

INSIDE:
FEMININITY REVISITED
GULF WAR AFTERMATH
GENETIC ENGINEERING



Breakthrough is the political journal of Prairie Fire Organizing Committee (PFOC), an anti-imperialist organization working in the inter-national solidarity, anti-intervention, anti-racist, women's and gay liberation movements and other progressive movements in the U.S. PFOC supports self-determination and liberation for Puerto Rican, Black, Native American, Mexican and other oppressed peoples, and freedom for political prisoners and Prisoners of War.

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"Auto-Vision/Self-Portrait," pastel on rag paper, 22" x 26", copyright 1987, by Juana Alicia, a San Francisco artist/muralist.

Back Cover:

"Intifada," by Suleiman Mansour, from "Occupation and Resistance," a traveling exhibit of art by Palestinians and North Americans who traveled in the Occupied Territories, curated by the Alternative Museum in New York City.



David Stern

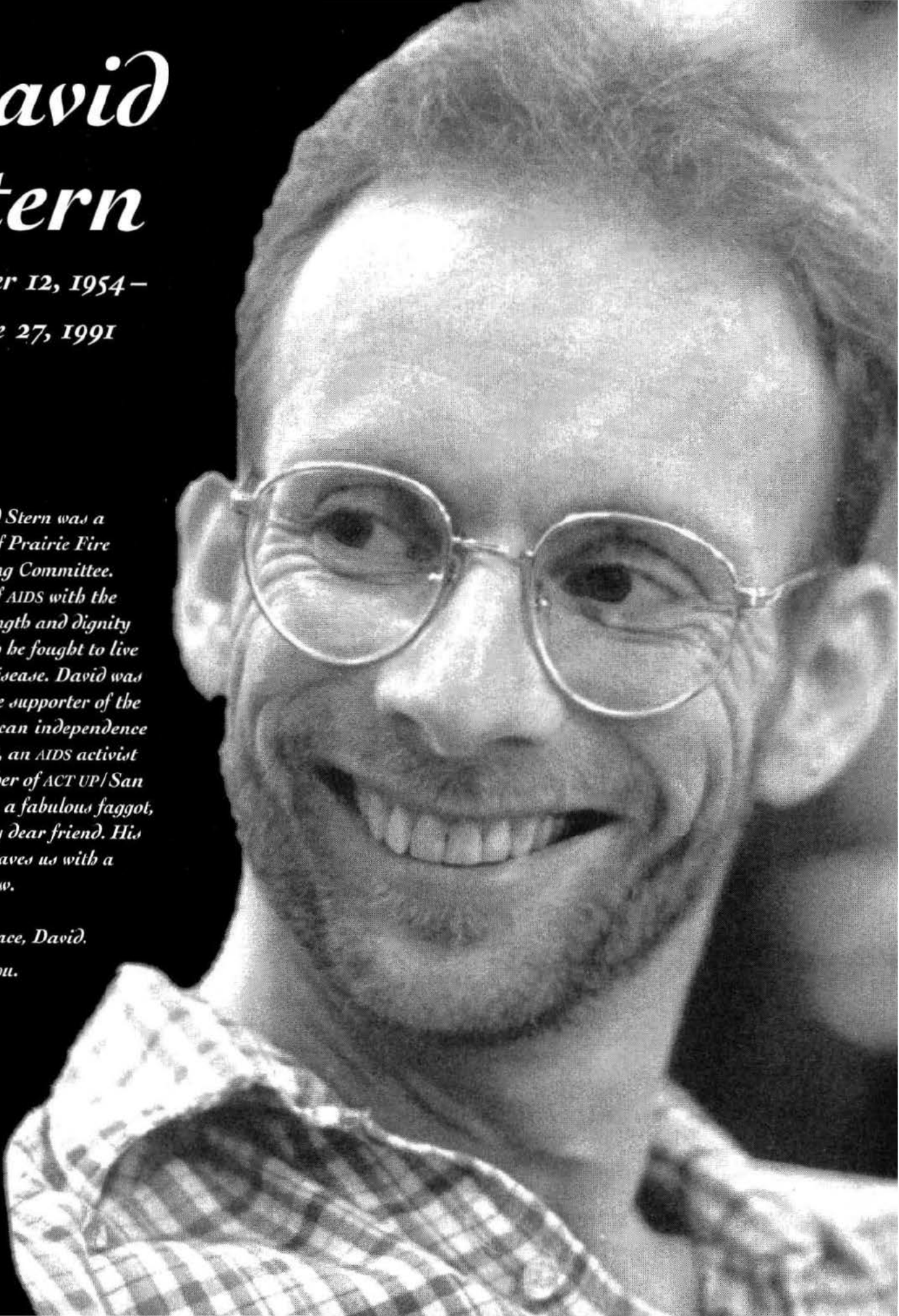
October 12, 1954 –

June 27, 1991

David Stern was a member of *Prairie Fire Organizing Committee*. He died of AIDS with the same strength and dignity with which he fought to live with the disease. David was a longtime supporter of the Puerto Rican independence movement, an AIDS activist and member of ACT UP/San Francisco, a fabulous faggot, and a very dear friend. His passing leaves us with a deep sorrow.

Rest in peace, David.

We love you.



PC, Palestine and other Post-War Ponderings

Seven months after the U.S. began bombing Iraq in one of the most intensive air-war campaigns in history, they're threatening to start all over. Hot on the heels of the obligatory July 4th orgasm of patriotism and the "Welcome Home, Troops" parades, Bush, Mitterand and Major are rattling their sabres again. Determined to grind Iraq into the ground, the U.S.-led alliance is prepared to renew the war unless the Iraqi government submits to the most humiliating terms of defeat.

For the people of the Middle East, the war never ended. As much as the government and the media want us to believe that the war was precise, surgical and more about smart bombs than about people, the devastation of Iraq is now producing a delayed reaction genocide. Without water, electricity, medicine or adequate food, slow death by starvation, dehydration, and disease are stalking the Iraqi people. Medical observers have warned of epidemics that are already taking the lives of Iraqi children. A quarter of a million may die if the sanctions against Iraq are not lifted. These are the Iraqi people, who Bush claimed were not the target of the war! Yet rather than moving to lift sanctions and provide humanitarian aid, Bush releases lists of possible new Iraqi targets for U.S. bombs.

It's important to see through the media lies and recognize that this is the most cynical of states, one that first drops bombs on Iraq, tells the Kurdish people to rise up, and then refuses — until push comes to shove, and very late in the game — to do anything about it. This is the same country which provided Iraq with the bombs, gas, and other weapons to commit genocide against the Kurdish people only four years earlier. But since it wasn't in interest of the U.S. to do anything about it — little if any complaints were made.

This cynicism is repeated in the approach to sanctions. Sanctions against South Africa are being lifted over the clear opposition of the liberation movements — even though Blacks still can't vote, but sanctions against Iraq are being maintained. We cannot allow the new threats against Iraq to go unchallenged. We must demand that the sanctions be lifted and that the Iraqi people be free from the threat of new interventions.

Although it's hard to remember amidst the patriotic fervor of victorious America, a few short months ago the anti-war movement brought hundreds of thousands of people into the streets. The movement mobilized rapidly and fought hard. We were defeated in the wake of a rapid, overwhelming and brutal war with hardly any U.S. casualties. It was a battle fought against great odds — and in communities adorned with yellow ribbons and American flags, activists bravely resisted the pro-war tide.

The Gulf war demonstrated once again the weakness of the movement trying to be as patriotic as everyone else. The focus on "saving American lives" and "supporting the troops" played into Bush's hands. Once American lives were elevated in value above those of Iraqis, we lost and they won. The Bush administration skillfully ex-

ploited the fear of U.S. casualties as a way to justify total devastation of Iraq. Why leave one Iraqi soldier alive and capable of killing an American? Racism was the cutting edge of the Gulf war and we have to more openly confront it to build an effective anti-war movement.

PALESTINE IN CRISIS

For the Palestinians the war could only be called a disaster. Since its inception, the Palestinian movement has posed a fundamental challenge to U.S. and Israeli control of the Middle East. Now, aided by its new regional allies, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Syria, the U.S. is taking the next logical step in shaping the new Middle East colonialism: the systematic destruction of the Palestinian struggle.

Before and even during the war, the *intifada* had brought the issue of Palestine into the world's consciousness. Scenes of Israeli police systematically breaking the arms and legs of Palestinian children, burying protesters alive with bulldozers, and responding to stones with tear gas and bullets revealed the brutality of the Israeli occupation and generated unprecedented calls for a Palestinian state.

From the moment the war began, Israel imposed a 24-hour a day curfew in the West Bank and Gaza which was maintained for weeks during the war. Palestinians in the Occupied Territories were forced to the brink of starvation and desperation as they were unable to leave their homes for shop for food or to go to their jobs. Those who worked in Israel saw their jobs taken over by new Soviet immigrants, who have been streaming into the country by the thousands as the U.S. refuses them entry and channels them to Israel. Although the U.S. has maintained that it opposes new Israeli settlements, they've reacted to Israeli pronouncements that it is building thousands of new homes on the West Bank with a wink and a nod.

The *intifada* continues, but much more of its energy must now be focused on fundamental survival issues for the Palestinian population. Programs such as popular cooperatives have been put on the back burner, while people return to subsistence agriculture as the only way to provide sufficient food for their families. This situation is only made worse by the expulsion of Palestinian workers from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, where they have been arbitrarily jailed, tortured and killed.

On the political front, the U.S. and Israel are setting the stage to shut out any possibility of a self-determining Palestinian state. The goal of Baker's shuttle diplomacy is to extend the separate peace negotiated with Egypt in 1979 to the rest of the region. The Palestinians would be effectively isolated from any support in the Arab world.

At the same time, a full-scale effort to destroy the Palestine Liberation Organization is underway. Saudi Arabia has cut off financial support to the PLO. The Arab regimes are conducting a frantic search for cooperative Palestinians who could replace the PLO and Yasser Arafat, complaining that he supported the wrong side in the war. In Lebanon, the Syrian-controlled army has launched a vicious military assault on PLO bases, intent on driving Palestinian fighters out of Lebanon. The rationale being given for these moves is that Palestinian bases in Lebanon compromise the country's sovereignty. The truth is that the PLO will settle for nothing less than self-determination and a Palestinian state, an outcome which is unacceptable to the U.S. and its allies.

Now is a critical time — a moment when international support for a Palestinian state is needed more than ever.

THE UNBEARABLE LIGHTNESS OF BEING CORRECT

As the war demonstrated, mass culture and ideology in this country are completely managed. Any alternative that challenges this is immediately beaten back. How interesting that the major ideological issue being raised by the right wing these days is an attack on "political correctness" — PC. A cover story in *Newsweek* was devoted to "PC: There's the Thought Police Out There." One might have thought this referred to Jesse Helms and his censorship crusade. However, that's not what they're talking about. They're talking about multicultural studies, Black Studies and Women's

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Studies. In fact, William Buckley has started a new group to promote liberal arts universities that *only offer Western Civilization*.

Much of the attack has been centered in academia: the whole question of western civilization and the so-called move away from the canon, the debates over curriculum and text-books and the bolstering of conservative and right-wing professors, think tanks and universities. Its very purpose is to challenge and eventually eliminate any intellectual opposition to right-wing ideology and practice. Progressive academics have compared what's going on to McCarthyism.

This totally orchestrated campaign has power — a lot of it. It helps change the language in which we think. What once was considered progressive is now too radical and dogmatic. This strengthens the basis for the inexorable move to the right. For instance, what used to be considered affirmative action is now called unfair quotas and therefore not allowed. And Black students calling for more emphasis on Africa in world history are dismissed with the PC label. It's all very convenient! This comes at a time when people of color are rapidly becoming the majority in many parts of the U.S. and are demanding a multicultural approach to education. It also coincides with the preparations for the quincentennial. (It should be quite a clash of cultures!)

Recent decisions by the Supreme Court are a perfect example of the confluence of this ideological onslaught with reactionary laws. The Supreme Court is often looked upon as "above politics" and somehow sacrosanct. Yet recent decisions — one upholding a ban on abortion counseling at federally-funded family planning centers, another allowing prisons to impose conditions which would otherwise be considered "cruel and unusual punishment" as long as the prison authorities don't have the resources to improve the situation, and a third allowing the state to use confessions obtained under duress — show just how political and reactionary the Court's decisions are.

The Reagan/Bush decade has gutted every liberal/democratic principle that was ever won in the Supreme Court. Having achieved political control over the justicesystem, the way is now clear for an accelerated de-constitutionalization of life in the U.S. With the resignation of Thurgood Marshall, we ought rename the Supreme Court, the Supremacy Court.

Of course, there already is a reigning PC view of the world, but George Bush and company own it. It's the one that will be used to justify the cutting of health care funds, aid to education and housing. It's the view that says that a sales tax which taxes the poor is more acceptable than a tax on the rich. It's the one that blames Black people for the conditions they now live in. Yet we're being told that if we challenge these things, we're being narrow or even worse, ridiculous. There *is* an ideological straitjacket — and

they're trying to put us in it.

PC touches people's buttons and makes them back away. Nobody, after all, wants to be labelled as dogmatic and/or stupid. Unfortunately even progressives have fallen into the trap: talk about a guy as a sexist — you're too PC; feel uncomfortable about the sexual objectification of women — what an uptight weirdo; worry about programs where they don't provide childcare and aren't wheelchair accessible — too correct by far; talk about gender parity and representation by people of color — too stupid for words.

And it goes deeper than that. Because when you deny radicalism, creativity, and real intellectual discourse, you deny the possibility for change. You do so by denying people the opportunity to think that anything could be different and therefore the opportunity to act.

We can't let ourselves get too discouraged, even though it's very easy. We can't let ourselves become completely enmeshed in the dominant culture, although it's very difficult to break out of it. We can't let ourselves be brainwashed, although considering the media these days, the attacks on real thinking, the superficiality of this society, it *is* very difficult to think.

* * * * *

This issue is dedicated to our friend and brother, David Stern, who died of AIDS on June 27th. David was diagnosed four years ago and was told he had nine months to live. But from the onset he refused to accept this fate. Many of us told him he was in deep denial.

David wasn't in denial, though. He just wasn't going to go without fighting it all the way, dragging many of us with him. He researched everything known about the disease and experimental treatments and, like many people with AIDS, became more expert than the experts. If there was a new method that made sense to try, he tried it. And he fought in the streets, believing that the only way that this government would do anything about AIDS was if people were in its face all the time, never letting them forget what AIDS was doing to thousands of people. A year passed, and then 18 months, and we started to believe that he would beat it too.

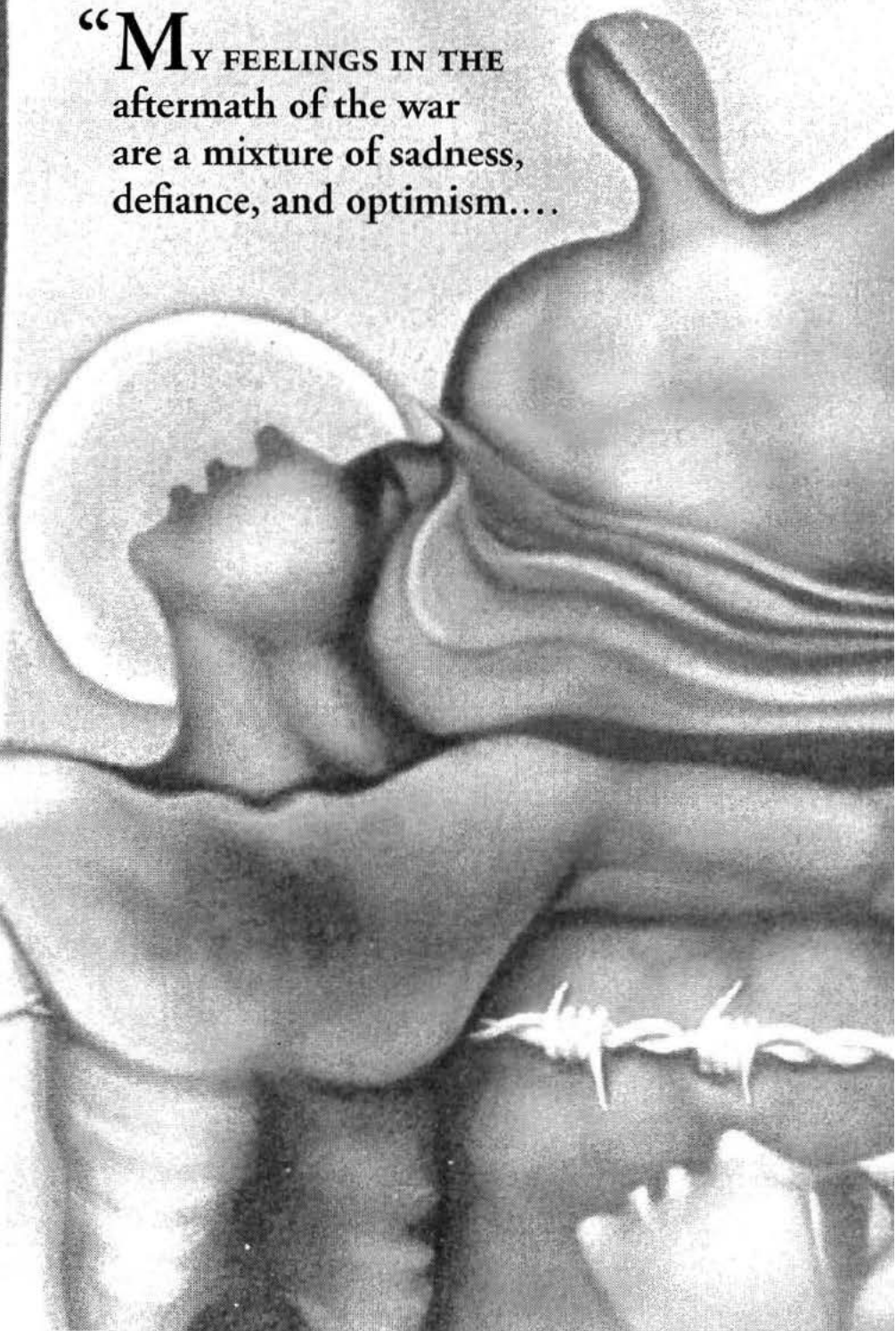
But then he began to get sicker with a constant fever and more loss of weight. And throughout it all, this man, who, after all, was like the rest of us, showed a dignity and humanity that helped and inspired us all.

He taught us that the "inevitable" can always be looked at in different ways — and therefore challenged with new strategies and ideas. It's a good lesson to think about these days when the scene around us is quite dismal, yet the path to change is unclear. If David's example taught us anything, it was to not accept and not give in, to resist and to always look for new ways to fight. □

The Arab Nation the War and the West

*a talk
with
Egyptian
human
rights
activist
Soheir
Morsy*

“MY FEELINGS IN THE
aftermath of the war
are a mixture of sadness,
defiance, and optimism....



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... I'm reminded of 1967, which for us Arabs was a very important turning point in terms of questioning what is happening to our society. When we look at the developments in the Middle East today, we are really looking at the most recent phase in the capitulation of Arab governments to the control of the United States and its surrogate in the



Soheir Morsy is an Egyptian human rights activist, writer and anthropology professor. Breakthrough interviewed her on April 25, 1991, while she was a visiting professor at the University of California, Berkeley.

area, Israel. The year 1967 is a very important turning point, symbolizing a setback for the Arab nationalist project.

Could you explain what you mean by "Arab nationalist project?"

In brief, when people in the Arab World talk about nationalism, we recognize historically derived and shared values, language and institutions. To us, Arab nationalism is an idea, a dream, a goal. In addition to various forms of solidarity, including the numerous expressions of support for the Iraqi people during the savage U.S. military assault, or popular support for the Palestinian revolution, there has been a protracted Arab nationalist movement aiming to realize the dream of making the boundaries of Arab cultural communities coincide with the political borders of an encompassing Arab state.

The period of the 60s witnessed the rise of Arab nationalist regimes, whether we are talking about Egypt, Iraq, or Algeria. In the post-colonial period the idea of an Arab nation was very popular. In Egypt, the socialist banner was also raised by the Nasser regime which became a model for other Arab countries. Those of us who have been critical of these regimes have come to the conclusion that the form of economy that prevailed in the 60s in the countries of the Arab world that raised the banner of socialism was not really socialist. Nevertheless there was a

populist form of development which allowed greater equity, especially by comparison with the periods which preceded it (the time of monarchies and the colonial period).

In Egypt, for example, during the 60s economic policies emphasized the development of the public sector which provided for the needs of the people in housing, in education, in healthcare. It's true that I myself in my earlier writings have been very critical of healthcare and education, but retrospectively if you start to compare how things have been going more recently, then you come to an appreciation of the attempt on the part of the Nasser regime to address the needs of the majority of the Egyptians, not the privileged few.

At the time, whether in Egypt or other Arab countries, including Iraq, there was a sense of defiance to the West, a hope of realizing a long-held dream of a united Arab nation. We certainly have a basis for unity, given a common culture, common historical experiences, a common language and so on. So there was this idea that state boundaries were not really that significant, that ultimately we were going to become one Arab nation.

Then came the '67 defeat and consequent abortion of the project of development under the banner of Arab socialism. Arab unity became greatly undermined with the defeat of Egypt, the most populous and strongest Arab military power. Eventually, under the leadership of Sadat, it became a signatory of the Camp David so-called Peace Treaty with Israel.

What is the significance of the Camp David agreement for understanding the current situation in the Arab world?

Camp David is central. Now we are in stage two of Camp David. In phase one Egypt was ostracized by the Arab community after the signing of the agreement. More recently, Egypt returned to "the Arab fold." But return of what kind of Egypt to what kind of Arab fold? It's a return of an Egypt that is economically devastated, that has been militarily defeated, a return of "American Egypt" as someone has recently described the Arab Republic of Egypt.

The Camp David treaty is correlated to the "Open Door" economic policy, that is the opening up of Egypt to the West — opening up in more ways than one. USAID — which Egyptians refer to as the shadow government in Egypt — is very much responsible for charting the course of Egypt's development. One of the most important components of the new economic policy is a move towards privatization of the economy, dismantling the public sector.

So here is a situation in which you have wealth in the region in the form of oil. You have Egypt economically devastated and outside the arena of the military confrontation to deter Zionist expansionism in the region. You have in the Gulf the predomi-

nance of what economists define as *rentier* economics, where the emphasis is not on work, but where the ruling classes not only acquire wealth without effort, but also use their wealth effectively to ensure regime security and export their "development" model to the neighboring societies.

Egypt returns to the so-called Arab fold, but it is an Arab fold where Saudi Arabia and the Gulf oil-producing countries are dominant. The local economies then become more service economies than productive economies. Egypt's productive public sector is undermined in favor of banking, hotels and tourism, and increased reliance on remittances from people working outside. The same kind of dependence on wealth from the Gulf is found in many other parts of the Arab world.

Yet these regimes continue to espouse Arab interests.

It is only the rhetoric of Arab nationalism and Arab solidarity which is used by the regimes of the oil-producing countries to gain their legitimacy. In fact, if you look at the oil wealth, where they invest and how their economies are linked, what you have is something very far from the idea of an integrated Arab economy.

Contrary to the rhetoric of the U.S. government in opposition to so-called Islamic fundamentalism, U.S. corporations have a cozy co-existence with the reactionary regimes of the region that manipulate the banner of Islam. In fact, in the discourse on so-called Islamic fundamentalism in the region, we refer to "petro-Islamism" as a form of political ideology which utilizes the symbolism of Islam to reproduce relations which in no way contradict the interests of the U.S. in the region. There is really no fundamental contradiction between the interests of the petro-Islamists and the U.S. corporate interests. Witness the investments by the Kuwaiti government in CitiBank, and elsewhere in the United States.

Contrary to the rhetoric of Arab or Islamic solidarity, we note cases of a preference for importation of labor, say, from South Korea, to Arab labor. Arab labor, of course, has the potential of dialogue with local Gulf labor organizations. People from South Korea, who are organized around some form of paramilitary structure, are brought in by their contractors; they stay in their barracks; they work only and do not meddle in the affairs of the host government. They do not speak the same language. They do not have a historical memory of labor organizing and labor resistance, or an alternative to the status quo which they can communicate about to the local population.

In the oil era, and contrary to the rhetoric of Arab solidarity, the Arab nationalist project has been dealt a setback. Far from catalyzing economic development, oil wealth has widened the gap between the haves and the have-nots in the Arab world, replacing

the notion of state responsibility for equitable distribution by notions of individual initiative.

While the oil wealthy maintained the facade of charity, their "generosity" was nothing more than a disguised form of bribery to those who continued to be considered the standard bearers of Arab nationalism, namely the Syrian and Iraqi regimes, as well as the PLO.

In this context, why did the U.S. see Iraq as a threat?

It's not Iraq *per se*, but any regime that threatens U.S. corporate interests and military superiority in any way in that part of the world. Any kind of military force in the region is seen as threatening.

After 1952, there were attempts on the part of the U.S. government to have relatively good relations with the new regime in Egypt, but it became very



Iraqi women at the 1,100-year-old Minaret at Samarra.



Survivor of "mistaken" bombing of civilian neighborhood in Kadahmiya, Iraq

clear that Nasser and his comrades were anti-imperialists and that Egypt was a leader in the non-aligned movement, aligning itself with India and Yugoslavia. During the 60s newly independent countries of Asia and Africa were trying to develop a bloc on their own, one where the people could control local resources. Especially in relation to its opposition to the U.S.S.R., the U.S. wanted military bases in the region. In the beginning there were attempts on the part of the United States government to woo these newly independent countries to be part of regional pacts like the Baghdad Pact, which existed prior to the overthrow of the royal regime in Iraq.

The U.S. has economic and military interests in the region to protect. In recent years discussions of these interests occurred during the time of the Carter administration. Within the framework of the Carter Doctrine, the rapid deployment force was to be developed to protect *our* oil in the Gulf. This interest is not new and it relates not only to Iraq but to *any* force which is threatening, including what is referred to as Islamic fundamentalism.

After the downfall of the Shah, the United States became quite sensitive to the possibility of the overthrow of the Saudi regime itself, especially after the takeover of the mosque in Mecca by opponents of the regime. Iraq, of course, was a country that was becoming strong militarily, something the United States government was willing to live with as long as that military might was directed toward the destruction of Iran.

That was something the United States government saw no problem in dealing with. It did not go to the rescue of Iran when it was invaded by Iraq, in

the same way that it would not go to the rescue of the Palestinians when they were massacred at the time of the invasion of Lebanon by Israel. This recent war crystallizes the hypocrisy involved in international relations, the use of one yardstick for measuring aggression in one place and a different yardstick in a different place.

In fact, now that the war is supposedly over and the U.S. government is trying to get some kind of "peaceful settlement" in the area, U.S. officials are openly declaring that this war saved Israel. The United States government has always supported Israel which continues to serve as police in the area.

Even when there are other Arab regimes that are willing to act as hired guns for a certain period of time, they are nevertheless not fully trusted by the U.S., because after all they are always threatened from their own people. These regimes have always considered state security to be primary and, in fact, have marginalized their own people, whether in economic development or in the political process. In fact, if you look at the countries which did side with Iraq, either officially or simply in terms of allowing the expression of popular sentiment of support for Iraq, these were the very countries where you find some form of democracy.

Do you envision any change in this situation now that the war is over? What about the prospects for the Palestinians?

I'm not optimistic about the prospects of so-called peace in the region. The Israeli settlements in the West Bank are there and growing. Understandably, the United States government is not going to put

significant pressure on the Israeli government, and why should it when Arab governments stand at the ready to protect U.S. interests in the region to the detriment of the aspirations and the welfare of the Arab masses, particularly the Palestinians.

The idea that the Palestinians are to give up their claim to the PLO as their representative is not going to bear any fruit, because they will not, in spite of the attempt of the Israeli government to cultivate relations with people whom they see as not representing the PLO. Here is the United States trying to overthrow Saddam Hussein because he is supposed to be not representing his people. Yet the Palestinians are saying, "The PLO is our representative," and the Israeli occupiers, the U.S.'s allies, are saying, "No!"

Unfortunately, in terms of the Palestinian issue, the conflict is going to go on. The Israeli authorities are going to continue to be as vicious as they have been. They have no reason not to be as long as the people of this country are willing to go on ignoring the fact that U.S. tax dollars subsidize occupation and the inflicting of terror on Palestinians.

There needs to be a movement from within Israeli society by people who stand in opposition to their government and who see that it presides over a vicious system which oppresses them too. After all, who wants to have one's child police and kill men, women and children in the occupied territories? Why should that be a way of life for a people? As a result of the *intifada*, the exposure of what Zionism is all about is growing in this country too. People are finally starting to consider the possibility that the Israeli regime is not the democratic regime that it purports to be, that it continues to exist and to expand at the expense of other people.

And the Arab people will not have it. The Palestinians would rather be dead; they would rather sacrifice their children; they would rather do anything than live under these conditions. The Arab governments have, for one reason or another, especially lately, used the Palestinian issue to their advantage. But especially within the framework of the *intifada*, the Palestinians have made it very clear that nobody speaks in their name. The military solutions that have been tried by the Arab governments in the past are not the only way of dealing with the conflict. There are forms of passive resistance involving entire communities. And here again we must note the involvement of women. The people are simply determined. Not unlike the South African case, you can subjugate people, but the subjugation does not necessarily break them, it makes their resistance and their determination much more profound. So in spite of the feeling of hopelessness and depression which many Arabs have felt recently, there is also a sense of enthusiasm and determination that things are not going to go on this way forever.

This may sound unrealistic at this point. But I

think people committed to a revolutionary transformation are unrealistic in that they can imagine the unimaginable. Once an alternative is contemplated, the question becomes how does one work towards this end, how does one organize towards this end. The Palestinian case gives us hope in the sense that these are a people who don't have an army, they don't have a state apparatus at their disposal, their resources are minimal, and yet their resistance to Israeli rule has been much more effective than the military exercises undertaken by the organized armies of the Arab regimes.

One thing that's been very obvious throughout the whole war has been the extent to which ideological manipulation has been used to prevent any identification with the Arab people generally or the Palestinians in particular.

Of the many manipulations, one stands out as particularly effective. This was the attempt to confuse anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism. If people stood up and said something against Israel, then they were labeled anti-Semitic, which is, of course, ridiculous. But this kind of manipulation has its upper limit. And I think if people are clear about the fact that they are not racist, that they are not anti-religious, I don't think that should be a concern. It's important to remember that the Arab people have struggled against occupiers who were Muslim. It doesn't matter what your religion is, if you are an oppressor, you are an oppressor. If you have your foot on the neck of some people and are pushing their noses down in the dirt, they don't care what religion you are, what color you are. To them you are an oppressor. That's the most important part of your identity that is relevant to their concern and to their struggle. It doesn't matter what else you are.

Another aspect of this ideological assault is the whole portrayal of Arab women, the images of Arab women we saw during the war, for example.

What was amazing during the war was the focus on the women of Saudi Arabia who couldn't drive. This was amazing in two ways: First of all, these women who couldn't drive have chauffeurs to drive them. My real concern wasn't about these women who couldn't drive, but the women who were their maids, who were somehow out of the picture completely. You saw American hostages who were in the Rashid Hotel and what a hard time they were having. But the many faceless women — and men of course — who ended up in tents somewhere in Jordan, who did not have the luxury to simply purchase an airline ticket and go back to India or Sri Lanka or Egypt — all these hardships that other women suffered were not shown.

Moreover what was really strange was to concentrate on the fact that women don't drive in Saudi

Arabia, which was not the enemy country. The enemy was in Iraq. This tells us something about how the West views Arab society. It homogenizes Arab society as a way of facilitating the imposition of control over it.

We don't see that women in Iraq have been in the forefront of the feminist movement in the Arab world. Back in the early 1900s Iraqi women were among the first to link the Zionist settlement of Palestine to the position of women, thereby working for the integration of the struggle for women's liberation in the region within the broader struggle against both Zionism and imperialism. This was something that we never heard about. Yet it was Iraq that was the enemy country and not Saudi Arabia. But because women in Iraq have a very different position than women in Saudi Arabia, their position wasn't discussed since it is inconsistent with the other portrayals of their country as a satanic domain.

Part of the problem is how distorted representations of Arab women are in this country.

When people in this country come to me with questions about women in Arab countries, they usually refer to the work of Nawal Saadawi on female genital surgery. Why is it that we hear about Nawal Saadawi's work on this topic repeatedly? Why is it that people in this country do not express eagerness about other Arab feminists' works, the work of those who do not sing the tune that the West likes to hear?

When you talk with Western "feminists" about women in Arab Muslim society, the first thing that often comes up for discussion is female circumcision. Just imagine if I were to mobilize women around the world around the theme of breast augmentation. This too is a form of bodily mutilation and a form of social control in the sense that in this society if you have small breasts, you're not good enough; if they're too big, you're not good enough; they have to be just right.

Another example is the veil. Take these two pictures, for example. [One shows a woman from the 1960s whose face is nearly obscured by her long hair. The second shows an Iranian woman whose face is obscured by her shawl.] We look at this one and we say "Well, that's the 60s, it's fashion." We look at the picture of the Iranian woman and that other image invites a very different kind of reaction. Yet they both represent forms of control.

The reaction of people is to say, "No, this is different. This is a fashion and it's up to you to follow the fashion or not." Americans like to think they're very individualistic. Now how many people with torn jeans have you seen in the past five years as compared to before? You get to the point where you have to buy jeans that are torn. If that isn't indicative of a conformist society, I don't know what is. That is conformity; that is control.

True, these examples are different in terms of

detail, but not in terms of expression of conformity whether it's to a standard of modesty, by covering up or a standard of beauty or whatever that women are subjected to all over the world. But rather than seeing the similarity of how women are controlled by certain cultural standards, we tend to focus on the differences in these forms of control, rather than the similarities. So authors from the Arab world who address a form of control which has no counterpart in the West are those whose work becomes more popular in the West.

This is something which never ceases to surprise me. It's not only in this war, but traditionally Orientalists looking at the Middle East have focused on women to symbolize the gulf that separates Western society from Arab Muslim society. People look at Arabs, including those of us who are Africans, and talk about all sorts of horrible things pertaining to women. Except when it comes to our color — then we are designated white. Westerners like to trace the origins of their civilization to the ancient Egyptians and some of them get very upset when African Americans want to claim that heritage.

There is a concerted effort to distance the West from Arab Muslim societies in practically everything, whether it relates to women, or the alleged cruelty of people in that part of the world: they are violent; they are vicious; they kill each other; the historic hatred between Muslims and Jews. They say all these things and yet they consider us like them when it comes to appropriating our history.

How has the feminist movement in the U.S. dealt with these issues in your opinion?

What was disturbing in the analysis of at least some segments of the feminist community in this country was the tendency to overlook the whole system of oppression that affects both men and women in the Arabian peninsula, and to focus only on one manifestation of the deprivation of women from participation in public life — the inability to drive — which — at least from the view of people who live in the region — is not so significant or so fundamental.

The whole focus on women detracts from the most fundamental issue of what right does the United States government have to interfere in that part of the world to begin with. Even if the women were slaves in shackles that does not give that right to anybody. And I think that the tendency to decontextualize extends to other concerns of the feminist movement in the West with regard to one issue agendas. Today it's abortion, tomorrow something else, rather than contextualizing women's oppression more broadly in terms of social oppression in general, so that women's oppression is one form of oppression that is experienced by people who live within the frame-

see Soheir Morsy, p.



the Kurds

by Jimmy Emerman

Although the bombs have stopped dropping on Iraq and Kuwait, the manipulation of information — and with it the control of public opinion — continues unabated. Throughout the entire Gulf crisis, the U.S. public has been fed a skillfully orchestrated combination of half-truths and outright lies to assure that we either understand the situation the way the U.S. government wants us to or are totally confused.

Particularly blatant in the “aftermath” of the war has been the portrayal of the Kurds. Although their agony has evoked the sympathy of people around the world and grabbed the attention of the media, we only hear that part of the story which the Bush administration wants us to hear.

What do we know about the Kurds — a people most Americans probably heard of for the first time a few months ago? Only that they are being destroyed by Saddam Hussein, that they have fled to the neighboring countries of Iran and Turkey for refuge, and the U.S. is their savior, offering them humanitarian aid and protection from the Iraqi army. We never learn how, since the beginning of the century, Kurdish national aspirations have consistently been sacrificed on the altar of “state interests” — those of Europe and the U.S. as well as those of Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria.

The story of the Kurds is one of a people whose self-determination has constantly been violated. It exposes not only the lies of the moment, but the depth of Western hypocrisy in manipulating the

national aspirations of the colonized to serve the political expediencies of the colonizers.

THE FIRST BETRAYAL

The Kurds are a pastoral nomadic people whose language, Kurdish, bears a linguistic relationship to Persian, but none at all to Arabic or Turkish. Most became Sunni Muslims following the Islamic expansion which swept out of the Arabian peninsula to the Fertile Crescent in the seventh century. Since antiquity, they have inhabited the area known as Kurdistan. This homeland stretches from the Zagros Mountains in Iran through the oil-rich province of Mosul in northern Iraq to northern Syria and southeastern Turkey. Except for Iraq, none of these four states have ever recognized a separate Kurdish identity and, because of this, population estimates are rough, between 24 and 28 million. A little more than half live in Turkey, a quarter in Iran, 18 percent in Iraq, about 5 percent in Syria and one percent in the Soviet Union.

Until the end of World War I, most Kurds lived under the nominal rule of the Ottoman Empire. Ruled by a Sultan-Caliph, who was seen as the "Shadow of

prevented the formation of strong national movements within the Ottoman Empire. Although major Kurdish uprisings occurred from 1837 to 1852 and again in 1880-81, these were essentially protests against attempts by the Sultan to infringe on Kurdish sovereignty through military recruitment or the levying of tribute.

Nationalism as a political movement did not really emerge within the Ottoman Empire until the late 1800s and early 1900s, when the same ideology which gave rise to the Arab revolt of 1916 led to the emergence of a Kurdish national movement. By this time the Ottoman Empire was deeply mired in debt to the great powers of Europe. France, Britain, Italy, Germany and Russia all greedily eyed the possessions of the Ottoman Empire, "the Sick Man of Europe." When the Ottomans entered World War I on the side of Germany, these powers saw the chance to capture new colonies in the oil-rich and strategically located Middle East.

The defeat of the Ottoman Empire gave hope to Kurdish nationalists that their claims to self-determination would be honored. In the summer of 1920, Turkey signed the Treaty of Sevres, allowing the creation of independent states in Armenia and Kurdistan. This was

the first and only declaration of international intent to establish an independent Kurdistan. But the Treaty of Sevres was never to be ratified.

Throughout the Middle East, the European colonial powers dictated the borders that would define the new states that emerged after World War I. In every case, the intent was to insure Western control of strategic trade routes and natural resources. The wishes of the Arab and Kurdish people for self-determination and national unity were never considered.

In the case of Kurdistan, Kurdish aspirations were sacrificed to consolidate the modern state of Turkey as a bulwark against Bolshevik Russia, and to satisfy the desires of U.S., British, French, Dutch and Italian oil companies to control the rich oil concessions of the area. At the 1923 Lausanne Conference, the Euro-

pean powers and the Americans agreed to a plan dividing Kurdistan among Iraq, Turkey, Syria, Iran and the Soviet Union.

GENOCIDE AND RESISTANCE

In virtually every country now incorporating parts of Kurdistan, the Kurdish people have been subjected to campaigns of cultural and physical genocide. Because the states of the region owe their existence to colonial borders drawn by the British and French at the end of World War I, the idea of an independent or autonomous Kurdistan poses a tremendous threat to their stability in much the same way that Iraq's attempted annexation of Kuwait did. As a result, Kurdish national



God on Earth," the Ottomans represented the last major dynasty to rule the Moslem world stretching from North Africa through Turkey down to the base of the Arabian Peninsula. This far-flung empire encompassed many diverse ethnic groups — Turks, Arabs, Armenians, Kurds and others — organized primarily around tribal lines. The Ottoman Sultan maintained his rule through a system of alliances with these feudal principalities. Local tribal leaders retained most of the trappings of sovereignty, including the rights to their language and culture, the right to mint coins and to self-defense. They were bound by loyalty to support the Sultan and the unity of the Empire.

This feudal structure and a pastoral way of life

identity has been harshly suppressed in Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria.

Turkey: Under Kemal Atatürk, the founder of modern Turkey, a policy of "Turkization" was harshly imposed over the Kurdish population. This has meant a complete denial of their separate linguistic and cultural identity. It is illegal to speak Kurdish and Kurds are referred to only as "mountain Turks." Turkish teachers are sent to government-run schools in Kurdish areas to teach the Turkish language and history. Kurdish children are required to sing the Turkish national anthem and recite a poem by Atatürk entitled "I am industrious, I am just, I am Turkish."

Attempts to assert Kurdish nationalism in 1925, 1929-30 and 1937 were met with massacres, executions and deportations. In the words of one Turkish prime minister in the 1930s, "We have buried Kurdistan and covered it with seven layers of concrete. The Kurdish people will not arise again."

A new stage of the Kurdish struggle in Turkey began in November of 1978 when the Workers and Peasants Party of Kurdistan (PKK) was formed with the goal of an independent, united democratic Kurdistan. The PKK sought its base among the most marginalized sectors of Kurdish society: the uprooted, poorly educated village youth. Unlike other Kurdish organizations, the PKK rejects as inadequate an autonomy solution under which Kurdish language and culture would be accepted. The PKK and its off-shoot, the ERNK (National Liberation Front of Kurdistan) define their struggle as a national democratic revolution to free the Kurdish people from colonial and feudal domination.

When the PKK organized strikes in factories and at universities, the Turkish regime responded with massacres of the civilian population and mass detentions of PKK activists. In 1978, the year the PKK was founded, martial law was declared in all Kurdish provinces of Turkey and remained in effect until 1987, when it was formally (but not actually) lifted.

The military coup of 1980 brought an openly fascist regime to power in Turkey. Torture became routine throughout Turkey and Kurdistan. Thousands were murdered or disappeared, and hundreds of thousands more were arrested, including more than 7,000 members of the PKK, many of whom are still in prison. Resistance in the prisons has included numerous hunger strikes by political prisoners.

In 1984-85, the PKK and the ERNK began armed actions against collaborators and feudal landlords. The reaction of the Turkish state was to establish a "village guard" system of militias whose purpose was to pit Kurds against one another and to assist the Turkish army in its counterinsurgency efforts. Special units, called "Black Beetles," were trained by anti-terrorist squads from West Germany and equipped with modern weapons. In Turkey, as in Iraq, the guerrillas were

attacked with poison gas. Villages suspected of sympathizing with the PKK were surrounded and attacked, and then forcibly relocated, in an attempt to uproot the social base of the liberation movement. Hundreds of Kurds were killed or arrested in this campaign, which climaxed in December of 1988.

PKK armed attacks against village militias, in the mid 80s, resulted in civilian casualties, leading some Kurdish groups in Europe, as well as much of the Turkish left, to denounce the PKK. By 1989, the PKK had announced that it would concentrate its attacks on economic and military targets in order to avoid civilian casualties, with the result that a number of radical Turkish groups reversed their position to one of support for the PKK.

In order to consolidate its base among the people, the PKK established mass organizations of women, youth and workers. People's committees were created to take responsibility for education, basic survival needs, and self-defense. In 1990, mass uprisings occurred in Botan and Mardin provinces, two PKK strongholds.

While the Turkish government portrays itself as the defender of the Kurds against Saddam Hussein, it too has used the Gulf crisis to rid itself of Kurdish resistance. In the months following the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, Turkey annulled all human rights in its Kurdish provinces and accelerated a policy of depopulating the area which had been in effect since the 1970s. Hundreds of villages were devastated, pastures, pistachio groves, vineyards, fruit plantations and beehives were burnt. Tens of thousands of people were made homeless and have been living in tent camps. More than a hundred people were arrested, tortured and then released.

Iraq: At various points in the past seventy years, Iraqi Kurds have been promised autonomy. Civil servants in the area were to be Kurdish; both Arabic and Kurdish were declared official languages; and Kurdish children were to be educated in Kurdish. Yet these promises were consistently violated.

Kurdish uprisings began in 1924 and continued from 1931 to 1936. From 1961 to 1975, Kurdish nationalists led by Mustafa Barzani fought an intermittent war with the Iraqi government. Following the defeat of the Kurdish resistance, the Iraqi military began the forcible relocation of 200,000 Kurds, burning 700 villages to the ground to clear a strip along the borders with Iran and Turkey. Under a policy of Arabization, Kurdish teachers were sent to southern Iraq, while Arab teachers were brought in to teach Arabic in Kurdish schools.

By the early 1980s, the Kurdish movement in Iraq had regrouped and was once again challenging the regime through armed struggle. The Democratic Patriotic Front, which was established in November 1980, represents the unity of most of the opposition groups struggling for democratic change in Iraq, including the Iraqi Communist Party, the Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party, the Kurdistan Socialist Party, and others.

These were the groups that were involved in the abortive uprisings in the late 1980s and this year.

The current tragedy is the second major decimation of Iraq's Kurdish population in recent years. In the spring of 1987, the Iraqi army killed 5,000 villagers and wounded 10,000 others in a poison gas attack against the Kurdish city of Halabja, which had surrendered to Iranian forces in the Iran-Iraq war. In August 1988, at the conclusion of the Iran-Iraq war, Iraq launched a military operation against Kurdish resistance fighters involving intensive aerial bombardment and use of chemical weapons. Seventy-seven villages were gassed, 478 were reduced to ruins, while 100,000 to 150,000 inhabitants of the region fled to Turkey seeking refuge.

BETRAYED BY THE CIA

In 1972, on their way back from a Moscow summit, President Richard M. Nixon and National Security Advisor, Henry Kissinger stopped in Tehran on the request of the Shah of Iran. They were asked by the Shah, who was feeling menaced by the Iraqi regime, to begin supplying arms and training to the Kurdistan Democratic Party, headed by Mustafa Barzani.

For the next three years, the U.S. poured \$16 million into a CIA covert operation conducted jointly with Israel. According to the suppressed Pike report of the House Select Committee on Intelligence, the goal of the operation was to sap Iraqi military strength so that it would not be used against Iran or Israel. The Kurds were specifically discouraged from either seeking autonomy through negotiations with the Iraqi government or from launching an all-out military offensive.

As early as the fall of 1972, though, the CIA knew that a settlement of the Iran-Iraq border dispute was in the works. But the agency was ordered to keep this information from the Kurds in order to give the Shah another "card to play" in his negotiations. As the suppressed Pike report to the Congress noted, "Even in the context of covert action, ours was a cynical enterprise."

Finally, in March of 1975, the Iraqi regime signed an agreement in Algiers with the Shah of Iran, conceding sovereignty and navigation rights in the Persian Gulf to Iran in exchange for the closing of the Iran-Iraq border to the Kurdish fighters.

The Kurdish resistance was taken completely by surprise. As the Iraqi military launched a search-and-destroy mission the day after the Algiers agreement, the Kurds found their supply lines cut off and the border with Iran sealed. 275,000 Kurdish refugees fled to Iran, but 40,000 were forcibly returned.

Appeals to the U.S. for humanitarian assistance and political asylum were ignored. The CIA station chief in Tehran cabled CIA Director William Colby, "If senior Americans like Kissinger [who planned the operation]... do nothing to help the Kurds in their present extremity, we may be sure that they will not lie down quietly to be buried without telling their story to the world." Kissinger's comment on the whole affair, "For us in government at the time, the decision was painful, even heartbreaking." (*San Francisco Chronicle*, May 8, 1991)

Iran: As in Iraq, Iranian Kurds were forbidden to practice the use of their own language and culture. For a brief period in 1946, Iranian Kurds had virtual control of the Kurdish areas of northwestern Iran. An autonomous Republic of Mahabad was proclaimed under the leadership of the Iranian Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP). The KDP's intention was to federate the Republic with the government in Tehran, while retaining control over the local administrative and military affairs. Kurdish was to be the official language of business, politics and education. By the end of the year, though, Iran had crushed the Mahabad Republic and executed its leaders.

Kurdish parties were outlawed, although never fully destroyed following 1946. Kurdish autonomists, including the Kurdistan Democratic Party, the leftist Fedai guerrillas, and Komala (the Revolutionary Organization of the Kurdish Toilers) were part of the opposition to the Shah and had sided with peasants seeking land reform against big landowners. These groups had significant support in the rural and mountainous areas of Kurdistan.

When Revolutionary Komitehs (committees) seized power in local areas in 1979, the Kurdish autonomists demanded a regional Kurdish government with control over all internal matters, the declaration of Kurdish as an official language along with Persian, and the use of Kurdish *peshmarga* fighters as internal security. Khomeini and the Islamic Revolutionary Council, however, viewed Kurdish self-rule as a first step toward secession and independence. Kurdish demands were rejected by Tehran and Revolutionary Guards were sent to Kurdistan to crush the opposition in the early 1980s.

Despite all obstacles and repression as fierce as any in recent history, the Kurdish people refuse to lie down and have their identity buried in the mud and cold of the mountains of Kurdistan. Their struggle challenges the political and economic structure put into place in the Middle East by European colonialism and maintained today by the United States. Like the Palestinians, they stand as a constant reminder of the tragic injustice against peoples that imperialist greed can provoke. Justice for the Kurdish people, like justice for Palestine, means support for Kurdish self-determination. □

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WAR & RACISM

Interview with the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement

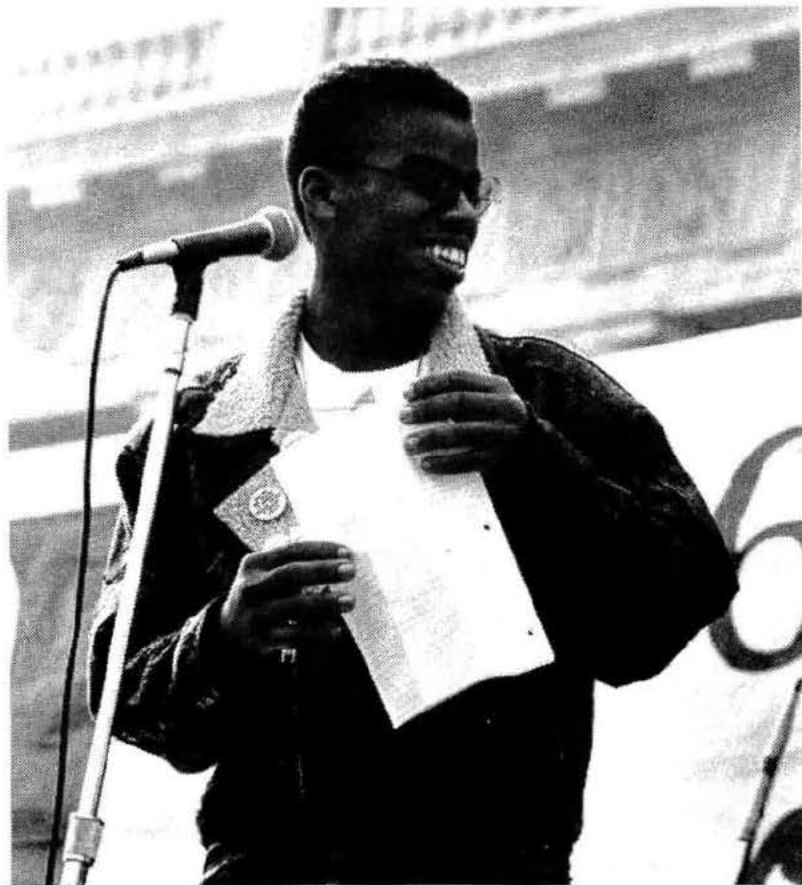
One of the most interesting aspects of the anti-war movement which developed against the Gulf war was the high level of involvement of people of color. Particularly in urban centers such as New York, Los Angeles, Boston, San Francisco and Washington, Black activists and organizations were highly visible and active in organizing against the war. At the end of April, Breakthrough interviewed Thandisizwe Chimurenga and Robin Alexander, two Black women who had been active in anti-war organizing in Los Angeles. Thandisizwe and Robin are members of the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, a national organization with chapters and affiliates in Los Angeles, Detroit, New York, Newark, Chicago, Fort Worth, Washington, D.C., Atlanta, New Orleans, Birmingham, Greenville, South Carolina and Jackson, Mississippi.

How did the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement get involved in organizing against the Gulf war in the Black community of Los Angeles?

Robin: When we realized that the government was going to be sending individuals over to the Gulf, and none of our mainstream leaders in Los Angeles was saying anything to the Black community about the injustice of this whole incident, we could not let them go on without speaking to our community and not allowing our community to speak out.

Thandisizwe: We don't bill ourselves as an anti-war movement. The Malcolm X Grassroots Movement is a coalition of organizations and individuals who agree that African people in America are an oppressed nation. We took on anti-war work as part of our overall work.

The first of our principles is self-determination for African people in America, meaning that Black people have the right to decide what we want to do with our lives: whether we want to integrate into America in its present form or in a socialist or reconstructed America; whether we leave



Tahan Jones, an Oakland, California, Marine Reservist, is currently facing a court martial for his refusal to fight in the Gulf War.

here and go back to Africa, which is our ancestral home; or whether we stay here in America on land that we have lived on for a long time, where we are the majority, and govern ourselves. Whichever of those we choose, we have the right to self-determination.

The second principle is that we believe that African people in America are victims of genocide. We struggle to educate our people around that and to end the genocidal practices that are targeted against us.

Third is human rights. The United Nations Charter on Human Rights states that all individuals have the right to decent housing, healthcare, and education and in addition to that the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. African people have been systematically denied those basic human rights here in America.

Fourth, we struggle for the release of political prisoners and prisoners of war, those people, particularly Africans, who have struggled in various forms to free Black people from the oppression we face. They have been jailed either for their beliefs which run contrary to America or their actions, and we believe they are entitled to recognition under international law and must be freed.

Finally, reparations — payment in the form of money, technology and land — is due to us for all that we have suffered since we were kidnapped from Africa.

Robin: Our work against the war grew out of the principles. It relates to genocide, the fact that we are a higher proportion of the individuals that were in the Gulf and most likely would have been the higher percentage of those killed. Because of the economic situation that we are in and the fact that, for purposes of education and just existence, people of color have to go into the military, we look at that as a violation of our human rights. In that regards, it is an issue of human rights and our self-determination.

How did you go about organizing in the Black community in L.A.?

Robin: We first started with a demonstration in front of the military processing center in Los Angeles. We then started creating educational flyers regarding what had been said by the administration, the contradictions, how Kuwait was never a democracy — they have less human rights than we do — and the whole falsehood of what was being told to the public. We then had a demonstration at a local recruitment center in the Black community. We based all of our demonstrations and activities in our community, to let our people show their opposition to the Gulf crisis.

We really wanted to know what people in the community felt about the war, so we went into the community and surveyed about 170 people. We found that the number who were opposed to it was very high.

Thandisizwe: We also called a teach-in. We saw a need for the Black community to look at what was happening in the Persian Gulf through the eyes of Black people. Historically, anti-war work has been majority white-led. It has not really addressed the special concerns and needs of the Black community.

We addressed the issue of conscientious objectors. If you're in the military and you want to get out, what can you do, what are your rights? Many people go into the military because of economic and social reasons. They don't necessarily go to kill people. And if they have problems with that, what can they do, can they get out of the military? If somebody wants to go into the military, someone needs to be with them when they meet with the recruiter to cut through all of the lies that they are fed. They are told that they are going to be trained in high computer technology. They don't! They get to work in the mess hall. They are trained to be a grunt. They need to know these things when they go to sign up. They need to know what their rights are if they are being harassed in the military and they want to get out. We wanted to provide a tangible service to our community by becoming draft resistance counselors.

We talked about the effect of imperialist wars on national liberation struggles including the Black nation here in America, the Chicano-Mexicanos and

the American Indians. When we talk in terms of nations and international happenings, we don't think of Black people in America as being a nation. We don't realize that there are American Indians left and this is their land and they are struggling to regain sovereignty over their land. Especially here in Los Angeles, we don't understand that we're living in occupied Aztlan, the Chicano-Mexicano nation, Mexico before the United States stole it.

We talked about the globalization of white power, the "new world order," or the new white world order. We talked about what that meant to people of color.

We also had a representative of Palestine. We specified that in terms of the whole new world order, Zionism is nothing more than a word for white supremacy. It's not a question of Jews and Muslims or the darkness of evil vs. the forces of light and all this madness. It's once again white folks who have taken somebody else's land. And we are in solidarity with the Palestinian people.

To what extent did you participate in the white-led anti-war movement and how was that received?

Robin: When the white peace movement started their involvement in Los Angeles, they came to a park in the Black community. And they did not at that time have Black representation to speak to the audience. We called them up after that incident, saying "You come into the Black community but you do not address our issues, you do not have any representation there." So they said, "Well, we have tried to get Black organizations to come to our meetings." So we went to their meetings. What we did with them is come together on those issues that we could agree upon.

But, all in all, the bottom line was they wanted to talk solely about peace and not about justice. And that was a problem for us, because if there is no justice, there is no peace. That is something that we stand true and stand fast to. The reality is that once they stopped the war, the majority of the members of the peace movement were going to go back to their other issues, the environment or whatever they were doing before. They are going to go back to the safety of their middle-class neighborhoods, and the problems and the struggles that the Black and Brown communities were facing were not going to be any more concern to the majority of the movement. For the most part they weren't very comfortable with that thought, but that's the reality.

So they didn't want to talk about racism in terms of demands?

Robin: Well, they spoke about it, but did they really want to incorporate it into their plans? No. They needed us to allow them easy access to the community and I'm sure many of them had very good intentions, but overall when it came down to talking

about the war at home, that was not one of their concerns and that was our main purpose, what we deal with on a day to day basis. And today is a very good example of that. With all that is going on right now with Rodney King and Latasha Harlins [*Ed. note: Latasha Harlins was a 15-year old Black girl who was killed a few weeks after the well-publicized L.A. police beating of Rodney King. Latasha was leaving a Korean grocery store in South Central L.A. after a disagreement, when the store owner shot her in the head.*], the L.A. peace movement is pretty quiet.

Let's come back to that in a minute. Robin, you attended a conference in Washington of African American organizations which were working against the war. Could you tell us about that?

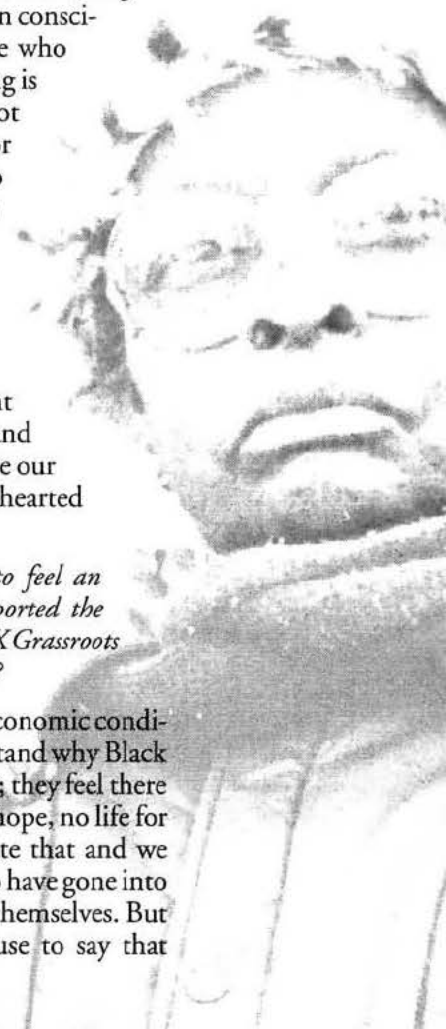
Robin: It was put together by the National African American Network Against U.S. Intervention in the Gulf and it was called the National Emergency Conference of African Americans on the Gulf Crisis. It was held from March 8-10 in Washington D.C. There was representation from Los Angeles, Oakland, New York, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Atlanta, and one person representing five different organizations from Alabama.

We came together to discuss and reflect on the Gulf crisis. At that time the cease-fire had begun, but there was still a lot of work to be done including the legal status of those who had taken conscientious objector positions and those who had gone AWOL. Military counseling is still a necessity, because there are a lot of people out there who are looking for assistance. All of us had a chance to discuss what we did in our cities to raise the consciousness of our community and get their participation and feedback.

We discussed our involvement with the white peace movement. Across the board there was agreement that their agenda is their agenda and they did not truly want to incorporate our agenda, but still wanted our wholehearted participation in whatever they did.

The anti-war movement seemed to feel an obligation to talk about how it supported the troops. What position did the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement take towards this question?

Thandisizwe: Because of the socio-economic conditions of our communities, we understand why Black men and women go into the military; they feel there are no jobs out here, that there is no hope, no life for them. We understand and appreciate that and we love our relatives and our friends who have gone into the military to make a better life for themselves. But we don't support the troops, because to say that



we support them and not even question whether they should be in the Gulf in the first place is wrong. Love and appreciation can never be taken from a person. Support can be taken and given. And we make the distinction that we love them and we appreciate them, but we do not support what they have done over in Iraq. Even now that the war is over, even though there is a low casualty rate among the Black community, we still do not support the slaughter of thousands of Iraqi people, many of them women and children, many of them soldiers who were running away from battle. Even though we love them and appreciate them, when they get back here to America, we are not going to greet them with parades and ribbons and stroke them and pump them up, because what they did was wrong.

What do you think the talk of the great contribution of Blacks in the military reflects — Bush talking about the fact that Colin Powell is Black, Black entertainers singing the Star Spangled Banner, all these Black athletes wearing flags?

Thandisizwe: It's an attempt to pacify the Black community. At the same time, because we've felt isolated and outside the mainstream of American society so long, it's almost like an attempt to bring us in. Even though Bush declared war on Dr. King's birthday, he's going to make a speech praising the history of Black folk in the military. I think someone asked him about racism in the armed forces. He said go talk to Colin Powell, that the military is the best equal opportunity employer around. It's a pacification attempt.

Even the white community at large is ignorant of the real issues. At one of our demonstrations at the recruitment center there was a white guy talking about how he's going over there so that we can have the right to protest. That wasn't even the issue. What are you talking about? Our right to protest is not at stake. I heard on the TV some guy saying we're going over there to defend the Constitution — well, the Constitution isn't under attack! "We're going over there to defend the Constitution and do what the President has instructed us to do." Why? You wouldn't do what your mother asks you to do half the time. Why are you doing what this guy asks you to do, you don't know him!

A lot of times in the white community those who supported the war effort didn't necessarily want to ask the question, is it right or is it wrong? Let's just support it. Whereas in the Black community, even though you didn't see them out demonstrating, they knew instinctively it was wrong. They didn't necessarily get out and scream about it. Sometimes even the ones with yellow ribbons would say, "It's wrong, but my son is over there and I love him."

What impact do you think the military, as such a

major employer in the Black community, has on the level of consciousness of Blacks?

Thandisizwe: Well, it does pose a lot of problems depending upon the individual and how far that individual goes within the military. The military strips you of your individuality — the same as when you go into the police academy. At the LAPD, for example, they claim that "our officers are only one color — blue." Actually it's white and blue — they think "white."

It's the same thing with the military, because the dominant society is white, the majority of the people in the military are white, and the military in America is used to further white imperialist adventures. When you go into the military, you are being trained to fit that mold. What is the good soldier? Somebody who's going to take orders, not think about what they're doing. So we're having Black men and women who will basically become mercenaries for an imperialist order that does not serve them. And in that sense it's very dangerous.

But that depends on how many of them make it and go all the way through — like a Colin Powell. You have a high number of people who get dishonorable discharges. They just can't take the blatant racism; it doesn't roll off their backs; they rebel and they get out; or they go AWOL, or get less than honorable discharges.

Do you think the fact that American casualties in this war were actually very low is going to have a negative impact in the sense that people will say, "Well, it was OK for me?" For example, after the war, the media ran a series of stories saying that Black men faced a greater risk of death in cities like Harlem or Detroit than they did as GIs in the Gulf.

Thandisizwe: That is a good point for us to capitalize on and organize around, because we can show up the contradictions. We see all of this money being spent on the military and now everyone is all happy and proud and hyped because America went over there and kicked butt. OK, if America can go over there and clean up the situation in Kuwait, why can't they take care of what's happening in Detroit, in Harlem, in Compton? Isn't there something wrong with that? Why is it that the situation is so horrible that it was safer in Kuwait in battle than it was here in America?

We're saying that there's a war right here in America. We don't think about that because of the successful criminalization of our community. We don't think it's a war directed against us that's got us killing each other. We just think, "Black folks don't know how to act. They aren't going to ever get it together. Look at them, they're killing each other." It is a systematic effort aimed at our demise.

We can also use that opportunity to talk about other issues. "Well, we didn't get that many casual-

ties, so everything's OK." Well, how about the Iraqi casualties? These people are being painted as the enemy. What did they do to you, who are from Compton? Iraqis never called you a nigger. Iraqis didn't beat Rodney King. But they're your enemy and you're going to go kill them for some guy in the White House, who you've never seen before, doesn't live where you live? Come on! So it gives us an opportunity to expose the contradictions and organize based upon them. We want to challenge people. You feel all happy because America cleaned up the situation in Kuwait. Well, let's get America to clean up the situation in Compton, in Detroit, in L.A.

How would you connect the rampant racism and brutality of the L.A. police to Bush's "new world order"? What has been the impact of the L.A. police beating of Rodney King and what has the response been?

Robin: The new world order, it is very clear to me, is a white world order. It is white supremacy and that is what the LAPD is from top to bottom.

For the vast numbers of people of color police violence is nothing new, but for those suburbanites sitting in their nice little homes in the upper middle class, this was appalling. All this time when we have said the war is at home, the taping of the attempted lynching — we do not call it a beating — shows exactly what we mean. It's validated what we've been saying all these years. The police are used, not to "protect and serve" the Black community, but as a tool used to oppress. People in Los Angeles are taking their rage out in demonstrations and the lobbying of elected officials. We are organizing together to demand a change in the character of this city. The city officials plus the "Black leadership" have been placed on notice. The community will not let this be forgotten and swept under a rug.

Thandisizwe: This is a blatant violation of the human rights of African people. As Robin said, it's an attempted lynching, but this is not a civil rights issue. They were attempting to murder this man simply because he was an African man. No matter what slimy lies they try to tell — "Well, he was drunk or he was speeding" — it does not justify their treatment of him. This is the daily reality of our people in this country and it has got to stop. And we stress that this is an issue of human rights. No one has the right to treat us this way. We don't care if they're the police, George Bush or whoever, they don't have the right to treat us in this fashion and African people must organize to stop it.

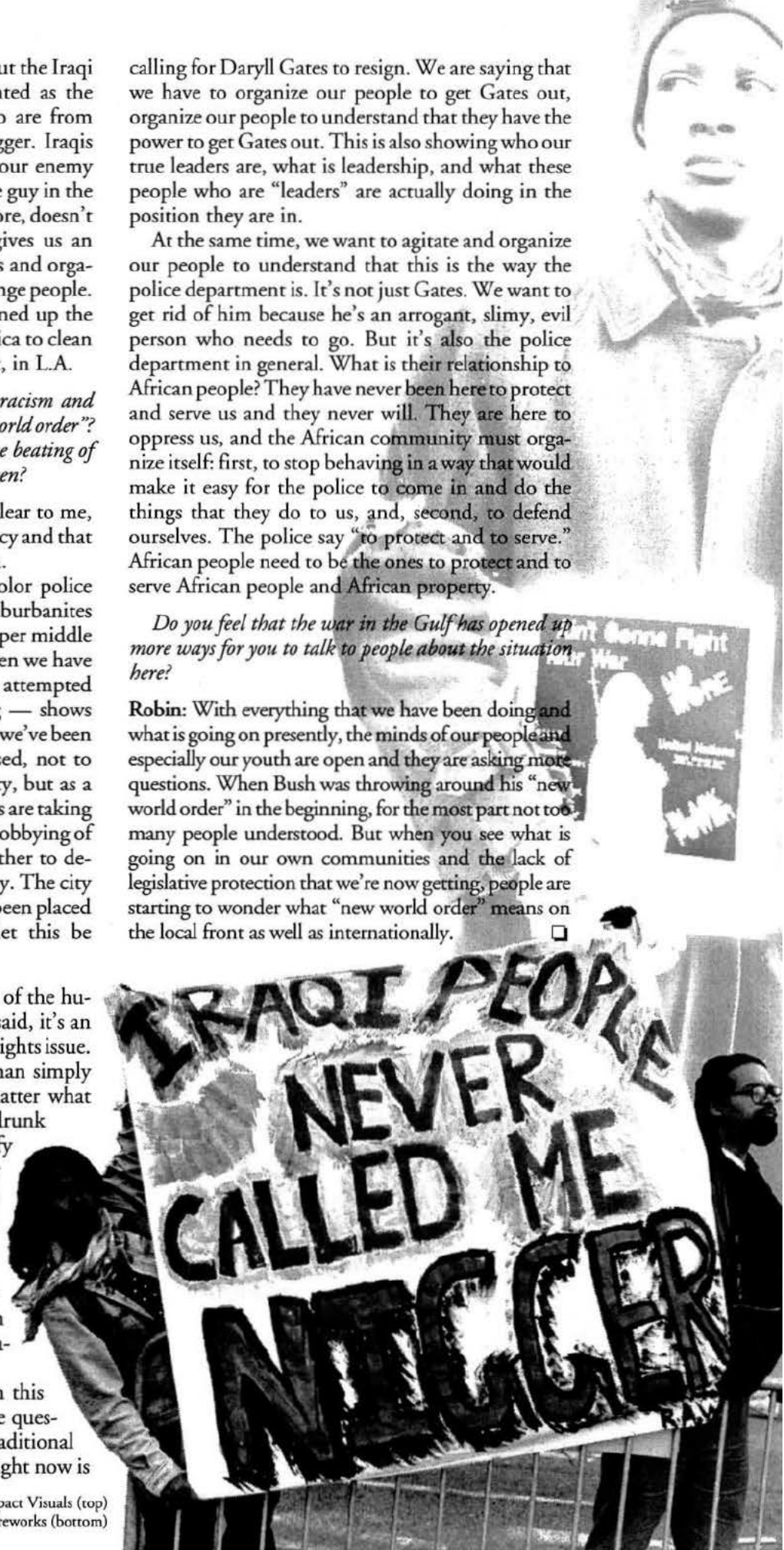
As I said before, our main purpose in this particular period is to agitate and to raise questions that are not being raised. The traditional status quo leadership in the city of L.A. right now is

calling for Darryl Gates to resign. We are saying that we have to organize our people to get Gates out, organize our people to understand that they have the power to get Gates out. This is also showing who our true leaders are, what is leadership, and what these people who are "leaders" are actually doing in the position they are in.

At the same time, we want to agitate and organize our people to understand that this is the way the police department is. It's not just Gates. We want to get rid of him because he's an arrogant, slimy, evil person who needs to go. But it's also the police department in general. What is their relationship to African people? They have never been here to protect and serve us and they never will. They are here to oppress us, and the African community must organize itself: first, to stop behaving in a way that would make it easy for the police to come in and do the things that they do to us, and, second, to defend ourselves. The police say "to protect and to serve." African people need to be the ones to protect and to serve African people and African property.

Do you feel that the war in the Gulf has opened up more ways for you to talk to people about the situation here?

Robin: With everything that we have been doing and what is going on presently, the minds of our people and especially our youth are open and they are asking more questions. When Bush was throwing around his "new world order" in the beginning, for the most part not too many people understood. But when you see what is going on in our own communities and the lack of legislative protection that we're now getting, people are starting to wonder what "new world order" means on the local front as well as internationally. □



Feminin REVISITED

by Judith Mirkinson and Sally Thomas
with Janice Schreckengost

“A survey about femininity?” asked our friends, when they saw the survey in the Winter 1991 issue of *Breakthrough* complete with pictures of Madonna and kd lang. “What does that have to do with anything? You can’t be serious!” But, in fact, we were and are.

We had started to notice things. A lot more women with longer hair, mini-skirts and high heels. Lipstick, hairspray and eye make-up started making their way back into our social gatherings. Lesbians and straight women alike were swooning over Madonna.

What’s going on, we wondered? Are women being bullied back into old traditional ways or are we finally coming into our own, free to be any way we want? What do women think? What do we think? In fact, we weren’t sure what to think, so we decided to ask around.

Our two-page, thirty-three question survey was dis-

tributed to at least 1,500 women over a four-month period. Since then, we’ve been sorting through the responses of over 325 women, in 35 states, between the ages of 14 and 75, and holding tons of conversations, arguments and debates. It got rather heated in spots.

When we started we had our theories. Objectification of women in society seemed as bad as ever; what we looked like was still so important. Alternative ways of being and looking that had been created by the women’s movement seemed to be closing up. At the same time, the feminist response to “femininity” in the 60s and 70s was not adequate for many women.

What is women’s identity (or rather, identities) in the 90s? What is different? What does this elusive, but all-present, quality called “femininity” mean to women these days? Anything? Nothing? Do lesbians experience femininity differently than straight women?

ity



Our simple survey wasn't going to answer all our questions. But we took the plunge. We knew right away we had touched a nerve. Many women were excited about participating in the survey. Some, however, were furious. We were criticized from all directions. Some women accused us of creating a survey where women would never admit to being feminine—where the only “correct” answers to “who do you want to be like” would be the two revolutionary women on the list, Assata Shakur or Dora Maria Tellez. They continued, “This is typical of *Breakthrough*. Why don't you relax and go watch some go-go dancers?” “You're too judgmental,” one woman said. “So what if I want to wear make-up and be attractive to men? What's wrong with that?”

On the other side, we were accused of being too into femininity and assuming that all women had those longings, somewhere. A lesbian from the San Francisco

Bay Area wrote, “Don't you see, I'm *femme*, not feminine. If I want to wear miniskirts, it has nothing to do with men.” While others wrote, “None of these images concern me in the slightest—there's nothing for butch women to identify with *at all*!”

In fact, the omission of butch and femme from our survey was a real shortcoming. Lesbians are experiencing a regeneration of interest in butch/femme roles, recovering after years of condemnation by feminists who claimed that any roles modeled after traditional masculine/feminine ones were oppressive. Joan Nestle and JoAnn Loulan are among those most vocal in defending the butch/femme dynamic, arguing that feminists, in their efforts to rid themselves of male domination, short-changed lesbians enamored with butch/femme. The butch doesn't mirror men, but flaunts her sexual desire for women and challenges the

narrowness of society's niche for women. And the femme, contrary to assumptions, is not powerless.¹ By not including these categories explicitly, we feel that we made it harder for femmes and especially butches to express their views on femininity and how it affects them.

All these responses put us, the writers, through a lot of changes. We were constantly going over the data and arguing with each other and with ourselves about what it all meant. We realized that, in the midst of all of this, we're each exploring and defining ways of looking and being that feel liberating. "Femininity" *per se* is probably not uppermost in our mind as we go about our daily activities, and yet, how we measure up in these ways is still surprisingly at the crux of how we feel as women.

So what did we find out? We asked women to describe themselves as either "predominantly feminine," "somewhat feminine," "not at all feminine" or "androgynous." From a list of 39 traits, they checked those that described themselves and then those traits (from an almost identical list) that they thought were "feminine." We asked questions about make-up and dresses, whom they slept with, whether men found feminine women more attractive, and several questions about eating, dieting and exercise.

We won't pretend that this survey speaks for all women. The women who responded were mostly white (87%)², and described themselves as "feminine" to one degree or another. The sample was overwhelmingly feminist and politically progressive ranging from liberal to radical, from all ends of the economic scale. A pretty good mix of sexual identities was represented (139 straight women, 104 lesbians, 55 bisexuals, 21 who "sleep with neither men nor women," and 6 young teenagers).

"Somewhat feminine" was how most women described themselves (49%), followed by 23% "predominantly feminine" and 14% "androgynous." The rest found themselves either between somewhat feminine and androgynous, or "not at all feminine."³

This sampling of women thought just about everything possible about femininity and what it meant, a lot of it seemingly contradictory. Part of it seems to be a language issue.

As one might imagine, there is no one accepted definition of "femininity." Standards of femininity are clearly set by society, on the one hand.

But, as we also know, most women have their own definitions, which to greater or lesser degrees fit societal notions. In fact, many women felt that the survey didn't allow them to distinguish society's definition from their own.

"I think femininity is too broad to determine. What

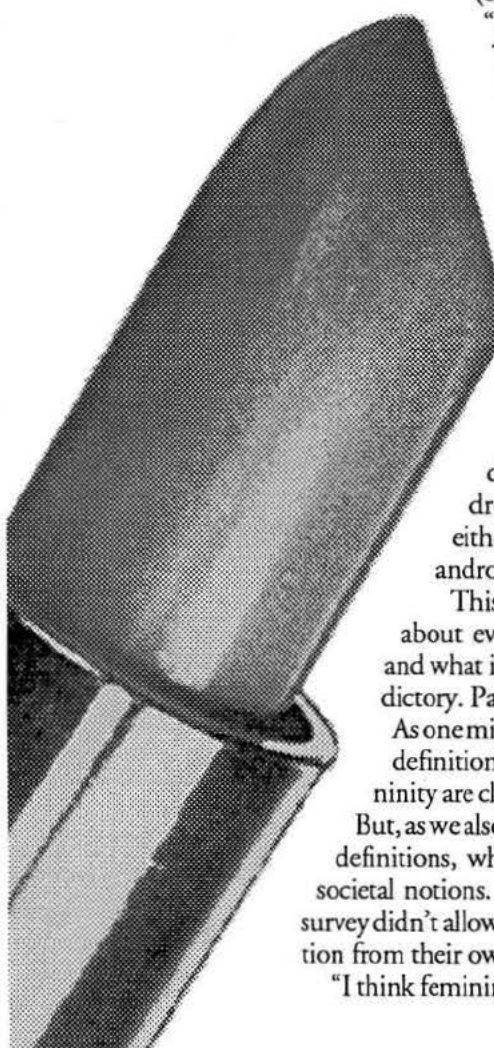
society as a whole deems 'feminine' is very different from what an individual may consider to be feminine. Due to this, I think many women feel 'pulled' in both directions (myself included) which leads to confusion." That's how a 21-year old straight woman from Phoenix, Arizona, described the slippery notions of "femininity." Yet, given the opportunity, she was like many women who responded to our survey: clearly eager to express her ideas, and anxious to learn what other women had to say.

From these women's responses, there's not much debate that they feel societal representations of "femininity" — the ones we see in ads, on t.v. and other large screens — are, for the most part, dictated by men and exploit women. Many of the women who answered our survey aren't merely dissatisfied with how they see femininity represented in the mainstream. A lot of women are depressed and upset, are very angry and hate the images they see, even disgusted and nauseated — because, no matter what, these images are as strong as ever, telling us how to look, act and feel. Many women wish there were more "strong" images of femininity portrayed in movies and on television.

That society judges women by standards of femininity can perhaps be taken for granted. Psychological profiles of what "society" views as masculine or feminine — Sandra Bem's is a good example — identify characteristics such as *leadership ability, ambitious, competitive, independent* and *athletic*, as masculine. It's no surprise that most of the typically "masculine" qualities are characteristic of "success" in modern America; in addition to those mentioned above, there are: *analytical, assertive, defends own beliefs, and self-reliant. Affectionate, cheerful, child-like, and loves children* are associated as traits society considers feminine. Got the idea?

The real debate is whether femininity can be anything else. Will *independent* ever be considered feminine? For most of the women we polled, this is a strong desire. For example, among those who consider themselves predominately feminine, *independent* was se-

1. Loulan suggests, however, that reclaiming butch/femme (and masculine/feminine) is not without pitfalls, and that we should be careful not to dump feminism along the way. Sexism is so infused in what we most commonly associate with masculine and feminine that we can't be so sure that our preferences aren't really fallbacks to what we're more accustomed to, and therefore concessions to the all-powerful patriarchal male/female dichotomy. We wonder what "reclaiming" these roles means without a mutually strong effort to challenge the power of what some feminists refer to as "PUD" (the patriarchal universe of discourse). We're not suggesting that there is a great alternative — certainly androgyny doesn't fit the bill for a lot of women. And yet it makes sense that many women (14% of our sample) are still opting for androgyny as a way to rebel against the oppressive aspects of feminin-



Hairy legs? Yep, no doubt about it, smooth, soft, shaved legs are a typical American social convention for women (and one that is becoming the social norm for women everywhere). Nevertheless, despite heavy social consequences, some women decide to let their hair grow — on their legs, in their armpits, on their faces — because they don't want to bother with the hassle; others reject this social rule for strictly political reasons. "I refuse to make myself hairless because men/society labels women with hair unfeminine," as one young straight woman explained to us in response to our question, "Do you shave your legs? Why or why not?"

"This is not an important question," was the answer that some supplied. Many women are on automatic pilot when it comes to shaving their legs. They forget they have a choice — or maybe they don't think they do. Though many women prefer soft hairless legs for aesthetic reasons, most do not feel they have the freedom to explore any other option, even if they are absolutely fed up with the hassle of shaving. Many of our respondents expressed feelings of extreme embarrassment to be caught in the public eye with ghastly body hair — especially if it's dark. "If you don't shave your legs, people either think you're a hippie, a lesbian, a feminist, or some combination of these identities," was how many women assessed the political and social repercussions of exposing one's body hair. Even if some women feel inclined to forego the shave, they succumb to avoid the raised eyebrows.

Our survey statistics reveal a strong connection between women's self-identified femininity and the status of their body hair. For example, 50% of predominantly feminine women shave their legs on a regular basis, compared to 28% of androgynous women. And 54% of androgynous women responded with an emphatic "No, I don't shave my legs" compared to 32% of somewhat feminine women.

Uppity women (the hippies, dykes, feminists and other non-conformists) often flash their hairy legs proudly — it's code for "I'm different." This presents a problem for the uppity woman who likes to shave her legs. "I think that length of leg hair is often used as a barometer for your dedication to the feminist movement, and that is very wrong," was what one bisexual from Wisconsin

told us — a sentiment echoed by others. So what's a girl to do? You make up your own mind. Here's an assortment of ideas:

Do you shave your legs? Why or why not?

"No. I don't shave my legs because it's just not a big deal. I do shave my legs when I don a dress, as that's part of the costume." — 26-year old "predominantly feminine/androgynous" bisexual from San Francisco.

"Sometimes, when I want to wear a dress. I am a definite feminist. I like to look and feel attractive. I have learned society's trappings for women on how to feel and look attractive. I don't mind adhering to them when I want to look better and feel better, but I do it to look attractive — not for anyone but myself." — 38-year old "predominantly feminine" straight woman from Indiana, Pennsylvania.

"No. I like hairy legs. Women's body hair is sexy. Shaving hurts and is tiresome. I don't want to look like a child. Hairy legs make me feel powerful. It repels people I don't want to know. It publicly identifies me as a dyke." — 29-year old "androgynous" lesbian from Atlanta.

"Yes — I like my legs better that way and a fresh shave feels really groovy on my sheets." — 19-year old "somewhat feminine/androgynous" Cherokee/white lesbian from St. Davids, Pennsylvania.

"I shave the bottom half. This is for comfort and I truly dislike the way it looks. But I only do this in summer and really only when I am exposing them. (Funny contradictions, I know.) But my hair is so dark and there is so much. Oooh, but shaving is a huge bother and takes a lot of time." — 22-year old "somewhat feminine/androgynous" straight white/Jewish woman from San Francisco.

"No — and I don't shave my face or my armpits or my pussy either." — "Predominantly Butch" lesbian from San Francisco.

ity. But neither is androgyny a quick fix for male supremacy. A mere change of style, though culturally and politically significant, doesn't necessarily alter the power structures that oppress women.

2. The obvious problem with a predominantly white group of respondents is that standards of beauty and femininity do vary according to culture. We found this lack of racial diversity to be a problem shared by most of the books and articles on femininity we consulted, which, of course, reflects the work of mostly white feminists — a vicious cycle. Suffice it to say the

results presented here have to be analyzed in this context. One thing we can safely assume is that racism permeates all aspects of our society, not excluding ideals of femininity.

3. Why so few "not at all feminine?" We don't really know whether this group of women was turned off by our survey, whether we didn't get it out widely enough or if there are just very few women who think of themselves in this way. Whatever the reason, we felt that we couldn't draw any conclusions from their responses, given that they represented only 3% (about ten women).



Photo credit: Pamela Valois

lected as a feminine characteristic 61% of the time; *athletic*, 39% and *muscular* 32%. Among all those who sent back surveys, over 17% felt that *all* characteristics should be considered feminine.

Not surprisingly, our sample, like many other studies, indicated

that women often view themselves as having many characteristics which society dubs as "masculine." *Smart*, *strong* and *independent* were the three leading characteristics of all women who responded to our survey. Trailing after the three most common traits mentioned above, the following seven characteristics make up the "top ten," distinguishing our sample as: *intuitive* (67%), *attractive* (59%), *emotional* (58%), *resilient* (58%), *nurturing* (57%), *intense* (56%), and *passionate* (55%).

The terms these women used to describe themselves sometimes had a direct relationship to how "feminine" they were. For example, take *pretty*. Fifty-nine percent of the predominantly feminine women consider themselves *pretty* as opposed to only 30% of the somewhat feminine, and 20% of the androgynous women. What defines *pretty*? According to Random House [Dictionary]: "pleasing or attractive to the eye in a feminine or

childlike way." Well, there you have it!

The same correlation between appearance and "femininity" was noted in responses to questions about make-up, dresses and shaved legs. The more "feminine" women, not surprisingly, used make-up, wore dresses and shaved their legs more often than less "feminine" ones. As you would guess, these more "feminine" women were less likely to have ever been mistaken for a man than the androgynous respondents to our survey. These findings only confirm what one may have expected all along. What our survey doesn't answer is how much women's appearance would change in a society that valued women as more than sex objects and where femininity wasn't so oppressive.

And then there's weight. It's extremely rare to meet a woman who isn't concerned in some way about her weight. This has been well documented in countless books and articles, the latest being *The Beauty Myth* by Naomi Wolf which states that 150,000 women die each year in the U.S. from anorexia. It's also clear that the standard for beauty is getting thinner and thinner. Even the current issue (July '91) of *McCall's* points out that in days gone by someone like Julia Roberts would have been called emaciated, whereas today her form is considered ideal. This obsession with weight is one more (and very powerful) control on women. And the results from our survey? In the answers about eating and exercise, most women (82%) said they exercise for health (could this be a euphemism for losing weight?), but only an average of 12% of the predominantly and somewhat feminine women said they considered themselves "fat." This surprised us. Why? Because women's self-conception regarding their looks rarely measures up to the standards of society. Perhaps the questions were unclear or perhaps the women we surveyed are more conscious. In any case the subject of weight could be a whole survey in itself.

These days the ability to be attractive and feel self-confident is very tied up with being sexual, which is for many women tied up with being feminine. And being feminine often relates to pleasing men — but not totally. Though more straight women (30%) consider themselves predominantly feminine compared to lesbians (9%), the category of women who described themselves as somewhat feminine was almost the same for straight women (56%), lesbians (54%), bisexuals (49%) and women who "sleep with neither men nor women" (43%). Lesbians and bisexuals were more likely to consider themselves androgynous compared to straight women (32% and 27% compared to 10%), but still, femininity clearly resonates for a lot of women, regardless of sexual preference.

A few questions were specifically targeted to lesbians and bisexuals to determine how sexual identity affected women's experience of femininity. For those who identified as feminine, we asked, "Do you think you expe-

rience femininity differently than straight feminine women?" Eighty-eight percent responded either "yes" or "in some ways." What does that mean? First, that "we are everywhere" (so don't be fooled by feminine attire). A preference for lipstick or tight dresses may be an expression of our sexuality, but not necessarily for men.⁴ (An acceptance and understanding of the feminine, though, is still problematic for lesbians. Fifty-eight percent of our self-identified "feminine" lesbian and bisexual respondents felt that other lesbians treat them less seriously to some degree or another.)

Maybe none of this would matter in a world where women were considered men's equals. But it is clear that women, as a group, feel pressures to look a certain way, i.e. "feminine," regardless of how strong and independent they feel. In fact, their strength and independence appear to be more aberrations of "femininity" than derivative of their femininity.

If anything, our feminine inquisition led us to confirm that, whatever "feminine" is, many women believe in it, and evaluate themselves and one another accordingly. Most women, regardless of where they fell on the "feminine" scale, ranked themselves *more* smart, opinionated, gutsy, independent, and resilient than their models of feminine, and *less* pretty, soft, passive, sexy, thin, erotic and exotic. To us this seemed to say that "femininity" sets standards and limitations—particularly in beauty, appearance and sexual appeal—that most women fall short of in their own estimation. Remember, both sets of traits were selected by the women themselves; they weren't rating themselves against someone else's list of feminine characteristics.

Although many women would like to believe that femininity just reflects what is female, it is much more than that: a set of standards about what women are supposed to be, one that most women feel above (in terms of independence) or below (in terms of appearance).

It seems that we really do have fewer options than we might think in terms of how we look and what we do. Maybe this is why 18% of the androgynous women who responded to our survey thought that "femininity is totally oppressive," while none of the predominantly feminine women felt this way.

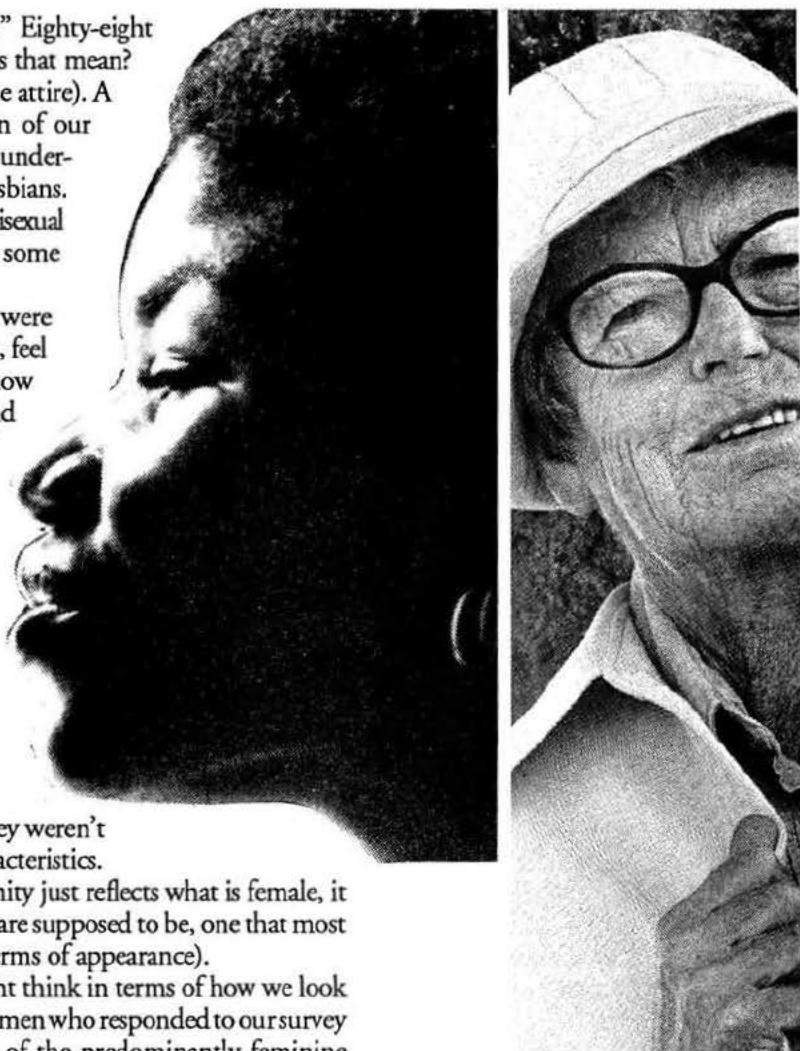
On the other hand, 21% of all women who responded to our survey feel that femininity has a bad rap. Whose rap? The feminist movement's, of course. While this sample certainly was positive towards feminist views on femininity (62% felt that it was either "liberating gender-wise" or "saved their lives"), 11% felt feminism was "totally judgmental and a drag," and many others expressed their ambivalence by not answering the question or by checking more than one response.

The feminist movement made it more possible for millions of women to be themselves. We put on pants and cut our hair. We refused to wear uncomfortable high heel shoes; we didn't shave our legs or our armpits. We didn't wear make-up. We learned to be physically strong. Scores of us came out as lesbians. For many, the notion of androgyny usurped the hallowed role of femininity.

But a couple of things happened along the way. Feminist alternatives to feminine stereotypes (in dress, hairstyle and image overall) just didn't appeal to all women. Nor did they solve women's contradictions. Unfortunately many women felt just as judged by this new code of ethics as they did before. An explicit rejection of *their* fashion was accompanied by the implicit message that *our* fashion was requisite.

Then there were the debates on sexuality. A part of the women's movement, which, in the beginning, was into women having sex and enjoying it for ourselves, responded to men's violence against women by drawing back and emphasizing its dangers. This view didn't really correspond with many people's desires to feel more free sexually, and to enjoy themselves no matter what they were doing. To tell the truth, many women got bored with being victims.

When all was said and done, each of us ended up fashioning ourself in ways that made us feel good. In this crazy world, where feeling good is hard to come by, many women asked why should we risk it with close examination?



⁴ It is also a way of getting over in the real world. Although only 6% of our lesbian and bisexual respondents answered "frequently" when we asked if they used femininity as a way to pass, 34% said they do "sometimes." Probably for that job interview or visit home to mom and dad.

Feminists were accused of making things worse by pulling everything apart, dissecting social relations which had been constructed over hundreds — if not thousands — of years.

And did we have something better to offer? We hadn't succeeded in creating a society which really accepted women for who we were. Although more women hold positions previously reserved for men, our society is still so threatened by women's independence that our feminine image has to be reinforced again and again. If we're straight, we have to deal with the fact that most men still want women to look and act in traditional ways. If we want to advance in our careers, we have to conform. And if we choose not to? We're constantly aware of the consequences.

This lack of real alternatives means that many women have blended their feminism with aspects of a feminine identity that — however much we may not like it — mirror society's. Is it an uneasy marriage? The majority

of women in this survey had little question about whether you could be feminine and liberated at the same time. We speculate that, while for some women who answered this question with a resounding "Yes" there was no apparent contradiction, other answers represent an accommodation to a conservative cultural age, when rebellion comes in small increments and you learn to live with compromises.

So, what about the women who shave their legs, wear make-up, and feel positively strong about their "femininity?" Are we trying to condemn the "feminine" woman? *No*. Is it bad, or "politically incorrect" to delight in high heels, fish net stockings and mini skirts? *No*.

Still, we can't shake the feeling there is something profoundly liberating in the rejection of the traditional feminine role, image and conception, something that we shouldn't compromise about. Without this, femininity retreats to the familiar.

Somehow we have to be able to critique society's—

We asked women to choose from a list of nineteen women (or write in their own choice) who they "wished they could be/look more like."

Most of the choices made available were women who are known as celebrities (Madonna, Aretha Franklin, Cher, Tracy Chapman, kd lang, Whoopie Goldberg, Roseanne Barr, Ellen Barkin, Lily Tomlin, Sinéad O'Connor, Patti LaBelle, Katharine Hepburn), or popular writers generally known to feminists and lesbians (Alice Walker, Cherrie Moraga), an intriguing artist (Frida Kahlo), a few revolutionary women (Dora Maria Tellez and Assata Shakur), a close relative ("my mother"), and one token but known-to-be-loved conservative (Barbara Bush). We tried to pick a relatively diverse list of women representing different looks and styles whom we could count on being recognized, more or less. Very few of those women are out lesbians (the cost of "success"). Some of the results surprised us.

Who would have guessed that *Katharine Hepburn* would have been voted the most inspirational? Well, 26% of all survey respondents made her their most popular choice. Especially for women over twenty-five years old. As the woman who carved feminine independence on the screens in the 50s, she still holds a place in a lot of our hearts. Strong, but not harsh, Katharine Hepburn broke the mold of feminine as weak—but her graceful appeal is undeniably feminine. More sex-neutral than explicitly sexy, Katharine Hepburn ranked the highest for women between the ages of 26–35 (35%) and androgynous women (32%).

Ranking up there with Hepburn was the write-in choice "me." Twenty-six percent of all women either didn't answer this question, or explicitly stated "I just wanna be me." Surprisingly, we didn't really anticipate this answer, though it is perfectly sensible. In a society that either sells looks, or in our own communities (the straight "left" or gay or feminist/lesbian communities) that dictate the realms of appropriate attire, women feel constricted.

Madonna: Everybody is talking about Madonna. Some say

and our own — views of femininity without being judgmental of the choices individual women happen to be making about their lives. Our fears and desires still express themselves in our opinions of others. So when some of us see a woman in a tight mini-dress, wearing lots of make-up, we feel threatened and enraged that she's betraying the gains feminists have fought so hard for. On the opposite end, many women groan with disgust on seeing women wearing "shapeless" jeans and unshaved legs. "Why do feminists insist on being ugly?" On both sides we feel like "gimme a break, haven't we gotten anywhere?" Of course, these are the extremes, but most of us fall somewhere in-between. What is clear from our conversations before, during and after the survey is that we're not satisfied with our image, but we're not sure what exactly we want instead.

Every now and then someone comes along who seems to represent something new and different — Madonna is a good example. Is she a radically new

model for women or just the same old shit? Whatever we think, we shouldn't let go of a bigger conception of liberation, one that goes beyond individual experiences. We know we're going out on a limb here, but it seems to us that the current debates on gender, sexuality, and, yes, femininity aren't enough. Our discussions might go further if they took place within a more vibrant feminist critique of society. We need more collective discussion, more rejection of the traditional, more radicalism and more risk-taking. We need to create new alternatives. We can't settle for less! □

Judith Mirkinson (straight) and Sally Thomas (lesbian) are editors of Breakthrough. Janice Schreckengost (bisexual) is a psychologist who assisted with data collection, analysis and general good advice. For complete survey data and selected responses to the essay questions, please send \$10 to Breakthrough.

she's "fucking great for queers." She's very feminine, right? But she's assertive — she's got balls, a 90s kind of feminine. Independent and vulnerable. Strong and soft. Sexy, very sexy. "In control" is the phrase you hear when people talk about Madonna. How many of us want to be and/or look like her? Only 17% overall, but her appeal increases among the young: 28% of women 25 years old or younger voted for Madonna, ranking evenly with *kd lang* and *Sinead O'Connor*, two other very 90s kind of gals. Madonna's appeal might be her precisely unattainable qualities. How many women have the time and money to look like her? (She herself admits that it's money that makes a woman beautiful.) Still, the statistics tell us that young women find a variety of gender expressions appealing: the Marilyn Monroe stylized femininity is perhaps only one of several different kinds.

Alice Walker: Smart, articulate, and beautiful. Rated 16% overall, 22% for women 25 years and younger, ranking higher than Katharine Hepburn, who is, despite her classic appeal, getting to be outdated. *Tracy Chapman*: Androgynous. Most popular among women who see her as their peer, 24% for women 25 or younger, 21% for women 26-35 years old. Highest for women who don't identify as feminine (33%). *Lily Tomlin*: Funny, smart. Rated at 17% overall. Highest for women 36-45 years old (23%). Not young enough?

Assata Shakur and Dora Maria Tellez: Some people assumed that we had secretly ranked these two revolutionary (and beautiful) women to be the "politically correct" answer. If so, only 7% of the respondents are "correct." Probably because they haven't made it to the silver screen.

Roseanne Barr: Surprisingly, a number of women couldn't believe that anyone would aspire to be like Roseanne Barr. She got the vote of only 5%. Could it be that outrageous women are appealing only if they weigh under 120 pounds? Is sexy synonymous with slender? Or maybe they have to be white. Only 8% voted for *Whoopie Goldberg*. In fact, most of the women of color ranked lower than the white women, which we guessed reflected how racism narrows the vision of white women's imaginations of who they want to be.

The Splice of Life

Behind the Myths of Genetic Engineering

by
ANTIGENA
WOMEN'S COLLECTIVE
ZURICH, SWITZERLAND



drawings by T. Forman

“Watch your step” signs as far as you can see... “Do all Americans have trouble walking, or what are all these signs for?” asked my friend during our stay in the United States. Having spent a year in this country on a foreign exchange program, I was a little bit more familiar with its customs. “You can sue the owner of a badly marked doorstep for damages, if you sprain your toe on it.” She could hardly believe it.

There were plenty of occasions to contemplate white Americans’ peculiar conception of life. Words like risk, danger and most of all safety can be noticed in conversations and articles at least five times more frequently than what we’re used to in Europe. One should be able to control, calculate, insure, predict and plan everything. A rock slide in the Alps that hits your sister fatally: something so unpredictable, uncivilized and primitive shouldn’t happen anymore. Isn’t there an insurance policy against that?

To be honest: as far as we’re concerned the white left and women’s movement in the U.S. which we mainly dealt with suffer from a safety and predictability neurosis that is caused by a feeling of estrangement from life. No, we’re not completely devoted to nature or fatalism, but whoever thinks that safety, control and the power of decision are essential to life unfortunately misses the point.

In Chicago, New York and San Francisco, we looked up a variety of women’s organizations that work in similar areas as we do: reproductive rights and population control. We didn’t come across a single organization that conceives of the consequences of genetic and reproductive engineering as an attack on the Third World and women in general. On the contrary, women supported the propaganda of those in power, the reasoning of the instigators of technology that reproductive engineering would widen women’s freedom of choice and that genetic engineering would alleviate world hunger.

U.S. feminists and anti-imperialists always talk about the deceased — deceased because a future remedy hasn’t been and won’t be discovered without genetic engineering — AIDS deaths, for example. Or they talked about unhappy, infertile women. They have never asked, though, why infertile women are inevitably unhappy and who’s responsible for it. And they never talked about the dead who die *because of* genetic engineering, of these millions of additional dead of starvation.

With this article, we try to make you more familiar with the very clear-cut attitude that most European feminists and anti-imperialists have towards genetic and reproductive engineering. There are women in the U.S. as well who see through the propaganda of these technologies. Some of them contributed to refuting the myths which we expose in this article. Hopefully, we can shake up your widespread attitude toward genetic and reproductive engineering with it.

It would also be interesting if you let us know whether you can relate to our perception about your feeling about life and “illusions of safety.”

GENE SPLICING IS BIG BUSINESS

Biotechnology is the human manipulation of plants, micro-organisms, animals and humans to serve some purpose. And it is not new. Before the dawn of history, humans were using bacteria to ferment grape juice to make wine and fungi to turn milk into cheese. Crop plants were selected and bred; many varieties of domestic animals were created.

Before the 1970s, DNA, the basic genetic code of organisms, was manipulated only indirectly through trial and error. A fungus whose genes happened to produce a good-flavored cheese was cultured; one whose genes coded for poisonous or bad-tasting cheese was discarded. Plants and animals were treated similarly — the breeding of those with acceptable traits was encouraged; others were killed. In some societies in the past, infanticide of infants with birth defects was common.

Was the old biotech ethically good? In general it was, although, of course, there were abuses. Plants, animals and humans with genes for valuable traits that happened to occur along with unwanted ones might have been destroyed, leading thus to loss of genetic resources. Sometimes rulers or entrepreneurs would keep



their manipulation methods secret to build up wealth for personal aggrandizement. But in general there was a dialogue with nature — only crops that could stand up to the climate would grow; only bacteria that could ferment grape juice would make wine.

But the new biotechnology — genetic engineering — can manipulate DNA itself. Changes are made that are not gradually worked out in cooperation with nature. Decisions of what to do are based on the ideas of individual scientists — or more often huge multinational corporations. Money, not scientific merit, has been the driving force in industry and university genetic research. Genetic engineering research has been funded because of the tremendous profits anticipated from the sale of genetically engineered processes and products.

According to the UN, the future market for biotechnology amounts to \$50 billion. A British study estimates the agricultural and food market alone to be \$1.3 billion in 1995. Never before in the history of industry have such huge sums for research and development been invested. Each country is hoping for more work and a profitable share of the

the use of genetic engineering has an outstanding strategic significance in the fight for the preservation and redistribution of market shares. Old patents expire; as a result of this, certain sources of income dry up. It becomes more difficult and more expensive to find new substances. In 1979 the development of a medicine cost \$50 million and by 1982 it cost double that. Controlling the biotechnology market reveals unlimited possibilities, namely in terms of power politics and financial control.

PATENTING LIFE

Western agribusiness insists that we consider Third World resources to be public property. This lets the corporations grab those resources for their own use without having to pay anything. Genetic engineering does not create new genes. It merely relocates genes already in existing organisms. Multinationals process these natural materials through their labs, creating products to sell.

Genetic engineering entrepreneurs want patent protection for modified life forms. They want to *own* the life forms they have manipulated, even though the technicians start with life forms that belong to others through customary law. In making genes the object of value through the patent system, a dangerous shift takes place in the approach to genetic resources.

Putting value on the gene through patents makes biology stand on its head. When monopoly rights on life forms are given to those who manipulate genes using new technologies, the intellectual contribution of generations of Third World farmers for over ten thousand years is stripped of worth. In conservation, breeding, domestication and development of plant and animal genetic resources, indigenous people contribute an unparalleled wealth of knowledge. Now their expertise, along with the complex organisms which have evolved over millennia in nature, are being reduced to their parts, and treated as mere inputs in genetic engineering.

Patenting of life means for the farmers worldwide that they will not be allowed to breed animals or other living organisms which may be patented in the future. The right of the patent-holder, which will certainly be a multinational agricultural company, usually lasts for several generations.

A NEW "GREEN REVOLUTION"?

Advocates of genetic engineering claim that new plant biotechnology will be instrumental in alleviating world hunger. But world hunger is caused by the exotic consumption habits of the rich and the unequal distribution of wealth.

The prevailing belief is that Africa is a basket case which will survive only through massive open-ended aid. In fact, it is a rich and steady source of crops consumed daily in the industrial nations: vegetables,



from *The Womanist*

predicted billions.

Many large firms, like Monsanto and Ciba-Geigy, have opened multi-million dollar biotechnology research centers. New types of businesses, research companies whose purpose is to commercialize new genetic technologies, have emerged. Many of these biotechnology firms have been started by entrepreneurial academics who have been able to attract venture capital. Universities depend on funding from private sources. Industry is eager to award money to university centers that do research and development in genetic engineering. Even the federal and state governments award money to universities for this purpose to assure the U.S. will have a competitive edge in the emerging national and global genetic engineering market.

For the pharmaceutical and chemical companies,

tea, coffee, cocoa, sugar and even fresh flowers for the dinner table. Pineapples from the Philippines and strawberries from Mexico come to the U.S. throughout the winter, from land that would otherwise be used by Filipinos and Mexicans to grow food for themselves. Rather than the rich feeding the poor, the poor feed the rich.

Industry and science have promised to solve world hunger once before, in the 60s when the "Green Revolution," a new agricultural technology, was introduced. This technology, consisting mainly in the utilization of new high yielding varieties of grain, was praised as a victory over starvation. Now we know that the main effects of the "Green Revolution" were the extinction of various kinds of plants, farmers driven into ruin, bad crops and famine. In areas where the "Green Revolution" had the most effect, according to the UN, malnutrition has actually increased.

In reality, the goal of the "Green Revolution" was to spread new varieties of crops — those controlled by multinational agricultural companies — and displace indigenous ones. On the one hand, the new high yielding varieties created a huge market for fertilizer, pesticides and agricultural machines. On the other hand, the new plant variety protection law enabled the multinational seed producers like Sandoz, Monsanto, etc. to create a monopoly-like position for themselves. Eighty percent of all seed patents in the industrialized countries are controlled by the transnational companies, and in the Third World they control 95 percent.

Unlike the "genetic revolution," the "Green Revolution" was mostly spread by public institutions like universities and research centers sponsored by the U.S. government. The genetic revolution is completely in the hands of private, multinational companies. In relation to agriculture, different serious effects are visible already:

1. Biotechnology will even aggravate the problem of overproduction of agricultural goods.

In December 1990, rBST (a genetically engineered bovine growth hormone) was approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for use in increasing milk production in cows. This comes at the same time as dairy farmers are being asked to reduce the amount of milk sent to market. According to an evaluation by the U.S. Congress, one-third of U.S. milk farms would have to close down if rBST were released. It is already known that rBST is harmful to the cow's health. There haven't been any studies, at least in Europe, about the effects of rBST-milk on humans.

In the Third World too, the manipulation of agriculturally useful plants will lead to overproduction. Genetic engineering will cause a huge increase in major export crops like cacao or palm oil. Cell

culture techniques make it possible nowadays to grow new plants with identical genes in the laboratory. The company Unilever, for example, specializes in oil palms and already clones plants whose harvest is 30 percent higher than in conventionally grown plants. Unilever counts on a future crop increase of 200 to 300 percent.

This has led to a decrease in the price of palm oil since 1985. In countries which couldn't compete with the decreasing prices several farmers had to close down production. Even soya farmers in the U.S. felt the effects, as the low price of palm oil put pressure on the soy market.

2. Biological and genetic engineering will transfer the production of many agricultural goods from the Third World to the northern hemisphere.

Vanilla is one raw material which in the future can be produced in laboratories with genetic engineering. The resulting artificial vanilla is identical with the original product. Ninety-eight percent of the world's vanilla is cultivated on four islands including Madagascar. If the vanilla market breaks down, Madagascar will lose its main export product. Thousands of farmers will be out of work and another country will be exposed to total impoverishment.

3. Through biological and genetic engineering, products will reach the market which will make important agricultural products redundant.

Take sugar for example: Thaumatin, an African bush, contains a compound that is about one thousand times sweeter than sugar and doesn't have any calories. Extensive research has been done on thaumatin in multinational laboratories. It is hoped that the plant can be used to produce extremely sweet sweeteners and that its genetic material can be introduced into cacao, for example.

Sweet cacao for the industrial countries, withdrawal of the means of existence for the sugar producers of the Third World: that's what the future may hold. Agriculturally cultivated sugar will be redundant. Global sugar production is now an eight billion dollar market. With the introduction of this sugar substitute, these eight billion dollars will be lost, mainly taken from the income of Third World countries.

The irony in all this is that many of these countries were forced into one crop economies such as sugar or cotton and now will be crippled because these crops are no longer necessary.

4. As a result of genetic engineering, there will be a higher usage of herbicides.

Along with a large part of the seed market, the multinational chemical and pharmaceutical companies control 63 percent of the herbicide market. Eli Lilly, Monsanto, American Cyanamid, Ciba-Geigy,

etc. have been researching for years in methods of genetic engineering to breed herbicide resistant seeds and plants. These plants will make it possible to increase the use of herbicides, and with it the profit of the transnationals.

Apart from the increase in profit, there is another financial aspect, reflected in a report by the European Parliament, which makes research in resistance to herbicides so attractive to the companies: "From the industrial point of view, herbicide-resistant plants are mainly bred for economical reasons, since it is 20 times more expensive to develop a new herbicide than a new brand of plant."

The doubling of agricultural yields in the last 50 years resulted in a tripling in the amount of pesticides used in the 20 years from 1965 to 1985. These chemicals poison farmworkers, contaminate groundwater, cause cancer in consumers, and have created twelve times as many insect species resistant to pesticides as there were in the middle 1950s.

Some of the worst pollution comes from the oil and chemicals related to pesticide and fertilizer manufacture. Agricultural chemicals have seeped from old chemical burial trenches like Love Canal, New York, billowed into the sky from a runaway chemical reaction in Bhopal, India, and poured into the Rhine River from the breach of a containment dike in Basel, Switzerland.

BRAVE NEW WORLD

The most important material for genetic research on humans are embryos and zygotes (fertilized ova) which are in a state of division. These cells contain all the genes needed to determine a person's specific characteristics, the genes that are responsible for one's constitution, hair color, and any genetic dis-



painting by T. Forman

ease. By watching the development determined by particular genes, genetic engineers increase their ability to take control of these processes and to intervene directly in human genetic material.

Although the "new" reproductive technologies — *in vitro* (test tube) fertilization, surrogate motherhood, artificial insemination and prenatal diagnoses — are touted as helping childless couples, their real value to genetic technologists is in observing embryos in the *in vitro* fertilization process.

Japan, Great Britain, other Western European countries, and the United States have all recently embarked on multi-million dollar projects to "sequence the human genome," that is, determine the exact makeup of each of the three billion genetic "bases" which comprise the 46 human chromosomes. Should sequencing succeed, what would be its value? Proponents suggest that this knowledge will help cure genetic diseases. But in the case of

sickle cell anemia, the knowledge of the DNA base difference in the genes for normal and sickling hemoglobin (known for 30 years) has not helped produce effective therapies or cures. Gene sequence information is not easily translated into information on what happens in cells and organisms.

The profit motivation — obvious even now — is frightening. Sequencers are so enthralled with the possibility of huge profits that they're already deep into secrecy and competition. There is international jealousy over which nation can sequence faster. Some plan to patent the DNA sequence of part of a chromosome and make the knowledge available only at a price.

Human genetic engineering projects like the "genome project" and the widespread introduction of reproductive technologies into our society both reflect and reinforce certain patterns of thinking:

1. *Only that life that can be politically and economically integrated and exploited has the right to exist.*

Early diagnosis of genetic disorders in fetuses is touted. But how do we decide who should or should not inhabit the earth? As more and more genetic tests are developed, pregnant women won't be allowed to "choose" to say no. DNA scientists will define the difference between "normal" and "abnormal."

Genetic manipulation is not only justified by claims to its therapeutic value; very clear political and economic arguments are put forward: The so-called disabled are reduced to a social service expenditure which could be saved in the future. The alpha-feta-protein test is made palatable with the argument that the annual cost of supporting a chronically disabled person born with spina bifida costs seven times as much as the test.

Our humanity will diminish if our society tolerates less and less physical difference. The risks of eugenic control are frightening.

2. *It is you who are responsible for your own illness or defect.*

What will happen when people believe they have found a gene sequence that gives a predisposition to some mental trait, such as high IQ or manic depression, or to diseases caused by genes in conjunction with the environment, such as diabetes or heart disease? Mass testing and screening may start. Privacy of one's personal genome is at stake. Who will have access to and control over the data banks? This could lead to hiring and firing decisions in the workplace and denial of insurance.

By the late 1980s, companies were already beginning plans to start analysis of their workers to determine a genetic predisposition to cancer. In other words, they were trying to define a worker's suitability for work in a cancer-causing environment. This is much cheaper and more interesting than trying to

reduce pollution by cadmium or other carcinogens at places of employment.

This method of "cancer prevention" is scientifically dubious. The real reasons for our illnesses stay hidden in this way.

3. *Under patriarchy, the body of a woman is a colony which is there to be exploited.*

Reproductive technology is the systematic encroachment by medical science into the birthing process. While some of these medical techniques have proven beneficial to mother and child, by and large the injection of technological "progress" into the sphere of pregnancy and childbirth has turned the natural biological process of childbearing into an unnatural, male-controlled search for perfection in technique and product. The woman is in danger of becoming a virtual baby-making machine, engineered and directed by the medical profession.

Scientists speak of "the environment of the fetus" when they mean the mother and talk about the uterus soon becoming as unnecessary as the appendix. "Oocyte recovery" is a term used to refer to the process of getting ova (eggs) from women's ovaries. The eggs are then used in research or for *in vitro* fertilization. Use of the word "recovery" suggests that the ova were lost and subsequently recovered. The doctor or scientist's job becomes one of egg reclamation. Here the language used makes the doctor a hero (an egg saver/savior) and the woman an egg vessel.

Another term used for the same process (of removing ova from a woman's body) is oocyte or egg farming or egg harvesting. This suggests that someone (the doctor?) has sowed the seeds and tended them. The farming or harvesting image evokes the pastoral, innocent serenity of rural life. Here the doctor is a farmer and the woman a fertile field. Some scientists have suggested that "oocyte capture" is a more accurate term.

The idea that scientific language is precise and clear is widely accepted. What the previous examples illustrate is that the precision and clarity attributed to scientific language are simply labels or code words



Kvinnobulletinen

which say, "We think this form of communication is the best way to understand and to talk about the world." Defining science as the best way to examine, understand and talk about the world is a political decision.

Scientific ways of knowing and communicating through language are based on a particular view of reality. Because they have convinced us of this view, we do not question the assumptions behind the language. When we do question the assumptions, we realize that scientific language is just one way of describing things. Scientific language captures reality in a partial way (just as other languages capture reality in a partial way). Scientific language, like all language, may be used to promote particular objectives. In fact, particular scientific labels for things reflect particular interests without necessarily providing a more precise depiction of reality.

Behind the terminology of reproductive technology is a deep contempt for women — the same contempt which is manifested in the ways these technologies have been applied.

The use of ultrasound and amniocentesis to determine the sex of an embryo has already resulted in numerous abortions of female embryos — simply because society prefers to cultivate male embryos. This is equally true of clinics in West Germany as it is in India.

Before the advent of reproductive technology, women, although oppressed, still had the ultimate means of production, their uteri. For society to control the production of other humans, the whole woman had to be controlled. Today, her mind and thoughts are no longer needed. It is sufficient to dispose of her ovaries, her uterus, her genetic material. Ultimately scientists would like women to give up their own discretion in connection with their reproductive organs and leave the decisions to doctors and biotechnologists, who would produce children the same way they produce products of industrial plants. Women offer the raw material; the boy or girl is the product.

Due to difficult economic situations, women are forced to work as surrogate mothers. The agencies subjugate these women to contracts which are more than degrading, while raking in big profits. In this commerce the surrogate mothers have no rights. Is the next step the recruitment of women of the subproletariat and the Third World to carry babies for the First World?

4. *Women are responsible for the "quality" (or defectiveness) of their "products."*

When reproduction is considered a form of production of goods, quality control is obligatory. To the extent this responsibility is delegated to women, they will be obliged to undergo these new techniques. It has become the norm for women to abort

so-called defective or "anti-social" fetuses. It has become normal for women to lose all power of decision; they must do everything to shelter a fetus from damage — refrain from smoking or drinking, take all the prenatal tests, etc. Courts in the U.S. have already taken steps to punish or control mothers whose actions may place a fetus at risk through negligence.

To carry a so-called defective embryo to full term is considered imprudent and could result in the cancellation of health insurance. Pregnant women are forced to face these techniques and the moral choices on their own. Instead of asking for a society in which the prospects for a so-called "inferior" life could be optimistic, individual women have responsibility for giving birth to children who conform to society's conceptions.

Technology doesn't solve any problems by itself. If we want to evaluate a technology, we have to consider the circumstances of its development and application, the interests of those that introduce it and direct it, and the conditions of life of those that the new technology is designed to affect. What does or does not matter in science is a question of human choice.

We should always remember that there is no neutral technology. Philosophers of science such as Helen Longino have pointed out that scientific knowledge is socially constructed. The data can always be interpreted in a variety of ways, hence the choices are always political and involve values. Scientists claim to be talking only about facts, not about values. But science itself is constructed on unquestioned, value-laden assumptions; and scientists have their own biases as to what is worth knowing, and therefore what is worth researching. Their decision as to what interpretation to give to the facts they unearth is also subjective. Since they cannot separate values from science, it is clear that the scientists themselves are as responsible as the rest of us for the ethics and the consequences of the decisions they make.

Finally, confronted with this technological apparatus and power, we have to ask ourselves several fundamental questions.

How do we want to live?

What would a life of dignity and a society with room for everyone look like? How can we live in harmony with ourselves and with nature? And is it true, that women can only feel like mothers when we have our own biological children? Do we need this technology that on the one hand pretends to offer a good and secure life and on the other hand commits crimes against humans and nature?

How we and our society answer these questions will profoundly affect how we live in the Twenty-First Century. □

SOHEIR MORSY, *from p. 10*

work of a certain type of economic and political structure.

Sometimes when we talk about feminism there is this idea that there is one form of feminism rather than having respect for the feminist agendas of other women around the world and standing in solidarity with these women. After all it's women over there that have the right to determine what is the priority of their struggle, rather than trying to live up to some kind of standard of priorities that is set for them in some other country. One of the things women from the other side see is how ineffective the feminist movement in this country has been in restraining its government from dumping on people in other parts of the world all sorts of horrors, whether military or otherwise.

Right now a lot of attention has been on the plight of the Kurds, while we see nothing at all of the suffering of the Iraqi people.

This is part of the general pattern. First you build up the other as the enemy. You are oblivious of differences among the enemy. Enemy society is monolithic and they are all bad people. But once you've destroyed them and you've imposed control over them, then you can afford to project the image of their savior.

My heart goes out to the Kurds too. But there are other people who are suffering. The Palestinians have been suffering for a very long time too. They are homeless; they continue to be suffering, not only in the occupied territories; they continue to be suffering in Kuwait; they continue to be suffering in other parts of the world; they continue to be suffering right here in San Francisco.

Again, it's much easier for people to act as the champion of a cause as long as that cause is distant. It's not something they have to deal with on a daily basis. It's been very easy for people in this country, at least of late, to marvel at the strength of Mandela and to support the opposition to South African apartheid because it does not affect people's own lives. But when it's a matter of dealing with the Arab issue and the oil and the possibility that one's own way of life over here is going to be affected adversely, then it's a different story. Then it's much easier to accept the image of Arab as enemy. Because that rationalizes the insensitivity to the suffering of the people over there.

What do you think the war reflects about the nature of U.S. society?

This society is supposed to be a democracy, to have a representative government. The Congress might as well have been in a deep sleep. People talk about how terrible things are in other parts of the world, how there is no proper representation, there

is no opposition and so on. I hope the events of this war will have an effect in awakening the people in this country as to what their country is all about.

There is a real need for us to talk about what is happening in our immediate backyard. During the war, people were very eager to understand more about what's happening over there. In fact, more people started to read about Iraq, more people started to read about the Arab world. I think this is very important. But what is more important is to start reading about the system of politics in this country and how it hooks up with systems of oppression in other parts of the world to produce the ascendancy of certain groups of people who stand to benefit over here and over there. People should hold their government accountable for all the sufferings and destruction that it inflicts on people around the world.

Maybe one way to start is to start at home and look at the kind of suffering this government inflicts on the people right here, including women, including minorities, including the people we see on Telegraph Avenue, who offend the sensibilities of some people by "interfering with their freedom to a hassle-free environment." If that kind of sensitivity does not exist with people that you can see, that you can relate to on a daily basis, it's no surprise that it did not bother people to talk about "collateral damage." Because these Iraqis were faceless, these people were not people. It doesn't come as a surprise. As they say, charity and sensitivity start at home. How can one expect someone from Visalia, California to be sensitive to the suffering of an Iraqi person whose family was destroyed in that shelter if one is not sensitive to the plight of the poor homeless people in their own community, or the welfare mother who was accused of abusing her children and to whom the judge gave a "choice" to go to jail or be implanted with the five year contraceptive, Norplant.

What do you think the tasks of the anti-war movement are at this point?

In terms of my reaction to the political organizing during the war, I feel that there was a strong anti-war sentiment and anti-war movement in this country, but I think it's important for that movement to expand its horizons and not be simply anti-war, but anti-U.S. intervention in the lives of other people. And that is an ongoing process because there is intervention in El Salvador, in Nicaragua, etc. It's not just the Arab world, it's wherever the U.S. government sees that it has interests to protect or has surrogates to protect its interests. In propping up one regime or another in one part of the world or another, U.S. intervention is also forthcoming. Now that the war in the sense of the military confrontation is behind us, the war goes on. And that war takes different forms. So I think it's important to link the war at home with the war abroad. □



by Frank Duhl

On May 24, 1991, what many considered the impossible became a reality. The Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front entered Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia, and set up a provisional government. At the same time, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) captured the Eritrean capital city of Asmara and the Red Sea port of Assab, took 100,000 Ethiopian prisoners of war and established a provisional government in the former Ethiopian colony. Thus ended one of the longest people's wars in modern history. For 30 years the Eritrean people have fought for independence against all odds. They were supported by practically no one. The Ethiopians were supported militarily by the Soviet Union.

When most North Americans think about Ethiopia and Eritrea, we think about the drought and famine which has killed hundreds of thousands of people over the past decade. We've seen countless images of starving children at their mothers' empty breasts — images which have contributed to a widespread view of African people as victims. What we haven't seen is the role of the Eritreans, along with the Tigrean, Oromo and other people of Ethiopia, in fighting for a future of justice and democracy. In fact as the *New York Times* reported, the EPLF

is considered the best guerrilla army in Africa and the only one not supported by any super power.

Among progressive people there has been much confusion about the situation in Ethiopia. The Mengistu government, the Dergue, falsely portrayed itself as carrying out a socialist revolution in Ethiopia, claiming to institute land reforms and overturn a feudal past. It labeled the Eritrean independence movement — along with those of other nationalities within Ethiopia — as secessionist and reactionary. Most nations and people went along with this view.

In order to understand the real situation, we have to look at the history of the Horn of Africa. In the late 19th century, Europe divided Africa into colonies, the borders of which remain largely intact today. In the Horn of Africa, Italy claimed Eritrea and Somalia, while France claimed the country now known as Djibouti. What's now Ethiopia was populated by various nationalities: Oromos, Tigreans, Somalis, Amharics and others. The Europeans allowed the ruler of the Amharic people, King Menelik II, to expand the territory under his control. The empire created by Menelik, imposed the rule of the Amharic people over the other nationalities.

Menelik's successor, Haile Selassie, ruled Ethiopia from

1928 to 1974. He was a strong U.S. ally, a repressive ruler who maintained feudalism in Ethiopia. Following the defeat of Mussolini in World War II, Britain gained control of the former Italian colony, Eritrea. In 1952, the U.S.-dominated UN federated Eritrea to Ethiopia without consulting the Eritrean people, strengthening Selassie, who, in turn, gave the U.S. permission to build what became the largest communications and intelligence-gathering facility in the world at Kagnaw Station in Asmara.

After years of peaceful protest and petitioning the Ethiopian government, the Eritrean people began an armed struggle for independence in 1961. The following year, Ethiopia unilaterally dissolved its federal agreement with Eritrea, annexed it and declared it Ethiopia's 14th province.

In 1974, a popular revolt overthrew the Haile Selassie regime, which had been severely weakened by drought and famine, popular strikes and the successes of the Eritrean liberation struggle. A clique of military officers, the Dergue, replaced Selassie, raising hopes for democratic reforms and Eritrean independence. Three years later, however, Lt. Colonel Mengistu ordered the execution of his opposition within the Dergue and became head of state.

Under Mengistu, the Dergue turned Ethiopia away from the U.S., declared themselves Marxist and allied with the Soviet Union. Despite their Marxist rhetoric, however, they never recognized the right of the Eritrean people to self-determination and independence. With \$3 billion in Soviet aid and military advisors, the Dergue carried out a brutal war against the Eritreans, using MiG fighters, napalm and 120,000 occupying troops. Within Ethiopia, the Dergue pursued a policy of violent repression of the left opposition, killing over 5,000 Ethiopian youth ages 12-25 in the space of two months at the end of 1977. The national oppression of Tigreans, Oromos and other non-Amharic nationalities continued with the denial of their language and cultural rights and massacres of villages which offered any resistance.

By the early 1980s, the EPLF had liberated most of the Eritrean countryside despite the fact that it faced an army ten times larger and backed to the hilt by one of the world's superpowers. Key to their success was the determination to carry out a revolution to overturn oppressive relationships in Eritrean society, such as those between landlord and peasant, men and women.

Prior to the anti-colonial movement, women had no rights whatsoever; they were forced to accept arranged marriages, couldn't own land and had no public role. In the land reform carried out by the EPLF, rather than following the traditional pattern of distributing land to families, parcels were given to individuals, thus allowing women to own land and eliminating one of the economic bases of their exclusion from public life. The marriage law promulgated

in the EPLF zones outlawed forced child marriages and gave women rights in divorce proceedings. Women became active in village assemblies and the National Union of Eritrean Women became one of the EPLF's most active mass fronts.

Self-reliance was also one of the EPLF's most important principles. Militarily this meant that the EPLF relied heavily on the capture and repair of Ethiopian weapons. Away from the battlefield it translated into the manufacture and repair of all kinds of equipment. In underground factories and hospitals (including one that spanned 5 kilometers), Eritreans were able to make enough medicine to serve 70 percent of their population. The Eritreans are counting on this legacy of political and economic self-reliance as they take control and responsibility for their country.

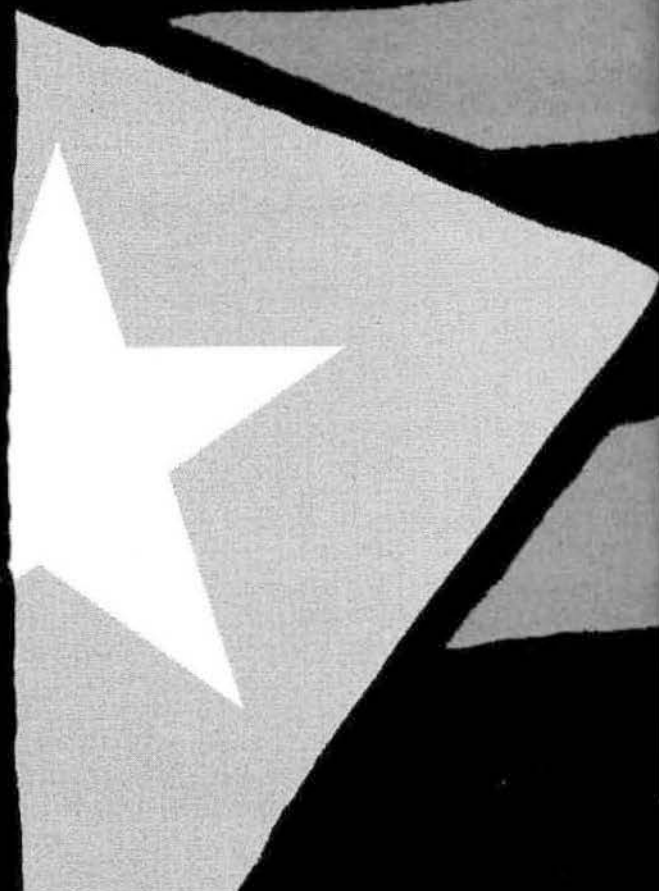
But the battle is not yet over. Now the Eritrean, Tigreans, and Oromo people face winning and preserving the peace. They are left with a devastated Ethiopia. They exist in a world where nationalist struggles are perhaps more acceptable, but where they are still isolated. A free and independent Eritrea helps to lift the hopes of all oppressed peoples from the Palestinians to the Kurds to the West Saharans. So countries like the U.S. and Israel will continue to view them as a threat. Clearly this is a time to build support for these newly liberated countries.

For this victory does something more. It shows us that a people can still fight and win, that national liberation is still a force in the world and that oppression will continue to be fought no matter how great the odds. □



Puerto Rican Prisoners of War

500 Years After Columbus



In 1493, Christopher Columbus happened upon the island of Puerto Rico during his futile search for India. While he no more "discovered" the island than he did any other parcel of the Americas, the coming anniversary of his travels holds a particularly painful significance for Puerto Rico.

For the indigenous peoples of the Western Hemisphere as well as the kidnapped African population, five hundred years of European civilization has meant shackles, rape and extermination. The conquerors divided up the continent and imposed harsh colonial regimes. Today, alone among the populous countries of the hemisphere, five hundred years after Columbus, Puerto Rico remains a colony.

This distinction is particularly ironic in the present world climate. The United States loudly champions "self-determination" for Lithuania, Kuwait, Cambodia...you name it. Puerto Rico, however, is a different story. The U.S. invaded the island in 1898, replacing Spain as the colonial power, and never left.

The residents of Puerto Rico have never quietly accepted the dominance of their colonizers. From the fierce resistance of the indigenous Arawaks and Tainos against the Spanish, to the modern independence movement, Puerto Ricans have always conspired and organized to regain their land and sovereignty.

The United States has responded in kind with a decades-long policy of brutal repression. Today seventeen Puerto Rican women and men are in U.S. prisons as a consequence of their resistance to U.S. colonialism. These include the thirteen Prisoners of War and four political prisoners. Political trials still await other Puerto Rican activists, while some members of the resistance have gone into

clandestinity or exile to avoid arrest.

Of course in its arrogance the U.S. government denies that it holds any political prisoners. Instead it claims that these Puerto Ricans are just "common criminals." This position is particularly hypocritical in the face of U.S. finger-pointing at countries all around the globe to release political prisoners.

The demand to free these prisoners is now a prominent issue in discussions of the future status of Puerto Rico. Representatives of all political sectors in Puerto Rico link any discussion of self-determination with a call for the release of all political prisoners and prisoners of war, and amnesty for political exiles and fugitives.

The National Committee to Free Puerto Rican Prisoners of War has launched an international campaign to pressure the U.S. government to free the prisoners. This campaign is enlisting the participation of prominent Puerto Ricans from all walks of life. Activities will be held in many U.S. and Puerto Rican cities on July 25, the anniversary of the U.S. invasion of the island.

On October 12, 1991, a major demonstration, to be held in Washington, D.C., will create a visible show of support for the Puerto Rican prisoners. At the same time, a delegation will present petitions with thousands of signatures calling for their freedom to George Bush or his representative. The campaign will continue into the quincentennial year of 1992.

WRITE THROUGH THE WALLS

The U.S. government says there are no political prisoners or POWs in this country. Yet the partial list below shows this claim is a complete lie. We urge you to write them and to send literature. These women and men represent the best of the movement. Make their struggle yours. "The Real Dragon" sponsors a continuing book drive to political prisoners and POWs. For more information or to send contributions write: POB 3294, Berkeley, CA 94703-9901.

Puerto Rican Prisoners of War

Edwin Cortes #92153-024
Ricardo Jimenez #88967-024 A-2
Alberto Rodríguez #92150-024 B-3
FCI Lewisburg
PO Box 1000
Lewisburg PA 17837

Carlos Alberto Torres #88976-024
FCI Talladega
902 Renfro (Delta-A)
Talladega AL 35160

Alicia Rodríguez #NO7157
Box 5007
Dwight IL 60420

Luis Rosa #NO2743
P.O. Box 711
Menard IL 62259

Oscar López-Rivera #87651-024
USP Marion
PO Box 1000
Marion IL 62959

Elizam Escobar #88969-024
FCI Colorado Unit
PO Box 1500
El Reno OK 73036

Adolfo Matos #88968-024
Lompoc Fedl Penitentiary
3901 Klein Blvd
Lompoc CA 93436

Dylcia Pagán #88971-024
Lucy Rodríguez #88973-024
Alejandrina Torres #92152-024
Carmen Valentín #88974-024
FCI Pleasanton
5701 8th Street
Camp Parks
Dublin CA 94568

Puerto Rican Political Prisoners

Luz Maria Berrios Berrios #24582-004
FCI Marianna
PMB 7007
Shawnee Unit
Marianna FL 32446

Juan Segarra-Palmer #15357-077
FCI Marianna
PMB 7007
Marianna FL 32446

Roberto Jose Maldonado #03588-069
Federal Medical Facility
3150 Horton Rd
Fort Worth TX 76119

Norman Ramirez Talavera
#031771-069
FCI Tucson
8901 S Wilmott Rd
Tucson AZ 87061

Haydee Beltrán #88462-024
FCI Pleasanton
5701 8th Street
Camp Parks
Dublin CA 94568

Black & New Afrikan Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners

Abdul Haqq #141-88-1173
s/n Craig Randall
HDM Rikers Island
1414 Hazen St.
E. Elmhurst NY 11470

Jalil A. Muntaqin #77-A-4283
s/n Anthony Bottom
Greenhaven State Prison
Drawer B
Stormville NY 12582

Herman Bell #79-A-262
Mohaman Koti #80-A-808
Shawangunk Corr Facility
PO Box 700
Wallkill NY 12589

Teddy (Jah) Heath #75-A-0139
Adbul Majid #83-A-483
s/n Anthony LaBorde
Sullivan Corr Facility
Box A-G
Fallsburg NY 12733

Bashir Hameed #82-A-6313
Maliki Shakur Latine #81-A-4469
PO Box B
Dannemora NY 12929

Albert Nuh Washington #77-A-1528
Auburn Corr Facility
135 State Street
Auburn NY 13024

Robert Seth Hayes #74-A-2280
Wende Corr Facility
1187 Wende Road
Alden NY 14004

Herman Ferguson #89-A-4621
Robert Taylor #10376-054
Attica Corr Facility
PO Box 149
Attica NY 14011

Thomas Warner #M3049
Drawer R
Huntington PA 16652

Cecilio Chui Ferguson #04372-054
Drawer K
Dallas PA 18612

Sababu Na Uhuru #07350-016
s/n William Stoner
PO Box 326
Mercersburg PA 17236

Kazi Toure
s/n Chris King
FCI Lewisburg
PO Box 1000
Lewisburg PA 17837

Martin Rutrell #042600
FCI Raiford
UCI 68-2018 Box 221
Raiford FL 32083

Sekou Kambui #113058
Richard Mafundi Lake #79972
100 Warrior Lane
Bessemer AL 35023

Johnny Imani Harris #23735
Atmore-Holman
Box 37 Holman Station
Atmore AL 36503

William Allen #66843
RMSI
7475 Cockrell Bend
Ind. Road
Nashville TN 37243-0471

Ahmad Abdur Rahman #130539
Ionia Corr Facility
1755 Harwood Road
Ionia MI 48846

Larry Guy
Jackson State Prison
Box E
Jackson MI 49204

Richard Thompson-El #155229
Box 10
Stillwater MN 55082

Sekou Odinga #05228-054
s/n Nathaniel Burns
USP Marion
PO Box 1000
Marion IL 62959

Sundiata Acoli #39794-066
Mark Cook #20025-2148H
USP Leavenworth
PO Box 1000
Leavenworth KS 66048

Mondo Langa
s/n David Rice
PO Box 2500
Lincoln NE 68502

Gary Tyler #84156
Louisiana State Penitentiary
Angola LA 70712

Rickie Green #84244
Oklahoma State Penitentiary
PO Box 97
McAlester OK 74502

Haki Malik Abdullah #C-56123
s/n Michael Green
Corcoran Prison
PO Box 3456
Corcoran CA 93212

Kalima Aswad #B24120
s/n Robert Duren
CMC
PO Box 8108
San Luis Obispo CA 93409

Tariq James Haskins #40075-133
Kojo Boman Sababu #39384-066
Mutulu Shakur #83205-012
Lompoc Fedl Penitentiary
3901 Klein Blvd
Lompoc CA 93436

geronimo ji-Jaga (pratt) #B40319
02B8C-205
PO Box 1902
Tehachapi CA 93561

Awali Stoneham #B-98168
Soledad Prison
PO Box 689
Soledad CA 93960

Ruchell Cinque Magee #A92051
Hugo Pinell #A88401
Pelican Bay CF
PO Box 7500
Crescent City CA 95532

Move Prisoners

Mumia Abu Jamal
Drawer R
Huntington PA 16652

Ramona Johnson Africa
Debbi Sims Africa
Consusuela Dotson Africa
Janine Phillips Africa
Merle Austin Africa
Janet Holloway Africa
PO Box 180
Muncy PA 17756

Carlos Perez Africa
Drawer K
Dallas PA 18612

William Phillips Africa
USP Leavenworth
PO Box 1000
Leavenworth KS 66048

Michael Hill Africa
PO Box 14
Boise ID 83707

Charles Sims Africa #41759-066
Delbert Orr Africa
Edward Goodman Africa
Lompoc Fedl Penitentiary
3901 Klein Blvd
Lompoc CA 93436

Virgin Islands 5

Malik El-Amin #96557-131
s/n Meral Smith
FCI Lewisburg
PO Box 1000
Lewisburg PA 17837

Hanif Shabazz Bey #9654-131
s/n B. Gereau
USP Marion
PO Box 1000
Marion IL 62959

Abdul Aziz #96521-131
s/n Warren Ballentine
USP Leavenworth
PO Box 1000
Leavenworth KS 66048

Raphael Kwesi Joseph #96558-131
Lompoc Fedl Penitentiary
3901 Klein Blvd
Lompoc CA 93436

**Native American
Prisoners of War
and Political Prisoners**

Eddie Hatcher #DL213
No. Carolina Central Prison
1300 Western Blvd
Raleigh NC 27606

Leonard Peltier #89637-132
USP Leavenworth
PO Box 1000
Leavenworth KS 66048

Rita Silk Nauni
Box 11492
Mable Bassett
Oklahoma City OK 73136

Standing Deer #83947
s/n Robert Hugh Wilson
Oklahoma State Penitentiary
PO Box 97
McAlester OK 74502

Norma Jean Croy #14293
CIW Chowchilla
PO Box 1501
Chowchilla CA 93610

**Mexican
Political Prisoners**

Alberto Aranda #300823
Ellis I Unit
Huntsville TX 77343

Irish Political Prisoners

Joseph Doherty #07792-0545
MCC New York
150 Park Row
New York NY 10007

Richard Johnson #17422-038
PO Box 900
Raybrook NY 12977-0300

Brian Fleming #08022-002
PO Box PMB
Atlanta GA 30315

Joseph McColgin
Kevin McKinley
Seamus Moley
MCC Miami
15801 SW 137th Ave
Miami FL 33177

Martin P. Quigley #41064-066
USP Terre Haute
PO Box 33
Terre Haute IN 47808

Chuck Malone #48310-097
FMC Rochester
PMB 4600
Rochester MN 55903

Chris Reid
FCI Pleasanton
5701 8th Street
Camp Parks
Dublin CA 94568

**Japanese
Political Prisoners**

Uyu Kikumura #09008-050
USP Marion
PO Box 1000
Marion IL 62959

**North American
Political Prisoners**

Richard Picariello #05812
Walpole State Prison
PO Box 100
S Walpole MA 02071

Kathy Boudin #84-G-171
Judy Clark #83-G-313
Bedford Hills
Box 1000
Bedford Hills NY 10507

David Gilbert #83-A-6158
Great Meadow Corr Facility
PO Box 51
Comstock NY 12821

Ray Bourgeois #01579-017
Charles Liteky #83276-020
Box PMB
Atlanta, GA 30315

Silvia Baraldini #05125-054
Marilyn Buck #00482-285
Susan Rosenberg #03684-016
FCI Marianna
PMB 7007
Shawnee Unit
Marianna FL 32446

Laura Whitehorn #22432-037
FCI Lexington
3301 Leestown Road
Lexington KY 40511

Alan Berkman #35049-006
FMC Rochester
PMB 4600
Rochester MN 55903

Timothy Blunk #09429-050
Bill Dunne #10916-086
USP Marion
PO Box 1000
Marion IL 62959

Larry Giddings #10917-086
USP Leavenworth
PO Box 1000
Leavenworth KS 66048

Linda Evans #19973-054
FCI Pleasanton
5701 8th Street
Camp Parks
Dublin CA 94568

Ed Mead #251397
PO Box 777
Monroe WA 98272

Ohio 7

Thomas Manning #202873-SH
Richard Williams #10377-016
Box CN-861
Trenton NJ 08625

Barbara Curzi-Laaman #18213-053
Carol Manning #10375-016
FCI Lexington
3301 Leestown Road
Lexington KY 40511

Raymond Levasseur #10376-016
USP Marion
PO Box 1000
Marion IL 62959

Jaen Laaman #10372-016
USP Leavenworth
PO Box 1000
Leavenworth KS 66048

**Ploughshares/
Disarmament Prisoners**

Fr. Jerry Zawada #04495-045
Pembroke Station
Danbury CT 06206

Dorothy Eber #04996-045
FCI Alderson
Conage 17, Box A
Alderson WV 24910

Fr. Carl Kabat #03230-045
FCI Sandstone
PO Box 1000
Sandstone MN 55072

Jerry Ebner #04467-045-B
c/o 4652 N. Kenmore
Chicago IL 60640

Jennifer Haines
c/o Denver Catholic Worker
2420 Welton St
Denver CO 80205

Vancouver 4

Brent Taylor
Frontenac Instn
PO Bag 7500
Kingston ONT Canada K7K 5E6

Ann Hansen
Prison for Women
Box 513
Kingston ONT Canada K7L 4W7

Military Resisters**Serving Time in Military Brig**

Darwin Airola #323-60-1827
Pvt. Marcus A. Blackwell
#128-62-7222
Sgt Dave Bobbitt #100-64-9752/0311
LCpl Colin Bootman
#061-64-2554/0311

Greg Dawson
Lcpl Doug DeBoer #288-82-9194
Lcpl Daniel Gillis #215-90-1228
Cpl Enrique Gonzalez
#119-68-1627/0311

Lcpl Harvey Hensley #037-52-8933
Cpl John Isaac III #101-58-1676/0311
Cpl Keith A. Jones
#076-60-2515/0311

Pvt Marquis D. Leacock
#094-66-8837/0351
Pfc Sam Lwin #127-60-6414/0151
Cpl Kenneth McGhee
Frederick McKinney #547-08-5931

Lcpl Wayne McWhite
#120-66-4372/0311
Lcpl Demetrio R. Perez #450-41-3595
Lcpl Doug Schiell #470-04-6888
Lcpl James E. Summers Jr.
#593-26-6614

George Ward #349-74-6579
Marine Corps Brig
Camp Lejeune NC 28542

George Morse
c/o Atty. Robert Lettrell
900 Pyntez Ave.
Manhattan KS 66502

Sgt Dave L. Holas
8320-1 Smith Drive
Fort Hood TX 76544

Being Held in Saudi Arabia

Pvt Bryan Centa #300-56-4866
(no address available)

Spc David O. Carson
HHC 47th Inf
Box 1256
APO NY 09126

Sgt Derrick Jones #501-66-5017
HHC 518 Inf.
3rd Bde 3rd Air Div
APO NY 09682-3310

Pvt Robert Chandler
C Col 266 AR
2nd Army Div Forward
APO NY 09758

Facing Court Martial

Tahan K. "T.K." Jones #564-43-9553
Pfc Erik Larsen #563-49-1139
Kevin Sparrock
Marine Corps Brig
Camp Lejeune NC 28542

We can use all the help we can get keeping this list of prisoner addresses up to date.

*If you are moved, or if you know of any corrections that need to be made,
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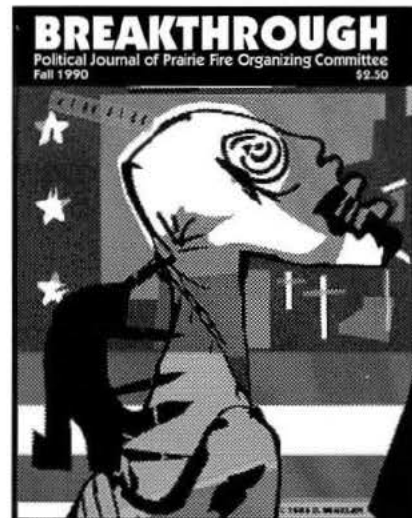
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