from the Court on whether it will consider these two appeals is expected in

early 2009.

To support his battle in court actions were held around the US, and in Mexico, England, Germany, Switzerland, France, and Venezuela. Please go to FreeMumia.com to learn how you can help at this critical time.



Shut em' down

Airport protests '08



Airports, global trading centers, "ports" of commerce and industry and other obvious targets for impacting global awareness, have experienced a spate of protests of late:

Stansted, U.K.: On the morning of December 8th, dozens of members of the U.K. environmental activist group Plane Stupid used wire-cutters to break into a secure area of Stansted Airport, 40 miles outside of Central London. While some members chained themselves together, others erected a barricade of fencing around them, successfully forcing at least 56 flight cancellations and extensive delays (it took police about 5 hours to cut them all apart). The action drew attention to opposition to proposed airport expansion and air traffic pollution. The group is well-known among the U.K.'s environmentally conscious, for breaching tight security and attention-grabbing direct actions (last February they managed to sneak onto the roof of Britain's House of Parliament, and one of the members hot-glued himself to PM Gordon Brown in July). 57 were arrested.

Athens, Greece: during October, groups of Olympic Airline employees outraged by plans to privatize the state-owned airline intentionally walked across runways in protest, disrupting and delaying flights.

Goodbye Prompt Press!

It's with great sadness, that we say goodbye to Camden's Prompt Press, the place where we for the last decade printed the defenestrator. Having Prompt as our printer meant we were in good company amongst others struggling for a better world. Prompt workers were regularly spotted at protests against the war, in support of Mumia Abu Jamal and other political prisoners and were generally active in social struggles around Philly. It meant a lot to have this paper printed by unionized workers who share the work we at the defenestrator collective are also doing.

Prompt closed its doors September 30th after a steady increase in costs of energy, ink and paper and a round of layoffs in 2007. According to an email sent out by Prompt, "waiting any longer to close would probably just lead us further in financial debt and make it even harder for us to pay our union workers any outstanding vacation pay and the proper severance pay."

In the meantime, we've decided to go with Linco Press in Queens, NYC who print NY's Independent. Prompt Press, we already miss you! <3

Bash Back! Disrupts Traffic in Response to Trans Killings

November 22, 2008

In response to the recent murder of Duanna Johnson, Philly's incompetence in trying Erika Keels murderer, and to show our love to all the Trans Folks who lost their lives to hate, Bash Back Philly took to the streets in our first action to mark the beginning of our existence.

As people left the hollow towers that cover our world in shad-

ows to go home to another day of gray, we here at Bash Back Philly had a different plan for them. Slowly, block by block, we reclaimed the streets, blocking traffic to leave the pink body outline of our murdered family and the words "Stop Trans Murder" and passing flyers to raise awareness to the most recent of our people's murders and the lack of respect our city shows for us. As the snow and rain beat down on our backs, we continued our Reclaim The Streets march, avoiding potential arrests and angry cars trying to run us down. The people out in the streets were with us though, inspiration enough to continue our action. Passerbys, wage slaves and of course upper class gays were all there learning that our queerstory is not all about San Francisco, that we are everywhere and we will not lose our lives and family without a fight.



This Message brought to you by Bash Back Philly (the city that cracked the Liberty Bell)

Palestinians Will Never Forget

By Susan Abulhawa

How can anyone watching Gaza burn escape the bitter realization that history repeats itself? Many have compared Israel's treatment of Palestinians to Apartheid South Africa, but not in their cruelest hour did the Apartheid regime wreak such wanton murder and destruction. Let us stop mincing words. What is happening to Palestinians now whispers of Warsaw and Lodz.

Schools, universities, mosques, police stations, homes, water treatment plants, factories, and anything that supports civil society, including the only mental health clinic in Gaza, have been blown to rubble from planes that rain death from clear skies without any resistance, because Palestinians have no opposing air force. Nor do they have an army or navy. No mechanized armor or heavy weaponry. Thanks to Israel, they haven't even had continuous electricity or fuel for the past two years, nor food nor medicine. Israel's siege and blockade of Gaza has prevented the movement of people and goods in and out of Gaza, including the import of the most basic goods necessary for survival.

A recent study by the Red Cross showed that 46 percent of Gazan children suffer from anemia. Malnutrition affects 75 percent of Gaza's population, half of whom are under the age of 17. There has been widespread deafness among children due to Israel's intentional and frequent sonic booms from low overflights. An alarming number have stunted growth and serious mental disorders due lack of food. The only way Gazans have been able to survive thus far has been due to the tunnels that smuggle food and goods from Egypt.

This is what Israel has done to Gaza over the past two years. They ghettoized Gaza and turned it into an open air prison – a concentration camp of civilians with no way to earn a living, no way to defend themselves and no place to run from the

slaughter bombarding them from air, land, and sea, or from the white phosphorous disemboweling young and old alike. Hear eyewitness accounts: at <http://tinyurl.com/9a5ftc>

But Gazans dared to try to resist with pathetic homemade rockets that, until Israel's barbaric attack, generally landed in open desert. The rockets were mostly symbolic of resistance, very much like the fighters in the Warsaw Ghetto uprising. But who would have called on a ceasefire there, in 1943, for "both parties" to "cease the violence"? Who would have blamed the Ghetto fighters for their ultimate fate? Who would say they had no right to resist? No right to fight back?

Just as Nazis gave Jews only the right to die silently, Israel starves and lays siege to Palestinians, giving them only that same right. Just as the Warsaw Ghetto was blown to rubble, Gaza is left to burn in an inferno, its hospitals bursting with the pus of death and unspeakable wounds. The entire population of Gaza is terrorized and traumatized. No one is spared the insecurity and fear. Imagine, please, that you are a Gazan.

What have Palestinians done to deserve such a fate? To be endlessly hunted like animals? To have their homes demolished, their ancient history and heritage cast into forgotten space? To languish in refugee camps and slums, while Jews from all corners of the earth flock to fill their confiscated homes and farms? To be tortured, imprisoned, and denied in every conceivable way?

What have we done that leaders will not speak against this massive and cold aggression against our people? With what



There have been three angry demonstrations this past week outside the Israeli consulate at 1880 JFK Blvd, and the local Fox affiliate, where hundreds protested last Saturday against the US media's complicity in masking the daily horror and humiliation Palestinians face. Local organizing continues to gain momentum as Gaza's suffering increases. Email sustainphilly@gmail.com to become involved.

logic do you call Palestinians terrorists when their streets flow with the blood of their own children? When they have been stripped naked of possessions, dignity and hope?

Why? Because they elected Hamas? Hamas has held power for less than two years. Yet, Palestinians have suffered this kind of slaughter for 61 years. Whether now in Gaza, in 2002 in Jenin, in 1947 and 1948 in Deir Yasin, Balad el-Sha, Yehida, Tantura, and the list goes on. Or 1982 in Sabra and Shatila.

Palestinians are killed as if insects not because of Hamas or Yasser Arafat before them, not because of Qassam rockets or hand thrown rocks. Palestinians burn

SATURDAY
JANUARY 31
TRASHY BOOTY



Support the defenestrator!

Buy our old crap! Also, rare and radical DVDs, books, propaganda and CDs. January 31 - all day long at the A-Space - 4722 Baltimore Ave. info: defenestrator.org/trashy_booty

and bleed because they are the non-Jewish natives of that land. There is no other reason. Just like Jews were killed for being Jewish. Palestinians are killed for being the Muslims and Christians who hold historic, and legal title to that land.

But unlike Jews of Europe, Palestinians are killed slowly over decades. But most importantly, like the fighters of the Warsaw Ghetto, Palestinians do not march like mice to their death. In six decades of enduring unspeakable oppression, their will has not been broken. Now is no exception.

Israel, and the United States with its unconditional support, will only succeed in

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Wall Street Gets Bailed Out, Philly Gets Thrown Out: The 'City That Loves You Back' Fights Mayor Nutter's Budget Cuts

By Sean West

Despite news of a massive economic crisis sounding throughout the nation, we in Philly seemingly got a break from the bad news in the later weeks of October into November. We partied. The Phil's won the World Series, resulting in wild, rowdy festivities up and down Broad Street (and a wee bit of rioting). Halloween celebrations went off across the city with their usual flair and fun. Then, in early November the wild street parties went off again when the election of Barack Obama on Tuesday, November 4th brought to an end eight years of neoconservative rule.

Then, announcing a sweeping round of cuts to social services and city government to balance the budget, Mayor Nutter crashed the party on November 6th. . I'll be fair

abatement while our neighborhoods have to lose libraries, pools and fire engine and ladder companies?

As of print here is a partial list of some of the original cuts:

Closing 5 fire engine companies and 2 ladder companies

Closing 11 library branches: Queen Memorial, Kingsessing, Fumo Family, Logan, Ogontz, Durham, Fishtown, Wadsworth, Haddington, Holmesburg and Eastwick.

Closing almost all our city pools, 62 out of 73!

Getting rid of street cleaning and snow removal on more small neighborhood streets...unless the snow is a foot deep!

220 city workers to be laid off (as of print time the number has dropped to down to about 100)

A 2 million dollar cut in funding to The Community College of Philadelphia (Again, in fairness, Nutter increased CCP funding by 4 million before making the 2 million cut...but CCP students still need that money not real estate developers or casinos!)

Nutter's announcement of the cuts sparked outrage among many Philly residents, particularly around the closure of the libraries and fire engine and ladder companies.

However, the pools are also a big deal to most people. It's likely that the public outrage about their closures will rise along with the temperature next year when kids have no place to cool off and learn how to swim. Citizens will also likely be up in arms when a snowstorm covers the city with anything less than a foot of snow and residents have to shovel out their entire block to get to work.

Get Your Hands Off Our Books You F***N Crooks!

"You reach a certain point where you say, 'I'm not doing that! If you want someone to do this to the library system that I love, find somebody else. I will not implement that kind of drastic cut.... I will leave and I will tell the public why!'" - Councilman Nutter after being awarded a 'Politician of

the Year'" by Library Journal in 2005

It made me proud to be a Philadelphian when right after the announcement of library closures my neighborhood in Southwest Philadelphia, Kingsessing, had posters against the library closures stapled to telephone poles, taped to street poles and a petition drive underway just days after Nutter announced his plans. I was even happier when I attended my first rally against the library closures in Fishtown, which is also losing a fire engine company. The rally drew well over two hundred people to this tight, scrappy, well-organized neighborhood. People had signs printed up, a banner and dozens of letters from kids in Fishtown to deliver to the mayor.

It would be generous to say that there are a few things that are lost on Mayor Nutter and Free Library Director Siobhan Reardon (who orchestrated the branch closures when the Mayor declared the Free Library system would need to make an 8 million cut to their budget.) We are, as the old cliché goes, a city of neighborhoods and our branch libraries are incredibly important to us.

Our branch libraries are much more than a place where you can check out a book, they are a hub of services for residents. For people without internet access at home, Libraries are the only public place that bridges the digital divide and allow residents access to information and services they would otherwise not have such as: internet based employment searches, tutorials on writing a resume, the ability to send an e-mail to a relative in another state or to search out knowledge on things that have caught their interest. Our branch libraries provide invaluable children's programs such as: Storyhour, Science in the Summer and the highly valued LEAP program, in which students receive tutoring for school work, mentoring and have a safe place to ask questions and get answers. In addition, branch libraries supplement area public schools since many schools do not have their own libraries or (limited library services) and their students depend upon the branch libraries for access to books!

The importance of neighborhood libraries was expressed best when I attended the two rallies at my local branch library, Kingsessing. The first, on Saturday November 15th, fortunately fell on an unseasonably warm day, and as I approached the library I could hear a DJ spinning some classic numbers, and saw people gathering around the demonstration. The protest drew hundreds of people to

hear community residents, old and young alike, express not only their love for the libraries, but their outrage at the budget cuts as well.

On the following Saturday, November 22nd residents across the city braved the cold and demonstrated in front of the branch libraries in their neighborhoods. At the Kingsessing branch, people were "fired up despite the cold" as one blog put it. Local youth put on a performance piece, along with many speakers and a gospel group. It was amazing to see nearly a hundred



people out despite the frigid conditions, and later on television, to watch as people came out all over the city to protest the cuts and defend their branch libraries.

Behind the rallies were amazing community organizing efforts led by neighborhood associations. These grassroots organizers have brought many people together to defend their communities and put pressure on decision makers. Included in this effort has been The Friends of the Free Library, which has devoted many resources to defending the branches.

Unfortunately, without the input of the communities, The Friends of the Free Library offered a concession to the administration, allowing them to make cuts across all branches so they would be open three days a week. Curiously, this even fell short even of Councilman Bill Green's proposal to conduct a survey of when the specific branches were underutilized and cut hours accordingly. In any struggle, it's common sense to put pressure on your opponent and let them offer a concession rather than lowering the bar for them.



and say that the budget crisis is not entirely of the Mayor's making. He's dealing with an economic crisis brought about by the misdeeds and quest for profit-at-any-expense brought about by Wall Street, major financial institutions, and the rich, which is now hitting home in many major American cities and municipalities. Wall Street has been bailed out while working people have been thrown out of their homes and jobs, have left college for lack of tuition and cities have been left to fend for themselves.

I'll say it how I feel it, Nutter has tried to solve the crisis with sweeping budget cuts directly attacking working people, the poor, various neighborhoods, youth and union while pandering to wealthy developers and city hall hacks. What civil servant needs a six figure salary? Why do wealthy developers get a 10 year tax

The Friends of the Free Library was limited in their ability to take more effective action by their role as a non profit that needs to maintain a relationship with Siobhan Reardon after this struggle is over. Various block captains, residents and organizers quickly grasped this fact and brought together The Coalition to Save Our Libraries, an organization freed from the constraints of ongoing political relationships, free to organize more "in your face" style protests and free to take direct action if needed.

The importance of the The Friends of the Free Library was highlighted, however, when council passed a non-binding resolution on December 6th calling on Mayor Nutter for a six-month moratorium on library closures while a study could be conducted on the impact of the closures and possible alternatives. First-term Councilwoman Maria Quiñones-Sánchez of the 7th district introduced the resolution. The resolution passed 12-5. The five who opposed the resolution were Council President Anna Verna (District 2), Frank DiCicco (District 1), Marian Tasco (District 9) and at-large council members James Kenney and William Greenlee. Let's not allow the five council people who voted against the resolution forget their choice, especially Anna Verna, who as council president refused to hold the hearings the resolution called for by arguing that council was



powerless and the decision to close libraries "...was strictly up to the mayor." As this resolution was non-binding, Mayor Nutter was quick to respond stating that library closures would go ahead as planned.

A large, vibrant demonstration of over 300 people from the various neighborhoods took place at the Central Library branch on December 6th. Many people spoke: children from local schools, community leaders, and council people. At the end of the rally youth from the Philadelphia Student Union and various community groups led a march to city hall and demanded to speak to the mayor or a representative. According to the protest police (aka Civil Affairs), the mayor's entire team were all at the Army/Navy

football game at that time.

The mayor's unwillingness to speak to the crowd (or at least to have a representative on hand), and his haste to disregard council's resolution for a moratorium, illustrated the arrogance of Nutter's administration and their insulation from public opinion. Pride comes before the fall indeed!

Many residents had been putting pressure on Nutter during the 'town hall' meetings he'd been holding to talk about his budget cuts.

These 'town hall' meetings were essentially 'dog and pony' shows where the mayor would explain his rationale for the cuts and during

'Q & A' would repeatedly cut people off, not answer questions directly, essentially refusing to engage in any meaningful dialogue. While people bravely spoke out during all the town meetings, Nutter was certainly in for a surprise when he came to the Kingsessing Rec Center where the people filling the facility started booing and chanting 'Save Our Libraries' before he even got up to speak. Free Library Director Siobhan Reardon was literally booed off stage when she was introduced and looked visibly shaken throughout the meeting. One highlight of the town meetings was watching the mayor being caught off guard when he couldn't name the schools lacking libraries in proximity to them, but most touching was the feeling of

community and solidarity that pervaded the room. Whenever the mayor tried to dodge a question, a chorus of people, shouted "answer the question". When people would bring up ending the tax abatements, or downplay children having to walk two miles to the nearest library, spontaneous chants of "Tax the Rich" or "Save Our Libraries" would break out.

While the town meetings throughout Philly let people blow off some steam, there was clearly still a fight to be had, and this fight would shortly take a surprising new direction.

Two separate lawsuits were filed citing a 1988 city ordinance that prohibits the mayor from closing public facilities without City Council's approval. In one--a class action lawsuit--attorney Irv Acklesberg represented plaintiffs from various neighborhoods that would be negatively affected by the library closures. In another City Council members Bill Green, Jannie L. Blackwell, and Jack Kelly filed suit claiming, essentially, that the mayor was not doing his job by failing to put the closures up for a council vote.

People mobilized through The Coalition to Save Our Libraries, as well as other groups, to pack the courtrooms at city hall and to speak their opposition at a press conference Mayor Nutter was holding on the first day of the hearings. Nutter's press

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NUTTER'S BUDGET SOLUTION IS THE PROBLEM...

WE NEED MORE PUBLIC SPACES NOT MORE JAIL CELLS....

WE CANNOT ALLOW THE CITY TO AUCTION OFF OUR CHILDRENS' FUTURES IN RETURN FOR A SHORT SIGHTED BUDGET SOLUTION WHILE THEY SPEND OUR TAX DOLLARS ON POLICE AND PRISONS. IN AN AGE OF PRIVATIZATION, WE MUST PRESERVE OUR FEW PUBLIC SPACES BEFORE THEY ARE GONE. FOR MORE INFO: [HTTP://WWW.LIBRARYFRIENDS.INFO/](http://www.libraryfriends.info/) [HTTP://WWW.PHILLYMC.ORG](http://www.phillymc.org)

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Philly SDS Gives the Department of Education an "F"

On November 14, 2008 the Philadelphia chapter of Students for a Democratic Society held a rally at the Department of Education in order to attract the department and the public's attention, to the problem of student debt. Kicking off the organizations National campaign for Accessible Education, SDS chapters around the country organized similar events at the Department of Education in their respective cities. College and high school students participated in the protest that targeted the student debt crisis in Philadelphia. Students attending public and private colleges and universities are finding themselves in more debt than ever before for multiple reasons, including increasing distribution of loans and higher interest rates, as well as ever-increasing tuition costs. In Pennsylvania, for example, 71% of students graduating from a four-year college are in debt, with the average debt over \$23,000. Furthermore, high school

students in Philadelphia and throughout the country face a lack of resources in their schools, a factor that leads towards greater difficulty in completing high school let alone attending college. The protest sought

The goal of the action in Philadelphia was to engage the Department of Education in conversation with students and student groups in order to start addressing the horrendous student debt crisis in the city. The department ignored the request to sit down and speak with Philly SDS at a rally where students presented the department with a giant report card failing them in the areas of affordable, accessible, and quality education as well as in student participation.

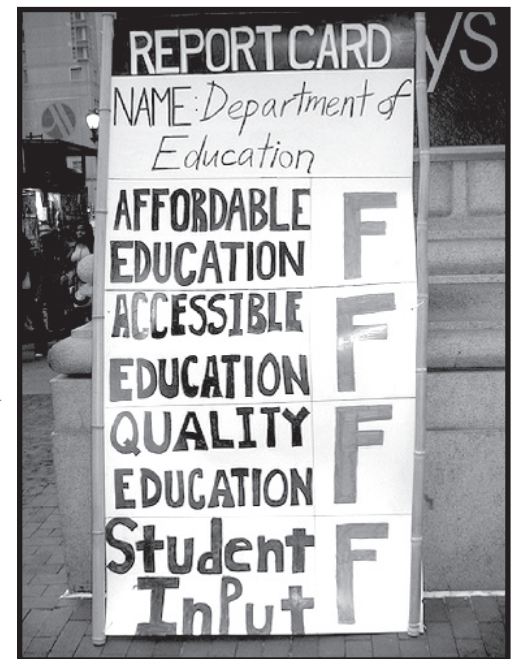
With a boisterous crowd wielding signs, banners, and noisemakers, the students eventually closed their rally with a march around city hall. Unsurprisingly, participants and observers alike overwhelmingly agreed with SDS's demand that the Department of Education start to act on the issue of student debt in Philadelphia.

With the announcement of budget cuts effecting social and educational services throughout the city, Philly SDS is focusing attention on supporting community

efforts to counter-act or stop the budget cuts. The campus chapters at Drexel, Penn, and Temple continue to work on the issue of student debt and accessible education. To get involved or to learn more check out phillysds.org!



to draw connections between the failing public school system and to the increasing costs, and therefore unequal access of higher education.



The Grinch that stole the Library at Christmas

By Dr. Schuyllkill

Every Who,
Down in Kingsessing, southwest Who-ville,
Liked their library a lot...

But a new Library director Grinch,
From a town far from southwest Who-ville,
Did not.

The city was going through a tough financial season,
Mismanagement of money and an economic downturn was the reason.

Budget cuts had to be made, that might be right,

But the Free Library's cut, that was way, way, (20%!!!) too tight.

The director decided she didn't need the libraries, serving the small,

And didn't want any cuts to the prestigious central library at all.

The Diabolical Director, Siobhan Reardon, came up with a plan,
She figured a way to keep the money, for the central library's expansion.

She would close the library in the neighborhood of the Whos.

And for this she set herself up to receive big BOOOOs.

It was the day before Christmas was the date of the closing,

Where the building would be shut up, and readied for selling.

It was Cindy-Lou Philly Who, who first saw the fact,
That this was forever a library, as it was written on a stone plaque.
Cindy read the words of a man named Carnegie,
That said this building would forever be a library.

Cindy looked up forever in the dictionary, confused by what she found,
As the entry said forever, couldn't be closed down.
Then Cindy-Lou Philly Who told all her Who friends,
So that the library that she knew and loved, wouldn't have to end.

Library director Reardon must not know her vocabulary,
Otherwise she wouldn't confuse the meaning so badly.
She wouldn't morally carry on with this library closing endeavor,
If she knew the true meaning of the stone carved word, forever.

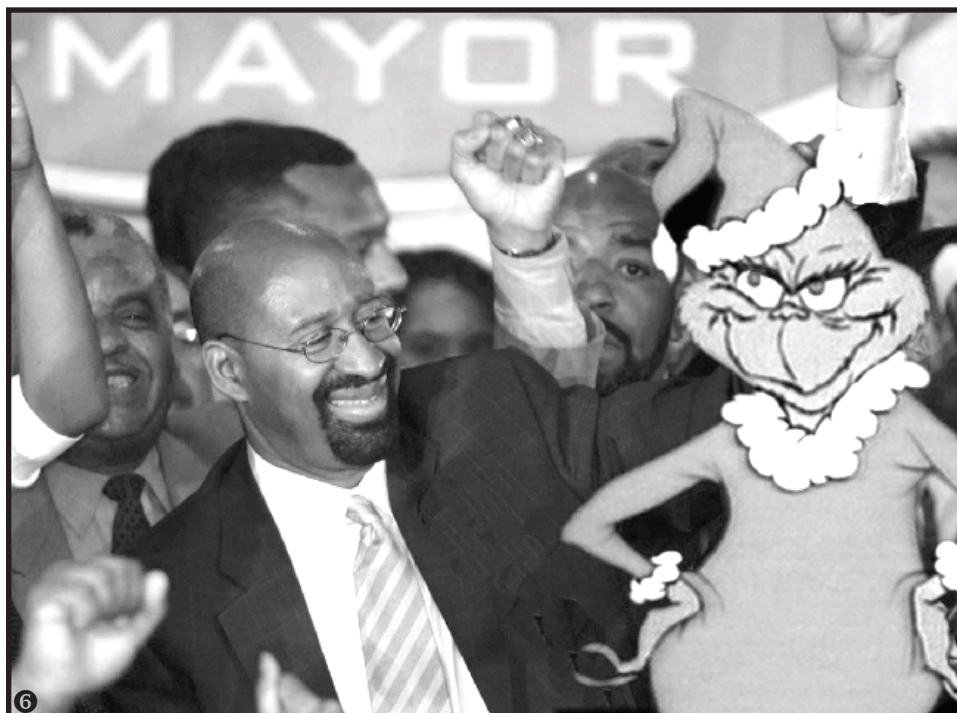
Cindy called the library directors office, but Ms. Reardon didn't care,
But Cindy-Lou Philly Who knew, that this wasn't legal, moral, or fair.

Also Cindy-Lou Philly Who's mother, was mad as can be,
And it wouldn't be long before the next democratic primary.
Mrs. Who and her friends who vote, will definitely remember,

The man who ignored, the library sign saying forever.

If Mayor Nutter was a smart man, he would know what to do,
Find a new director who could keep the library open, for the Who's.
Nutter could be the one to save the libraries, and stand much taller,
And he should, because political careers have been lost, over things much, much smaller.

The Mayor has in his power, to free the Who's library from their Grinch,
Because there are other ways of saving money, in a financial pinch.
Mr. Nutter it time to do the right thing, to be a strong leader and to be brave,
Because you know in your heart, that the library branches, need to be saved.



“We’re here! We’re Queer!”:

The Grassroots Politics of Harvey Milk

by Bronwyn Lepore

A teenager in the 70’s, I still remember the rant of the activist parent whenever Anita Bryant, singer, orange juice queen, Christian wing nut and anti-gay crusader came on TV. “Get that hateful woman off, I can’t even look at her.” My mom was a social worker in Camden, New Jersey, and a gay co-worker, Richard Marcucci, often came by the house at night to chat. Mom baked chocolate chip cookies and the scent of a joint and the warm cookies wafted through the louvered doors, as they giggled conspiratorially in the kitchen. The 70’s were a decade of social battlefields and powerful grassroots movements, a decade when identity politics came to the forefront, and conversations around our dinner table were full of hopeful talk of the cultural changes taking place.

In a recent profile in *The New Yorker* (12/8/2008) Naomi Klein (activist/author of *The Shock Doctrine*) echoed some of my feelings, and I’m sure we’re not alone, about Obama’s candidacy and the somewhat misplaced hopes for his upcoming presidency: “I don’t want to appear too cynical, but when I first saw the ‘Yes We Can’ video... my first response was ‘Wow, finally a politician is making ads that are as good as Nike’s. The ‘Yes We Can’ slogan means whatever you want it to mean. It’s very ‘Just Do It.’” When you hear it, you catch yourself thinking, yeah! We’re gonna end torture and shut down Guantanamo and get out of Iraq! And then you think, Wait a minute, is he really saying that? He’s not really saying that, is he? He’s saying we’re going to send more troops to Afghanistan. He’s telling regular people what they want to hear, and then in the back room he’s making deals and signing on to the status quo.” She continues, “‘But if people don’t like where

Obama is they should move the center... get out there and say some crazy stuff! And then, suddenly, it’ll seem more reasonable for politicians to take riskier positions.’”

And that’s what Harvey Milk and the gay rights grassroots movement he was a part of did. They moved the center. They took risks, and won. Milk’s was a face of 70’s radical transformation and possibility. Obama may have cut his teeth on community organizing, but his drift has been ever rightward. Look at Obama and Biden’s stance on gay marriage (and any number of other issues) and you’ll get what I mean. Milk wasn’t referencing God and family and the middle-class or cow-towing to centrist perspectives. He was marching at the front of gay pride parades, his arm proudly around his partner, demanding equal rights and treatment for marginalized groups: gays and lesbians, minorities, the elderly and unions.

And so Gus Van Sant’s biopic *Milk* brought on a shock of pleasure after weeks of increasingly disgusted feelings over Obama’s appointees, his meetings with Bush to bail out Citigroup (one of the most sickening abusers of monetary power in the world – devastators of Latin American rain forests, predatory lenders, greedy, out-of-control risk-takers), who had, of course, donated equal amounts to the McCain and Obama campaigns, his early, but predictable, betrayals of hope. Besides telling the story of Milk’s 70’s activism (and personal life) the film highlights the possibilities of transcendent grassroots activism – thousands of gay people in the streets of San Francisco inspiring gay people all over the country in an “I am here; I am queer” statement of “fuck you if you don’t like it” solidarity.

In some ways the film is

a shift for Van Sant, whose best films *Elephant* (2003), *Last Days* (2005), and *Paranoid Park* (2007), are non-traditional, atmospheric studies of 90’s youth-culture alienation. *Milk* is a conventional narrative. But maybe his intention, “in these times” of Prop 8 (whether you think marriage is a conservative cultural tradition is besides the point; it’s a civil rights issue)

changing San Francisco encouraged him to be “out” and politicized him.

The film opens with black and white archival footage of police raiding a Miami gay bar, the men shoved into paddy wagons like cattle, a reminder of the harassment gays faced and why so many stayed in the closet. Dade County, Florida, Anita Bryant



and conservative cultural values was to recreate and thus encourage possibilities of moving the center. I mean, how rare is it to witness the manifestation of a politician you can actually admire, feel inspired by, would take to the streets with, who would take to the streets with you? Milk always emphasized that he was not a politician but part of a movement. But he was a pivotal, charismatic leader, who courageously fought the white power establishment, and his death inspired Van Sant and thousands of others to come out of the closet.

While Van Sant deserves the attention (he’s one of the bravest, most experimental mainstream film-makers of the past few decades) this isn’t a film review. Go see it. Watch Rob Epstein’s 1985 documentary *The Times of Harvey Milk*.

Milk, a New Yorker and closeted conservative Wall Streeter in the 60’s (he tried to talk one of his boyfriends into campaigning for Barry Goldwater) moved to San Francisco in 1972 at a time when the Castro neighborhood (traditionally Irish Catholic blue-collar) was witnessing a huge influx of gay men and lesbians. By 1969, San Francisco had more gay people per capita than any other U.S. city. A port town, a lot of gay men who’d been expelled from the military settled there. Milk’s countercultural experience of a

country, was a pivotal battleground for gay rights.

Milk opened Castro Cameras and started organizing the neighborhood. Strategically turning conservative tactics against the opposition, he created blacklists of businesses hostile to gays. He organized gay bars to support the Teamster’s strike by boycotting Coors and convinced the Teamsters to hire gay drivers. The camera store became a hub for neighborhood organizing, but police and other harassment of gays continued, and Milk decided the only real way to gain clout was to become part of the political structure of the city. After 3 tries, during which he and supporters hit the streets and each run gained him more supporters, and changes brought about by Mayor George Moscone who granted more autonomy and decision-making power to neighborhoods - supervisors could be elected by district - Milk was elected to San Francisco’s board of supervisors in 1977, becoming the first open gay elected to public office in the U.S. And his campaign did this with barely any money, and with what one campaign coordinator called a team that was “anything but normal”; grassroots volunteers of all ages, races, shapes, sizes and sexual orientations. It was also the first time a feminist, a black, and a Chinese



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Critically Resisting:

Ruth Gilmore on CR10, Political Will and Successful Prison Abolition Work.

interview by Andalusia Knoll

From Sept. 26th to 28th, nearly 3,500 people from across the U.S. gathered in Oakland California for the CR10 Conference and Strategy Session. Organized by the national Grassroots Prison Abolition group Critical Resistance, conference attendees strategized and shared stories of their work to end societies use of prisons and policing as an answer to social problems. At CR10 Andalusia Knoll along with The Thousand Kites Project (thousandkites.org) interviewed conference attendees and attempted to capture the stories of those organizing against the prison industrial complex.

In the following interview Andalusia Knoll speaks with professor, author and founding member of the Critical Resistance collective Ruth Gilmore.

AK: You have spoken about how the concept of Prison Abolition has become more accepted over the past ten years, since the founding of Critical Resistance. Now that more people have an understanding of what you mean when you speak about abolishing prisons, how do you think we should move forward?

RG: One thing that has been happening a lot that is really encouraging to me is that people work on all different kinds of issues that are across the landscape of social justice, economic justice and racial justice and gender justice activism are starting to see that every issue connects in really profound ways and one place that they all connect is around and in the prison industrial complex. The abandonment of schools and the growth of prisons go together; enforced gender normality and the growth of prisons go together, white supremacy and the growth of prisons goes together. So now people are persuaded of the connections; practically speaking how do we craft campaigns that will move us forward? I had the good fortune

yesterday to facilitate a workshop of people who worked on three different campaigns to stop jail expansion; one in New Orleans, one in Monroe County, Indiana where the second Klan was born in the 1920's and the third in the South Bronx. They talked about their strategies, what worked, their campaigns at different levels of development. It was exciting and inspiring to have people share their best strategies, and figure out their failures. Also, it was really obvious that the kinds of people who are drawn to the work are much more diverse in every imaginable way than people who I encountered ten years ago.

That example that you gave is definitely an inspiring one, of people who organize against the construction of new jails. That fits into the prison abolition framework, but what about many people who are more engaged in more reformist activities. In Pennsylvania there is a group called Fight for Lifers; comprised of prisoners serving life without parole and their loved ones who together are fighting for people to be able to be sentenced to life with parole, as opposed to life without parole. What advice do you have for people doing this work that is clearly necessary and how they can incorporate an overarching abolitionist thought into their work?

One of the simple rules of thumb, for me is to ask does the work that I or anybody else is doing in any way extend the scope or the life of the prison industrial complex. If people are fighting on behalf of people who are lifers to get the possibility of parole for them, what they are doing is shortening the life and scope of the prison industrial complex, by trying to figure out how, even if it is one person at a time, they can get them out. That is what abolition work is, even if it doesn't feel like abolition work and that's what abo-

lition work its that kind of detail, painstaking, troubling work and that's different than saying: That's different from saying "We are against the death penalty. Let's have life without parole." That's not abolition work even though abolishing the death penalty is a good thing.

Today after I presented a workshop about the Prison Poster Project this woman came up to me and asked "Okay I get it you don't want people to be in prison." But what do we want? What are these alternatives? I told her personally that I was opposed to the capitalist system at large, but to me abolition work includes a whole restructuring of society. Do you believe that prison abolition has to include this kind of restructuring and if so and how so?

The two biggest reasons that people are in prison are issues around income and issues around illness. That's the reason most people in prison are in prison. These are things we can address without putting people in cages and employing other people to watch the people in cages. So yes, we are talking about a wholesale restructuring of society. Now some people say to me, and I'm getting old I'm in my late 50's, "this will take forever." That may be true, but anyone who has been paying the least attention to the news in the U.S. in the last week and a half, sees that things that take forever can happen overnight. The U.S. nationalized two major mortgage banks and the biggest insurance company in the world and in some way shape or form put

up 700 billion dollars to bail out investment banks and Wall Street. If that can be done overnight, then a lot of things that we are talking about can also happen overnight if we had the political will. It takes clout



Ruth Gilmore

Andy Smith, (a founding member of INCITE! Women Of Color Against Violence) during her open plenary said there is some way in which we

start to get a little worried that we cant get everything we want, so instead, we say lets make what is just a little bit better: better prisons, cleaner prisons, more spacious prisons, better education in prisons.. That's not it. Political will is what we need to change things overnight There are more of us than there are them. All this money they have been talking about [with the bailout] is actually us. Abolition is taking control of all that social income for ourselves. Its kind of straightforward, we made it, it's ours.

I've seen CR shirts that say something like "One day there was a world without prisons, that day will come again." Can you speak to that? I think its become so much a part of the American mindset, that there are prisons and they have always existed.

Well a lot of people think "gosh, there have always been prisons." But really what they are imagining are dungeons. Prisons and dungeons while they seem similar are not the same thing. Large scale individualized but impersonal cage systems are very modern. They are about the same age as the United States of America, they weren't invented here but they were launched large scale in the early nineteenth century here and perfected here. They are currently being exported to a lot of the world. Before that, what happened? All kinds of things happened, some good, some not so good, but a lot of the sorts of problems of today that are dealt with conviction, criminalization, punishment and imprisonment are things that once upon a time were not crimes or were dealt with in sort of customary ways. Through making restitution or whatever it would take to make both the person who did the harming and the person who was harmed whole, which is to say able to get on with their lives. The intervention of cages has completely disrupted that, and it gets worse and worse and

continued next page 



Was the HIV/AIDS Epidemic Caused by Government Neglect?

By cliffwms44

I am an African-American father, husband, son, brother and grandfather at age 46, living in the epidemic of HIV/AIDS and STDs. April 23, 2003 was a birthday I'll never forget, when I tested positive for HIV and my life took a change in purpose – to work in efforts to erase the damage done by government.

Black America: Present numbers support evidence that the U.S. government neglected HIV/AIDS as a priority when it allowed an epidemic to become a pandemic that has killed more than 25 million people around the world since 1981.

In the 1980s, when Ronald Reagan was president, America began its campaign of misinformation by sending out reports that AIDS was a disease of gay white males. They used misleading labels like “Gay-Related Immune Disease (GRID).” Still in the crosshairs as targets, the mostly white gay population rallied as activists. The stigma that hung over people with the virus fomented separation in families, and the U.S. government was considering quarantine and forced tattooing of HIV positive people. People with AIDS died because drug companies, governments, and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) blocked new drugs and clinical trials. Women fought for testing, because new medicines were only tested in men. Protesters invaded the New York Stock Exchange, mostly about the price of antiretroviral drugs being \$8,000 to \$10,000 a year.

Now, documents show that more Blacks are living with HIV/AIDS in the United States than in seven of the 15 African and Caribbean countries served by the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). If Washington D.C. was a country, it would be ranked #11 in a list of the countries with the highest HIV rates in the world.

Conservatives like George W. Bush and churches who shared some of his ideas on how to prevent HIV left America spinning

its wheels while AIDS activists fought for educational tools for our junior high and high school aged youth. Neglect in this area saw a steadily rising rate of HIV among youth that widened the scope of the epidemic. If you just say “abstinence-only” and there are no condoms in the schools, you're fomenting stigma against people living with HIV.

As many as 60% of people with HIV have experienced homelessness or unstable housing (staying on someone's couch, where a person could be kicked out). We need housing as an HIV prevention measure. One way that having a home can prevent HIV is as protection from sexual coercion. Homeless people are often targeted for reasons of their vulnerability. As a homeless male, I have been approached by other males who offered me a place to stay if I would have sex with them. The same thing happens to women. There are people in this world who take advantage of situations in which they hunger for control. They see you with all these bags, and they see that you're vulnerable. If you had sex with another man and you didn't want to, that's a trauma, just like having sex with anyone when you don't want to causes trauma. And that's a decision that could affect the course of your life, if a condom is not used.

The ban on people with HIV/AIDS coming into the United States isn't keeping us safe - it's our prevention messages that keep us safe. We should allow immigrants to have the quality of care they can't get in places like Mexico or Africa. It's an exclusionary rule, and that's not right.

November 20th, 2008: Activists from ACT UP, the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power, and other groups, rallied in force on a cold day in November in Washington, D.C. Activists, HIV positive and negative alike, demanded the attention of president-elect Barack Obama, with most urgency, to act on our last chance to devise a universal – not just national – strategy for this HIV/AIDS pandemic. The number of people who came out, the number of buses we came with,

mean that we're reaching a lot of people with our message. It felt like we've achieved something, come a few steps closer to getting Washington to take notice of a few things.

HIV positive people need to speak out more. More straight people like me need to voice their stories and get involved in activism. Heterosexuals tend to stay low-key because they don't want to expose their status. When I was first diagnosed, I thought it was a death sentence, I thought I had to be like an ostrich and put my head in the sand. My family thought they'd be infected by using the same toilet. But I realized the power of being around people like myself. It molded me into a certain type of person, someone who speaks up about injustice. It's made me have a lot of compassion for what people in general go through.

My hope for the AIDS movement is to cross



November 20th: ACT UP's Jose de Marco and Waheedah Shabazz-El on the mic (top, photo by Suzy Subways); just a few of almost 1,000 AIDS activists demanding action from Obama (bottom, photo by Kaytee Riek)

the lines of race and gender, taking a lesson from this election. In order to get that man elected, people – Black, white, Asian – had to get together on something. I don't know if it's his upbringing, being cross-cultural, but Obama inspires hope. He won't be able to satisfy everyone who comes at him. But the HIV/AIDS epidemic has to be made a priority, by the government and by all of us, because our future is at stake.

Ruthie Gilmore continued from last page

worse, as prisons become a normal part of everyday life.

Here we are at cr10, how do you envision the next 10 years?

I feel very strongly and have written about this some, what's important in social movements is to keep the movements going, and sometimes the organizations don't last. It doesn't make that much difference, even though organizations are necessary to make movements happen, I imagine [Critical Resistance] will be around for ten years,

if not it's not a bad thing because other things will come into play. What my hope is, is that the kinds of things that we have learned over the past ten years and the connections we have made will make us a whole lot more successful than we were in the past ten years. The fact is that there are a million more people in prison in the U.S. than there were ten years ago, during the first conference. Some people say: “Well then ya'll failed, didn't you?” Well maybe, but maybe there would be 2 million more if we hadn't been doing what we had been doing. Knowing that our small, medium

and every so often large successes are I actually think there would be way more people in prison. But there are also way too many people. My hope is we are going to start seeing reduction and see this group more and more, and I hope people [reading] will make the connection between the 700 billion bailout, offered to Wall Street and the U.S. Congress and the fact that 1 out of every 100 adults eligible to go to prison based on age is in prison.

Ruth Gilmore is an Associate Professor of American Studies and Ethnicity and Geography at the University of Southern California. She is a member of the founding

collective of Critical Resistance and author of *Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California*

Andalusia Knoll is a Station Organizer with the Prometheus Radio Project in Philadelphia and a reporter for Free Speech Radio News. She is also a member of the Prison Poster Project collective working to create a visual education tool that will challenge current reliance on prisons as a solution to social problems.

Artwork by Icky A. <http://blackoutprint.com>

Is Obama Really the Change People Hope For?

by nathaniel miller

I did not vote for Barak Obama—Despite the imploring of friends, many bona fide radicals, the queasy feeling of voting Democrat while being an anarchist led me to vote McKinney/ Clemente, the Green Party candidates, two women of color whose names I had to write in, a process that literally caused the voting machine to break and a long line to develop, indicative of our democratic farce where the only legitimized form of political expression is voting for one strata of the ruling class or another. But the spontaneous, and global, celebrations that erupted on election night were real, and certainly electing as president a black man with the middle name Hussein who speaks of inclusion and who promises to dull (oh so slightly) the edge of US imperialism is exciting, even if it is only a symbolic change. Contrasted to the McCain campaigns' visceral racism and the encroaching fascism since 9/11, Obama's election more than anything repudiates Bush, so while neo-colonialism has now come to the heart of the US Empire, there was real cause to celebrate.

I cannot exactly say I have hope for Barak Obama. Given the political realities of being elected, particularly as a black man articulating a progressive agenda, he has had to curtail his message, particularly around foreign policy—not promising an immediate end to Iraq, expanding the war in Afghanistan, and vociferously supporting the racist ambitions of many in Israel to annex Jerusalem are just a few examples.

This summer Obama followed the advice of his intelligence advisor John Brennan (who advocated that extremely harsh interrogation methods be used on “detainees”) and voted to give retroactive immunity to Telecom companies that spied on US citizens. Is that really change? While many argue this is just the political reality of running for president, I wonder if his presidency would be able to veer from that reality, at least if he hopes to be re-elected in four years, and I am quite certain he will not dismantle the US military empire which started to uncoil under Bush. Obama will likely consolidate the empire by marginalizing radicals (slightly better I suppose than ignoring us entirely, but not much better); appeasing liberals with speeches about inclusion and change; ending unilateralism by rekindling alliances with corrupt and ambitious world leaders, and generally applying balm to the ragged wounds at the empire's edge—Iraq, Afghanistan, Latin America, etc. But simply ending unilateralism and ironing the empire's wrinkles will not stop cruise missiles from killing families, nor will it bring the troops home. If his speeches are to be believed, the suffering the US is inflicting on Iraqis is to be siphoned to inflict greater suffering in Afghanistan, a far more popular war internationally. One lesson I'm certain the

US ruling class will not forget is that cavalier adventures like

Bush's crusades in the Muslim world do not make the empire strong. Nor should we forget, once the hangover sets in after election-night's Barakchanalia, that Obama is part of that ruling class, and was long before he was elected president. His Chief of Staff appointment of former Israeli Defense Force soldier Rahm Emanuel who, like Joe Biden, supported the Iraq invasion, and still supports Israeli apartheid, is ominous. So too Hillary Clinton, Bush's Robert Gates, and the swelling line of Clinton-era vultures he's casting for roles in his administration. Obama has so far said nothing about the atrocities in Gaza, and his transition staff basically recycle the same soundbites that Bush and virtually every other US administration have used regarding Israel and its illegal (and certainly immoral) occupation.

While I do not have much personal hope for Barak Obama, I think the world, and particularly the United States has some small reason to hope. But that hope should not be placed in the man himself, nor in the smug belief that the US has some divine mission to lead the world. It must come from the fact that Obama could not have been elected without massive community based organizing that cut across traditional cultural polarizations. There is the very obvious race issue. Since racism is institutional and requires structural change Obama's election is no panacea for the US's long and brutal race war. His election does not mean the sudden empowerment of tens of millions whose ancestors were humiliated, enslaved, raped, and murdered. Obama's election does not absolve whites of their involvement, intentional and unintentional, in the exploitation of others—but that a significant number of white people were forced to talk about race in a genuine way is auspicious, as they also had to examine their priorities in opting to vote with their direct economic interests rather than their racism, and that some of those people voted, or even considered voting for Obama, means much of the country at least notices the white elephant that has always been sitting in the front of the bus. An anecdote from my life illustrates this: Last Easter, shortly after Obama's race speech in Philadelphia, I went to church with my 90 year old grandfather, who is a retired fundamentalist minister, a good man, but nonetheless someone who epitomizes Bush's America. It is a very conservative church, but the pastor focused his sermon on Obama's speech, and how suddenly it allowed whites to talk openly about their complicity in other's oppression. The pastor spoke of his own latent fears when he sees black men on a street corner, and the guilt this conjures; also the resentment some blacks told him they feel towards whites for innumerable and usually unacknowledged privileges. I was genuinely shocked to hear his sermon, and while it ended with the typical “we are all brothers in Christ” trope, the gist of it, in an almost exclusively white, conservative congregation, was radical. I am certain

similar conversations are taking place all over the US.

While I do not see a fundamental difference between Obama and any other US president on waging wars of aggression and supporting criminal regimes like Israel and Columbia, there is a very real difference with what he's proposing at home. While John McCain's accusations that Obama is a socialist are laughable (oh that I wish he really was) there is no disputing that Obama proposes a more redistributionist economy, particularly regarding health care and increasing taxes on the wealthy. His health care plan is somewhat vague and does not sufficiently address the health care catastrophe in the US, but it at least holds us slightly away from the precipice; and the rich have always found ways to avoid paying taxes—I doubt that will be different under Obama. His rightist economic team, recently endorsed by Karl Rove in the Wall Street Journal, is an indication of the pro-business line he will likely take as the world stumbles into depression, but that Obama even suggests some form of national healthcare and taxes on the rich to benefit everyone is extremely unusual, and his overwhelming victory was a mandate to do just that. On a fundamental level there is no difference between the Democrats and the Republicans, both parties being so intricately entwined with ruling elites, but for people on the margins there is something to be said for slightly better welfare, health-care, veterans benefits, social security, etc. Since most of those Obama surrounds himself with will suffer from his proposed tax increase it is incumbent on us to organize and pressure the Dems to follow through on their promises, something they are consistently reluctant to do. We cannot forget that we gave them Congress two years ago on an anti-war mandate and they subsequently rubberstamped war spending and did nothing to end the war.

Other aspects of Obama's proposed domestic agenda are equally vague, but nonetheless more promising than what we've had under Bush. He claims he will fight global warming and bolster the economy, and if he really does invest significant resources in genuine renewables like wind and solar that will be huge (though let's remember that clean coal cannot accurately be called “clean”). With the Dems in near total control in DC they are very likely to pass the Employee Free Choice Act, which will make organizing a union much easier by implementing a card-check system that would allow union recognition if a majority of workers sign union cards, without going to an employer-friendly election unless the boss voluntarily grants union recognition, as the law currently requires. It also allows for Federal injunctions and fines against bosses who violate labor law, and

increases the amount of back pay given to workers fired for organizing. Though EFCA does little for small, radical, independent unions like the Industrial Workers of the World (some argue that it even hurts them by requiring binding arbitration which could result in unfavorable contracts with no-strike clauses), there is no doubt it will make the mainstream labor movement stronger, virtually overnight. There is even hope that with sufficient pressure Congress could repeal the anti-union Taft-Hartley act passed during anti-communist hysteria in 1947 (which outlaws wildcat strikes, solidarity or political strikes, and secondary boycotts, and also requires union officers to sign anti-communist affidavits), although I won't be holding my breath.

Eight years after that fearful night, which became that fearful month ending in Gore's capitulation, it seems Bush will finally be gone and Karl Rove's prediction of a vast right-wing ascendance shattered for now. For that reason alone, seven years into the war of terror, there is genuine cause to celebrate. But the messianic quality the Obama campaign had is disturbing and I fear that people have placed too much unbridled hope in a man I predict will let them down. It's inevitable. All politicians exist to maintain their power, and that ossification of military might and money within the US plutocracy make it impossible for them to genuinely empower an angry population who regularly say they would choose “none of the above” were that an electoral option. That empowerment must come from us as we reflect on Obama's victory and organize for more fundamental change—for in its context Obama's election is a step in the right direction for the radical left. Perhaps Obama is a Trojan horse, who will sneak in some deep socially progressive reforms. More likely he is a chimera who speaks of inclusion and change, but like Kennedy, Johnson, Carter, Clinton, etc. will paint a glossy veneer over a bloody reconsolidation of Pax Americana. One thing that we radicals must remember is that Obama was elected with a mandate of change. It was a grassroots campaign that many on the radical and progressive left mobilized around, and without this involvement Obama would not have been elected—he probably would not have even won the Democratic

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WHEN COPS KILL.



Our lives do not belong to the states and their assassins! The memory of the assassinated brothers and sisters, friends and comrades stays alive through our struggles!

We do not forget our brothers and sisters, we do not forgive their murderers.



On Saturday, December 6, Greek police killed a Alexandros Grigoropoulos a 15 year old student in Athens. By that night, as word spread, Athens had already erupted in widespread rioting. Thousands rushed to the hospital where Alexandros was taken to prevent police from entering. Elsewhere in the city protests quickly turned into pointed attacks on police, police stations and banks. Angry protests spread across the country including rural towns and Greece burned as wide ranging groups joined in the protests including many immigrants whose first hand experiences with police have been marked by

abuse and racism.

On December 9th as Alexandros was being buried, police attacked the funeral and arrested friends of the deceased. Further riots broke out, with police shooting to disperse the crowds. A general strike the next day included massive marches led by unions whose leaders did what they could to keep their workers in line.

But the protests just escalated: thousands of students ditched school in protest (organizing spontaneously via text message), university professors staged a three day walkout, the Athens and Polytechnic universities and the University of Law, the University of Finances were taken over by protesters, prisoners--already struggling-- went on solidarity hunger strikes. Hackers shut down the Greek Prime Minister's website and slowed the police website to an unusable crawl..

Across the world solidarity actions and protests have shook Greek embassies and targeted police in general from NYC to Melbourne to Montevideo to Moscow.

Clashes have continued in Greece up until now as we go to press, with a shooting of a riot cop being the latest news.

According to the Philadelphia Inquirer, in 2008, Philadelphia Police fatally shot 15 civilians and injured 19 others. Amidst a worsening financial crisis, over 1 billion dollars, or about 35 % of the budget of the entire city goes to the police and the prison system. The gangsters on wall street walk free after perpetrating the greatest heist of this century; as the gangsters in blue patrolling our streets kill and maim with total impunity, we remind them, and state in solidarity with our Greek comrades, "we do not forget our brothers and sisters, we do not forgive their murders."



SCI Camp Hill Update

Call for Action, Increased Monitoring, Constant Vigilance

As Pressure Fades, Retaliation Escalates

Prisoners in the Camp Hill Special Management Unit report that the retaliation against them has escalated again. The timing of the reports indicate that the last action alert stayed the hands of the guards for a while, but once the calls died down, the threats, deprivations of food, fabricated misconducts, and other forms of harassment and torture have escalated again.

Michael Edwards, Damont Hagan, and Gary Tucker have been targeted most heavily by prison guards as a result of their efforts to expose racist brutality and maintain their dignity while being subjected to systematic dehumanization.

These men, and the others listed below, need the following from all of us:

- 1)—Take immediate action (detailed below)
- 2)—Establish channels of communication with these men; write them letters
- 3)—Committed and strategic thinking for a long-term battle with the DOC and the Governor's office, involving intensive monitoring, visitation, legal battles,

Name and #	Time since last shower	Time since last yard
David Smith #FZ5168	4 months	4 months
Terry Brooks #DD3814	7 months	6 months
Damont Hagan #DS9488	10 months	5 months
David Crews #DC0924	16 months	7 months
William Meekins #EF3877	11 months	4 months
William Kulp #GK7562	3 months	3 months
Ronald Jackson #CF3994	13 months	12 months
Angel Santiago	18 months	?
Michael Edwards #CM8086	6 months	6 months
Gary Tucker #FG8520	10 months	5 months

media work, community organizing, and—not least of all—transformation of an unsustainable, oppressive social order.

There is no other way to begin to address the conditions in the Camp Hill SMU, or any other solitary unit in PA or the country for that matter. Please take a deep breath and make a commitment right now to make a phone call and write a letter sometime in the next couple of days.

24-Hour Lockdown for Months

Several recent prisoner reports indicate that the following individuals are currently locked in their cells 24 hours a day, deprived of access to shower and yard, and frequently denied food and water.

To cover up this flagrant violation of the law prison ① ② personnel have been fabricating documents to

make the situation appear otherwise, falsely claiming that prisoners have been participating in Program Review Committee meetings and leaving their cells on occasion.

Repercussions of the Last Action Alert—Prisoners Targeted for HRC Affiliation

Initial reports indicated that the severity of threatening and violent behavior by SMU staff under the command of Unit Manager Chris Chambers eased during and immediately after the issuance of the last action alert.

Since that time has faded, however, the abuse has escalated again.

According to Mr. Tucker:

“I want to place emphasis on the fact that me and the others are glad to know that there are people like yourself who realizes that in spite of our situations we are still human beings. These people treat us very inhumanely in here. It is evident that you and your staff are making a statement. The reason I say this is because now me, Edwards and Hagan are being taunted daily by Sgt. Jones and his flunkies. These taunts come by way of Sgt. Jones, C/O Flynn, C/O Brandt and several others walking past our cells saying, ‘you better not mess with them they’re gonna call HRC.’ They even be getting on the loudspeaker taunting us, which is very unprofessional. It’s cowardly as well.

This is but one of several accounts we have received in which prisoners have been taunted for their efforts to expose conditions of torture inside the SMU.

Efforts to Obstruct Justice in the Jacobs v. DOC Case

At the trial *Jacobs v. DOC*, in which state inmate Andre Jacobs was awarded \$185,000 for violations of his constitutional rights, prisoners in the SMU at Camp Hill testified in front of Judge Conti to being threatened and assaulted by prison guards in an effort to silence them.

On Wednesday, November 5th, state’s attorney informed the judge that Michael Edwards and David Smith were refusing to leave their cells to testify on Andre’s behalf. When Mr. Jacobs asserted his disbelief, Judge Conti ordered them brought from their cells to the videoconferencing room on Thursday morning. On Thursday, November 6th, Michael Edwards testified that he feared for his safety due to repeated threats from guards in the SMU and David Smith being assaulted the day before. Mr. Smith confirmed this testimony, alleging that his head was slammed against a wall by prison guard

Uler the day before, and that he still had not received any medical attention. Both men agreed to proceed with their testimony as witnesses for the plaintiff, helping Andre win a victory for prisoners’ rights.

Actions to Take

(1) Contact the Governor—Demand an Investigation

Governor Rendell has command responsibility for what occurs in these prisons. In the attached letter HRC/Fed Up! demands that Rendell initiate an investigation into criminal practices in the SMU at Camp Hill. Join us in sending a clear message to Secretary Beard, Superintendent Palakovich, Unit Manager Chambers, and Sgt. Jones that the SMU is being monitored, and that they will be held accountable for any harm visited upon the prisoner population.

Call Governor Rendell at 717-787-2500 and demand the following:

- 1)—That Rendell initiate an investigation into the allegations of prisoner abuse contained in the documentation sent his office by the Human Rights Coalition.
- 2)—Gary Tucker, Michael Edwards, and Damont Hagan need to be transferred immediately, as their safety cannot be guaranteed in the SMU.
- 3)—If you want to write Rendell, he will no doubt be thrilled to hear from you on this issue at: Governor Rendell, 225 Main Capitol Building, Pittsburgh, PA 17120

(2) Contact the Harrisburg Patriot—Demand an Investigation

A press release (attached) has been sent out to media in Pittsburgh and others in Pennsylvania, and we are asking that it be forwarded widely. We are asking our allies to join us in concentrating our attention on one media target, pressuring them to investigate and report on prison conditions in the SMU at Camp Hill.

Call the Editor, John Kirkpatrick, of the *Harrisburg Patriot* at 717-255-8161 and demand the following:

- 1)—That the paper initiate an investigation into and report on allegations of prisoner abuse and torture in the SMU at Camp Hill
- 2)—Ask that the newspaper contact HRC/Fed Up! in order to be put in touch with prisoners and their families willing to talk with the press.

(3) Write the men in the SMU

Please take the time to send a letter, however brief, to one of the men named above. We need constant monitoring of the situation,

continued next page

Prisoner wins \$185,000 for Violations of Constitutional Rights.

Andre Jacobs, a prisoner in SCI-Fayette, was awarded \$185,000 in compensatory damages by a jury November 24 for violations of his constitutional rights while being held in the Long Term Segregation Unit in SCI-Pittsburgh in 2003.

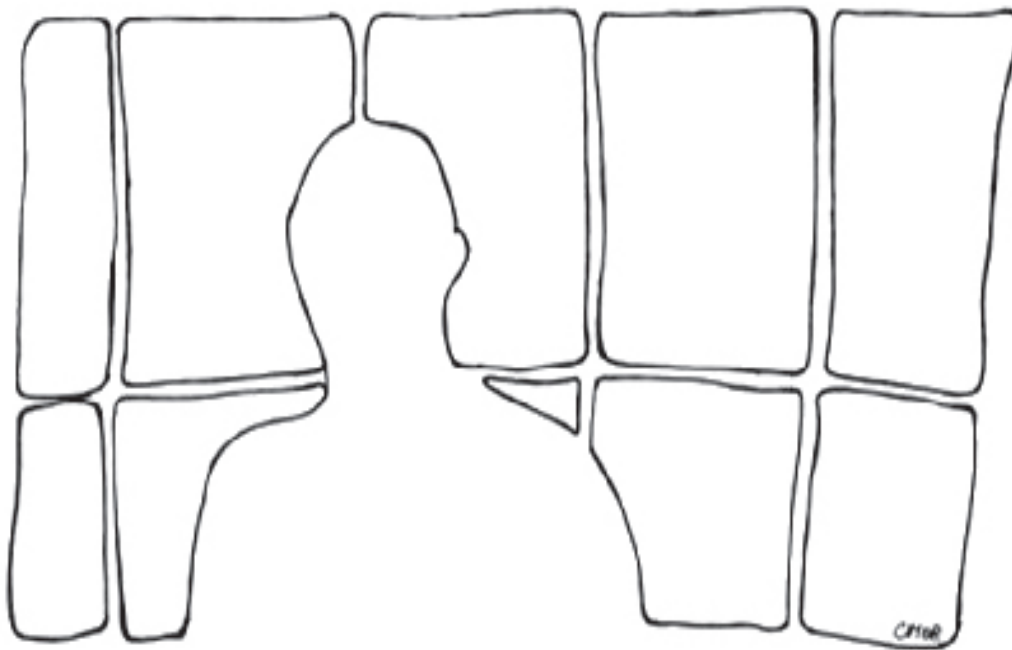
Andre represented himself at trial, and prevailed despite being forced to wear a remote-controlled electro-shock stun belt throughout that was controlled by DOC staff. Two of Andre's witnesses testified to Judge Conti that prison guards working the Special Management Unit (SMU) in Camp Hill threatened them for their participation in the case, with both testifying that C/O Uler assaulted one of the witnesses.

In the first of three upcoming jury trials (the other two are scheduled for January and February) in Federal Court, Mr. Jacobs out-lawyered the state's attorneys throughout, eventually winning guilty verdicts against Lt. Gregory Giddens, ex-Captain Thomas McConnel, and Superintendent's Assistant Carol Scire.

Check the Post-Gazette for an article: <http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/08329/930437-100.stm>. And don't believe the hype: Andre never broke the hand of a federal marshal, but rather was beaten unconscious by federal marshals while in cuffs and shackles after he violated a direct order not to speak by having the audacity to tell his grandmother, Elizabeth, that he loved her. To cover up their own criminal assault, they charged Andre with assault under federal statutes.

Check the Trib for a better article, although it also fails to challenge the

official "cover-up" story in the interests of responsible journalism: http://www.pittsburghlive.com/x/pittsburghtrib/news/cityregion/s_599980.html



Update! Andre Jacobs Targeted for Retaliation--Take Action Today

In the aftermath of Andre Jacobs recent victory in a federal civil rights suit against PA DOC employees to the tune of \$185,000 the DOC has wasted no time in sending a message to prisoners fighting for their constitutional and human rights that any such efforts to combat the system of state torture will be met with relentless punishment.

On December 17th, while Mr. Jacobs was being led to retrieve legal property of his C/O Miller said, "This nigger thinks he's a lawyer," and squeezed the prisoner's arm. When Mr. Jacobs asked why he was continuing to squeeze his arm, C/O Miller pushed the inmate in an effort to provoke a confrontation. Mr. Jacobs had alerted both Capt. Leggett and Unit Manager Abrams that Miller was harassing him in retaliation for the lawsuit the prisoner had recently won. Capt. Leggett and Abrams both

indicated that this is to be expected. This incident has been verified by personal interviews with Andre Jacobs and Eric Lyons, along with correspondence from Patrick Brown and Tierre Davis.

Andre has experienced bruising on his arm by the continual rough treatment, particularly of C/O Miller, and has been denied access to important legal property needed to continue his battles in the court.

Criminal complaints have been filed against Miller, Leggett, and Abrams with the District Attorney's Office of Fayette County on Andre's behalf.

This round of retaliation and repression comes as part of a statewide backlash against prisoners in recent months, particularly those who testified on Andre Jacobs behalf. Michael Edwards and David Smith at SCI Camp Hill have received death threats from staff, and the latter has been assaulted again by guards. Eric Lyons has been issued several fabricated misconducts and has had his ability to pursue legal work deliberately obstructed through the theft of legal property and the breaking of his typewriter. Several others at SCI Fayette have reported the theft and/or destruction of their legal property, including Eric Robinson and Steven Gravely.

Check out http://defenestrator.org/andre_jacobs_retaliation

Mental Health Neglect at Greene

by Sadot Williams

Prisoners that suffer with serious mental health needs make up just under half of the total population of the long term control unit at SCI Greene located in South-western PA.

This is the easy, low-cost way for the PA-DOC Department of Corruption to deal with hundreds of prisoners that may need some form of psychotherapy. This "lock-them-down-and-medicate" approach creates an environment of 24/7, non-stop confusion that administrators and correctional officers use to their advantage, as they are strategically placing these prisoners with mental health needs on this unit for years at a time.

Prisoners with mental health needs are very unlikely to complain or file grievances on the numerous policy infractions that are taking place daily on this unit. Things like scorching hot showers in the summer months and ice cold ones in the winter, computers in the law library being broken for long durations of time, undercooked meals being served on unwashed trays caked with food from the previous day, to name a few instances!

No one from the Psychology Department does rounds on this unit. So basically the prisoners with mental health needs soon come to realize that in order to speak with a counselor, they must do something extreme like threaten to harm themselves, flood their cell or refuse to return to their assigned cell from the law library or yard cages. Things of that nature must take place before the unit officers will even consider calling the Psychology Department.

Unfortunately, by their actions, the administration here at SCI-Greene have made it clear that outside of being medicated to the point of being incoherent, prisoners with mental health needs will not be receiving much needed rehabilitative care.

Sadot Williams
DQ3608
SCI Greene
175 Progress Drive
Waynesburg, PA 15370

Camp Hill continued

and our capacity to do this will improve significantly if everybody agrees to make contact with at least one prisoner.

Please call and provide some cover to the men held captive in the SMU. It is much harder to assault, starve, or kill a prisoner when you know you are being watched by hundreds or thousands of people.

Please write one or more of the men held in the SMU at the following address: SCI Camp Hill, P.O. Box 200, Camp Hill, PA 17001. We

need constant monitoring and to develop a strategy for protracted struggle. This is only possible by making more contact with those on the inside.

Human Rights Coalition - FedUp! Chapter
5125 Penn Ave Pittsburgh, PA 15224
412-361-3022 xt.4 hrcfedup@gmail.com
www.thomasmertoncenter.org/fedup/

Workers Occupy Chicago Factory: Echoes of Argentina's 2001 Worker Uprising

by Benjamin Dangl
Monday, 08 December 2008

When the 250 workers at the Republic Windows and Doors factory in Chicago were told that the plant was shutting down, they decided to take matters into their own hands. On Friday, December 5, the workers occupied their factory in an act that echoes the sit-down strikes of the 1930s in the US

and the occupation of factories during the 2001 crisis in Argentina. "They want the poor person to stay down. We're here, and we're not going anywhere until we get what's fair and what's ours," Silvia Mazon, 47, a formerly apolitical mother and worker at the factory for 13 years told the New York Times. "They thought they would get rid of us easily, but if we have to be here for Christmas, it doesn't matter."

The workers are demanding that they be paid their vacation and severance pay, or that the factory continue its operations. They were given only three days' notice of the shut-down, not the 60 days' notice which is required under federal and state law.

Supporters Rally Outside

On Friday, fifty of the workers at the plant – taking shifts in the occupation – sat on chairs and pallets inside the factory and were supplied with blankets, sleeping bags and food from supporters. Throughout the takeover, workers have been cleaning the building and shoveling snow while protesters gathered in solidarity outside waving signs and chanting.

The occupation of the factory - which produces heating efficient vinyl windows and sliding doors – is taking place in the midst of a massive recession, with the rate of unemployment in the US at a 15 year high, and with 600,000 manufacturing jobs lost in this year alone. As another indicator of the economic crisis, 1 in 10 Americans - a record of 31.6 million - now use food stamps.

The factory workers are protesting the fact

that the Bank of America received \$25 billion in the recent \$700 billion government bailout, and then went ahead and cut off credit to Republic Windows and Doors, resulting in the subsequent closing of the factory.

"The bank has the money in this situation," said Mark Meinster, a representative of the United Electrical, Radio and Machine

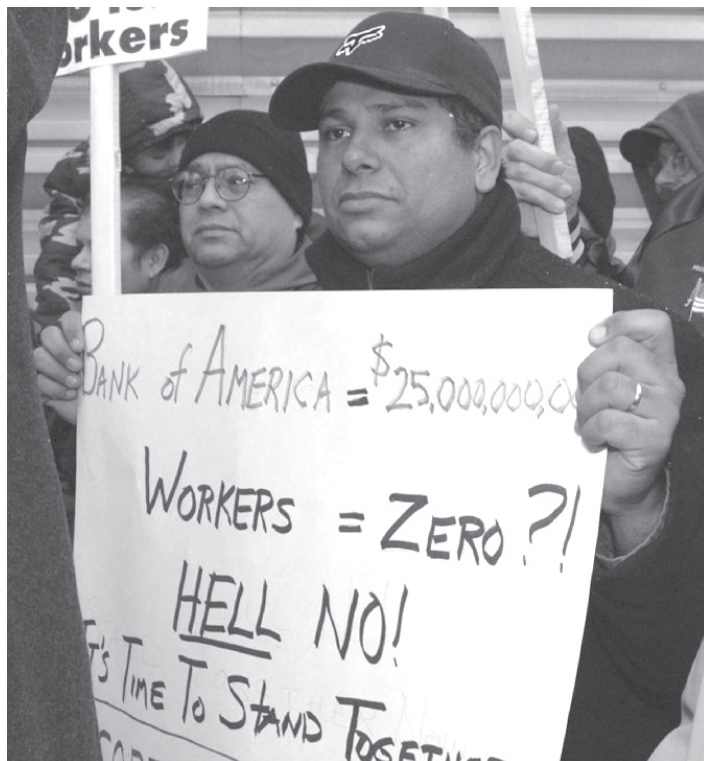


Workers Occupy Chicago Factory

Monday, Illinois

Governor Rod Blagojevich announced that, in support of the workers, the state will temporarily stop doing business with Bank of America.

President-elect Barack Obama also announced his support: "When it comes to the



Workers at picket

situation here in Chicago with the workers who are asking for their benefits and payments they have earned, I think they are absolutely right . . . what's happening to them is reflective of what's happening across this economy."

Rev. Jesse Jackson delivered turkey and

groceries to the workers, saying, "These workers are to this struggle perhaps what Rosa Parks was to social justice 50 years ago. . . This, in many ways, is the beginning of a larger movement for mass action to resist economic violence."

Occupy, Resist, Produce: Argentina's 2001 Crisis
Argentina's crisis was similar to the current recession in the US in the sense that in December of 2001, almost overnight, Argentina went from having one of the strongest economies in South America to the one of the weakest. As the occupation of the factory in Chicago indicates, there are some tactics and approaches to combating economic crises that were used in Argentina that could be applicable during the US crisis.

During Argentina's economic crash, when politicians and banks failed, many Argentines banded together to create a new society out of the wreckage of the old. Poverty, homelessness and unemployment were countered with barter systems, alternative currency and neighborhood assemblies which provided solidarity, food and support in communities across the country. Perhaps the most well known of these initiatives were the occupation of factories and businesses which were later run collectively by workers. There are roughly two hundred worker-run factories and businesses in Argentina, most of which started in the midst of the 2001 crisis. 15,000 people work in these cooperatives and the businesses range from car part producers to rubber balloon factories. Though the worker occupation of Republic Windows and Doors is different in many respects to examples of worker occupations in Argentina, it is worth reflecting on the strikingly similar situations workers in both countries found themselves in, and how they are fighting back.

Chilavert Workers

The Chilavert book publisher in Buenos Aires offers one example of workers taking back a bankrupt factory to operate it as a worker cooperative. "Occupy, resist and produce. This is the synthesis of what we

are doing," Candido Gonzalez, a long time Chilavert worker explained to me during a visit to his bustling publishing house, with printing presses clamoring away in the background. "And it is the community as a whole that makes this possible. When we were defending this place there were eight assault vehicles and thirty policemen that came here to kick us out. But we, along with other members of the community, stayed here and defended the factory."

Candido didn't attribute Chilavert's success to any politician. "We didn't put a political party banner



Chilavert Workers (Photo: Dangl)

in the factory because we are the ones that took the factory. All kinds of politicians have come here asking for our support. Yet when the unions failed, when the state failed, the workers began a different kind of fight. . . If you want to take power and you can't take

over the state, you have to at least take over the means of production."

Back in Chicago, at a time when politicians have failed to respond appropriately to one of the worst US economic crises in history, the occupation of the Republic Windows and Doors factory is a reminder that desperate times call for fresh approaches to social change.

"We aren't animals," Republic Windows and Doors employee Apolinar Cabrera, 43, told reporters. Cabrera is a father of two, with another child on the way, and has been an employee at the factory for 17 years. "We're human beings and we deserve to be treated like human beings."

We pulled this article from from <http://up-sidedownworld.org/>

All photos of Republic Windows and Doors occupation from Chicago Indymedia: <http://chicago.indymedia.org>

Benjamin Dangl is the author of "The Price of Fire: Resource Wars and Social Movements in Bolivia" (AK Press). The book includes many stories of workers, families and activists throughout Latin America working together to build a new world in the face of economic crises.

Report back on the G20 Summit in Washington D.C.

by Ben Bernasty

On November 15th the leaders of the of the 20 most powerful economies met in Washington D.C. for the "G-20 Leaders Summit on Financial Markets and the World Economy." Responding to the financial crisis.

A variety of organizations in D.C. assembled under the name Global Justice Action organized a three-day weekend of events across in and out of the streets. This weekend U.S. organizers a chance to organize against a world financial summit during at historic moment—not when world economic leaders are calmly a new trade deals, but when they are scrambling to deal with a major crisis in the world economy.

The organizers worked under a serious time crunch, saying "No" to a reformed global financial system as people around the world called for 'the crisis be paid for by the richest' (2). Given the current low energy of the anti-globalization movement—the global movement for economic justice that dramatically shut down financial meetings such as the 1999 World Trade Organization meeting in Seattle—stopping the meetings was never a possibility The organizers put a lot of energy into a counter-summit, allowing mostly DC-based organizations to discuss the crisis and strategize on how movements can fight crises already making themselves visible in the U.S.

Friday

On Friday November 14th was the launch of SDS's first national campaign: Student Power For Accessible Education. This national day of action called by SDS against the student debt crisis saw protests across the country. In Philadelphia SDS held a demonstration at the office of the Department of Education (DoE), where fifty or so students from Philadelphia area universities and high schools presented a giant report card to the Department of Education and awarded it failing grades for undemocratic, unaffordable, and inaccessible education. Philly SDS delivered hundreds of "Bail me out" requests to the DoE's office, allowing local students the opportunity to put in writing exactly how much federal money they would need to achieve a proper education (3). In DC, members of DC-SDS and other local schools similarly converged on the national DoE, this time marching around a school edifice chanting, "Education is a right, not a privilege!" and delivering aid requests to the guard at the door (4).

In Philly, several students walking home from school joined the demonstration because it looked like "the most fun [we've] had in a long time," and in DC, several student activists who had not previously worked with SDS helped lead the group with student power chants they'd used on their own campus. Evidently,

student debt and accessible education are tangible issues with the potential to mobilize a broad youth base for democratic change in our schools and communities.

That evening, as the wealthy G-20 attendees visited their exclusive, ritzy galas and dinners. Organizers with DC Food Not Bombs held a People's Banquet in Lafayette Park, directly across from the White House. Unfortunately, the coppers deliberately cleared most of the homeless residents out of the park an hour before the scheduled food sharing, leaving many hungry and distressed. Regardless, the event received some press coverage in the Washington Post and other news outlets. On the whole, the banquet was a perfect kick-off for a weekend discussing and celebrating alternatives to capitalism.

Saturday: Morning Rally

150-200 people rallied in front of the World Bank Offices listen to radical cheers and impassioned speakers critiquing the G20 and the world financial systems. After about an hour, a march began, accompanied by a superb brass band.

Saturday: People's Forum

The march moved into the Luther Place Church for the People's Forum, which turned out to be the highlight of the weekend. The 6 hour session opened with explanations of the financial crisis, including educational theatre by the ACT Collective (5). From there we moved into simultaneous 'break-out' sessions, where we discussed various facets of the summit and the international financial crises, the fuel crisis, and the housing crisis). The housing crisis session gave a great overview of the crises of affordable housing and homelessness in D.C. and offered insight into people's organizing around these issues, including chronicles of homeless-lead efforts to fight shelter closures.

The highlight of the People's Forum was the Global Justice Discussion session, where we discussed the state of global capitalism, the nature of money, and how pro-people social movements can propose alternatives. Here the organizer's forethought made itself clear, as people were invited not only to ask questions, but to sit on the panel of 'experts' and express their opinions. As people cycled on and off the panel, one started to get the very real sense that there was a 'we': a mass of plans and experiences and disagreements coming together against something, and for many things.

Saturday: Night march

There were dual calls for a rowdy SDS march and a Black Bloc (a group of militant protestors that dress in black

to conceal their identity as they confront the police and destroy property) meeting in Dupont Circle at 11:55 p.m. that Saturday. By 10:55 p.m. 13 police vehicles had parked in Dupont Circle with their lights flashing. Protesters reconvened and marched through a residential area close to some embassies, blocking traffic and making noise. This small group of protesters was eventually forced to disband by the police. There was no reported property damage.

Conclusions?

U.S. radicals love endlessly critiquing major mobilizations while going to them anyway; this author is no different. Due to the rushed nature of the G20 summit itself, this never had time to develop into a major

mobilization. Given that, it was however, a critical meeting at a critical time and it's important as a movement that we can be self critical in the most constructive way.

As we mentioned before, the People's Forum on Saturday afternoon was superbly planned and organized, moving beyond the passive or irrelevant speaker/workshop models to something that gets us analyzing, networking, and planning like an anti-capitalist movement should. There was a very real understanding that this crisis in the credit markets is already becoming a crisis of basic needs.

While the confrontational protests of Saturday night were poorly planned and out of place, the experience was valuable if not strategic. If we are seriously facing **continued on page 19**

Global Bank Users Strike: Call for Organizers and Participants

As we all know, the world financial system is in crisis. The line has been drawn: from predatory lending, to socially and environmentally destructive development, to demands for bailouts, it's clear that the banking system considers only a select group of people and ignores or exploits the rest.

This September Catalanian anti-banking activists put out a call for a 'global bank users strike.' The plan is to develop a worldwide, coordinated effort to organize withdrawals from the commercial banking system and debt non-repayment. People can 'pre-register' to participate; when enough people are signed-up in a given city or region, they can call a day for withdrawal of money from commercial banks and place it in non-capitalist financial institutions and begin debt non-payment. People can participate as much or as little as they like: those already living without the banking system or resisting debt payment can coordinate with others and give them advice. The idea is to begin--in a public and collective way--popular resistance to the banking system that can no longer be trusted with our paychecks and savings.

Read the call to action distributed at the G20 counter-summit in Washington D.C. here: <http://www.bankstrike.net/?q=node/1> The method of this strike will vary by region and people's organizing efforts. Some ideas are on the strikes methodology are on the European site: <http://www.17-s.info/esborrany-de-metodologia-de-la-vaga-mundial-casteng>

Interested?

The North American Bank Strike campaign is looking for people to help organize this campaign. There are lots of ways to help out...

What we need:

Participants: Join the strike and close your commercial bank account!

Sign up at <http://www.17-s.info/en/banks-users-strike-form> Organizers—People to organize support for this campaign

at the local level. See how organizers have been debating at <http://www.17-s.info/en/forum>. Contact bankstrike@riseup.net for organizing materials.

Researchers—We are hoping to make <http://www.bankstrike.net> a good source for critical information on the banking system, the financial crisis, and alternatives to capitalist finance. Contact bankstrike@riseup.net for more information.

Translators—This is a global effort; organizing efforts are underway across the world in multiple languages.

Contact us:

For more information contact: bankstrike@riseup.net or info@bankstrike.net in North America info@17-s.info in Europe <http://www.bankstrike.net/> <http://www.17-s.info>



Repression Against the RNC 8

On September 1st, 2008, thousands of people took to the streets of downtown Saint Paul to protest the Republican National Convention. For several hours, the city was essentially brought to a halt as protesters marched, danced and erected blockades around the convention center. Even \$50 million of federal money, thousands of police armed with tasers and chemical weapons, secret service agents and the national guard couldn't stop the residents of Minnesota and activists from all over the country from showing their opposition to the Republican party and the forces of global capitalism.

Of course, it takes months or years of hard work by dedicated activists and organizers to make a mass demonstration possible. One of the groups that played a key role in making the RNC protests happen was the RNC Welcoming Committee, a group composed mostly of anarchists and anti-authoritarian residents of the Twin Cities working to coordinate the logistical aspects of RNC resistance. To thank them for their trouble, the Saint Paul police and the FBI paid informants and undercover officers to attend Welcoming Committee meetings and events, and conducted extensive surveillance and harassment of anti-RNC activists. Then, in the days before the convention, eight members of the Welcoming Committee were rounded up in their homes or off the streets, held in jail for the duration of the convention, and charged with "conspiracy to riot in furtherance of terrorism." They face a maximum sentence of 7 1/2 years. Below is a statement from these organizers, an update on their case and information on how you can get involved in the struggle to keep them out of jail.

A Letter from the RNC 8

Dear Friends, Family, and Comrades:

We are the RNC 8: individuals targeted because of our political beliefs and work organizing for protests at the 2008 Republican National Convention, in what appears to be the first use of Minnesota's version of the US Patriot Act. The 8 of us are currently charged with Conspiracy to Commit Riot in Furtherance of Terrorism, a 2nd degree felony that carries the possibility of several years in prison. We are writing to let you know about our situation, to ask for support, and to offer words of hope.

A little background: the RNC Welcoming Committee was a group formed in late 2006 upon hearing that the 2008 Republican National Convention would be descending on Minneapolis-St. Paul where we live, work, and build community. The Welcoming Committee's purpose was to serve as an anarchist/anti-authoritarian organizing body, creating an informational and logistical framework for radical resistance to the RNC. We spent more than a year and a half doing

outreach, facilitating meetings throughout the country, and networking with folks of all political persuasions who shared a common interest in voicing dissent in the streets of St. Paul while the GOP's machine chugged away inside the convention.

In mid-August the Welcoming Committee opened a "Convergence Center," a space for protesters to gather, eat, share resources, and build networks of solidarity. On Friday, August 29th, 2008, as folks were finishing dinner and sitting down to a movie the Ramsey County Sheriff's Department stormed in, guns drawn, ordering everyone to the ground. This evening raid resulted in seized property (mostly literature), and after being cuffed, searched, and IDed, the 60+ individual inside were released.

The next morning, on Saturday, August 30th, the Sheriff's department executed search warrants on three houses, seizing personal and common household items and arresting the first 5 of us- Monica Bicking, Garrett Fitzgerald, Erik Oseland, Nathanael Secor, and Eryn Trimmer. Later that day Luce Guillen-Givins was arrested leaving a public meeting at a park. Rob Czernik and Max Spektor were arrested on Monday, September 1, bringing the number to its present 8. All were held on probable cause and released on \$10,000 bail on Thursday, September 4, the last day of the RNC.

These arrests were preemptive, targeting known organizers in an attempt to derail anti-RNC protests before the convention had even begun. Conspiracy charges expand upon the traditional notion of crime. Instead of condemning action, the very concept of conspiracy criminalizes thought and camaraderie, the development of relationships, the willingness to hope that our world might change and the realization that we can be agents of that change.

Conspiracy charges serve a very particular purpose- to criminalize dissent. They create a convenient method for incapacitating activists, with the potential for diverting limited resources towards protracted legal battles and terrorizing entire communities into silence and inaction. Though not the first conspiracy case against organizers- not even the first in recent memory- our case may be precedent-setting. Minnesota's terrorism statutes have never been enacted in this way before, and if they win their case against us, they will only be strengthened as they continue their crusade on ever more widespread fronts. We view our case as an opportunity to demonstrate community solidarity in the face of repression, to establish a precedent of successful resistance to the government's

attempts to destroy our movements.

Right now we are in the very early stages of a legal battle that will require large sums of money and enormous personal resources. We have already been overwhelmed by the outpouring of support locally and throughout the country, and are grateful for everything that people have done for us. We now have a Twin Cities-based support committee and are developing a national support network that we feel confident will help us through the coming months. For more information on the case and how to support us, or to donate, go to <http://RNC8.org>



RNC 8 family photo

We have been humbled by such an immense initial show of solidarity and are inspired to turn our attention back to the very issues that motivated us to organize against the RNC in the first place. What's happening to us is part of a much broader and very serious problem. The fact is that we live in a police state- some people first realized this in the streets of St. Paul during the convention, but many others live with that reality their whole lives. People of color, poor and working class people, immigrants, are targeted and criminalized

on a daily basis, and we understand what that context suggests about the repression the 8 of us face now. Because we are political organizers who have built solid relationships through our work, because we have various forms of privilege- some of us through our skin, some through our class, some through our education- and because we have the resources to invoke a national network of support, we are lucky, even as we are being targeted.

And so, while we ask for support in whatever form you are able to offer it, and while we need that support to stay free, we also ask that you think of our case as a late indicator of the oppressive climate in which we live. The best solidarity is to keep the struggle going, and we hope that supporting us can be a small part of broader movements for social change.

For better times and with love,

the RNC 8: Luce Guillen-Givins, Max Spector, Nathanael Secor, Eryn Trimmer, Monica Bicking, Erik Oseland, Robert Czernik, Garrett Fitzgerald

Updates on the Case

The eight codefendants and their lawyers have begun to receive the state's "evidence," which includes hundreds of pages of transcripts, photos and audio recordings of Welcoming Committee meetings and personal conversations. What has emerged is a picture of

A SNITCH EMERGES

An Austin-based activist named Brandon Darby has revealed he worked as an FBI informant in the eighteen months leading up to the 2008 Republican National Convention. Darby has admitted to wearing recording devices at planning meetings and wearing a transmitter embedded in his belt during the convention. He is expected to testify on behalf of the government later this month in the trial of two Texas activists who were arrested at the RNC on charges of making and possessing Molotov cocktails. Darby had recruited them and pushed them towards building the firebombs. Darby had been wearing a wire for years and had been known as a disruptive element in countless different radical projects including Common Ground relief effort in New Orleans post Katrina.

Darby is just one of many deep surveillance efforts targeting radical social justice organizers lately. Included in the discovery for the RNC 8 cases were photos taken of defendants in Philly during their RNC tour. It includes Philly activists who they met and some of our houses.

Check out <http://brandondarby.com> for the lowdown



the ridiculous extent to which the group was surveiled and infiltrated by local and federal law enforcement. A trial date has not yet been announced and most of the legal battle is still ahead. Lawyers are estimating that the case will cost \$250,000 and take months, if not years, to be completed. A support committee for the RNC 8 is already active in Minneapolis, and different groups and individuals have started holding benefits all over the country.

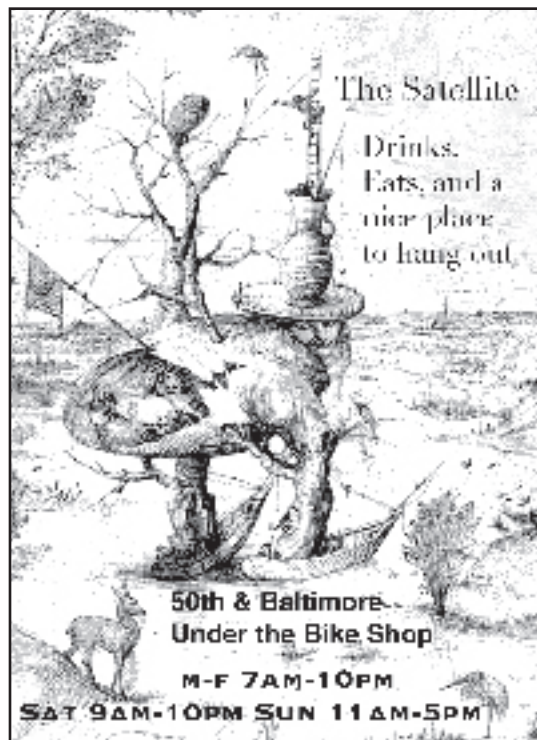
Why the RNC8 Case Matters (even if you don't go to protests)

While these charges are being brought on a state level they have the potential to create a legal precedent that would effect activists and organizers around the country. This case should be of concern not just to people who attend or organize for mass mobilizations, but for anyone is committed to strategic and open radical work. Conspiracy charges are threatening to so many different kinds of organizers because they go after the very nature of what we do when we are being effective: plan, organize, work in coalitions, build strategies and communicate these ideas to others. The charges against the RNC 8 are also an attempt to broaden who is seen as a terrorist both in the courtroom and in the media. The RNC 8 are not alone in this, increasingly the state has used the Patriot Act, as well as conspiracy and terrorism charges, to target a wide range of people, including Muslim charity organizations, animal liberation activists, and former Black Panthers. The use of terrorism charges against anti-RNC organizers is just one more step in a state sponsored effort to eliminate, marginalize and control all those who cannot or will not stay silent in the face of systemic violence, poverty and war. It falls to all of us to fight these charges and others like them, not just for the RNC 8, but for the future success of our collective projects and movements.

What You Can Do

Donate money, as much or little as you can spare. To make a donation online or find out where to send checks, visit www.RNC8.org. This is also where you can find ongoing updates about the case and information about events in your region.

Spread the word! There is no way we can exert pressure on the state to drop these charges if people don't



know what's going on, so tell your friends, family, coworkers and community about the RNC 8. Distribute literature, make posters, get the word out. If you're a journalist, write about it.


Have a fundraiser!

Bake sales, shows, dance parties, chili cook-offs, phone-a-thons, art auctions, every little bit helps.

Sign the petition telling Ramsey County Attorney Susan Gaertner to drop the charges (find it at www.RNC8.org) or give her a call and let her know how you feel at 651-266-3222

Keep organizing and building movements for social change. Show those in power that this escalation of legal charges against activists only heightens our resolve to struggle for a better world.

For more information on RNC 8 support efforts in Philadelphia and the greater northeast region, or if you are interested in joining the Philadelphia RNC 8 support committee, please email us at neRNC8support@riseup.net.



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Election Night

continued from page 10

nomination. Naomi Klein, Lynn Washington, and others accurately point out that while Obama is a centrist, unlike Bush he is susceptible to pressure from the left. Now the real hope is with us, that we organize in our communities to hold Obama and the rest of his party accountable, without buying into the mirage that they truly represent us. This is an argument made every time a Democrat runs for office, and it never happens. But the political forces that coalesced behind Obama are genuinely different, though without that concerted effort Obama and the rest of the Democrats will almost certainly advocate for their own class, as they invariably do, and despite the beautiful, inspirational words "yes we can", provide only a facade of change.

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Budget Cuts continued from page 5

conference was met by a crowd holding signs and hollering at the mayor's announcement that the LEAP after-school program was going to be transferred to the Rec centers and that the libraries slated for closing would eventually be privatized and reopened as "Knowledge Centers." Details on the "Knowledge Centers" were slim; no details were given on what companies or foundations would fund and operate them and when the libraries would reopen as "Knowledge Centers." One person held up a sign that read "Restored Service is a Cheap Knockoff" giving voice to many peoples' suspicions that the announcement was a way to deflect criticism, and to avoid legal arguments. To date, no concrete plan explaining the "Knowledge Centers" has been released. Why? Perhaps there is no plan.

On the second day of the hearings, residents with The Coalition to Save the Libraries held a gathering outside city hall and delivered a "People's Indictment" of Mayor Nutter charging him with abandoning the task of educating youth, eliminating safe havens for them, expanding the digital divide, ignoring the peoples' will along with other misdeeds. Then people filed into the courthouse for the final testimony and the judge's ruling.

People openly wept and cheered when Judge Fox ruled that the libraries could not be shut down without city council approval and issued an injunction prohibiting the libraries from closing. The next day, January 31st, the Kingsessing branch library hosted a large multi-neighborhood celebration in its basement. People danced and sang, got up on the mic to testify to the amazing victory, shared food and conversation and a lot of smiles. Importantly, people stated emphatically that the struggle is far from over.

It is certain that Mayor Nutter will appeal Judge Fox's ruling and request expedited legal proceedings that could possibly overrule the injunction which is keeping the libraries open. If the ruling is upheld, we will need to hold city council accountable by putting pressure on them to keep the libraries open.

Already, Mayor Nutter has deployed a 'divide and conquer' strategy. Mayor Nutter is instituting rolling, unpredictable closures throughout the entire library branch system. This will cause the inconvenience of unforeseen, poorly announced disruptions of library service. Mayor Nutter claims this is the result of a crisis due to staff lay offs in anticipation of the closures. Rather than fixing this crisis, it appears he is attempting to pit neighborhoods against one another by creating inconvenience and unpredictability throughout the whole system.

Clearly, the struggle is far from over. The Coalition To Save the Libraries is **18** meeting and strategizing for the

struggle ahead. For more information get down to your neighborhood library, get on the web and check out <http://coalitiontosavethelibraries.blogspot.com> or shoot them an e-mail [save.11.libraries@gmail.com](mailto:11.libraries@gmail.com).

Wow Nutter! Thanks for Letting My House Burn To The Ground!

In the city that gave birth the modern Fire Department, Nutter wants to cut back five Fire Engine companies and two ladder companies--mostly in poor and working class neighborhoods.

Losing the engine and ladder companies will rob Philadelphia of more than just the ability to keep our homes from burning. In this city, where the ambulance system is overburdened, often the first responders to a medical emergency will be--you guessed it--fire fighters. They call them "shoe runs", because they don't put on the boots they need to fight fires. According to data released from the Philadelphia Fire Department, "the engine and ladder companies slated to be cut responded to a total of 5,761 fires, 6,016 'shoe runs' (medical emergencies)" and only 16 false alarms last year. Two companies are slated to be cut in Center City and one each in South, North and Northeast Philly, Kensington/Port Richmond and Roxborough/Manyunk.

Whether firefighters are performing CPR on a victim of a heart attack, pulling children out of burning buildings, or putting out a blaze and saving someone's home, the cutbacks on Fire Engine companies no. 1,6,8 and 14, and the Ladder companies no. 1 and 11 mean one thing for people in the affected neighborhoods: People will die. The difference between minutes lost in travel time mean lives lost.

The Philadelphia Firefighter Union's (IAFF Local 22) has taken its fight and the fight of the communities it serves to the streets. Engine No. 6 rallied community members and its rank and file to take over the intersection of Aramingo Ave and Huffington Street for over an hour. At Mayor Nutter's town hall meeting at Kensington High, firefighters and residents were out in full force. Recently, I was told by a friend in the Francisville section of North Philadelphia, that in their neighborhood, firefighters occupied a busy intersection along with residents as well.

On December 15th, firefighters from IAFF Local 22 marched five hundred strong alongside members of other unions and community residents to protest the cuts at city hall. Brian McBride IAFF Local 22 president was quoted as saying, "The Mayor's study fails to consider the critical facts ...It's not ok to tell someone whose house is burning down they need to wait a little longer because 'our study' says so.

When lives are at stake you can't afford to close these engines and ladders." On December 16th IAFF Local 22 filed suit against the city to halt the closures. The suit aimed for an injunction so that a grievance on workplace-safety issues, filed with the city on Dec. 3, could be heard before the engine and ladder company closures.

On December 30th Common Pleas Judge Gary DiVito struck a blow against the safety of all Philadelphians when he ruled against the Firefighters' injunction. IAFF Local 22 responded quickly filing an emergency appeal with the Commonwealth Court on December 31st. IAFF Local 22 President Brian McBride said in a statement, "I have reviewed the judge's decision. It is a disgrace, it has no basis in law or fact, and it basically rubber-stamps the Nutter Administration's dangerous plan to cut fire protection. From my vantage point, it looks like the judge simply didn't want to rock the boat."

Currently, the engines and ladder companies are being closed down and the fight will continue in the courts. However, we, as Philadelphians, can make a difference by keeping an eye on the news and supporting any rally the firefighter's call together. You can keep up to date by checking out the union's website at <http://www.iaff22.org>.

The Struggle Ahead: Next Year's Budget and Some Class Struggle Conclusions

With the struggle against the current cuts in social services, and next year's budgeting process on the horizon, we need to strategize for the new battles around the corner. Philadelphians will have to band together, form coalitions, and bring more of our neighbors into the fight in order to increase the pressure on the administration with more protests, campaigns and direct actions.

The mobilization against the cuts has seen some amazing accomplishments. In the struggle against the branch library cuts, neighborhoods have not been divided along lines of race or geography, rather, they have stood together in saying "no" to the closure all of the branches rather than merely focussing on the interests of their own neighborhood.

I offer a few suggestions in building our fight against Nutter's budget proposal and the broader fight we'll be facing in the coming years of the economic crisis, against cuts in social services and against working people, unions and our communities.

A Coalition of Neighborhood Associations:

We in Philadelphia could only be advanced

in our struggles and day-to-day lives by a network of neighborhood associations not tied to our city council people. We could share in our common struggles, and build trust and relationships by showing solidarity with each other, in our particular neighborhood struggles. The Coalition to Save The Libraries is a fresh effort in that direction and ought to be supported.

Cross-Pollinate:

People who are fighting the fire engine closures need to represent at protests against the library closures and vice versa. A blow against one is a blow against all and we need to further network and support each other in our citywide fight against the administration. As their contracts expire, the unions will be facing one hell of a fight next year and we need to stand by them. Additionally, the fight to save our city pools has yet to begin

Broaden the Base and Deepen The Struggle:

We need to be organizing and bringing more new people into the struggles (i.e. broadening) while escalating our tactics in a diverse manner against Mayor Nutter and other decision makers. Of course, the bottom line on any action we take is that we need to make sure our neighbors, co-workers and allies are taking these actions alongside of us, and that we are not alienating people who are ready to fight. We need to reach people 'where they're at' and create exciting levels of involvement for everyone who is ready to fight in their own way.

Our Job Is To Fight For What WE Want:

We should be demanding what WE as citizens want in our city rather than making policy suggestions to Mayor Nutter and other "decision makers" on balancing the budget... Our success should be a measure of the popular power we're able to build, not a reinforcement of the power of the Nutter administration.

As a class struggle Anarchist, I envision and struggle for a society where the people who live in the neighborhoods and work the jobs can dispose of politicians and bosses and make decisions about their work and their communities through direct democracy and popular assemblies. There is a proud tradition of such struggles—in which Anarchists have played a part—including the struggle for the eight hour work day, struggles for civil rights, women's rights and much more. We continue to fight today to defend the rights of working people against attacks by the ruling class, and protect the gains of past struggles.

With the latest economic crisis the capitalist economy has caused, it's hard to imagine such a utopia. However, I'm confident that we here in Philly can build a powerful struggle and fight to win despite the hard times to come. This crisis didn't start in November and won't end this December. Keep loving, keep fighting!

Rage and Riots in Oakland over Killer Cop



In the early hours of January 1st, Bay Area Metro Transit (BART) police shot and killed a 22 year old man, Oscar Grant, on the platform of the Fruitvale BART station in Oakland. Grant was being held on the ground by two officers and was not struggling as another cop, Officer Johannes Mehserle, took out his gun and shot Grant in the back fatally wounding him. All of this took place in front of a crowd of people some of whom filmed the murder with cell phone cameras.

On January 7th Grant's funeral, as well as protests took place. A march leaving from the metro station where Grant was murdered made its way to downtown Oakland where the crowd's fury was unleashed. Dumpsters were set on fire and a police cruiser was attacked, police counter attacked and over the course of the night a number of cars were set on fire, businesses were attacked, and over 100 arrests were made.

from <http://amoryresistencia.blogspot.com>
more breaking news at: <http://tinyurl.com/9qmfd>

GAZA continued



radicalizing a whole new generation of its victims.

Palestinians will not forget this, as they have not forgotten the past 60 years. But what will you remember a week or a year or a decade from now, when a Gazan, who stood before the long rows of corpses and vowed vengeance, creates your 9-11? When one of those

few million children without a will to live straps on a belt that rips through your daily routine? Will you remember what we did to them?

Susan Abulhawa is the author of the book *The Scar of David*, www.scarof david.com

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food, fuel, and economic crises, people are going to riot. From Nigeria to Venezuela to Argentina, the results of previous financial crises have been similar. This rioting sometimes translates into generalized social uprisings that alter a country's political course.

No doubt we'll see same the thing in the massively indebted, de-industrialized, auto-centric US urban economies as long-term fundamentals around food and fuel production mix with the inevitable fall of the dollar as the world's reserve currency. Living standards will tumble as public services—other than the police will be

cut. Potentially, groups of politicized, experienced hoodlums could be valuable as people seek by their own material survival by any means necessary. In the U.S., unlike many other countries, street protests have never brought down presidents and there are no annual riots in celebration of popular resistance, so we need all the practice we can get. It's doubtful isolated counter-summit actions are that place; perhaps we should look to some recent (differently) political and non-political street situations, such as Day 1 of this summer's RNC protests in St Paul, the Phillies World Series riots, and the Obama win. Most importantly, all of these events

had the numbers for interesting situations to develop.

Notes

(1) The original 1944 Bretton Woods meetings established the relatively regulated and stable (under U.S. economic and military hegemony) post-World War II economic order.

(2) Read a report-back at: <http://www.17-s.info/ca/15n-explica-com-ha-anat-la-concentracion-cuenta-como-ha-ido-la-concentracion-explain-about-assemblies>

(3) See pictures at: <http://phillysds.org>

(4) See video at: <http://tinyurl.com/dcsdsdoe>

(5) <http://actcollective.blogspot.com>



We're Queer continued from page 7

candidate were elected in San Francisco.

“Come out, come out, wherever you are!”

Inspired by the anti-gay victories of Anita Bryant's “Save Our Children” Christian movement, California state legislator John Briggs created a ballot initiative for November 78, Prop 6, which would ban gays, lesbians and gay rights supporters from working in California public schools. Initially, public sentiment supported the ban, but buoyed by Milk's win, with networks already in place, progressive, grassroots activists, gays, feminists, rank and file union members, mobilized, and thousands spread out across the state garnering door-to-door support against the initiative. Milk believed the only way

to win was to come out, to families, to neighbors, to co-workers, thus the above slogan. A huge risk, personally, socially and economically, Milk's encouragement was key to turning the tide and to opening up dialogue for what he called “the sensitivities of all people,” and their win was the first defeat against Bryant's scourge.

Milk knew that as a gay activist he was always a target of hate. A year before he was killed, he recorded a will, announcing: “if a bullet should enter my brain may it knock down every closet door.” On November 27, 1978 Mayor Moscone and Harvey Milk were assassinated by the disgruntled, and just resigned city supervisor Dan White. On the night of

Milk's death tens of thousands took the streets in a silent, candle light vigil from the Castro to City Hall. In the infamous “Twinkie defense” case White got off with a 5-year sentence, inciting the White Nights riots that rampaged the city for days. Years later, for Van Sant's film shoot in the Castro, thousands volunteered for free as extras and as advisors in honor of Milk's legacy.

Cleve Jones, an organizer for Milk and gay rights, who advised Van Sant stated, “I think it's important to know that Harvey Milk is not a saint, but he was courageous, he truly cared about people, and he gives an example of how an ordinary person can change the world.” Milk fought for rent control, for senior citizen rights, for

parks and schools, “anything that effected little people.” Mostly he fought for the disenfranchised, the voiceless. A nurturer with a temper and a sense of humor who made people feel worthy, the Mayor of Castro Street's legacy and Van Sant's film remind us not of the “yes, we can” of the opportunistic politician – years back Nutter promised to defend Philly's libraries – who bends to the corporate will and holds tight to the center – but of the power of real grassroots activism from below. An independent San Fran weekly in the late 70's was called “Harvey Milk vs. the Machine.” He was in the streets among the people, fighting the powers that be.

Rebel Calendar

Thursday January 15

Speaking Radically: A Public Speaking Workshop for Radicals facilitated by Jason Del Gandio author "Rhetoric for Radicals: A Handbook for 21st Century Activists" (www.jasondelgandio.com). 7pm at Wooden Shoe Books

Friday January 16

Jericho Movie Night- Shakespeare Behind Bars Free! Donations appreciated. Free popcorn! Free Political Prisoners! 7:30pm at the A-Space

Freestyle Dance Night

Drop it like its hot and get your dance on!! donations at the door are encouraged. 10pm at LAVA

Saturday January 17

Honor King's Legacy, Stop the War(s), Yes We Can! Rally and Parade for Peace. ufj-dvn.org Martin Luther King Day Weekend - Saturday, January 17 - Philadelphia, PA Reception: 9am - 10:30am at William Way Center, 1315 Spruce St. Rally: 11am - Philadelphia City Hall, west side (15th and Market)

People's Movie Night- The Day The Country Died: A History of Anarcho Punk (90 Min) 7:30pm at Wooden Shoe Books

Thursday January 20th

Hope From People at the Inauguration - a non-protest for radical democracy. Check out hopefrompeople.com

Thursday January 22

Green Is The New Red. Activist / Journalist Will Potter explains "Green Scare" gov't repression of environmental activists. 7pm at Wooden Shoe Books

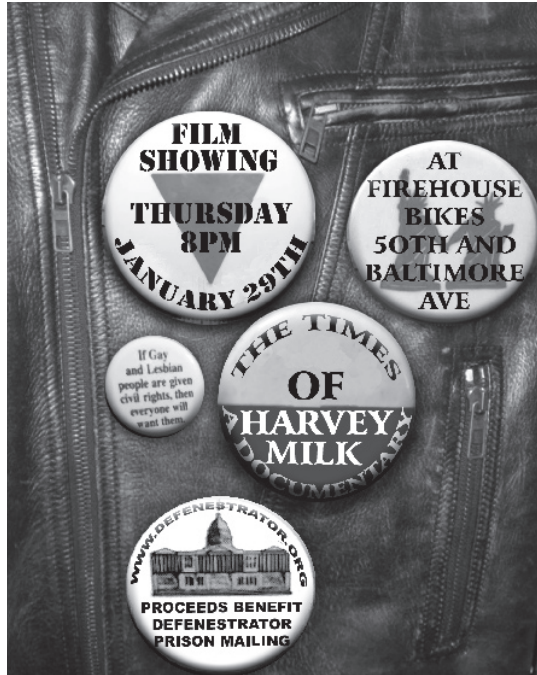
Saturday January 24

People's Movie Night- Featuring the film "Strike" (104 minutes) 7:30pm at Wooden

Shoe Books

Thursday January 29

Last Thursday Night Movies- Times of Harvey Milk -- Documentary about life and times of late gay rights activist Harvey Milk. 8pm at Firehouse Bikes. Benefit for the defenestrator prisoner mailing.



Saturday January 31

Trashy Booty Sale at A-Space Support the defenestrator! Buy our old crap! Also, rare and rad DVDs and CDs. All day long at the A-Space

People's Movie Night-Flow: For The Love Of Water (84 Min) 7:30pm at Wooden Shoe Books

Saturday February 7

Anarchist People of Color Fundraiser on behalf of Ojore Lutalo 9pm at LAVA. 4134 Lancaster ave

People's Movie Night- Camden 28 PLUS DIRECTOR Anthony Giacchino WILL BE SPEAKING! (83 Min) 7:30pm at Wooden Shoe Books.

Saturday February 21

People's Movie Night- The Spook Who Sat By the Door (102 Min) 7:30pm at Wooden Shoe Books

Saturday February 28

People's Movie Night- Entertaining Angels (110 Min) 7:30pm at Wooden Shoe Books

March 27-29

Baltimore, The City From Below a group of activists and organizers, including Red Emma's, the Independent Reader, campbaltimore, and the Campaign for a Better Baltimore are calling for a conference called The City From Below, to take place in Baltimore during the weekend of March 27th-29th, 2009 at 2640, a grassroots community center and events venue. For more info, visit: www.cityfrombelow.org

A relevant article titled **Reappropriate the Imagination!** by Cindy Milstein was submitted in connection to this conference, but we didn't have space to print it. Check it out here: defenestrator.org/reappropriating_the_imagination

Ongoing Events and Meetings

Food Not Bombs

In a country hungry for war, that bombs countries hungry for food..

Rain or shine: Servings are Sundays at 5:00PM and Mondays at 7:00PM across from the Free Library on Vine Street between 19th and 20th Streets

In West Philly : sharings happen every Wednesday @ 5pm-CEDAR PARK (50th and Baltimore)

for more info, see

Weekly Meeting Every

Monday from 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm St. Lukes Church; 330 S. 13th St. (between Pine & Spruce) Email: actupphilly@critpath.org for more info.

Books Through Bars

Packing Café Every Tuesday from 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm The A Space; 4722 Baltimore Ave. E-mail: info@booksthroughbars.org for more info

International Concerned Family & Friends

Defenestrator Movie Nights

Last Thursday of every month at Firehouse Bicycles at 8pm 50th & Baltimore to benefit the defenestrator prisoner mailing Call for info (215)727-9692 or [info\(at\)firehousebicycles.com](mailto:info(at)firehousebicycles.com)

Regional Anti-War Network) Meets 1st Tues. at Local 4, AFSCME, 1606 Walnut.

of Mumia

Interested in being involved in the campaign for Mumia's release either email icffmaj@aol.com or call 215 476 8812

PRAWN

(Philadelphia

6:30-9pm www.prawnworks.net

The Philadelphia Icarus Project: A Radical Mental Health Collective

Philadelphia Icarus holds its meetings the 2nd and 4th Sunday of every month from 6-8 pm at the A-Space Anarchist Community Space. philadelphiaicarusproject@msn.com

Wooden Shoe Books People's movie night

Free movie screenings held every saturday at Wooden Shoe Book Store. 7:30 PM, 508 south 5th street -- 215 413 0999

ACT UP

Liberated Spaces

LAVA

The Lancaster Avenue Autonomous space is a center for radical media and organizing located at 4134 Lancaster Ave. in the Belmont Neighborhood of West Philly. info: 215.387.6155 or info@lavazone.org * lavazone.org

A-Space - a collectively run anarchist gallery and meeting/community space. Events are free and generally start at 7:30pm unless otherwise noted. Accessible by the 34 trolley. Plenty of parking for cars and bikes. They pass the hat to cover rent.

4722 Baltimore Avenue Philadelphia, PA 19143
215.727.0882 a-space@defenestrator.org

WOODEN SHOE BOOKS and RECORDS - Anarchist bookstore owned and run by an unpaid collective of geniuses with nothing better to do than sit around talking philosophy and riots. Carries a wide range of anarchist and radical books, periodicals, pamphlets, T-shirts, patches, CD's records etc. 508 S. Fifth Street Philadelphia, PA
215.413.0999 woodenshoe@rocketmail.com

Firehouse Bikes- A worker owned collective bike shop. 50th and Baltimore

The Divine Bicycle Church - Bike repair co-op at Neighborhood Bike Works. Tools, advice and recycled parts available. Every Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday from 6:30-9pm
40th and Locust Walk, behind St. Mary's Church

Crossroads Women's Center- open Tuesdays and Thursdays 10am-2pm or by appointment
33 Maplewood Mall, Germantown 215-848-1120

The Friends Center - American Friends Service Committee HQ. Contains meeting spaces and offices for a gazillion different entities.
1501 Cherry Street

the defenestrator

PO Box 30922
Philadelphia, PA 19104

to: