

# BREAKTHROUGH

FALL 1992

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INSIDE  
1492-1992

LEONARD PELTIER  
THE LA REBELLION

LIBERATING THE CHURCH  
THE PATRIARCHY WITHIN

*Breakthrough* is the political journal of Prairie Fire Organizing Committee (PFOC), an anti-imperialist organization working in the international solidarity, anti-intervention, anti-racist, women's and gay liberation movements and other progressive movements in the US. 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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- 1 EDITORIAL: WHO DECIDES?**  
by Sally Thomas
- 2 500 YEARS: RECOVERING THE PAST, REVISIONING THE FUTURE**  
by the Editors
- 4 TO REGAIN OUR SOVEREIGNTY**  
an interview with Leonard Peltier
- 8 UNRAVELING THE MYTHS**  
by José Lopez
- 13 SISTER ACTIVIST: LIBERATING THE CHURCH**  
by Sister Mary Kay Hunyady
- 19 FROM COLUMBUS TO RODNEY KING:  
THE LOS ANGELES REBELLION AND BEYOND**  
by Akinyele Umoja
- 24 THROUGH ARTISTS' EYES**
- 30 FEAR OF THE SHIVERS OF FREEDOM**  
by Ingrid Strobl
- 35 LA PATRIA ES UNA!**  
by the Movimiento de Liberación Nacional Mexicano
- 38 BACK TO BACKLASH**  
by Margaret Power and Melinda Power
- 41 CAN'T JAIL THE SPIRIT**  
• Uprising at Lexington Federal Women's Prison by Laura Whitehorn  
• Dhoruba Bin Wahad Threatened with Reimprisonment
- 43 FROM DEATH ROW — THIS IS MUMIA ABU JAMAL**  
writings by Mumia Abu Jamal
- 48 WRITE THROUGH THE WALLS**

*Front Cover:* "The Protector of the Woods" by Leonard Peltier.

"I wanted to be an artist ever since I was a little boy. There was no Indian school that taught art, except in Santa Fe. They had a two year waiting list. I couldn't wait that long — I would have turned into an alcoholic like everyone else my age — I had to get a job. In 1983, in prison, I decided to develop my painting."

*Back Cover:* "Who Decides" by Kerr & Malley, Los Angeles-based artists, created in response to the Supreme Court *Webster* decision in 1989.



# Who Decides?

**S**AY "ABORTION." What's the first thing that comes to your mind? Probably not "medical procedure." Chances are just uttering the word sets off a chain of complex thoughts and emotions. Why does abortion evoke such an emotional response when half of all women will choose to have an abortion by the time they are 45 years old? That abortion is a commonly sought medical procedure would suggest that, for one reason or another, a lot of women *want* or *feel the need* to have abortions. I wonder then, if abortion is so common, why do we almost automatically associate it with tragedy and emotional pain?

Women haven't always agonized — and *shouldn't have to agonize* — over the decision to have an abortion. There are many complex factors in deciding whether or not to have a child — terminating a pregnancy may not always be easy. But the majority of women who have abortions do so because they didn't intend to get pregnant. (And until there's a foolproof method of birth control that every woman has access to and will use — suggesting major changes in social attitudes about sex — women are going to get pregnant unintentionally.) My point is, the decision to have an abortion should be easier to make than it is now. But we live in an atmosphere where the right wing has succeeded in convincing us that abortion is not only tragic but criminal.

How could that have happened, when all evidence points to a strong pro-choice majority in this country? Really — everyone to the left of Marilyn Quayle is pro-choice! So why is *Roe v. Wade* in shreds? Why are women facing more and more obstacles to getting an abortion?

Because abortion is not just a medical procedure. Abortion and women's reproductive freedom raise basic questions about women's autonomy and sexual independence.

Give us an inch and we will take a mile. Give us the ability to terminate a pregnancy, and we may realize that motherhood is optional. Relieve us of mandatory motherhood, and the essence of womanhood (à la the patriarchy) is threatened. Take away men's domination of women, and you get all sorts of possibilities — a women's movement defining womanhood from the perspective of women. Women prioritizing our own sexual gratification — even tuning men out of the picture. Lesbianism! Yes, Pat Buchanan, it's your nightmare from hell!

The right wing identified these threats to male power early on and set out to destroy the women's movement. "Put women back in their place!" they cried. "Make

abortion taboo and sexuality immoral!" The right wing's clever manipulation of language — coining their anti-woman movement "pro-life" — suddenly rendered feminists "baby-killers" and witches.

It was a major concession when pro-abortion activists countered the right wing's "pro-life" movement with a "pro-choice" movement. "Choice" was our way of avoiding talk about abortion, of internalizing the right-wing interpretation of abortion as tragedy. And although women have never stopped fighting for women's power to control our own bodies, we're now smack in the middle of losing one of the fundamental keys to women's liberation.

Changing our language won't magically turn the tide in our favor. But by reclaiming a consciousness that is decidedly "pro-woman," "pro-abortion," "pro-feminist," "pro-sex," and "pro-lesbian" we can begin to reclaim our power.

The Supreme Court decision on the Pennsylvania abortion case essentially gutted *Roe v. Wade*. Yet newspaper headlines across the country declared it a "pro-choice victory." We can't accept the non-meaning of "choice" in this context. By now we know we can't count on the courts to affirm reproductive freedom, and there's little evidence that we can count on "pro-choice" candidates. Whether it's denying funding for abortions or requiring parental consent, even so-called pro-choice candidates add fine print restricting access to abortion in the laws of this land.

Women won't be able to make any choices about abortion, sexuality or motherhood until we can direct our lives unhampered by anti-woman ideology. That's why abortion can't be a "tragic" choice, made with a guilty conscience. That's why we have to reclaim our sexuality, beginning with the eradication of child abuse and incest. That's why we have to end the age-old double standards that deem sex for women naughty, that insist women care more about love, husbands and children than sexual gratification. That's why women must be able to choose abortion *and* have the financial resources that make that choice viable. That's why we must have access to safe forms of birth control, sex education, and an end to forced sterilization. That's why we have to claim our lives as fully independent individuals, who can choose to lead meaningful lives with or without children, in relationships with women or men. That's why all families should be recognized, whether they are headed by single women or lesbians and gay men. That's why all children must be valued equally — with access to quality health care, housing, and education.

Who decides? The answer can only be women — not just *some* women, but each and every one.

—Sally Thomas

# 500 Years

## Recovering the Past, Revisioning the Future

by the Editors



**O**n this special day, celebrants laid aside differences and resolved to make the day a "festa." In doing so they were able to blend the old world traditions with the newness and individuality of their life in America. By 1892, this popular Italian holiday became an American holiday commemorating not just a discovery, but the spirit of all immigrant people who chose to join the Native Americans in calling the Americas home.

*We have a special task in this Quincentary Year to call for all groups — immigrants, old and new, along with the Native Americans — to share their unique cultures, to take pride in the blending of their cultures, and to set a new course of discovery whereby through mutual cooperation we can surmount the disappointments of the past as we work for a new world, a world of shared opportunities and solutions.*

— San Francisco's official brochure  
for the Columbus Day celebrations

OCTOBER 12, 1992. It's mind-boggling to think of all the energy that has gone into the celebration of this day, the 500th anniversary of Columbus sloshing ashore on a Caribbean island. From Madrid to San Francisco and up and down the coasts of Latin America, political leaders, big businesses, and the media have been working frantically for over a year to engrave the Discovery (Encounter, Exploration, what have you) in people's minds as the defining symbol of the beginning of the modern era.

Columbus Day, 1992 — it's big...and it's coming to your school, movie theater, downtown streets, and living room. But the corporate, educational, and civic megabucks aren't being spent on a remake of that old history pageant we remember from 4th grade; rather we're being treated to a careful re-construction of history. The real event of 1992 is an ideological one. From *Newsweek's* special issue to the Smithsonian's "Seeds of Change" exhibit, the Columbus myth, having gone through several changes over the centuries, is being re-worked once again. Some typical slogans are instructive:

"Europe meets America — the exchange of two cultures" and the (no doubt unintentionally ambiguous) banner which was strung across Main Street in a Pennsylvania town, "Columbus — He Came For All of Us."

Just in case you missed it, here are some of the major elements in the campaign:

- The "encounter" between Europe and the Americas was inevitable. It was only a matter of time before these two different cultures came together — with unavoidable results.
- The meeting of two continents produced a mutual exchange, some good, some bad. This is the theme of "Seeds of Change" at the Smithsonian: Europe got potatoes, corn, and syphilis; America got horses and smallpox and other diseases. (The theme carried over to people as well, something the Smithsonian leaves out: "good Indians" adapted to the changes, "bad" ones didn't; there were brave explorers and gold-crazed *conquistadores*, cruel missionaries and compassionate ones, etc.)
- The resulting culture — or "multi-culture" if you will — is a mixture of European and American elements. And that's...progress. That is, in fact, the destiny of the world.
- Yes, terrible things "happened" to the Indians. It's too bad, but let's not dwell on it. After all, look at all the positive things we've been able to do with their land. This too is progress.

But the traditional Columbus dogma has been challenged this year as never before by people of color, particularly Native Americans. Throughout the US and Latin America, protests, educational projects and publications, celebrations of indigenous culture and resistance, and the creative use of media to present a counter-history have been accelerating for the past year and will culminate in October.

All of these activities have had their impact. The



celebrations, planned for years, have certainly not been an unqualified success. In fact the official sailing of the Niña, Pinta and Santa Maria has been something of a flop. They're not even sailing into what was supposed to be their grand finale port — San Francisco! More important, however, is the fact that even the official ideologues have been forced to concede that there were peoples with rich cultures in the Americas long before Columbus stumbled upon them.

This issue of *Breakthrough* adds to the voices offering alternative perspectives on the last 500 years. The articles you will find here pick up the ideological gauntlet thrown down by the official quincennialists, for a future free of domination depends on a history free of the dominant myths.

The myths are mists, hiding:

- 500 years of conquest, colonialism, genocide, and repression.
- The systematic destruction of Native American culture in order to totally exploit the land and resources of the Americas.
- The kidnapping of millions of Africans for a system of slave labor. The middle passage, which caused the deaths of between 50–100 million Africans, can only be thought of as a holocaust.
- The fact that European culture and civilization was, at the time of the Columbian invasion not at a high point but at a low one — with most of its advances made as the result of its contact with the East.
- Five centuries of resistance, including warfare, for Native American and African survival and liberation, always keeping the people's roots (their history) and branches (their possibilities) alive.

How ironic that we are always taught that civilization's advances came on a straight line from Greece to Rome to Europe, when the peoples of Africa, Asia and the Americas were actually further advanced than Europeans in the fields of science, medicine, architecture, engineering and navigation (to just name a few). Instead, the destruction of the Earth, the emasculation of millions of people, the homogenization of culture are all legacies of European culture and the invasion of the Americas.

In acknowledging and learning about the history of indigenous peoples it is absolutely necessary to rethink the European idea of progress. "Rational, modern" thought and practice rests — and classic "socialism" differs only in degree — on the principle that the end justifies the means. And that it doesn't matter if you exploit the land as long as it allows you to accumulate wealth and advance technology.

These are some of the themes addressed by Leonard Peltier, José López, Akinyele Umoja, and the Movimiento de Liberación Nacional Mexicano, writing and

speaking on behalf of nations — Native American, Puerto Rican, New Afrikan and Mexican — whose people have been colonized, enslaved, murdered, and culturally assaulted, in the Columbian tradition.

Our contributors also remind us that the past continues into the present. Thus genocide of Native Americans is not merely a "bad" of the past; it continues today in federal and state attacks on treaty rights, violations of sovereignty, and in poverty and neglect. State brutality against Rodney King and all Black people is a continuation of slavery relations — a Columbian legacy. And, with the North American Free Trade Agreement, the US continues to encroach on Mexican independence — as in every decade since the 1830s.

What would a discussion about Columbus be without an article about the Catholic Church? But rather than just a traditional history we asked Mary Kay Hunyady, an activist nun in the prophetic (liberation theology) church movement in the US, to reflect on the struggle to change the Roman Catholic Church from within. The Catholic Church provided a fundamental ideological rationale for colonialism and slavery in the Americas and bears a heavy responsibility for the suppression of native religions and customs. Furthermore, the Vatican continues to be one of the most powerful reactionary forces in the world, and also plays a critical role in opposing women's and gay and lesbian liberation.

Patriarchy was and is deeply embedded in the Western culture so lauded as "advanced." Ingrid Strobl examines the way that male supremacy achieved its dominance in European history — not only institutionally, but in the hearts, minds and bodies of men and women. In questioning the relationship between woman's role as reproducer and her role in society at large — biology as destiny — she challenges us to find new ways for men and women to relate to each other.

The Columbian Quincentenary represents one moment — albeit a significant one — in a centuries-long battle to define the past and, through it, envision and define the future. Both the official celebrations and the countering of these spectacles by indigenous and popular resistance movements represent the state of the struggle at this point in time. But, just as importantly, they represent the starting point from which we must move forward. The "New World" is neither the version of America and the world created by the European descendants of Columbus nor the one envisioned by George Bush and his ilk — it is still before us, still to be created.

Voices of resistance are important because they challenge our willingness to accept a European legacy which insists that domination is inevitable and surrender the only possible response. From them people can learn not only about the past but begin to seek new ideas and avenues for change, to construct a new vision for the future.

The Columbian era must not be celebrated; it must be ended! □

# To Regain Our Sovereignty

an interview with Leonard Peltier

**L**eonard Peltier is an Anishinabe/Lakota born on the Turtle Mountain Reservation in North Dakota. Leonard became affiliated with the American Indian Movement (AIM) in 1970 as the struggle for sovereignty and treaty rights was heating up. On June 26, 1975, a shootout on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota left two FBI agents and an AIM member dead. Eventually Leonard Peltier, Bob Robideau and Dino Butler were charged in the killings of the agents. Robideau and Butler were found innocent of the charges by a jury which was outraged at evidence of FBI complicity in a massive campaign of terrorization and intimidation against AIM members on the reservation. Leonard, who was in Canada, became the target of the FBI's vindictive rage. He was fraudulently extradited and run through a sham trial in which evidence of FBI misconduct was suppressed and perjured testimony used against him. He was sentenced to two consecutive life terms. Leonard's case has drawn international attention to the plight of political prisoners in the US. Breakthrough conducted this interview with Leonard on August 12, 1992.

*Breakthrough: Why does the US government want to keep you in prison?*

Leonard Peltier: In the 70s, when the two agents got killed, as in all incidents when law enforcement agents get killed, someone has to pay. Someone has to take the rap whether guilty or innocent. I, unfortunately, was the last to go to trial. Of my three co-defendants, two were found not-guilty and the third, Jimmy Eagle, had his charges dropped. I was the fourth to go to trial. We have documentation that after the others' acquittal, a memo was circulated throughout the judiciary system. The memo said the government was to put the full weight of the judicial system on me and to find me guilty. All of their evidence has been impeached: the murder weapon, Myrtle Poor Bear's testimony and other witnesses'. Not that they really incriminated me, but they testified against me. They have now recanted. We've also won four issues in the Court of Appeals in 1985 in St. Louis: (1) The government was withholding exculpatory evidence, (2) there was perjury by government witnesses, (3) the FBI had engaged in misconduct, and (4) the judge erred in rulings which prevented me from putting up a defense. I wasn't able to defend myself. Politically, it was well known throughout Indian country — not only in Pine Ridge — that I was upcoming in leadership, and my popularity among Indian people was very high. Proof of that is their standing with me all these years. Twenty-seven tribes have passed resolutions demanding my freedom. We have an FBI document where FBI informant Doug Durham said the FBI should no longer concentrate on the national leadership, but should concentrate on the "lieutenants." And he was well aware that I was one of those people. Otherwise, I can't see any other reason why they would want to keep an innocent person in prison.

*Looking back at 500 years of domination of the Americas, what criticism would you make of the white European view of the Earth?*

Well, my criticism, of course, is very strong against the white European people for the destruction they've done to Mother Earth, all because of their greed and



their attempts to become wealthy. In the process, they've destroyed the Earth and nearly destroyed the indigenous peoples of the Americas.

*The U.S. and the left in this country always put the wrongs against Native people in the past. What are the actual conditions Native people face today?*

Of course, as I said, near extermination of Native peoples was the wrong committed against us in the past, but Indian people believe that these methods are still being enforced, only in a more sophisticated way, now. One way for them to accomplish this is to create an environment on the reservations of such high poverty that Indians have no other recourse but to leave the reservation, therefore splitting up the nation — leaving our land more accessible to being sold or stolen. Of course, as we leave the reservation, our children intermarry and the blood line dies. The population with less than one million full bloods in the US can be very damaging to our future — and very destructive too.

*How do your experiences mirror those of Native people in general?*

The poverty, the racism, of course the dual system of justice I have experienced personally, the unemployment. It's difficult for Indian people to get employed near the reservations, where the jobs are, because of the racist myth that we're all drunks and lazy. It's a little easier in the cities, but that forces us to leave the reservations, which many of us don't want to do. These experiences that my people have had are the same as I've had.

*When did you first experience racism?*

I was six years old. There are a couple of incidents in my life which stand out for me. I went off the reservation — I was on the Turtle Mountain Chippewa reservation in North Dakota. I was in the store with my grandmother. Just because I had my hands in my pocket, an owner of a store accused me of stealing something. The real reason I had my hands in my pockets was my grandma had told me not to touch anything. His attitude — which I'd heard Indians comment on — was that non-Indians always thought Indians were going to steal.

Another time, was when we — the whole family — moved to Butte, Montana, to work in the copper mines. I was about six. I was standing on the street corner. Some white kids came by. The first group was about my age. The second group was a little older. They threw rocks at me and yelled at me to go back to the reservation. Little did they know the only toy we had on the reservation was rocks, so I was a pretty good thrower. I waited a while because my grandmother told me not to throw hard to hurt people. I picked up a tiny, little rock. I knew it would curve. I hit him right above the forehead. Being a young, inexperienced kid, I ran straight home. He followed me to see where I lived.

A little while later, he showed up with his mother.

His head had a big bandage on it. His mother called my grandmother an Indian bitch and threatened to put me in a reformatory. My grandmother didn't speak English and wondered what was going on. My aunt ran out and told the woman, "Who do you think you're talking to?" The woman panicked and ran away.

During the night, we left and went back to the reservation. My grandpa had asked what had happened. Back then, we were taught not to snitch, so it took a while, but I finally told him. I heard my father and grandpa talking, and they said if the white people came back looking for me, tell them they didn't know who I was. When I was 16, I got the shit beat out of me by a cop for being with a white girl. He handcuffed me and beat the hell out of me in Grafton, North Dakota. This guy was always handcuffing and beating up Indians. It wasn't the first time for him.

*What are the key elements of Indian resistance to Euro-American genocide 500 years ago and today?*

Of course, in the past our resistance to the invasion — as we call it — moved from peaceful attempts at first to armed struggle and again to peaceful attempts through treaties. That continued clear up to the 70s. Today, our resistance continues in organizing the international

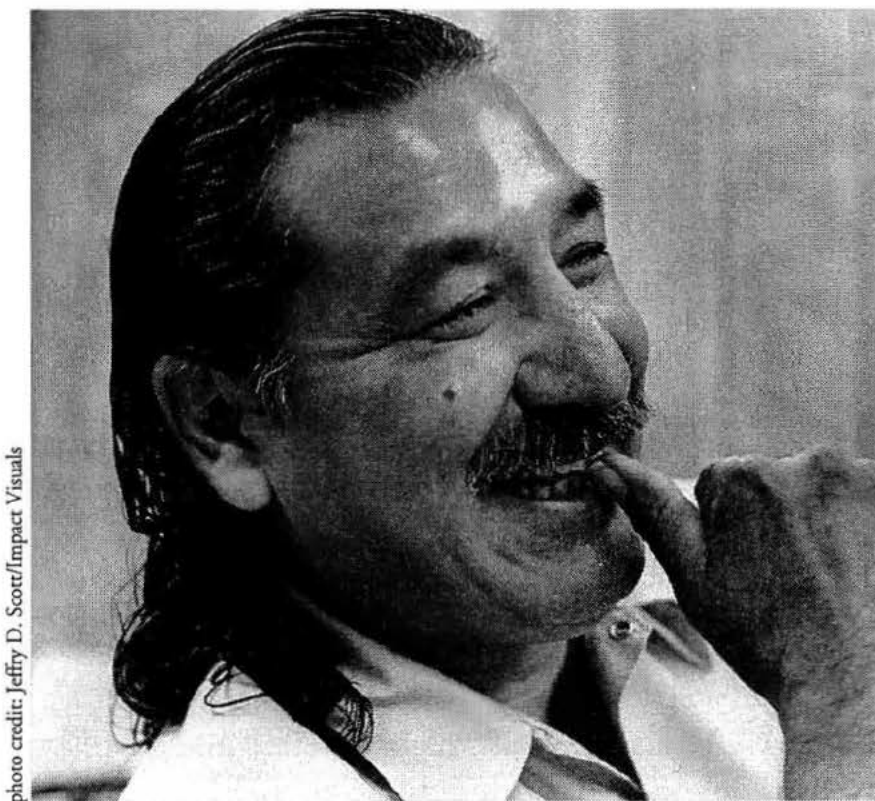


photo credit: Jeffery D. Scott/Impact Visuals

Leonard Peltier

public to the history of Native peoples. Plus, we're concentrating on working within the political system. But, of course, we're attempting to build our own economics to be able to have self-determination; we're creating our own legal systems. We're attempting to get

**The  
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more industry on the reservation, shopping malls. And we're concentrating in those areas, and have been for the last 20 years. We know that if we're ever going to regain our sovereignty as a nation, we have to be self-sufficient, so a lot of effort and concentration has been to build an economic base. Of course, also our education. We've been building community colleges on the reservation. In some areas, we've been very successful.

*What type of industry do you want? How do you see having an industry that doesn't pollute and destroy the Earth as industry in US society does?*

We take into consideration the environment. We don't want any that destroy the environment. Our problem is that we're in such a situation that it's hard to be selective, but we understand that it's cost us a lot of jobs. It's held us back. We can't move at the typical pace. We refuse to have strip mining or uranium mining, stuff that we know is destructive to humankind in the world. In other areas, we have no choice. I think we were the first to put the land back after strip mining as it was before. We would plant trees — to make the Earth look as natural as possible long before the government made this a policy.

*What kind of relations do you envision between workers and owners, in order not to make them exploitative as they are in this society?*

We're going through a re-education process, because the US system has taught us to have different classes and employees and supervisors. We've been trained that way for the last 100 years. We're trying to combine our traditional ways and US ways. We know we need supervisors. But we want to set it up so the worker will feel as important as the supervisor. Industries will be owned by the nation, just as the big malls are owned by the tribe. It's a very slow process and makes it harder to bring in corporations. But we're working this out and trying to resolve it.

*How have recent movies, such as Thunderheart and Incident at Oglala, and the events surrounding 1492 impacted on your situation and your conditions in general?*

I don't know about *Thunderheart*. People claim there is a great parallel between my case and *Thunderheart*. It should

be understood that *Thunderheart* is about a fictional character in the 70s. So, I really can't comment much.

*Incident at Oglala* is doing a good job in educating the public not only to my situation, but Indian people's situation in general, which is the way I wanted it made. I made sure Redford and Michael Apted made a documentary in this form because the struggle isn't just a Leonard Peltier struggle, it's a struggle for and about my people. And I hope, of course, on a personal level, through this, people will become educated about what took place in my conviction and I will win my freedom.

1492 events that are taking place are unifying indigenous peoples of the Americas. American Indians are playing a great role in organizing these events. We've had such success that we've had powerful politicians, such as Inouye (D-Hawaii), Wellstone (D-Minn.), Biden (D-Dela.), Kennedy (D-Mass.), and others call for reconciliation with Native peoples and have admitted it was high time to admit and amend for the wrongs done to Native people and my name has been thrown around by them.

All the resistance of the organizing groups that has been done around 1492 has been successful in changing the terms of 1492. Now they admit Columbus wasn't the first here, the Vikings were here before. I know they've found Viking writing here. And my understanding is Columbus had a navigator who was Black. There are a lot of people in organizations in this country and throughout the Americas who are planning big events to oppose the mass murder by a man who is considered a hero, of which there is well documented evidence and proof.

*What is the role you play for Native American people?*

Right now, I guess my role is symbolic. In all struggles, we need someone as a hero to look up to and follow. The people we looked up to in the past were Crazy Horse, Geronimo, Chief Gall, and Quannah Parker, a Comanche. The list goes on. The people like to have a living symbol to follow. I happen to be the one they've selected. It's a great honor to be put in this position for people from different tribes. My only concern is that they don't create out of the symbolic person they've made of me a person who can walk on water. You know what I mean. Occasionally, I have to tell them, hey, I'm just a human being. I'm not gifted with any spirituality. I can't move mountains. Otherwise, I'd be the hell out of here. I hope I don't disappoint them. I hope I can make them proud of me when I'm out. I will have to live up to myself and my beliefs and walk out of prison with dignity — to not turn against my people and my nation and not to be a snitch.

*What do you see as key issues in the Native American movement? How do you define the goals of the Native American struggle?*

The key issue is to regain our sovereignty. This has



always been the main issue that Indian people have resisted under and struggled under. If through this we can get our treaties honored, a lot of the government land that the government has illegally controlled would be returned to us.

*What do you mean by sovereignty?*

For example, instead of being called Pine Ridge reservation, it would be called Oglala-Lakota Nation, with our own government with a constitution. We'd be self-sufficient. We'd be running our own affairs. That is what the struggle is about for us, and really for all Native people in the Americas.

Big Mountain and fishing rights are immediate issues that have to be taken care of. The evictions from Big Mountain have to be stopped; and we must ensure that no law is passed to stop our fishing and hunting rights. In all of these, treaty rights are at issue.

*How do you see accomplishing this?*

What we've been doing is through education, working with the political system, we're getting more and more politicians supportive of these issues. Even Bush said the US government will now start working with tribes on a nation to nation level. That's what we hope officially. There are 25 tribes that have declared themselves sovereign. Warm Springs in Oregon are more advanced than other tribes in this area. They're rewriting the constitution and have made a declaration to the US government. No more Warm Springs Indians, but they will soon be a sovereign nation — the Paiutes. I'm not sure what the name of the nation will be. All this is a result of educational policy and radicals such as myself making these statements publicly. They're in the process of designing their nations, getting their judiciary system and economy together.

*Is Bush in any way a friend of Native peoples?*

No. He just says these things because of the support among non-Native people in this country. We have an enormously broad support in this country. Twenty years ago, we made friends with educators who taught young people the history of Indian people.

When I used to speak out about Indian treaties, the response I received from non-Indian people was, "That was so long ago — 200 years; forget about it, and become part of the American system." Non-Indian people really didn't believe their government had done this. Now, they're more open. They understand and are willing to believe their government committed genocide and they want to change it.

*But, as you try to get your land back, there will be opposing forces in the US government, and the owners of corporations who won't allow this. How do you plan to deal with them? How will you avoid the type of repression that was directed against you in the 70s?*

We've learned from that. We're cautious, even para-

noid. We understand they are saying good things. Bush is saying we'll work nation to nation. We know they haven't had a change of heart. They want something. They want the minerals. In the 70s, we were successful in stopping them from taking the minerals. We said no, you're not going to strip-mine the uranium. Hopefully, we'll continue to be successful. We understand that some of the reservations are so barren, we'll have to develop some of these minerals ourselves to bring these people out of poverty and unemployment.

Hopefully, if we have more sovereign rights, we won't have to worry about the Bureau of Indian Affairs coming in and trying to stop us. There is never any guarantee that they won't respond with the repression of the 70s. For now, we're just hoping they won't use those programs again. Now, because of direct experience with them, we'll be better prepared. There is no doubt in my mind that they will try to come after those minerals. They'll try COINTELPRO tactics, infiltration of leadership. It's not unheard of for Indians to sell out. We have to be very cautious and prepared for any of these leaders that will sell out. That's about all we can do now.

*What does the movement need to do to get you out of jail?*

We have to continue what we've been doing. I think we have to amplify it through our organizations, by letter campaigns, organizing demonstrations and protests. Continue to build awareness campaigns. We started 16 years ago. Work more closely with the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee. So far, it's been successful, but it hasn't been done at the level that is really needed. It has to be developed into something like a campaign — like Clinton and those guys are doing now. I need an army of people out there that will continue to organize with the LPDC on a daily basis. The committee could use financial assistance. In October, 1992, I need as much support as possible. Come to the hearing on my appeal in St. Paul, Minnesota.

In this case, so far, the prosecutor has gotten everything he asked for. The Canadian Parliament filed an amicus brief asking that I get a new trial. The 8th Circuit Appellate Court said yes. The prosecutor wrote the court a letter and told them not to accept Canada's amicus brief. The Clerk of the Court wrote to the prosecutor and told him the court had accepted the amicus brief and if he is going to respond, he should respond professionally through motions. If he refuses to respond appropriately, his letter will be given to the three judges on the appellate court panel in St. Paul as his answer. I've never heard of the court writing such a strong letter to the prosecutor before. He usually cried in the past and got his way.

This is a result of all the work people have done. People can continue to organize around this hearing. Help us raise funds for legal expenses.

For more information, contact the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee, P.O. Box 583, Lawrence, Kansas, 913-842-5774. □

# Unraveling the Myths

## 500 Years of Oppression, 500 Years of Resistance

speech by José E. López, First Secretary,  
Movimiento de Liberación Nacional Puertorriqueño (MLN)

**T**HERE ARE TWO OBVIOUS LEGACIES that come out of 1492. The legacy that most of the governments of Europe and the established order around the world will celebrate is the legacy of Columbus as the heroic figure exemplifying the best of the European spirit of adventure and rugged individualism, who set out to diffuse Western Civilization to the "lesser breeds of mankind" as Rudyard Kipling would say at the end of the 19th Century — that civilization about which Mahatma Gandhi, when asked by a reporter, "What do you think about Western Civilization?" responded by saying, "It would be a good idea." That it *would be* a good idea is because its lofty vision has never been actualized, or more so because almost all the great books or great thoughts attributed to Western Civilization are not uniquely or exclusively western.

For example, we are led to believe that all the great philosophical, religious and civic ideas that have characterized Western Civilization were inherited from the "great Greco-Judeo-Christian tradition" and that they originated in Europe and Asia Minor.

A synopsis of the great epochs of the western world would clearly demonstrate that this is not so.

- There probably would not have been a Classical or Roman Civilization had there not been an African Egypt. It was literally the invasion of Egypt by Alexander the Great that permitted the Greeks to appropriate the knowledge and mysteries in the tombs of Egypt.
- There probably would have not been the High Middle Ages nor Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologicum* without an African by the name of St.

Augustine of Hippo.

- There probably would have been no Renaissance without the great University of Timbuktu where European scholars went to study the latest findings and scientific discoveries, and from there went on to found the Universities of Salamanca, Bologna and Oxford.
- There probably would have not been an Age of Discovery had it not been for the maritime knowledge the Europeans acquired from the Chinese, the Hindus and the Muslims.
- There probably would have not been an Enlightenment or Age of Science without the scientific knowledge including astronomy, medicine and engineering science appropriated from the native peoples after the so-called discovery of America, scientific discoveries such as those made by Incas regarding medicine and brain surgery, including the use of quinine and other drugs; the Mayan knowledge of the universe; the harmonious relationship to the ecosystem developed by many native peoples, that met people's needs without destroying the environment, and many others.
- There probably would not have been an Industrial Revolution without the gold and silver stolen from the Americas that allowed the nascent European merchant class to wage war on its nobility and consolidate its political power and, at the same time, increase its buying power and promote commerce with other areas of the world — particularly in the Indian Ocean Basin which in 1492 was the First



World, in terms of development. And soon, they laid false claim to the land of the Americas and initiated the enslavement of African peoples; without the stolen gold and silver, and land seizures, and slavery there would have been no Industrial Age.

- There probably would not have been a Romantic Period had the Europeans not studied the myths and ideas of the people of this continent; the libertarian and egalitarian notions which characterized this period had their genesis in the Native American view of the world, most notably the return to nature and the belief in the goodness of human beings.
- There probably would not have been a Darwin, an Engels, utopian socialists, or even a Marx without the body of knowledge and the thoughts on society which flowed from the study of the native peoples of the Americas and from the aborigines of Australia.
- There probably would not have been a Picasso, or cubism, and perhaps no modern art without the intricate African art and masks.
- There would have been no rock and roll and the music revolution of the 50s, 60s and 80s without the music of resistance of Africans in America.
- There probably would be no fashion of the 90s in which men wear oversized colorful shirts and pants without the style of Africans in the ghettos — as bell hooks stated, "My style ain't no fashion."

So there is nothing exclusively and uniquely Western about Western Civilization. And so, that civilization, that they claim to have diffused, is nothing more than a civilization that the Europeans appropriated from other peoples — a real stolen legacy. It was that stolen civilization on the border of its own demise in 1492 (Europe was backward, and the emerging European merchants were a desperate class) that Columbus represented. Columbus was a desperate man, representing a desperate class. He made four voyages to the Americas and never knew he had "discovered" the Americas. Four voyages! It was the native people who discovered him lost en route to the Indies!

Five centuries ago, Columbus brought forth on these continents a vicious legacy: a legacy of colonialism, racism, slavery and genocide. But, Columbus's legacy has found a depositor, a sacred depositor. Frantz Fanon in his *Wretched of the Earth* points to it: Two centuries ago, a former European colony decided to catch up with Europe. It succeeded so well that the United States became a monster, in which the taints, the sickness, and the inhumanity of Europe have grown to appalling dimensions.

These United States are defined by two "great" documents — perhaps wickedly great documents: the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States.

It is clear that the Declaration of Independence,

which some have praised as the greatest anti-colonial statement ever written, represents for the native peoples a Declaration of Genocide, a call for their extinction — a call for the seizure of their lands. One of the key grievances against King George III is,

He has excited domestic insurrection among us, and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.

Thus, the "Founding Fathers" did not have the best of intentions when constructing the Declaration of Independence. This charge was in clear reference to the Proclamation Act of 1763 and the Quebec Act of 1773 by which the British tried to reserve for themselves the land west of the Alleghenies and exclude the American Colonist, who, due to soil erosion, needed more land to plant tobacco and cotton.

And then, the so-called "Founding Fathers," taking a page out of the Iroquois Confederacy, formulated a constitution to create a country that has no name — *United States* is not a name — the only country in the world without a name. It is defined by a structure, the federalist system. And that Constitution, again considered one of the greatest political documents of all times, as far as people of color are concerned, constitutes one of the most sophisticated, perhaps the most sophisticated colonialist manifesto of all times. For it calls upon the incorporation of territories and the exclusion of the native inhabitants, and this has been so from the days when the states of the Ohio Territory were incorporated to the incorporation of Alaska and Hawaii in 1959. By the time any state has been incorporated, its native people have been either placed in reservations or decimated. Only the settlers petitioned for incorporation.

More so, this Constitution immediately reveals its racist nature, when, according to Article I, Section II, on the question of representation it reads:

Representation shall be apportioned among the several states...according to their respective members, which shall be determined by adding to the whole number of free persons...excluding Indians...three fifths of all other persons.

In other words, Black people were to constitute three-fifths of a human being, and Indians were to be totally excluded; perhaps they were to be exterminated. Read it in the Constitution! But one can go further in relationship to the Constitution's racist nature. The great event following the Civil War in 1865 was the so-called adoption of the 13th Amendment. Most of us celebrate the adoption of the 13th Amendment as the Declaration of the Abolition of Slavery. What most people don't know is that the 13th Amendment puts an end to chattel slavery and codifies civil slavery, for it says: "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been

duly convicted shall exist within the United States." This latter part of the Amendment is key to understanding the reconstruction of the South after the Civil War, race relations in the US to this day and perhaps, the development of America's prisons into America's future concentration camps.

Most of us have never really studied Reconstruction in a critical way. Reconstruction meant the reconstruction of the white South. It had nothing to do with reconstructing the lives of Black people in America. After 1876, the prison population of the South multiplied by leaps and bounds; but it was the jailed Black people who filled the jails and prisons. It was they, the Black people, who rebuilt and reconstructed the South. It was they who rebuilt that South which had been destroyed — its mines, its railroads, its entire infrastructure. The prison population of Louisiana, Mississippi, etc., multiplied to such an extent that instead of building jails, they formed chain gangs. That is how the South was reconstructed. And today, over three million

people are under the aegis of the penal system — they are actually wards of the state — slaves — and the overwhelming numbers of them are people of color. If the devastated South was rebuilt by Black slaves in America's dungeons, then, perhaps, George Bush and his successor hope to do the same thing in the next period: to rebuild this country's declining economy by turning today's prisons into concentration camps.

There is no doubt that today America's ghettos are increasingly playing the role that old Africa played yesterday — a place for hunting Black slaves. One look at the so-called war on drugs, and its "weed and seed" campaign, which is nothing more than a war on Third World people in this country, suffices to prove this. Another example could be a close study of the state's response to the Los Angeles rebellion recently, how it militarily occupied that ghetto. An interesting incident concerning this occupation, that few people may know, is that thirteen men — FCI Pleasanton's best Riot Squad — were militarized and sent to Los Angeles. They militarized these people — guards at Pleasanton — and send them to Los Angeles. Can you believe that? And, most of us think that it was the Army that was sent to L.A. Obviously, the participation of this elite corps of jail guards is a prelude to what prisons are becoming. They are planning the militarization of prisons. So, as

you privatize the prisons, and turn them into centers of production (read, concentration camps), you also have to militarize them. And you have to get the experience, for it has to be learned and acquired. The Los Angeles occupation provided them with that experience.

So, as we look at this infamous Columbian legacy, this legacy of racism, of genocide, of all that is rotten about the Western world, when you look at this, you also have to understand that the very moment that the Europeans arrived on these shores, people resisted, and developed another legacy — a legacy of a rich history of cultures of resistance. When Columbus arrived, he established a settlement on the island of Española named Navidad. Upon his return during his second voyage he finds that it had been totally wiped out. One of the lies that was been repeatedly told is that the Indians were stupid and dumb. Well, these people were pretty bright — they told Columbus when he asked what happened, "Oh, some horrible people from down there — pointing to the islands east and south of Española — came and raided this place and these people are so evil they will eat your heart out." They were trying to scare the Europeans. Columbus was bent upon finding these ferocious peoples. Also, the natives, knowing Columbus's greed for gold, told him that the land of El Dorado was also in that direction. And so, hopping from island to island, Columbus went in search of these ferocious people and in search of El Dorado. He was still trying to find Cinpango, India and Indonesia, as he traversed the Caribbean. But, to his bewilderment, Columbus encountered the ferocious people, an army unlike any he had ever met — an army composed of fighting women. An incident is recounted, in which these women confronted and drove the Columbus expedition out of the island of Martinique. Dumbfounded, Columbus referred to them as "the Amazons." His male chauvinist European mind could not conceive that women could fight and defend themselves, and also defend the dignity of a people.

A revelation that there was something wrong here comes to Columbus — the people on the island of Española had received the Spaniards with open arms, but these people in the Lesser Antilles fought and drove them away. Columbus and his men immediately made a distinction between the "good Indians" and the "bad Indians." By "good Indians," they meant the Taíno-Arawak speaking people. The "bad Indians" were to be the Caribs, a derogatory reference to the people that resisted. The word Carib has its origin in the Spanish word *carne*, a reference to denote these people as flesh eaters. A whole myth has evolved around the Caribs as ferocious cannibals. For your historical and anthropological knowledge, there are no Carib Indians. There never were and there have never been. There were Taíno and Arawak-speaking people throughout the Caribbean. They were the same people from the island of Trinidad-Tobago to Cuba. Only in Cuba did you have a small grouping of people who were related to the



Maroon warrior.



Seminole. Now, why did Columbus name these people the Caribs and refer to them as a separate ethnic entity? Obviously, it was due to the fact that as the Taíno learned about the true objectives of the Spaniards, they rebelled, and those who rebel are always ostracized and marginalized and transformed into objects.

That is why freedom fighters today are called "terrorists." And just as you can wage war against "terrorists," according to Catholic teaching you can wage Holy War on cannibals. Despite the Church's consent, in fact, the Spaniards were not able to penetrate the Caribbean further than the island of Vieques in Puerto Rico. And it took the European over 200 years to establish settlements on the island of Martinique and the islands of Dominica and the rest of the Caribbean.

As the native population was decimated, Africans were brought to the Americas to work on the plantations. The Africans resisted at every turn. As a matter of fact, all Africans brought to America were Prisoners of War and political prisoners. An interesting sidelight is the fact that as we talk about the quincentennial, we also have to talk about the existence of 500 years of political prisoners. It would be as if history was repeating itself, and we often hear this idea that history repeats itself, and those of us who do not understand history believe this; but history never repeats itself. Historical problems, as individual problems, insist on being resolved. And so, one of the interesting things is that when Columbus took back with him to Europe native peoples, he took them in chains. Thus, he initiated the first chapter of anti-colonial political prisoners and POWs in the Americas — both men and women. By the way, many Indian Caciques were women, because the Taíno society was matrilineal and women were leaders of the Yucateques. And, so he took men and women back with him to Europe to show them off, but he took them in chains as political prisoners. We are talking right now about 500 years of the existence of political prisoners on this continent. The Africans who were brought here were all POWs; they were captured in war.

An incredible episode of the African experience in the Americas is that the Europeans brought Africans from various nationalities, and ethnic groups — the Yorubas, the Asante, the Ibos, etc. — and mixed them in the plantations. This was done in order to prevent people from the same ethnic group from organizing and conspiring, because they knew that people, unified by the same language and the same way of life, would rebel. The incredible thing was that the slaves found ways and means to organize, conspire and rebel.

Joining their oppressed Taíno brothers and sisters on the Islands of the Lesser Antilles and in the mountainous regions of the islands of the Caribbean, the Africans created the "Cimarrón" Societies or the Maroon Societies. Far away from the eyes of the plantation owners, far away from the colonial governments, these societies flourished from the southern part of the United States, throughout the Caribbean, to the northeast of Brazil.

There they created centers of praxis (action and reflection) — what the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire refers to as centers of cultural actions. If one studies the language patterns, the musical rhythms, the artistic expressions and the literary traditions throughout the plantation societies, one finds a great deal of similarities — thus, perhaps, proving that a New African civilization evolved during that period.

You can listen to a samba, you can listen to reggae, you can listen to Black music in the south, you can listen to a *bomba* or *plena* in Puerto Rico, and the rhythms are the same. In Puerto Rico there is a wonderful *plena* that says: "*Se fugó el Cimarrón y nació la Plena.*" ("The slave ran away and the *plena* was born.") What is the *plena*? The national dance, the national composition, the national music of Puerto Rico. The slave ran away and created the *plena*.

In other words, in the Cimarrón societies the seeds of our national identity were planted, but a national identity forged out of a process of resistance, and a unity based on a commonality of struggle among the marginalized sectors of these societies, including the Indians, the Africans and the outcasts of European societies. They built these societies; for example, you have the marvelous experience of the Quilombo — the Republic of Palmares — in Brazil. And they built these centers far away from the eyes of the plantation owners. They built incredible civil and religious structures, yet on the economic plane these societies that were egalitarian, everything was shared. They never forgot where they came from.

Study the Underground Railroad in America and see who built it. It was not white folks; they merely helped. It was Black folks who escaped, Black people all over this continent created Maroon societies and created cultures of resistance which in many ways were the genesis of the national liberation struggles in the Americas.

A very interesting episode was the episode of the Haitian Revolution. In 1758, a man by the name of

**The  
Constitution  
of the  
United States  
is perhaps  
the most  
sophisticated  
colonialist  
manifesto  
of all times.**

Makandal, who was a Muslim, was captured. He had been leading one of these Maroon societies. Makandal was tried by the French and burned at the stake. But for the Haitian people, Makandal lived on. According to the legend, as the French attempted to burn Makandal, he serenely walked out of the fire and fled to the mountains. It is an incredible myth — the myth of Makandal. But that myth lived to reaffirm that the struggle continues.

And thus, in 1788 the Haitians initiated a process that ended in 1804 with the declaration of their independence. It should be noted that Napoleon's first defeat was not in Waterloo, his first major defeat was at the hands of Black Haitians. Haiti became the first significant and true national liberation struggle in the Americas, and in 1804 Napoleon had to recognize their independence. Even though we have been led to believe that the roots of the Haitian Revolution were to be found in the French Revolution — that is the theory of the Black Jacobins — in actual fact the Haitian Revolution is a truly indigenous movement that rose out of the contradictions of the slave system. Something that most people do not know is that the Haitians were among the most internationalist people who have ever lived. When Simón Bolívar was exiled by the Spaniards, he fled to Port Au Prince. The Haitians provided him with moral and material aid. All they asked of him was to liberate all the slaves upon his arrival on the South American mainland.

The Haitian Revolution had such reverberations that the use of drums was prohibited in the southern part of the United States following the Haitian Revolution. Drums were one of the most important forms of communication of the Maroon societies, a form of communication which the white man did not understand. Maroon societies constituted one of the most incredible and heroic episodes of human history — out of almost nothing, these people built a new civilization. And I believe that today from the southern part of the United States — wherever Black people lived on this continent — all the way to the northeast of Brazil, there developed a new African civilization in the Americas, a civilization that was molded by Black hands, mulatto hands, mestizo hands, hands that molded cultures of resistance that to this day still exist, and continue to develop new dimensions.

Today, in the midst of despair, in the midst of poverty, in the midst of powerlessness in America's ghettos, new forms of the culture of resistance manifest themselves. That is where what Black writer-activist bell hooks refers to as "homeplace." In her words:

The task of making homeplace... was about the construction of a safe place where Black people could affirm one another and by doing so heal many of the wounds inflicted by racist domination. We could not learn to love or respect ourselves in the culture of white supremacy, on the outside; it was there on the inside,

in that 'homeplace'... that we had the opportunity to grow and develop, to nurture our spirits.

It is that ghetto or reservation (homeplace) — East L.A., Río Arriba County in New Mexico, the Mississippi Delta, Harlem, Pine Ridge Reservation, the South Bronx — that is truly what Eugene Perkins in his classical work on the so-called underclass, *Home is a Dirty Street*, calls "a ghetcolony." And it is also true that any social index will show that the human conditions and the quality of life in these areas are similar to that of the third world and not the first world. As a matter of fact, the per capita income of all these regions is \$5,500 per year... the same as that of the colony of Puerto Rico. But, despite this reality, these peoples have built and constructed — and the Los Angeles rebellion is a clear manifestation — a history and culture of resistance. Thus, Africans in America, Native peoples, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Black people, people of color, create in their ghettos, (while confronting all sorts of depravities), cultures of resistance and continue carrying on the tradition established yesterday by the Maroon societies. For example, what many of you call fashion is obviously Black styles appropriated by the fashion industry. The rap music that comes out of the ghetto has been appropriated and mainstreamed. Every form of Black cultural experience, Mexican cultural experience, Puerto Rican cultural experience, indigenous peoples' cultural experience, has been appropriated by Western Civilization, as it has done for the past three thousand years.

So I call upon you to reflect upon this situation — to reflect upon what the next 500 years of human civilization will be about. We are called upon to unravel the myths and the lies, and we call upon you to deconstruct our notion of Western Civilization. If the etymological origin of analysis springs from the word "smash," maybe we are all called upon to smash Western Civilization and then reconstruct something better in its place. As the Native American activist Susan Harjo wrote last year, we must:

turn our attention to making the next 500 years different from the past ones; to enter into a time of grace and healing. In order to do so, we must first involve ourselves in educating the colonizing nations, which are investing a lot, not only in silly plans but in serious efforts to further revise history, to justify the bloodshed and destruction, to deny that genocide was committed here and to revive failed politics of assimilation as to the answer of progress. These societies must come to grips with the past, acknowledge responsibility for the present and do something about the future. It does no good to gloss over the history of excesses of Western Civilization, especially when the excesses are the cause of deplorable conditions today.

Maybe in the process of facing reality, and doing something about transforming that reality — beginning by unraveling the myths — we can challenge ourselves to envision a different future. □





# Sister Activist Liberating the Church

by Sister Mary Kay Hunyady

I LOVED MY TIME IN ROME. It was a simple time, really. I didn't have to go to a paid job every day. I had been given five months there to build community with the 18 other women in my house as 10 of us prepared together to make our final profession in the Society of the Sacred Heart, my religious congregation.

The house we lived in was in the Trastevere — a nine-minute walk from the Vatican. I spent a lot of time walking the path to St. Peter's. I needed to sit in the belly of the beast to test myself. Did I really want to be connected in this formal way to one of the most sexist institutions in the world? What would be my relationship to these men? Could I bear it?

Through the many days I spent sitting in St. Peter's Square, I came to develop my understanding of my relationship to the institutional Roman Catholic Church. For me, the bonds I had and have are with the people of God, people who are a part of the prophetic church, which I will describe later. As I watched the men who bustled around that square in Vatican City, my heart filled with sorrow and with anger — akin, I suppose, to what it would be like to sit outside the Capitol in Washington, DC, for days on end.

We spent time in our group discussing our feelings about the hierarchy. I recall saying that once, while sitting in the piazza, I had a vision of the structure of the hierarchy and the men who uphold it dying. I described the structure as being in the last gasp that accompanies the end of the throes of death. When a person dies, the last gasp certainly passes more quickly than when an institutional structure dies. Through history, that death comes at what feels like a snail's pace. It probably would not come in my lifetime, even. Could I stand it?

My sisters, especially those from the Third World, raised questions for me. Didn't I realize that I could "dismiss the differences" I had with the Vatican — as most of the world's people do? Or better, couldn't I be involved in a struggle over the differences? What was my relationship to the people, *el pueblo*? Why did I have to spend so much time wondering about the Vatican? With the help of my sisters, with the insights I gained

from hanging out in angst at St. Peter's, and with a bit of theology, I was able to recognize two things. First, my life was already filled with a pile of incongruities (contradictions, in the language of the left), and I could sustain yet another—a formal link with the Vatican—because I felt that I was making a life commitment with a group of women dedicated to serving the people and committed to struggling for liberation in a world broken by sin (that is, institutionalized social injustice). Second, I did not want to surrender my experience of God and of people of faith to the Vatican. I refused to give them that power.

### GOD

Whereas the Vatican seems to believe in a God of rules, regulations, and control, I do not. On the contrary, I think that developing rules and regulations is the basic temptation of every individual who mediates her experience through the field of theology. While I studied theology for 13 years and taught it for 8 of those years, I recognize its pitfalls. It is a discipline which is removed from experience. It's a discipline that formulates reflections on people's experience of God, unlike the discipline of spirituality, whose focus is the experience itself. Spirituality is a sort of "theology in walking shoes," that is, it is the actual experience rather than the rhetoric about the experience. That's why, in talking about my spirituality, I will unavoidably become a little poetic.

There are moments in my life, and they come more frequently as I grow older, when I know that I am touching God. For example, I began doing childcare for a five year old girl about nine months ago. Once I got over my self-consciousness and clumsiness with her, I was able to feel deeply the moments when she so touches me. In those moments, I know that I am in the presence of God. Maraya's honesty and her heartwarmingness is of God. Both Hebrew and Christian scriptures talk about a little child leading you, and being with Maraya makes me realize the truth of this.

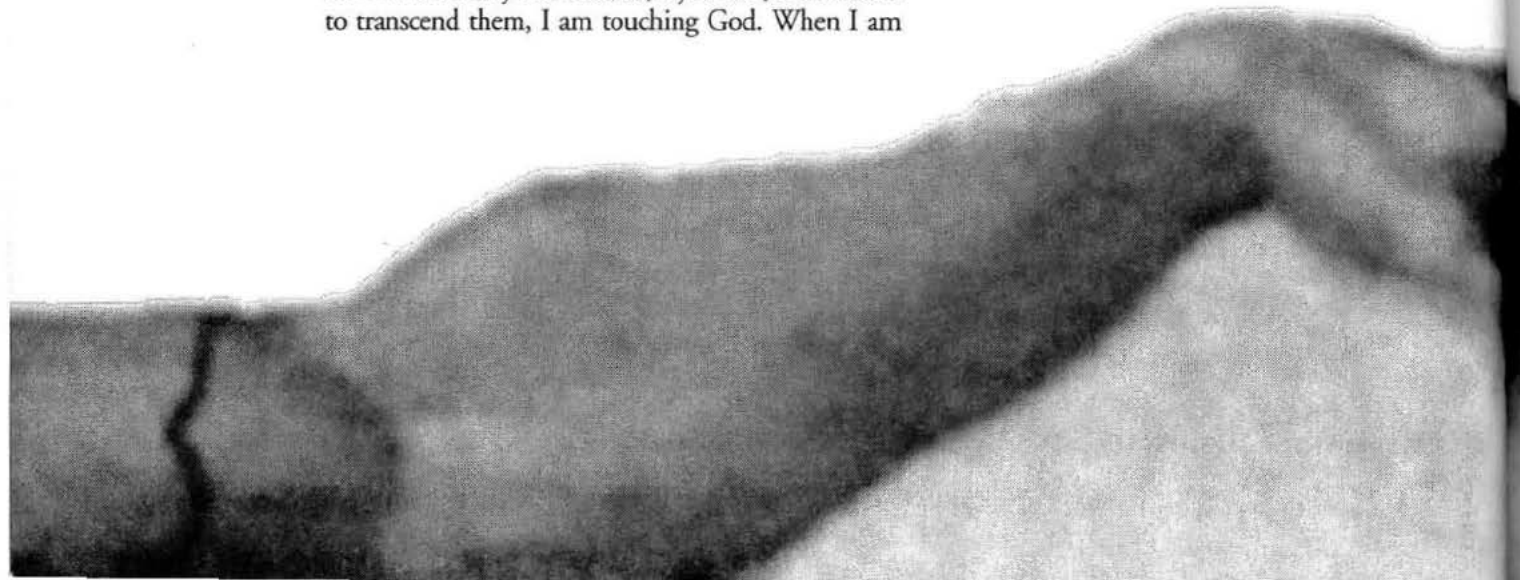
I believe God is in everyone, journeying with us—not in opposition to us—to wholeness. When I become more aware of my unfreedoms, if you will, and am able to transcend them, I am touching God. When I am

involved in a conversation with a friend and we communicate from the heart, I am touching God. When I participate in a demonstration in a focused manner, I am touching God. Being in Creation, as compared to being in opposition to it, is touching God. I do not believe that Creation is separate from God, trying to find its way back to God (which I think others in the church believe). Rather, I believe God is at the heart of Creation and in the heart of each one of us, loving us into ourselves. In psychological terms this process is called integration; in spiritual terms it is called salvation.

I think that our purpose in life is laid out in the Hebrew scriptures: "This is what God asks of you, only this, that you act justly, that you love tenderly, that you walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8). To act justly means to do justice, to struggle to create a world of "right relationship," where humans and, in fact, all of Creation, are in a relationship of equality in which no one has more authority or power than another except, of course, when that authority is freely accepted. To love tenderly is an act of justice: one can love tenderly only in a relationship that is mutual. Walking humbly with God (who is not outside of ourselves) means realizing one's place in the world in relationship to the rest of the world. Capitalist policy, which puts the rich at the center of the universe and gives them the power to do what they will to maintain their power and domination, is contrary to the Gospel of justice and peace where God stands on the side of the poor and the oppressed, and humans are called to do the same. That is "our place."

### A LITTLE BIT OF THEOLOGY

Ecclesiology is the branch of theology which examines the various forms "church" takes and explicates the function of each of the forms. In his book, *The Politics of Education*, Paulo Freire, a Brazilian who developed a radical form of education for illiterate people, names three forms of church. I will explain them briefly.





## THE TRADITIONALIST CHURCH

The traditionalist church, first of all, is still intensely colonialist. It is a missionary church, in the worst sense of the word — a necrophiliac winner of souls; hence its taste for masochistic emphasis on sin, hellfire, and eternal damnation. The mundane dichotomized from the transcendental, is the “filth” which humans have to pay for their sins. The more they suffer, the more they purify themselves, finally reaching heaven and eternal rest.<sup>1</sup>

In this model, religion truly is the opiate of the masses: the church takes the form of a womb which comforts the downtrodden (not the oppressed!) in this vale of tears called life. The relationship of this church to the world is an antagonistic one. Rather than see the structures that promote injustice as the enemy, people are taught to project onto the whole world and onto life itself their anger at their position in history. Life, then, is to be escaped from, as it is the cause of people’s misery and oppression. Instead of seeing their oppression as caused by the systems the oppressor has in place, people say to the oppressor, “You are powerful, but the world over which your power holds sway is an evil one and we reject it.”<sup>2</sup>

This form of church is surely loved by the power elite! Christian fundamentalism, which comes not only out of the Protestant evangelical traditions but also out of Roman Catholicism, in Latin America and in the US, are probably the clearest forms of the traditionalist church today. With concepts of God and human nature that terrorize people about God and about themselves, Christian fundamentalism serves to protect the status quo. It is involved in the work of oppression, not of liberation. It does its work in a masterful way, and represents everything bad about religion.

## THE MODERNIZING CHURCH

As the West moved into modernity, so too did people’s practice of church. Unlike the traditionalist church’s practice of abandoning the world, the modernizing church inserts itself in history. But like the traditionalist church, the modernizing church demands no deep changes in social relations. People who form this kind of church genuinely want to do good. They want

to change people’s circumstances. But they want this to happen without fundamentally changing the structures that oppress people.

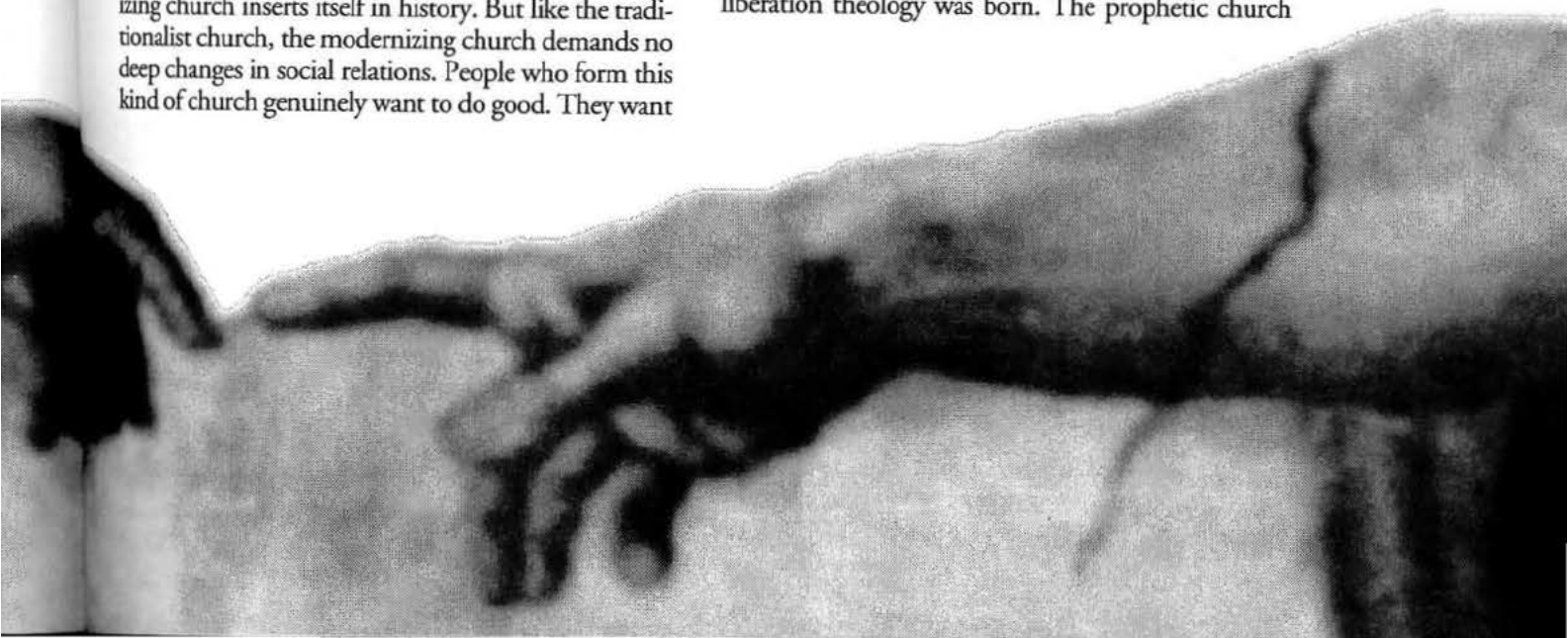
The important thing is that the reformist process — publicly called development — should not affect the basic relationship between the master society and its dependent societies. Development is acceptable, but it must not alter the state of dependence!<sup>3</sup>

Paternalism, then, is the foundation of the modernizing church. People will branch out in their ministries. More social work will be done, offering band aids to those who struggle for liberation against imperial powers. Technology will be employed to help more people; tons of computer lists will be generated, for example, showing more names of people who are being helped than ever before. All this without ever asking, “Why do people need ‘help’ in the first place?”

## THE PROPHETIC CHURCH

Oscar Romero stands as a good example of people’s ability to move from the modernizing church to a prophetic church. As a priest, Romero associated with the elite of El Salvador. He was one of *their* priests. He was concerned, of course, about poor people because God is concerned about them. But his experience was in the circle of the elite. Once Romero became bishop, however, he necessarily had to have more of a relationship with the other priests of his diocese, many of whom were working with the people of San Salvador. Some of the priests were connected with the FMLN. It was by coming to know the people introduced to him by the priests of his diocese that Romero began to move from being a liberal (modernizing church) to being a prophet, one who would ultimately be killed by the state.

The Salvadorans I know in the Bay Area often talk about Monsignor Romero. They quote Romero’s statement about choosing sides: “There can be no neutrality; either we stand for the life of the Salvadorans or we participate in their death.”<sup>4</sup> It is the prophetic church into which Romero moved — the church in which liberation theology was born. The prophetic church



and liberation theology consciously recognize that the church, whether in the Philippines, Central America, Korea, Kenya, or the US, is a political entity. The traditionalist church denies this fact on the one hand, while being intensely political on the other. The modernizing church pays lip service to this reality, while never challenging the status quo — a highly political activity, indeed!

Always in the process of becoming, the prophetic church is principally a collective reality. People in it recognize that we are a "we," not a collection of "I's." The prophetic church, and its liberation theology, use the Exodus story of the Hebrew people to name our reality. In this story, God is a liberating God, who participates with the people in their motion towards liberation. Liberation theology sees God at the heart of human liberation, not as an obstacle to it. Poor and oppressed people see God identified with themselves, not with the ruling class.

Because God wants people not to be exploited, because God loves people so deeply that God stands on their side, a whole different power arises. It's a power that impels people to look critically at their historical circumstances, and this leads people to action on behalf of change. People act as subjects of history rather than objects of it.

Liberation theology, Freire explains, "demands of its followers a knowledge of socio-political science...[And] since this science cannot be neutral, this demands an ideological choice."<sup>5</sup> Therefore, the prophetic church is involved in critical analysis of society, both past and present. This is a vital difference between the prophetic church and the modernizing and traditionalist churches. Of course, the prophetic church is not without struggle. Two forms of struggle, at least, characterize the life of prophetic church people. First, there is the struggle to stay "within" the Roman Catholic church. Surely, it's a difficult — and a necessary — task to do this. If change within the body politic of the Roman Catholic church is to continue happening, then we need people who are committed to revolutionizing the church from within it, while still maintaining their integrity. That is a constant tension in the lives of progressive church people.

Second, it's an arduous task to examine the strains of oppression that we have internalized from our Catholic upbringing. But not to do this means that our work becomes superficial and modernizing. Imagine someone who does anti-racist work, for example, without being committed to examining her or his own racism! Prophetic church people, like their secular counterparts, need to view critically those oppressive opinions that they find within themselves because they grew up in the Roman Catholic church.

Coupled with looking within themselves to weed out internalized oppressive stances, prophetic church people also have the work of activism, both in the world and in the church. Not to be an activist in the church (or

the world in general, for that matter) leads to a kind of idealism: believing that by simply changing your own ideas and attitudes you have changed the church. Prophetic church people use a variety of tactics to change the church: teaching, writing, lecturing, working in parishes, demonstrating, starting consciousness-raising groups and study groups. Ironically, it is the pro-patriarchy, fundamentalist, Roman Catholic journalist and author Donna Steichen who describes the strategy well:

In the US, prophetic church people's chief revolutionary strategy is a shrewd, relentless "long march" through church agencies concerned with liturgy, theology, spiritual direction, moral instruction, catechetics and sex education by a corps of self-identified "subversives," many of them shaped in Women Church groups [feminist groups]. Like members of liberation theology's "popular churches," they remain "outside institutional control" while maintaining "footholds" within the church and using [the church's] resources to destroy [the church], "without being stifled or controlled" themselves.<sup>6</sup>

I like Steichen's assessment, although I think it's not totally accurate. Whereas she feels that we are outside institutional control, as she calls it — most probably because none of us has been burned at the stake yet — some of us have had the institution's control directed at us in a very particular way. For example, some have been silenced by the Vatican; others have been kicked out of religious communities, by word from the Vatican. We have had right-wing fundamentalist Catholics protest talks we give and books we write. That Steichen talks about institutional control — rather than discussion or debate — highlights a theme of fundamentalist Catholics who bemoan the passing of the time of absolute and blind obedience to the Vatican and its pronouncements.

Many people in political movements in the US are members of the prophetic church. They have come out for demonstrations against US intervention in Central America, the Gulf massacre, the death penalty, and nuclear weapons. They participate in actions focused on homelessness. But some of them also participate in actions that are anti-choice. And some of them never come out for lesbian and gay rights demos. Why the discrepancy? What's the struggle here? And what role should the movement at large take in the struggle?

I actually understand the struggle within the prophetic church in the US about abortion. Simplistically, I think it represents a difference in emphasis. Church people in the movement, when they make their choice to join an anti-choice demo, focus not on women — they focus on the fetus. Considering the fetus a life, these people don't view it as inconsistent to protest the Gulf massacre on the one hand and uphold repression against women on the other — because repression of women is not the issue in their eyes. It seems to me that anti-



abortion church people in the movement haven't yet lived through, or thought through, the complexity of issues surrounding women's reproductive choice. Other prophetic church people who are pro-choice or pro-abortion have a role to play in the struggle with those who oppose abortion. Likewise, the broad progressive movement has a pivotal role to play in this struggle. I think that it is important to continue to raise the issues of women's reproductive choice with those anti-choice church people in the movement precisely because it is a movement that is struggling for justice for everyone. To recognize women's struggles, people have to hear about them again and again. Then people who are anti-choice will continually be met with the contradictions that cause them discomfort. I think, eventually, they will change. I say this with the conviction of my own experience.

As with women's liberation, so too with lesbian and gay liberation issues. The movement has the responsibility to keep raising the issues of homophobia and lesbian and gay liberation. There are a couple of short passages in the Bible which, when interpreted literally, are construed as a mandate against homosexual love. But to take a line or two from the scriptures and interpret it literally, ahistorically, and out of context is not the work of prophetic church persons; it is the work of Christian fundamentalists (christofascists, to use a term recently coined). I can give no insight into "prophetic homophobes," except a psychological one. Sexuality is a deep part of each person's being. I believe it is true that all humans are on a continuum regarding sexual preference and that most people have the capacity for both homosexual and heterosexual love. Prophetic church people's homophobia, like the homophobia of their secular progressive counterparts, probably reflects their fear of their own capacity for love of persons of the same sex. What exacerbates prophetic church people's homophobia is the Christian sexual ethics developed in the 4th century. Nevertheless, the issues of lesbian and gay liberation and homophobia, like issues around women's liberation and male supremacy, need to be raised continually. The struggle for justice for lesbians and gay men is a struggle for all of us in the movement.

### SCHISM

Some Roman Catholics believe that schism (a split in the church) is inevitable because of the widening gap between Third World churches, the church in the US, and the Vatican. If schism is to happen, one can hope that the Vatican breaks away from the church, and not the reverse.

If there were no division in the church, as certain officious declarations would have it, the leftist sectors would already have left, for they could not tolerate being



Right: Religious worker, Madre de los Pobres, San Salvador. Nuns like this one were labeled subversive because of their work for the poor.

Photo Credit: Adam Kufeld

identified with those who support exploitative social regimes. If they were to be asked why they do not leave, they would have incomparably more right to return the question: "Why do the rightists, as a church of the rich, insist on belonging to an institution that was established to be the church of the poor?"<sup>7</sup>

While it is theologically correct to say that the Christian churches are called to be churches of the poor that speak truth to power, it is not always historically accurate to say this. Once a Christian church aligns itself with the powers of the empire, i.e., once it becomes the traditionalist church, it has no business existing. It is the prophetic church that has every right and *responsibility* to exist today. And it is the prophetic church that one finds in Latin America, the Philippines, East and South Africa, and other parts of the Third World where people are struggling for justice. It is in the prophetic church that one finds progressive church people who are in political movements in the US.

### BACK TO THE VATICAN AND MY SANITY

I first saw the Vatican in 1971. In 1987, I spent those hours in front of the Vatican which I described earlier. If it is a pattern that I go to Rome every sixteen years, then perhaps I'll see the Vatican again in 2003. Maybe by then the Vatican will be a meeting ground for people of color, lesbians and gay men, and all women. Yeah, sure.

The question is: why do I choose to stay? I belong to the US province of my order. But we are in 41 other countries as well. This adds a vital dimension to my life in my order. We have a vision that transcends the boundaries of US culture. It is a vision that is shaped by all of us, each province from its own rich experience. Our internationality is one of the reasons that I was attracted to this Religious Congregation in the first place. Another principal reason that I was initially attracted to my order is this: we place a very high value on relationships with one another and with others who are "outside" the order.

What is it like to belong to an international group of very strong women committed to struggling for justice in the world? [There are days when I would simply like to say to everyone: "Get out of my face!"] But in general, I find it life-giving. Our common life means that we have committed ourselves to one another, really for our very lives. We share the money we make; no one holds goods of her own. We renounce the private holding of material goods when we make our final profession. In terms of finances, "from each according to her ability, to each according to her need" describes the way we share our money and material goods. Defining what those needs are is a struggle because we are women who have been taught by our cultures to put others' needs first and because we say we want to live a simple lifestyle, a single definition of which is not yet commonly held.

Many of us often raise this question: "Why do we stay in the church?" At this point in our lives, this is a

rhetorical question which simply represents the frustration that we feel as we struggle to change the patriarchal system of the Roman Catholic church.

In my province we have used the image of "staying at the table" a lot these last three years (the secularists might say "continuing the struggle"). For me, this means that I can count on my sisters to challenge me, to listen to my struggle, to celebrate with me the triumph of spirit I experience, and to support me. They know that they can count on me for the same. Together we are singing to one another:

By these laboring wings we have come thus far  
to this place in the wind where we see trouble and  
beauty  
and that far wandering star still calls us on.  
It's the star will rise and shine, rise and shine.  
It will rise and shine when Earth's people all are free.  
It calls to you—it calls to me: Keep your laboring wings  
till all are free.  
By these hearts of rage we have come thus far  
to this place in our love where we dare trouble and  
beauty.  
We dare trouble, we dare beauty  
and that far wandering star still calls us on.  
By this rainbow, my friends, we have come thus far  
to this place in our lives where we live trouble and  
beauty.  
We live trouble, we live beauty.  
And that far wandering star still calls us on.  
And this rainbow is you, this rainbow is me.  
Keep this rainbow, my friends, till all are free.<sup>8</sup>

*Mary Kay Hunyady, a member of the prophetic Catholic church, has been as activist for as long as she can remember. She entered her religious order in 1977.*

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# From Columbus to Rodney King The Los Angeles Rebellion and Beyond

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**T**HIS IS 1992, 500 years after the invasion of the Western Hemisphere and its inhabitants by Christopher Columbus and the pirates under his command. For New Afrikan people, what will be remembered most about this year will not be the celebrations of the "quinSINtennial," but the uprising in response to the racist verdict in the Rodney King case. There is a connection between the initial colonial conquest and violation by Columbus and the West and the rebellion of Spring 1992. The rebellion began in Los Angeles and quickly spread to Atlanta, San Francisco, Las Vegas, Toronto and other cities. Far from being a riot, it was a continuation of resistance to oppression, colonial domination, exploitation, and genocide. We will explore the Los Angeles rebellion, its nature and potential for the total liberation of people of Afrikan descent in the u.s.

## COLUMBUS, COLONIALISM, AND NEW AFRIKAN RESISTANCE

As part of the mythology used to cement the hegemony of Euro-centric thought and white settler colonial domination over Africa and the Americas, Christopher

Columbus is presented as a hero and father of "civilization." Everyone in the u.s., whatever their descent, is bombarded with this mythology. As with all other social phenomena, we are rarely allowed to view social, political, historical, or cultural reality through the Black, Native, Puerto Rican or Mexican eyes. We are never taught that Columbus enslaved indigenous people of the Caribbean. While Columbus found the indigenous Arawak and Taíno peoples were "peaceable" and stated "there is not in the world a better nation," he also ordered they be "made to work...and adopt our (European) ways."

Columbus also decreed that "(f)rom here, in the name of the Blessed Trinity, they can be sold." The Spanish commercial class which had already begun to establish a plantation system with forced African labor on the Canary Islands were receptive to these recommendations. For most of the next 400 years, this system flourished. Scholars estimate that by the time the slave trade officially ended around 1870, 10-20 million African women, men and children had been brought in chains to the Americas. Tens of millions more died in the journey into captivity.

From the moment of their capture, Africans resisted. Ten years after the invasion by Columbus the first enslaved Afrikans were brought to the Western Hemisphere in 1502. According to William Katz, author of *Black Indians*, some of the Afrikan captives escaped and aligned themselves with Indigenous peoples. Spanish colonial Governor of Hispanola, Nicolas de Ovando, wrote King Ferdinand, asking that there be moratorium on captured Afrikans being transported to the Americas, as "(T)hey fled amongst the Indians and taught

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*Notes on language:* We use the term New Afrikan to refer to people of African descent in the united states. We don't see our people as "Americans," but rather as a colonized nation. In the 60s and 70s, some Black nationalists began to spell Afrika with a "k" as a symbol of self-determination. In many indigenous African languages, the letter "c" is only used to connote the sound "ch." Finally, We capitalize "We" and use a lower case for "I" because to us, the community is more important than the individual.

**It's  
modern day  
slavery,  
y'all.  
They've  
just switched  
from whips  
to billy clubs.**

— WC and the MAAD Circle

them bad customs; and never could be captured." We will assume the "bad customs" shared by the Afrikans with the indigenous nations of Hispanola were tactics of resistance against European domination. Of course, the Spanish colonial commercial interest ignored Ovando's request due to the tremendous demand for labor and their desire for profits and wealth.

The initiation of Afrikan resistance on the territory that is known today as the United States took place in 1526. That year Spanish settlers attempted to establish a colony in eastern South Carolina. This colony, San Miguel de Gualdope, had a population of 500 Spanish men and women and 100 Afrikans.

Months after its founding in June of 1526, the Europeans became divided by a power struggle after the death of the colony's leader, Lucas Vasquez de Ayllon. The Afrikans used this opportunity to revolt and aligned themselves with Native Americans. To disrupt the stability of the slavers, the enslaved Africans set fire to everything they could. Those Europeans who survived the rebellion and the disease and starvation inflicted on the colony fled to Santo Domingo, abandoning San Miguel de Gualdope.

The resistance by Afrikans in Hispanola and San Miguel de Gualdope continued throughout the Black experience in the Western Hemisphere from the 16th century. The Maroon societies, communities of captive Africans who fled enslavement, were established in the Carolinas, Virginia, Florida, Brazil, Jamaica, Venezuela and throughout the Americas. Wherever they were, Afrikan people attempted rebellions and insurrections with the goal of the abolition of slavery and the establishment of self-determination.

The successful Haitian Revolution was a significant chapter in the historic resistance of Afrikans in the West. Black people have fought European settler colonialism and imperialism intellectually, spiritually and culturally. The rebellion of Spring 1992 comes out of that resistance.

## THE ROOTS OF REBELLION

In 1992, while Black people in the U.S.A. are no longer classified as property, We remain an oppressed, colonized nation. As stated by the Los Angeles-based rappers WC and the MAAD Circle, "It's modern day slavery, y'all. They've just switched from whips to billy clubs." Over the centuries, the legal forms of our bondage have changed, yet politically and socially our people remain fundamentally powerless. Where once our labor, whether as slaves, sharecroppers or underpaid blue-collar industrial workers, was in great demand, We now experience mass unemployment in a very capital-intensive, high-tech economy. Our communities are economically underdeveloped; We lack the financial resources and means for our people to sustain themselves and progress. The majority of our people live in virtual "ghetto reservations" devoid of resources, quality education, health care, and security. The dismal facts of this situation can't really be denied — Black men in Harlem have a lower life expectancy than people in Bangladesh.

The videotaped beating of Rodney King only reminded the world of what we've always known — police in Black communities, whether it's South Central Los Angeles, Oakland, Harlem, or Atlanta, are an occupying army. The job of the "soldier-cops" is not to stop crime, but to manage it and make sure it doesn't get "out of hand" to disrupt business in the ghetto or spread outside. Just like the overseers during slavery, the police make sure We "behave" ourselves on the new plantation — the ghetto. The police also make sure property and commercial interests, rarely owned by Blacks, are protected. Finally, just like the slave patrol, the police manage our movements and behavior when We are off the plantation, particularly in the zone of the Euro-American suburbs and commercial districts.

In the 1980s, the period of Reaganomics, Black economic life in South Central Los Angeles — and everywhere in the U.S.A. — sharply deteriorated. As the high-tech industry located its firms in sparsely populated white middle-class communities, the manufacturing industry abandoned the inner city. As a result of the relocation of jobs and the removal of Federal employment programs such as the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) and Neighborhood Youth Corps (NYC) by the Reagan Administration, Black unemployment skyrocketed. In the early 1980s South Central Los Angeles experienced a 50 percent rise in unemployment. The median income for Blacks in South Central Los Angeles is below \$6,000 a year. Without understanding the deteriorating economic situation, one will never understand the rise of crime and the crack economy in inner city neighborhoods. The lack of economic opportunity makes criminal activity one of the few viable means of survival for many people.



The Reagan-Bush Administration's "war on drugs" has primarily been a war on New Afrikan youth, a cover for "low intensity" warfare. While our young people are neither producers nor wholesalers of cocaine, the competition for markets on the retail level has created armed conflict in our communities between drug traffickers who have employed youth from rival neighborhoods as armed soldiers. Rather than create economic opportunity, the u.s. chose a military response. (Interestingly, it has declared no such war on the banks which handle drug profits.) With the "war on drugs" as the battle cry, Black communities, particularly youth, became "public enemy number one."

Under the banner of the "drug war," new forms of repression were introduced: the creation of anti-drug squads, the mobilization of police "sweeps," the increased use of helicopters, "battering-ram" tanks, high-tech police tactics, massive prison construction and new repressive legislation. These only increased the reality of living under occupation. Civil liberties were a thing of the past as young Black people were harassed or picked up for only "looking suspicious." In Los Angeles, the LAPD, under the leadership of the infamous Daryl Gates, initiated its "gang sweeps" called Operation Hammer, a campaign of terror in 1988 which resulted in the arrest of nearly 1,500 New Afrikan youth. The "anti-gang sweeps" have also been used to compile intelligence on our community. In Los Angeles, the LAPD and County Sheriff have compiled over 150,000 files on so-called gang members, primarily Black and Chicano/Mexicano youth.

### FIGHT THE POWER

Add to this incidents of white supremacist violence in Howard Beach, Bensonhurst, Forsyth County, and Virginia Beach and you have a formula for radicalization. In the late 1980s, we witnessed a resurrection of national and militant consciousness among New Afrikan youth, whose experience of the "american dream" was a farce. The reality was a genocidal ameriKKKan nightmare. Reflective of this growing militancy was the expression of ideological and cultural resistance in Hip-Hop music. Rappers with radical messages like Public Enemy, KRS-One, 2Pac, Paris (the Black Panther of Rap), X Clan, and Ice Cube became heroes in the Black community. Songs dealing with social-political messages like "Fight the Power," "Fuck the Police," "AmeriKKKa's Most Wanted," "You Must Learn," and "Trapped" became theme songs. Looking for revolutionary heroes as images and role models for their growing spirit of resistance, young New Afrikans began to identify with Malcolm X, Assata Shakur, Louis Farrakhan, and the Black Panther Party. They began to embrace the revolutionary spirit of their ancestors, the maroon and enslaved Black rebels who fought Spanish conquistadors in the early 16th century.

But despite these positive aspects, certain deficiencies limit these Afrika-centered sentiments from be-

coming a counterforce to the dominant culture and ideology. In fact they continue to reproduce some of the most oppressive characteristics of society. In fact, much of the Hip-Hop music reinforces elitism, sexism, misogyny and patriarchy.

Womanist responses from female rappers like MC Lite, Yo Yo and Queen Latifah have challenged the sexism of their male counterparts. In spite of their valiant efforts, however, the majority of their brothers have not found out how to express being "a strong Black man" without feeling they must dominate women.

Like their other young New Afrikan brother and sisters, youth involved in the Crips and Bloods in South Central LA, Watts and Compton were also becoming more politically and nationally consciousness. Many young gang members who had been incarcerated returned home with lessons learned from politically conscious prisoners. On the streets, the efforts of New Afrikan revolutionary nationalists and Muslims, who had worked for years to build unity between the warring factions of LA's Black community, were bearing fruit. Many Crips and Bloods began to wear the New Afrikan nationalist colors of the Red, Black, and Green along with their Blue or Red colors of their neighborhood. This politicization of many Crips and Bloods would in fact lead to a treaty to reunify the community of Watts weeks before the uprising. This same spirit would later spread throughout other predominately Black communities in Los Angeles, including South Central, Compton, and Inglewood.

It was this transformation of consciousness of New Afrikan youth, particularly in the gangs, which was a factor in the u.s. redeploying intelligence agents from the "Cold War" to participate in "fighting crime" in u.s. cities. Potentially revolutionary elements would be "weeded out" as part of Bush's "Weed and Seed" program for the cities, including Los Angeles, Atlanta, Chicago and Washington, DC.

The rise of youth gangs in South Central Los Angeles and Compton is, to some degree, a result of the counterinsurgency war against the Black Liberation Movement of the 1960s. Prior to the Watts uprisings of 1965, Black youth participated in gangs like Slausons, Gladiators, Businessmen and the Treetops to protect themselves and their neighborhoods. After 1965, many of them joined the Black Panther Party, US Organization, or the Malcolm X Foundation. These organizations provided revolutionary and nationalist alternatives for those who joined gangs because they could not identify with colonial or neo-colonial institutions. For New Afrikan youth, the Black Liberation Movement fulfilled the need to possess some sense of power and identity, while offering a perspective to change the system rather than co-existing with it. The BLM lost momentum in the early 1970s, due to the counterinsurgency war of the u.s. government and its own internal weaknesses. As the Black Power

Movement's presence on the streets declined, the Crips and the Bloods began to gain momentum. Rather than a dynamic insurgent movement which would direct rage against the colonizing system, the frustrations of our youth were directed against their brothers and sisters in other neighborhoods. Just like the South African government's encouragement of violence between Inkatha and ANC members in the Black townships, the state used gang violence to destabilize the Black community. Los Angeles soldier-cops often incited conflict between youth of various neighborhoods through spreading rumors. There were minimal consequences for murdering Black youth. The helplessness created by the destabilizing violence in our community was used by the state to gain popular support for the terrorist occupation of our community by the police. Our people began to see the LAPD and the County Sheriff as just another gang terrorizing the entire community — not because you wore Blue or Red, but because you were Black.

#### RODNEY KING: THE VERDICT AND THE AFTERMATH

The videotaped beating of Rodney King by officers of the LAPD confirmed the brutality New Afrikans have historically charged against racist police. We finally had graphic evidence to convict the "pigs" who had terrorized us. We had witnessed the murders of Eula Love, Oliver X Beasley, Ron Settles and hundreds of brothers and sisters with no soldier cop ever being convicted. *This time We knew We had them.* Many still had faith justice would be rendered after the trial was moved to Simi Valley.

April 29th, 1992, the verdict acquitting the racist cops was a bitter slap in the face. The racist verdict was the spark which lit the fuse. In South Central the afternoon of April 29th, the LAPD came into one neighborhood, near the famous Florence and Normandie intersection, to make an arrest. The residents of the neighborhood came out to witness the arrest. The police ordered the crowd to disperse and eventually used force to convince the residents to go inside their homes. This only infuriated the residents. Fearing retaliation, the police left, allowing the youth to take over major intersections and to begin to rebel. They couldn't take it anymore. The "explosive ingredients" of oppression were ignited, and as our youth say, "It's On!" It was time to be heard. Again, as in Soweto, the West Bank and Gaza, or Belfast, violence was the language of the oppressed.

The traditional Black leadership in Los Angeles, including Mayor Tom Bradley, called for calm. But the people had relied on them before to bring justice in the cases of Love, Beasley, Settles, not to mention 13-year old Latasha Harlins who was murdered — shot in the back, by a Korean grocer. Even though the perpetrator in the Harlins case was convicted, she received a sentence of 5 years probation and 300 hours of community service. The "responsible" Black leaders had not gotten

any results in the above case, so this time it was out of their hands. "It was on!!!"

Just like the Afrikans of San Miguel de Gualdope, the New Afrikan rebels of South Central Los Angeles set the city aflame to disrupt the stability of the oppressors. In the midst of the chaos, poor and working class New Afrikans, Latinos, and whites — those who had suffered the most from Reaganomics — took the opportunity to seize merchandise from LA stores. When the smoke cleared there were 52 deaths and more than \$800 million in damage. It was the most costly uprising in U.S. history.

While the uprising was initiated by New Afrikans, it became a rebellion of the have-nots versus the privileged and propertied. The outrage was also expressed in predominately Mexican and Latino areas. Unlike the Watts Revolt in 1965, institutions in elite white communities, like Bel Air, Beverly Hills and Century City were firebombed. Within 48 hours the Bush Administration directed the counterinsurgency campaign to suppress the revolt. Motivated by his desire to communicate that he was willing to keep "niggers in their places," Bush commissioned Joint Chief of Staff Commander Colin Powell to direct elite Army and Marine troops, National Guard, and thousands of federal soldier-cops, including the FBI, marshals, Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS), Border Patrol, and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms agents to suppress the rebellion in Los Angeles. Such a large force was not only needed to reinstate the status quo, but also to send the message that any resistance would be comprehensively put down. The INS and Border Patrol were deployed in predominately Latino areas of Los Angeles, sweeping these communities for undocumented immigrants. Over 700 undocumented people were deported as a result of those sweeps. In fact, over 52 percent of the people arrested during the uprisings were Latino.

Those arrested during the uprising experienced "assembly line justice." Los Angeles prosecutors eliminated plea-bargaining and sought the maximum possible indictments, bail and sentences for uprising-related charges. The state also used the massive amounts of intelligence gathered through its "war on drugs" and "anti-gang sweeps" to compliment video and photo evidence in order to capture participants in the revolt and to seize "liberated" merchandise. One important aspect of the counterinsurgency effort was the encouragement of snitching through offering financial rewards for information leading to "liberated" merchandise or arrest through "We Tip" hotlines. A major focus of this aspect of the campaign is to regain the thousands of weapons seized during the rebellion. By September 1992, however, only 186 of these weapons have been reclaimed.

Although the uprisings have been contained, the counterinsurgency efforts have not ceased. For weeks after the curfew was officially declared over in Los



Angeles, certain Black neighborhoods, particularly the projects, were under virtual martial law. Unity rallies between Crips and Bloods were harassed by Los Angeles soldier-cops who attempted to incite violence. Some Crips and Bloods leaders who helped initiate the reunification were arrested on trumped-up charges in order to keep them off the streets. The most publicized counterinsurgency effort was the arrest of youths from the South Central Los Angeles neighborhood where the Spring uprising was initiated. A special task force of federal and local prosecutors, backed by with FBI, LAPD, and County soldier-cops, coordinated the sensationalized arrest of four South Central youth charged with federal and state offenses, including the beating of white trucker Reginald Denny. The focus of the "legal lynching" of the LA Four+ is to criminalize the uprising and shift the focus of public attention from racism, colonial oppression and police terrorism to so-called urban crime.

### LA AND BEYOND...

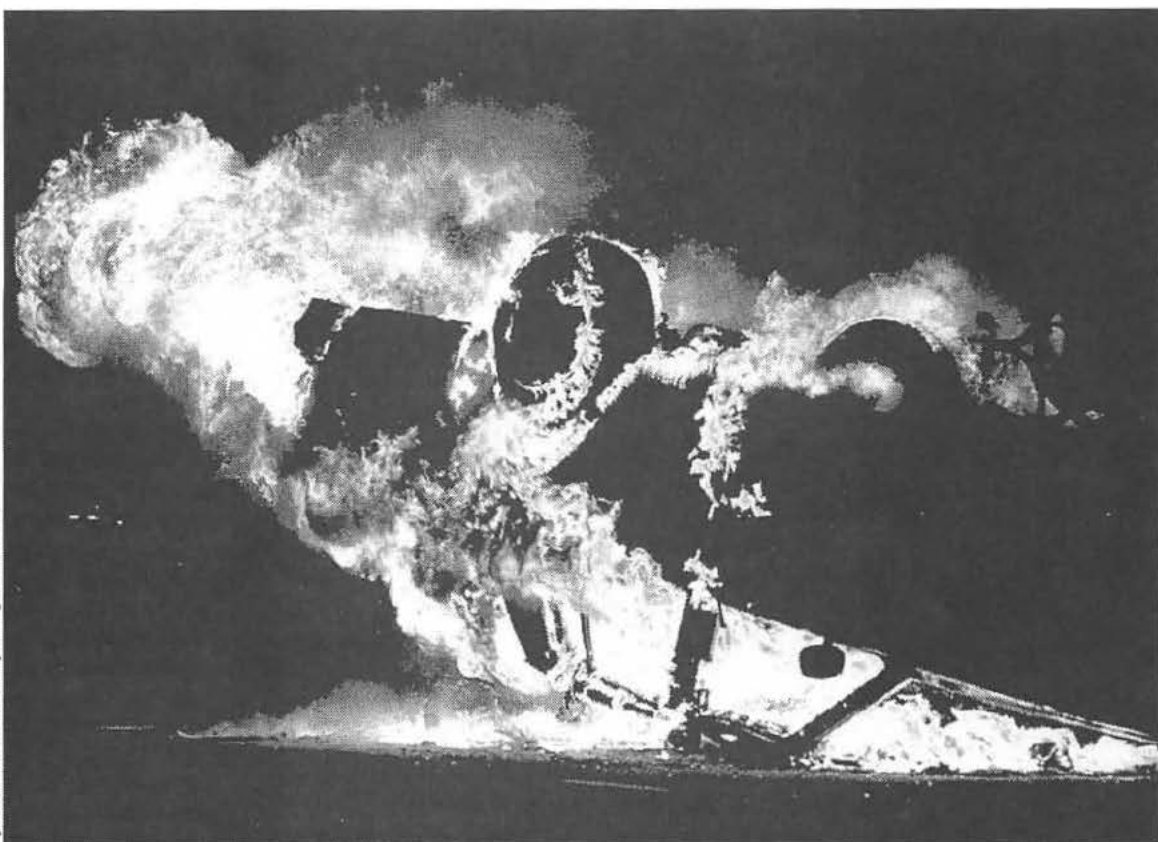
A few days after the uprising, i talked to some youth who were involved in the Atlanta events which occurred there simultaneous to the explosion in Los Angeles. "*It was the revolution*," they proudly stated. Cautiously, so as not to diminish their sense of accomplishment, but to sober them to political realities, i responded, "What We experienced was a revolt, a rebellion, an uprising. Our goal was not to seize power, only to make the statement that We weren't going to take it anymore. A revolution requires organization, sophistication, and the clear goal of seizing power from the oppressor and establishing a new order."

While New Afrikans in Los Angeles and other cities across the u.s. empire demonstrated audacity and courage in the rebellion of Spring 1992, We were unable to sustain active resistance against our oppressors. We lack the organizational and institutional strength to maintain a dynamic thrust to keep the pressure on the system and create a revolutionary situation. Without this, organized popular resistance could not be maintained to create a crisis which could change the balance of forces and advance the struggle to a new level.

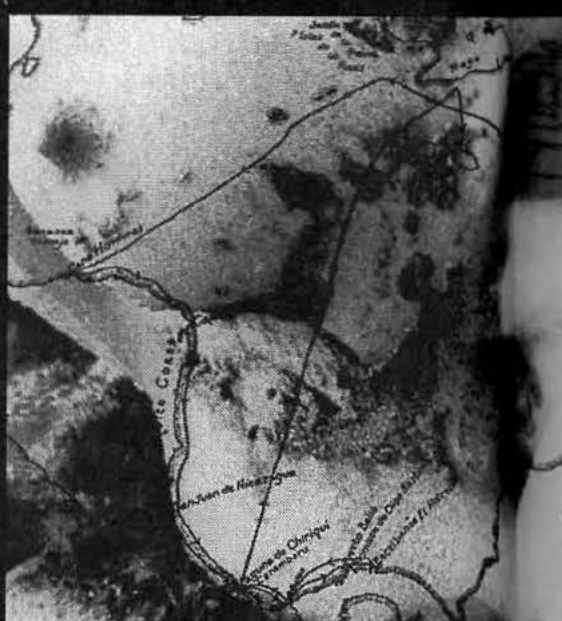
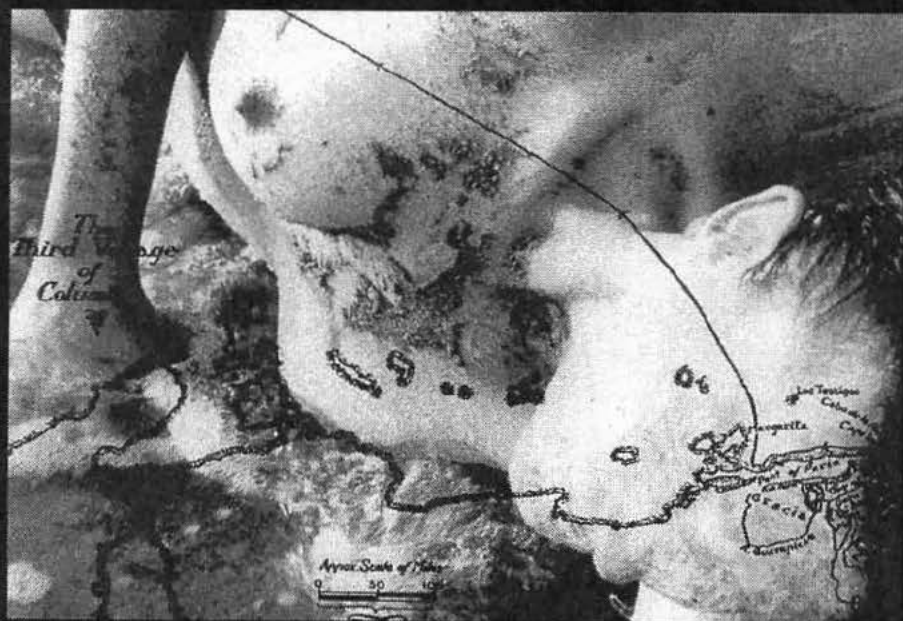
The Rodney King verdict communicated to New Afrikans that there is a need for a revolution. The tasks of New Afrikan revolutionaries is to build on the increased will of militance and combative spirit that the Los Angeles uprising represents. We must help to strengthen the militant spirit and work to sharpen our people's national identity and consciousness. We must build institutions which reinforce a vision of self-determination and challenge the values of colonial oppression and dependence. We assist our people in organizing themselves to seize power over their lives. We in the New Afrikan People's Organization (NAPO) believe that building institutions (survival programs, freedom schools, New Afrikan community centers) and organizing our people (primarily worker, community, youth, and women's organizations) are our primary tasks at this stage. Without building this foundation We will not be able to fight for power.

For 500 years our people have risen up to challenge our oppressors. Through boycotts, demonstrations, firebombs, attempted insurrections, and snipers attacks, We have fought back against our enemies. Through spirituals, poems, prayers, bluesongs, and rap music, We have maintained our fighting spirit. As long as New Afrikans are oppressed, We will see resistance and

photo credit: Ted Soqui/Impact Visuals



uprisings. We will not stop fighting. We must organize for People's War to complete the work of our ancestors nearly 500 years ago to defeat colonialism and slavery, and to win back our independence and human right to self-determination. □



"EARTHLY PARADISE IS ON THE NIPPLE OF A WOMAN'S



# Through Artists' Eyes



'S BREAST"  
-COLUMBUS

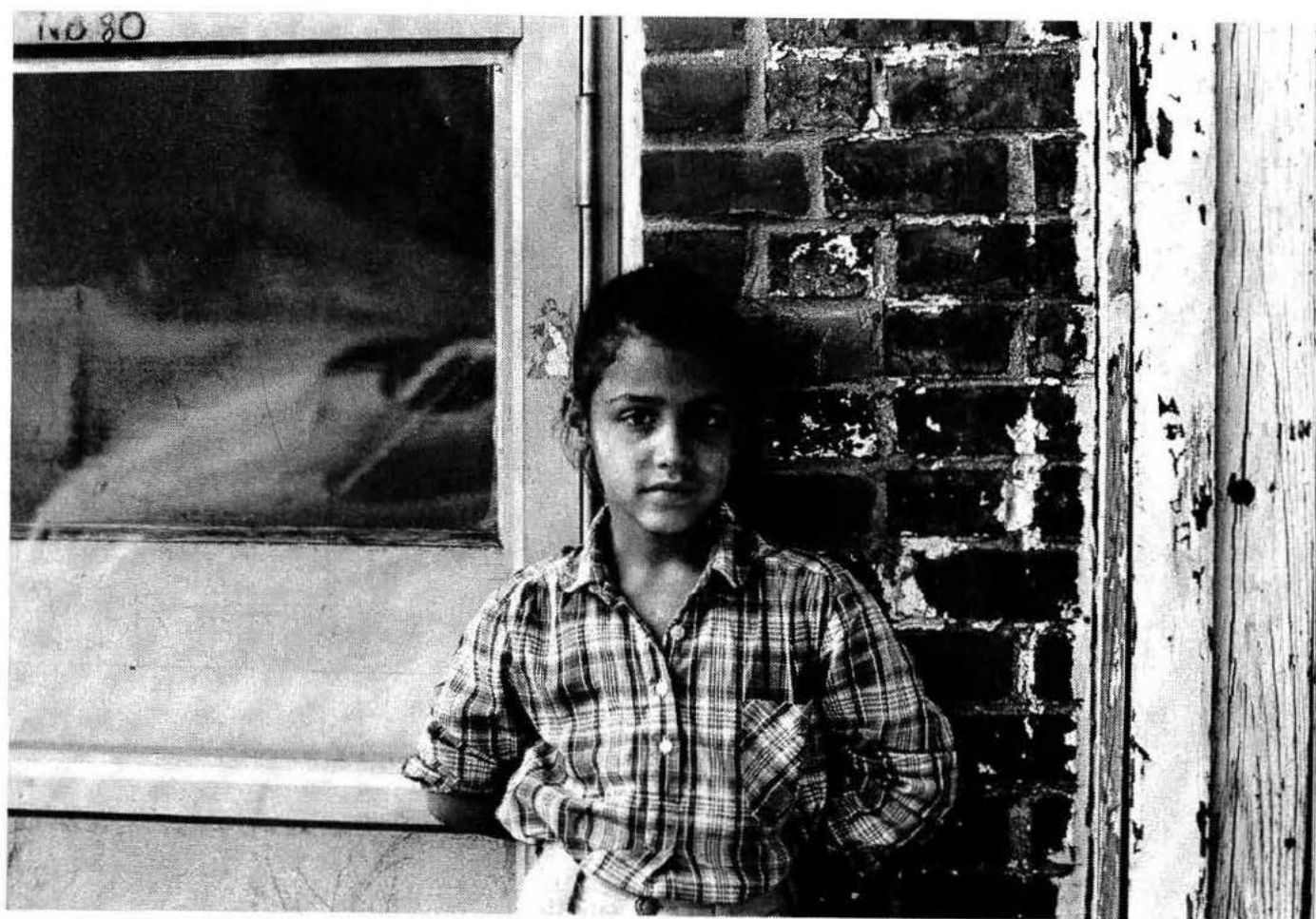
Kerr & Malley

March 13 Commemoration of Student Uprising  
Sonja deVries





Young Man by a Fence in Washington, D.C.  
Frank Espada



Paloma, Hartford, Connecticut  
Frank Espada



## I AM NORTHAMERICAN

Once I knew who I was;  
I was myself moving through the world  
like thoughts stirring within a body.  
México, you were my body then:  
your sun and moon,  
my eyes;  
your streets of earth and tile,  
my legs;  
the generosity of your people,  
my arms;  
my heart,  
your indigenous ways engraved  
in unassuming faces of clay  
and volcanic stone.

And long after I left  
to become nothing more  
than another figure  
in the profit margin  
of U.S. companies,  
I believed I still knew  
who I was,  
though all I thought I had  
I didn't have at all,  
not a home,  
not a people,  
for I am neither Mexican nor gringo,  
nor European nor indio,  
nor African nor Asian  
nor anything less  
than the sum of these parts.

I am *Northamerican*.  
Nations war and embrace each other inside me.

I am heady jazz and Afro-Cuban rhythm,  
Funkadelic and Chopin,  
Pre-Columbian and Renaissance,  
an exile, a dreamer,  
a refugee.  
I am the ingenuity that bore pyramids and temples,  
the strength that forged railroads and cities,  
the dead that served as collateral  
for cheap harvests, textiles, steel and coal.  
I am the restlessness of the barrios,  
the wisdom of those intimate with the land;  
I am stories recounted  
from fire pit to sagging porch  
on sweet, lazy summer nights;  
blood of dragon and sundancer,  
elder, warrior and starched collar,  
fisherman, healer,  
high heels and agile feet;  
spray paint, motorcycle jacket  
and soft bear breasts;  
rituals of sage and routine appointment books,  
the child renewed in the hearts of lovers.

My intellect was shaped by thoughts borne of many languages.  
My rage incited by those who would silence them.

Mine are the eyes of a hungry woman  
with no roof under which to cry;  
the hardened stare of an eight-year-old  
in a scholastic holding cell.

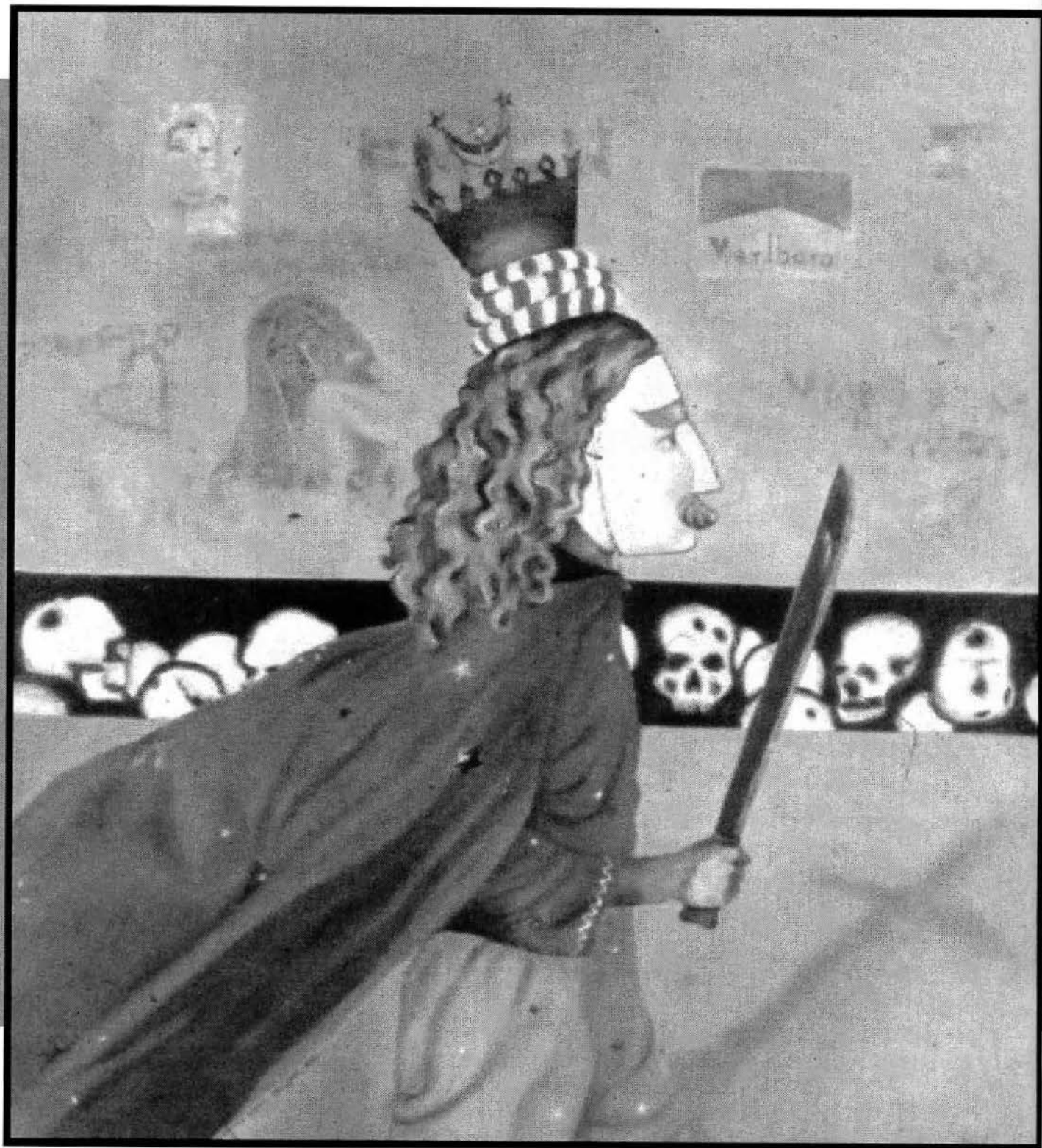
I am *Northamerican*,  
for home is wherever we've chosen  
to draw the battle line.  
And I won't stop fighting,  
not even come the day  
I can say I'm *Northamerican*  
with the pride  
of a woman  
who with her own hands  
has designed and built  
her first house,  
and know that by this triumph  
I've earned the right  
to reclaim  
as my country  
the people of the world.

### Margot Pepper

*Margot Pepper, a Mexican-born writer, is currently a journalist corresponding from Cuba.*

**Romona Roach, Shawl Dancer**  
**Leonard Peltier**





500 Años  
Carmen Elena Trigueros

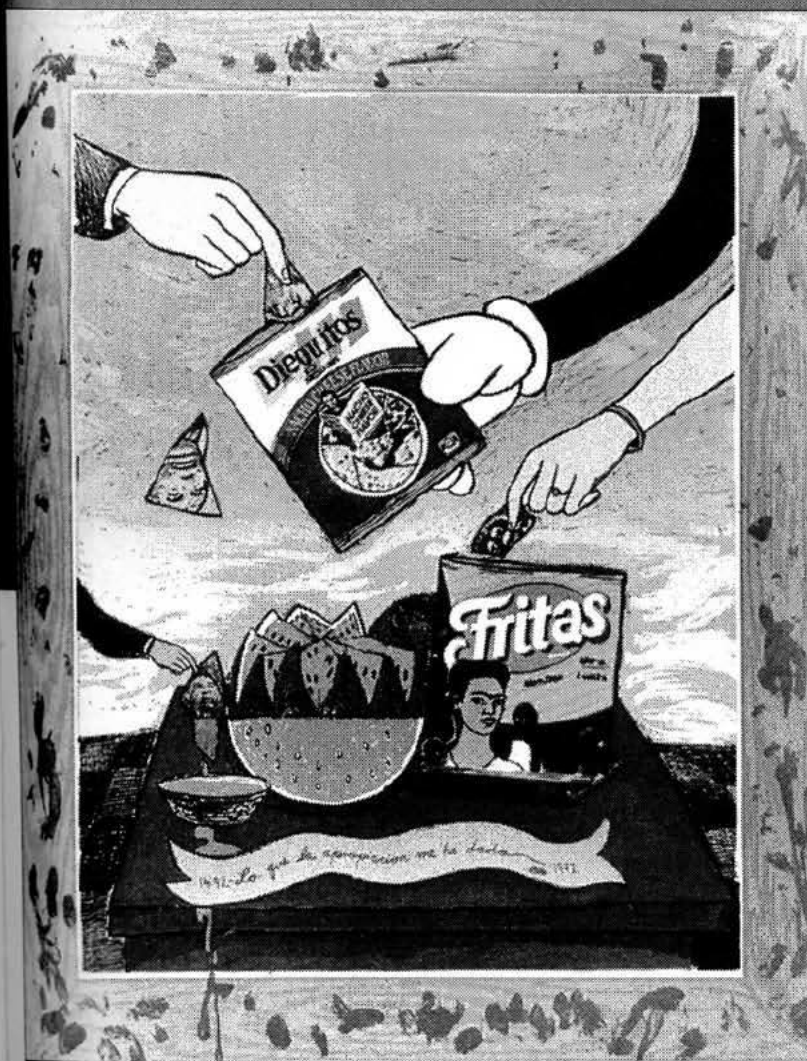




FROM THE NEW WORLD TO THE NEW WORLD ORDER

The Tradition Continues  
Doug Minkler

Cerebral Fracture  
T. Forman



What Appropriation Has Given Me  
Enrique Chagoya



# Fear of the Shivers of Freedom

by Ingrid Strobl

**T**hough we only know a bit about matriarchy and about certain matriarchal societies from historically factual materials (as opposed to retrospective daydreams), one thing is sure: namely, that patriarchy as a ruling system could only be established after a long and bloody struggle. The proof can be found in European history, in the classic legends and stone tablets depicting the Amazons, in the witch hunts, and also in the ethic of Rousseau and the Napoleonic Code. Yet even after the temporary total defeat of the female gender, over and over again groups of women rose up against what was thought of as their "natural destiny."

In the 16th and 17th centuries, for instance, numerous groups of women fought for lives which were independent of men. They survived in various ways: as craftswomen, migrant laborers, midwives, or even swindlers. These women refused to be reduced to the role of "reproducer." Rather they were noisy, insolent, and rebellious, and were actively involved in developing political sects and rebellious movements. They formed a feisty revolutionary potential, and were thus a threat to both the secular and spiritual powers. The witch hunts which accompanied the consolidation of the state were developed as an instrument to suppress these potential and sometimes acute uprisings of those rebellious wives. After the murder of what's estimated to be between 9 and 30 million women in less than two centuries, the majority of the survivors and descendants were intimidated to such an extent that they subjected themselves to what had become a common patriarchal society. Although all women were not accused, tortured, or killed, the effect was the same. In an atmosphere in which any woman is a potential witch, behavior which may help to avert the suspicion of oneself is quickly developed.



The middle class revolution of the next century liquidated what was left of female rebellion. The beheading of Marie Antoinette can be looked upon in this light. The infamous Marie was decapitated not only because she was queen but also as a symbol of the "immorality" of the old society. Long before her death, male revolutionaries had started a campaign in which the queen was portrayed as the personification of decadence: nymphomaniac, lesbian, adulteress, power crazed. Last but not least, she was accused of keeping contact with poisoners and witches. The revolutionary Olympe de Gouges suspected the deeper meaning of this campaign and had her head chopped off too. But the ordinary run of middle class women went along with this sexist garbage to the point where they wanted the queen's head even before that of the king.

Because of their ability to bear children, women were entrusted socially with the task of child rearing and reproduction as a whole. This became a burden which curtailed their social and political influence. Many theorists, including some feminists, attribute this gender role to "natural" biological differences, thus consolidating women's role through biological determinism. These theories, however, ignore the fact that, rather than being unchangeable, both reproductive and social work were formed and have evolved over time.

An example is the historical development of child-rearing. Until long into the 18th century, children were not "raised." Instead, they were fed and grew up in their mother's family or social group. Babies were put in carrying boxes so that they could be laid down somewhere during work — whether in the fields, the stable, the workroom, the forage-wagons, or on the barrow of the traveling market-woman. Unwanted babies were often killed or given to a midwife to raise until they were no longer a hindrance. So-called mother love, in the way we know it today, is a middle class invention. Reproductive work didn't always mean what it means today — that the "housewife" has to handle it all herself.

This reduction of women's role to that of child rearer did not take place for the greater number of women. Women participated in trade, in agriculture, in the factories. Women were always present — in some periods so much so that their position was challenged by their male contemporaries. Examples can be found in the struggles of craft guild women, midwives, beer-brewing women, and others. In the 19th century, the developing German workers' movement collaborated with reactionary tailors to bring the women-controlled trade of tailoring into the hands of men.

The fact is that women are required to do not only reproductive work, but productive work as well. In reality they are doubly burdened, while in society's

eyes they're not seen as doing any work at all. Patriarchal theory and social politics have systematically worked on making the woman invisible, by excluding her from daily life where it was impossible to ignore her. This invisibility was propagated for so long that she herself began to doubt her existence, began to see herself as merely an appendage to a man.

All of this is not to deny biological differences between men and women, especially in the reproduction of the human race. The man only carries the sperm, while the woman has to do all the rest: bringing together the sperm and egg, ripening the egg, the developing the fetus into a child, giving birth, and finally nursing the child.

If a society were organized around the simplest principles of fairness, it would be obvious that, after the birth of the child, it should be the father's task to take over. He should be responsible for caring for the baby, since, after all, up to that point he was rather idle in its reproduction. There is no reason at all, neither physical nor psychological, why the biological mother should be indispensable in caring for the newborn child.

The ability of women to give birth also causes other burdens and, although they exist in nature, they are conditioned by society as well. Monthly menstruation is one of these. But paramount is the fact that women, unlike other animals, are fertile all year round and can always be made pregnant. A continual state of pregnancy not only weakens the woman's body, but limits her participation in society. Women therefore experience a permanent threat: their whole way of life is limited just by the sexual act.

Women's experience has consequences not just for their social existence as a whole but for their sexuality and views of sexuality. Too often the woman become resigned to her state, at the same time as the man becomes aware of his power: his ability to make the woman pregnant and thus weaken her. Society needs to be organized differently to address this situation; women need to be given more power to complement the biological vulnerability of childbirth and reproduction.

**Sexual  
relations  
are perverted  
into a lie  
for sale,  
a luxury  
which can be  
regulated and  
controlled,  
a fantasy.**

**The  
concrete  
advantages  
of malehood  
obstruct  
men's view  
of the  
unimaginable  
advantages of  
being human.**

There have been times in European history in which women were capable of redressing this imbalance. From the beginning of history women developed methods of birth control which allowed them to regulate their fertility and uncouple their sexuality from the dictates of reproduction. In other words, sexuality could become a pleasurable experience.

By the time of the transition from matriarchal society to the patriarchy, a large part of the female population had already been deprived of these contraceptive skills and only a few specialists, the midwives, could offer them help. This explains why midwives and so-called wise women were the first to be criminalized in the witch hunts. In the end women had to be deprived of their ability to control their own fertility, so that they would be at the mercy of men.

Hereafter heterosexual women could only control their fertility by mutilating themselves: by totally giving up their sexuality, by submitting to barbarous and often murderous abortion practices, and by acquiring the ideology of female asexuality or frigidity and, even, internalizing it.

The decent middle class female was unacquainted with feelings of pleasure. Her body was an instrument for the satisfaction of men and for reproduction. The price a man had (theoretically) to pay for this satisfaction was either taking care of one legally inferior woman for life or paying by the hour for a prostitute.

Kant's rather sober statement — that marriage is a contract for the mutual use of the sexual organs — was already an anachronism at the moment of its formulation. Certainly from the time of the French revolution, when the uncontrollable fishwives of Paris became domesticated middle class women, mutuality was out of the question. Only the woman's body was used: by the man to satisfy his growing sexual needs, by the woman to obtain some "social" advantages. For

the woman, her body was no longer a source of delight, but simply an apparatus, the use of which she could sell in exchange for other goods of equal value: either a one-time sale to a single user or one that would be repeated again and again to multiple users. The necessary support, care, and cleaning of the machine was guaranteed in the first case by the one-time buyer, the husband. In the second case, the woman had to bear the costs herself, resulting in a higher sales price — and faster deterioration of the machinery. In this way, women experienced an alienation far deeper than a worker's from the products of her labor. For, while as a wage laborer, a woman sold her labor power — for example, the skills of her hands — as a woman she sold herself entirely.

The most humiliating picture of female slavery and alienation is that of the married woman who, full of loathing and antipathy, lies resigned and completely abandoned under her possessor, wanting only one thing: that he finish quickly. This radical depersonalization of a woman's sexual identity has far-reaching effects on her whole identity. And this is true for the identity of the man as well. He is confident in his wife's willingness, but her resignation bores him and drives him to search for variety among "immoral" women. They not only sell him their bodies, but for an extra fee give him the illusion that he experiences and gives delight. So, the original intent — to give and receive delight — is perverted into a lie for sale, a luxury which can be regulated and controlled, a fantasy. In reality, the man doesn't want to see the independent autonomous delight of the woman, because it threatens him. It is a sign of self-reliance, of independence. It is something to be denied women, because it attacks the power base of men.

On this basis, which is the result of a social development so deeply anchored that it has become second nature for both genders, men feel themselves strong enough and confident enough to try to appropriate women's attempts to liberate themselves. Thus, in the early revolutionary stage of the Soviet Union, initial attempts at sexual liberation promptly changed into their opposite. When women like Kollontai advocated the dismantling of marriage as a forced structure and called for free love, every man who did not directly disapprove of such demands joined their ranks. The girls of the Komsomol were now under pressure or even forced by their male colleagues to be sexually available. If they refused to be at the men's disposal, they were branded as counter-revolutionary and effectively blackmailed.

Something similar occurred during the sexual revolution of the 60s. Women who refused to sleep with everybody and join in any and all sexual games were denounced as reactionary and frigid. What happened then in limited, quasi-elite circles has



become a mass phenomenon is today's porno-drenched male society.

### THE LOVE CONNECTION

Simone de Beauvoir once laconically observed, because you cannot make women believe that their greatest happiness comes from scouring pots and doing laundry, you must make them believe that they do it out of love. With the political and social entrenchment of the middle class, which followed the overthrow of the aristocracies of Europe, marriages of convenience were replaced by marriages of "love." At least that's what marriage partners tried to make themselves believe.

The working class had the idea drummed into their heads that the petty-bourgeois family based on

the course of history, which was channeled into the strait-jacket of "love." It became one of the most effective levers of patriarchal power, next to the actual application of violence. It's the most radical, strongly anchored obstacle to her own liberation that a woman encounters: namely, that she "loves" her possessor, that she looks to her private rapist for protection from a rapist who is a stranger, that she has gained her very identity from the "acceptance" of her opponent.

The base of middle-class patriarchal power rests on a three-part constellation: (1) the dependency of the woman who lacks power or knowledge to control her own fertility, (2) the ongoing alienation of the woman from her own body as a source of pleasure, and (3) the simultaneous numbing of the female consciousness by the drug "love." Denying any of



Revolutionary Parisian market women marching to Versailles, October 1789.

love was a sign of social progress, an escape from a backstreet existence. This propaganda landed on fertile soil. In the case of men, this ideology strengthened their social status and actual power over women. It gave women the illusion that they could be liberated from the production-labor portion of their double burden. And, as de Beauvoir asserted, they found the scouring of pots out of love more acceptable than the scouring of pots out of slavery.

Beneath this constructed ideology, however, lives a real human desire for companionship, love, and sex. It was this need, taking different forms throughout

these deprives a "revolutionary" theory of its revolutionary quality.

That men remain silent about the sexual relations of power is logical. Their self-indulgent sexual behavior has become second nature in the process of establishing and expanding patriarchal power. It's a part of their identity, which is threatened in its totality when this part is abandoned. That women remain silent about this is in part connected to their identification with the aggressor and his theories. And it is also connected to the fear, by the (female) slave, of the shivers of freedom. In this way, the sexual

relation between the genders — based on violence and forming the foundation for economic and social relations, and therefore needing to be overturned in the most radical way — is disregarded, even by those who are at this moment busy fighting relations of violence and power.

### THE WOMAN-FRIENDLY SEXISTS OF THE LEFT

Just as there are smart racists, there are smart sexists. Their well-established tactic is to encourage women to believe that their ability to give birth confers special qualities: women as a gender are better human beings, more loving, more tolerant, more caring, more peaceful and considerate of life. This suggestion implies, on the one hand, that men don't have to learn these qualities, and that women, on the other hand, should keep their distance from "male" (as defined by men) qualities. Many women let themselves be drugged by this narcotic, so that they don't have to accept and change their real position as unequal, dependent, exploited and humiliated beings.

The radical left variant of this smart sexism is the romanticization of reproduction as a domain of subjectivity, a sort of enclave which so far hasn't been demolished by the order and rationalism of capitalism. This variant of "woman-friendly" sexism denies the dependency-creating, isolating, obtuse, monotonous, and neurotic character of domestic work. This kind of work consists for the most part of endlessly repeated activities, "Sisyphus" work. The cleaned plates are used, get dirty, have to be cleaned again and so on ad nauseam. The floor's cleaned, it's walked over, gets dirty again, has to be cleaned, and on and on.

The lie, or self-deception, of these left sexists is exposed by their fantasy images. They demand, at the most, a socialization of domestic work, never a take-over of these activities by the man, either privately or collectively. In his fantasies, the male revolutionary does not see himself washing the dishes, doing the laundry or cleaning toilets. If he has to do these kinds of necessary duties at all, he does them with aversion, as a duty or concession (often forced to it by female housemates). But in his revolutionary theory, although these nasty tasks are automatically left to women, the left man manages, through a kind of revolutionary magic, to transform the unpleasant character of domestic chores into a thoroughly humanizing activity.

It would be naive to believe that the regulating of human beings, something which has become second nature, could be negated by a decision, by a revolutionary deed. For an interminable time, it can only be brought up again and again as a subject for discussion through a long-lasting and tough struggle. It will bring the revolutionary woman again and again into

conflict with her comrades and with "normal" people. These societal "norms" appeal to the love of ease, because it's always less tiring to comply with them than to fight them, socially as well as personally. Society tells the revolutionary woman: "You can only make yourself heard and understood by normal people, the masses, if you start to behave normally yourself."

It's not an outside enemy against which the revolutionary must fight: the norms are hidden deep inside and are closely intertwined with the material which makes him a social human being. In order to fight against it he has to destroy part of himself. This is also the case for the revolutionary woman. She must destroy the (female) slave inside herself, just as the male revolutionary has to destroy the ruler in himself. She struggles for her victory as a human being, but he must struggle for his defeat as a man. The norm that is inside of him makes him blind to the goal that the revolutionary woman struggles to attain: the creation of the human being. The concrete advantages of his malehood obstruct his view of the unimaginable advantages of being human.

That's why the male revolutionary again and again swerves onto the terrain that he can oversee, that of pure economy. That's why he denies the political in the personal, his own involvement as a profiteer in the relations of power. That's why he falls back into petty-bourgeois idealism, into total personification, as soon as the terrain shifts to the contradiction between the sexes and his personal contribution to its abolition. As a revolutionary man, he acknowledges the societal conditions of human existence. But in the meantime, he can shirk away from history and declare, as stubbornly as a child, "But I'm not like that!" In the worst case, all men are evil, but he's the friend and helper of women.

Women who struggle against the power relations between women and men, women who have declared war upon the patriarchal norm — that tough and grim enemy of being human — women who want to radically abolish the ruling relations, their dominion in the true sense of the word — we women have no need for male comrades who look upon themselves as our friends. But we do need male comrades who are prepared to become the enemy of the man. □

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*This article is reprinted (and retranslated) from Clash #6, an anti-imperialist magazine from Europe. Ingrid Strobl is a German feminist journalist and activist. As a result of her activism against genetic engineering she was accused of being a member of the clandestine women's group Red Zora and was imprisoned for over a year. The editors of Breakthrough apologize for any errors in re-translation.*





# La Patria Es Una!

by the Movimiento de Liberación Nacional Mexicano (MLN-M)

**H**IGH IN THE ANNALS of the devastation brought by the Spanish who followed in the footsteps of Columbus is the conquest of Mexico and the fall of the Aztec empire at the hands of Hernán Cortés in 1521. In many ways, this event was as significant as the first landfall by Columbus in setting a path of colonization that continues to this day. And while the tale of conquest and betrayal is well known, history also records an ongoing resistance to the Spanish, from Montezuma and Cuauhtémoc to the full-blooded Indian who became the first President of Mexico, Benito Juárez.

Five hundred years of colonialism, five hundred years of resistance is an apt encapsulation of the history of Mexicano people. A mestizo people, descendants of the indigenous people of this continent, Mexicano people are a product of the rape of our Indio foremothers by the *conquistadores*. Colonized by Spain in the 1500s, we fought and won our independence. But in the northern territories of Mexico, this independence was short-lived. In the 1830s the expanding US empire eyed Mexico's northern territories as a ripe field for the expansion of slavery and a new phase of our colonization began.

As the US and Spain prepare for the celebrations of the 500th anniversary of Columbus's voyage, our people are still colonized, treated as "foreigners" in our own land, and divided by an imposed border from the southern half of our nation.

The Mexicano people within the present boundaries of the United States did not come here as an immigrant people. It was US citizens who "came" to Mexico prior to 1836—and ended up militarily occupying 50% of the Mexicano national territory. In 1836, Anglo settlers succeeded in separating Texas from the Mexican Republic. Then, after a US-sponsored incident along that first imposed border, the United States invaded Mexico in 1846 (what Americans call the Mexican-American War is known in Mexico as *La Invasión Norte Americana*).

This war lasted for two years, with US troops occupying Mexico City and several regional capitals. The treaty that brought about a temporary cease-fire ceded the territories of New Mexico and Alta California to the United States. In 1854, the US stole even more of Mexico through the Gadsden Purchase, which brought the Mesilla Valley of Arizona into the US and provided the US access to the Gulf of California.

The takeover of Mexican territory brought terror and repression to Mexicanos. Recent studies show that after the conquest there were more lynching and hangings of Mexicanos throughout the occupied territories than there were of Blacks throughout the plantations and farms of the slave South.

Throughout the militarily occupied territories, Mexicano people organized, resisted, and fought against the invading armies and settler-colonialist society. Among the most famous Mexicano resistance fighters were Tiburcio Vasquez and Joaquin Murieta in California and the Cortez and Espinoza brothers in Colorado. In Texas, Juan Nepomuceno Cortina carried out a 15-year guerrilla war, evading the Texas Rangers and gaining wide support in the Mexicano community.

The Mexicanos also formed clandestine armed community organizations such as the Mano Negra and Gorras Blancas to defend their farms against land-grabbing Anglo settlers.

This, of course, led to further repression against the Mexicano people in general. The 1850 Anti-Foreign Miners Law was aimed at forcing "foreigners" (namely Mexicanos and Central and South Americans) from the mining fields of California. Between half and three-quarters of all Mexicano miners were forced to abandon the mines.

In El Paso, Texas, the Salt War broke out. Mexicanos had been using a salt mine for years prior to the occupation. In 1877, Anglos took control of the mine and began charging the Mexicanos for salt. This led to

**Mexicano  
people  
have survived  
the tests  
of time  
and colonialism,  
remaining  
firmly rooted  
in the land  
of our ancestors.**

a local rebellion by the Mexicano community. Many Mexicanos were killed and lynched as a result.

The 1910 Mexican Revolution also unleashed a wave of repression in the occupied territories. Ricardo Flores Magon, his brother Enrique, and other members of the Partido Liberal Mexicano fled into the occupied territories in an attempt to continue their organizing efforts against the Porfirio Diaz dictatorship. In the southwest, they received major support from the Mexicano communities, which sent money, materiel, and men to fight the dictator. This, of course, led to repression against the Mexicano community, culminating in the jailing of Ricardo Flores Magon for seditious conspiracy. Flores Magon was killed by a Leavenworth prison guard in 1921.

In the midst of World War I, south Texas was in a virtual state of siege as armed supporters of the Plan de San Diego—a call for self-determination for Mexicanos—were violently repressed. The Plan called for the independence of the occupied territories and for the Black nation bordering the occupied territories.

#### TEXAS RANGERS

Violence in the occupied territories was the specialty of the rangers—California, New Mexico, and Arizona Rangers, and, of course, the notorious Texas Rangers. All of these ranger formations evolved from private vigilante squads to state institutions.

The Texas Rangers were born out of vigilantism that sought to tame the frontier by ridding it of Indians and Mexicanos. Their origins can be traced back to 1823, when they began as “ranging companies” to clear the way for white settler expansion. They went from killing Indians to subordinating the Mexicano population. The Rangers were employed by land barons and cattlemen’s associations, but also served as a fighting auxiliary to the regular army and state militia during the 1836 Texas revolt and the 1848 North American Invasion. Afterwards, they were organized into frontier battalions to repress the Mexican and Indian populations. In 1881, the Texas Rangers became a kind of state police, charged with suppressing crime and bringing law and order to the “lawless” counties.

“During World War I,” according to a 1977 *New York Times* article, “the Texas Rangers became little more than terrorists, a racist army supported by the state” for the purposes of intimidating Mexicanos on both sides of the border. Between 1915 and 1920, the Rangers killed thousands of Mexicanos along the border.

During the 1960s and 70s the Texas Rangers policed migratory labor, striking unions, civil rights activists, and Mexicano-Chicano community activists and organizations. In 1962 and ’63 the Texas Rangers were used to subvert the local elections of Chicanos to the city council of Crystal City, Texas. In 1976, the Texas Rangers, with encouragement from Gov. John Connolly, quashed a 13-month strike led by the Independent Worker Association.

#### LA MIGRA

The Border Patrol (BP) and the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS)—also called La Migra—are special police agencies created by the US primarily to be used against the Mexicano people. Since their formation, one of their principal objectives has been to control not just migration, but also to keep radical, revolutionary ideas from reaching the Mexicano people in the occupied territories.

The BP was created in 1924. It had been preceded, from 1919 to 1921, by the Army Air Service Armed Patrol, which was organized to protect American businesses and property in the border region against raids by General Francisco “Pancho” Villa and from Mexicano bandits. In the beginning, the mounted inspectors were a small band of men assigned to guard the militarily-imposed 2,000 mile border. The BP was viewed as an “international equivalent” of the Texas Rangers. In fact, the BP recruited heavily from the Texas Rangers.

Another job of the BP and INS is the actual and threatened deportation of Mexicanos from the occupied territories. In the post-World War I depression of 1921–22, as a precursor of what was to come, thousands of Mexicanos were arrested and deported. During the Great Depression of the 1930s, hundreds of thousands of Mexicanos were “repatriated” in “Operation Deportation.” The civil rights of the entire Mexicano people were wantonly violated as whole communities of Mexicanos were cordoned off and raided. It was a reign of terror. Any Mexicano stopped in the streets was required to prove



birth in the United States or was "voluntarily deported" back to Mexico.

In the 1950s, under "Operation Wetback," millions of Mexicanos were again deported. The reign of terror was reinstated: even Mexicanos born in the United States were not safe from the Migra dragnets; political activists were denaturalized and deported. These raids were carried out with military efficiency by Gen. Joseph M. Swing, who had participated in the 1916 punitive raid across the border against General Francisco Villa.

During "Operation Jobs" of the 1980s, also known as Operation Raids, the Migra carried out raids in churches, sports stadiums and wherever Mexicanos congregated. In recent years, the INS and BP have taken on a new more repressive role. In 1990, INS and Border Patrol agents killed four people in Tijuana, one in Mexicali and nine in San Diego, all unarmed Mexican citizens.

### FBI AND CIA OPERATIONS

In the 1950s as part of its COINTELPRO counter-intelligence operations, the FBI created the Border Coverage Program, with offices on both sides of the border. This program was authorized to use disruptive tactics against Mexicano political organizations both in the occupied territories and in the dependent capitalist state in the south. It also engaged in monitoring the Mexican elections.

The FBI has used covert operations in various efforts to disrupt, subvert or destroy Mexican organizations regardless of their political orientation. These efforts must be seen as early forms of what is now known as "low intensity" warfare. The objective has been to deprive the community of revolutionary leadership and the resistance movements of a base of support. "Counter-intelligence" activity against the Mexicano people has not been limited to the occupied territories. The largest CIA office in Latin America is in Mexico City. The FBI has even carried out disruptive activities against the social and revolutionary movements of Mexicano people south of the imposed border.

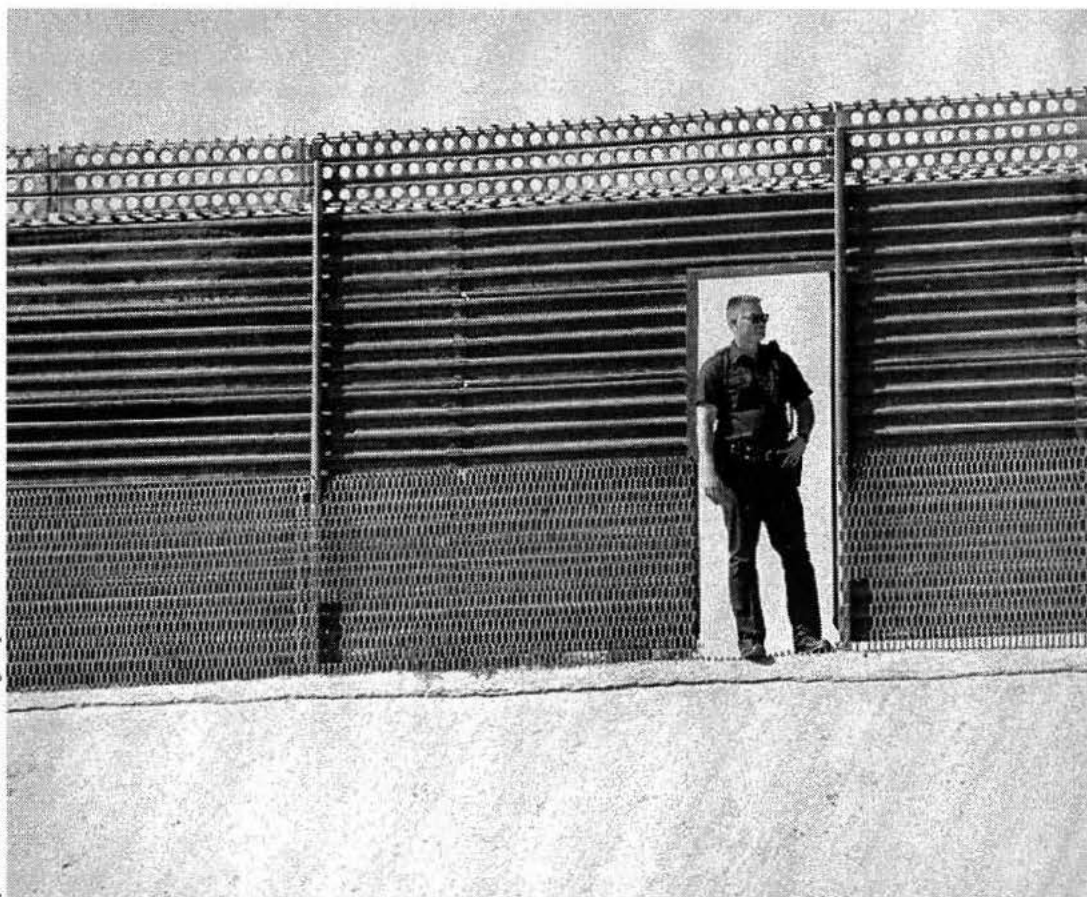
The 60s and 70s witnessed FBI, CIA — even IRS — infiltration, disruption and harassment of dozens of Mexicano student groups and organizations, including La Raza National Law Student Association, Brown Berets, United Mexican American Students, Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan, and the Mexican American Youth Organization. In 1973, the CIA created a program called

CHAOS which has recorded the activities of Chicano academicians, students, and leaders, and used dirty tricks to pit one activist group against another.

In the late 1980s, with the continued growth of the Mexicano population and its spirit of militant resistance, a new attack was launched from another angle against the Mexicano people. In a report titled "Nation within a Nation," the Committee for Internal Security pointed to the growth of a nationalist sentiment as a potential "Quebec-type" independence movement. This report specifically targeted the Movimiento de Liberacion Nacional as a dangerous, subversive organization. This report added fuel to the English Only movement, which seeks the cultural genocide of the Mexicano people in the occupied territories. This is but a continuation of the attempts to eliminate the identity — and presence — of the Mexicano people within US borders, a practice which began with the early settler-colonialists.

Mexicano people, however, have survived the tests of time and colonialism, remaining firmly rooted in the land of our ancestors. Despite the persistent, continu-

photo credit: David Maung/Impact Visuals



A US Border Patrol agent in the doorway of the new steel wall that separates Tijuana from San Diego.

ous attacks on Mexicanos for more than 140 years, the Mexicano people continue to struggle against the imposition of a colonial language, religion, and political institutions, against the attempts at physical, psychological, cultural, and linguistic genocide of the Mexicano people. □

# Back to

*Backlash* has raised discussion and debate and has provoked many different reactions. The last issue of *Breakthrough* included a review of the book. Here are two more opinions.

by Margaret Power and Melinda Power

(Please Note: although the article is a joint project, at times the pronoun *I* is used to indicate an individual experience.)

**W**e like *Backlash* and have been really excited and happy at the response it has received. However, despite the disagreements of many of our friends, the book has raised issues for us which we would like to raise as part of an ongoing discussion we feel it's important for women to be engaged in with each other. Although the book made very positive contributions, mentioned below, it also has some serious problems. First, although it claims to be a book on "American women," it really is about white middle or upper class straight women. Second, by focusing on what was being done to women — principally by men — women end up being portrayed, once again, as passive beings. We are left out of our own story. By failing to acknowledge the resistance that took place during the 80s, Faludi leaves us unprepared to understand the roots of the current upsurge in women's anger and activity.

*Backlash* contributes much to our understanding of the multi-layered attack that a diverse array of forces unleashed against women in the 1980s. We join with many other people, primarily women, who applaud Faludi's work. In *Backlash*, Faludi exposed and critiqued those men, and some women, who organized against the gains made by women in the 60s and 70s. The impact of the book has been widespread and positive. Published during the Thomas hearings, the book added to women's anger. The information in the book has spurred women to think and act. We attended a discussion of the book sponsored by a women's bookstore in Chicago. About 50 women, most of them white, attended, eager to share their reactions to the book and anxious to connect with other women to discuss what to do. Many described themselves as having been active in the 70s, quiescent in the 80s, mainly concentrating on their careers and personal lives, and eager to get reactivated in the 90s. Others were young women just getting involved. They attributed their urge to get active to the Thomas hearings, the acquittal of William Kennedy Smith and *Backlash*. *Backlash* helped these women assess their individual experiences and understand them as reflections of what occurs on a societal level to many women in the United States.

Despite the strengths of the book, and the positive impact it has had on the many women who have read it, we would like to discuss certain aspects of the book which trouble us.

Faludi claims her book describes the war against the American woman. We don't believe such a person exists. By and large Faludi ignores such essential factors as race, class and sexual preference. Failing to qualify and distinguish the American woman, Faludi invariably describes white upper and middle class women and apparently assumes that all women equally identify with them and share their reality. When Faludi discusses Hollywood movies and TV shows, she doesn't mention any Black stars or shows. As viewers, we know the level of racism that exists on TV and in the movies. This is reflected, until very recently, in the virtual absence of African-American actors or in the stereotypical portrayal of African-American





# Backlash

people. For example, while the media portray single white women as unhappy, deranged or sinful, they routinely project African-American women as prostitutes. While both portrayals are damaging, they are different and need to be recognized and analyzed as such. Equally, an analysis of how Hollywood and TV portray Latina, Asian and Native American women would have helped Faludi's discussion be more thorough and more accurate. Her failure to deal with the different realities women of distinct nationalities face in this country appears to come from a white-centered view of the world.

Further, a true picture of the war on African-American women would have discussed the economic free-fall that has devastated the Black community, as even low-wage jobs have relocated to other communities or been phased out. Faludi should have analyzed the criminalization of the Black woman in the "welfare reform" debate. As the leading part of this unequal

debate, white male legislators put themselves forward as the protectors of Black children from their mothers, even as they simultaneously make savage cutbacks in Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and refuse even pitiful increases to women with new babies. Or, she could have discussed the use of Norplant as a form of "sterilization on the installment plan," a proposal put forward by David Duke and others, and now being widely implemented through government incentives for welfare mothers who accept the device. Missing from *Backlash* was any discussion of teen pregnancy, the impact of drugs, police terror, imprisonment, unemployment and white supremacy. In such a discussion, it would have to be acknowledged that the reality for Black women and for all Third World women in this country is one that is shaped not solely by their gender, but also by their race. The "universal woman" described by Faludi does not exist; she always turns out to be white.

(continued next page)

by Edy Scripps

I came across another review of *Backlash* recently and was reminded again how important this book has been to current feminist activism. It made me want to comment on some of the criticisms that have come up about the book. I agree that *Backlash* didn't describe the resistance to attacks on women, but I don't believe that was what the book proposed to do. I don't think, however, that not focusing on women's activism and resistance implies that there hasn't been any. Rather, the book attempts to put together the pieces of a whole picture of reaction in order to explain the current situation women face. I think it is kind of a revelation for many women to find that the emperor has no clothes, that the big lie about the integration of feminist goals into the mainstream is just that — a lie.

A book like *Backlash* has a powerful impact because it explains individual women's experiences in the context of a societal assault on feminism and its gains. This is why the book has had such a big impact. Sure, it has its weaknesses — and they're not small ones. Faludi is blind to contributions lesbians and women of color have made to feminism and the different way they are oppressed and excluded. But many of the issues that Faludi describes also affect women of color and lesbians. In fact, the attack on reproductive rights, women's portrayal in the media, and job discrimination affect women of color and lesbians even more severely than "middle class straight women."

*Backlash* made connections for women the same way

the Anita Hill/Clarence Thomas hearings made connections for women. It told us to trust our instincts, that something stunk and it wasn't us! It allowed us to turn self-doubt, self-blame and denial into anger directed at a society which has tried to turn us against ourselves and each other if we dare to step outside the norm. In the 70s the women's movement had a similar effect on women's consciousness, but that movement doesn't exist now in the same way. Without a movement, women have been forced to analyze global problems individually.

That is why *Backlash* is so important — it has helped to build a collective understanding of a collective problem, even given its political weaknesses. For instance, I think this book has contributed to the development of the Women's Action Coalition (WAC), a mass feminist phenomenon that formed outside the left and the existing women's organizations, and now has chapters in New York, San Francisco, Santa Fe and who knows where else! Under the slogan, "Women are Watching," WAC does direct action and art around women's issues such as rape, abortion, and sexist advertising. WAC is just one of many organizations where hundreds, perhaps thousands, are getting organized.

Yes, it's important to read books like *Backlash* critically and to be aware of their weaknesses, but it's equally important not to miss the forest for the trees. That's the only way we can figure out the role we want to play in the building of a new feminist movement. □

The book, as the title indicates, is about the undeclared war against American women. Faludi skillfully gives us revealing portraits of the individuals who helped to develop and implement the backlash. For example, she reveals that the original script for *Fatal Attraction*, one of the more misogynist films of the 80s, originally focused on the husband's "responsibility for a stranger's suffering." Far from targeting single career women, the original script held the philandering husband accountable. Michael Eisner, the president of Paramount, believed the male character was too unsympathetic — or perhaps too realistic? He rewrote the script, hired Adrian Lyne, director of *9 1/2 Weeks*, to do the film, and the anti-woman movie became famous. In similar fashion, Faludi exposes the politicians, fashion designers, Hollywood producers, and authors (some few of whom are women) who led in the attack against women.

It is certainly essential that we understand and oppose the anti-woman machinations these powerful people developed. However, Faludi makes them the subject of her story and converts women into the objects or victims of their schemes. By focusing exclusively on just one side in the battle, Faludi leaves out the actions, thoughts and resources of women. She thus presents a misleading picture of the status and nature of the war against American women. Only on rare occasions — for example, when women refused to buy the mini-skirt fashion designers frantically pushed — do women emerge as actors, capable of deciding for ourselves how to respond.

Take, for example, her excellent unraveling of the web of lies, half-truths, subterfuges and patriarchal assumptions that, woven together, became the "scientific" finding that by age 40 an unmarried woman is more likely to be killed by a terrorist than to get married. Certainly this study received widespread coverage. But how did it affect women? Did images of lonely spinsterhood compel women to rush into marriage? If so, did these marriages last? Were women more willing to settle for less, in the hopes of getting something? How many lesbians were devastated by the news that they would never marry?

Faludi doesn't directly answer these questions. However, she states, "Under the backlash, statistics became prescriptions for expected female behavior, cultural marching orders to women describing only how they should act — and how they would be punished if they failed to heed the call." It is important to understand what society wants us to do and be. But intention does not equal success. A history of our oppression only presents one-half of the picture — a history of our resistance completes it.

When the study came out, I (Margaret) wasn't involved with anyone. I thought, "Oh, gee, maybe this means I never will be." (I was in my mid-thirties at the time.) The study both evoked and played on fears that had already existed. However, a short while later I also began to think, "Wait a minute. How would anybody

know how many American women are killed by terrorists?" (And whom did the makers of the study consider a terrorist?) Next I remembered I didn't want to get married anyway. And, of course, the study ignored the fact that if women weren't getting married, then neither were men. I include this description of my response, not knowing how typical or atypical I am, to illustrate what we believe was largely missing from Faludi's book: the sense that women were not helpless marionettes, easily manipulated by those who are out to return them to some pre-liberated past.

As proof of this, in July of this year, a study based on figures from the National Center for Health Statistics and the Census Bureau came out indicating that the "decade-long decline in American marriage rates accelerated sharply last year" (*New York Times*, 7/17/92, emphasis added). Although this decreasing rate of marriage was more pronounced among African Americans than whites, it reflects a general trend across race, class and education levels. Thus, for many reasons — the crisis in the economy, women's desire to be independent, build a career, or men's unwillingness to marry — the attempts to scare or entice women into marriage do not seem to have been successful.

A patriarchal society creates an image of the world that reflects and reinforces male power as inevitable and natural. The portrait of male power is completed by the projection of female powerlessness. To a certain degree, this picture of life in the patriarchy describes our reality. However, it also obscures and conceals ways women have resisted male domination, at times successfully. While no one could possibly describe the 80s as the decade of women's power, to characterize it solely as a time of one-sided warfare is misleading. It is important to look at ways women fought and won battles in the 80s, both to develop an accurate picture of where we currently stand, as well as to build from our strengths and victories — and, of course, to understand where we need to go from here. Since a thorough discussion of the 80s is beyond the scope of this article, and the knowledge of the writers, we would like to offer a few examples of the ways that women resisted the backlash.

Although weak and, by and large, unable to claim any victories, the movement to maintain abortion was building in the 80s. The activist component, particularly clinic defense, has helped to galvanize many women, particularly younger women, into action. In 1989, 500,000 women marched in Washington, DC to demand women's right to choice. Early in 1991, *Ms.* magazine dropped all commercial advertising, relying on the support of its readers for funding and has greatly improved its content and expanded its readership.

Women's studies courses and departments, begun in the 1970s, continued to develop in the 1980s. While often underbudgeted and under attack by threatened male professors, women's studies classes have taken

(continued on p. 47)



**T**he LA uprising has led to an increase in protests and rebellions against racism and institutional violence in US prisons — protests that were met, in turn, by a relentless persecution by the courts and prison officials. The following news items reveal that the attack on resistance movements — begun under J. Edgar Hoover's infamous COINTELPRO — is widespread, systematic, and brutal. We urge our readers to contact us to find out how you can support campaigns for freedom for political prisoners and POWs.

## Uprising at Lexington Federal Women's Prison

by Laura Whitehorn, anti-imperialist political prisoner

**F**or a few bright moments, we felt free. As we moved into Central Park, defying the daily, grinding regulations and control of prison life, we were liberated from the fear that holds prisoners in check. We had the power of justice on our side — and in our eyes as we looked at one another.

It was the first active resistance in a federal women's prison in the US in 20 years.

### HERE'S WHAT HAPPENED

On Wednesday night, August 12, there was an argument between two prisoners in the central yard area ("Central Park") at about 8:30. It was over quickly, and everyone was walking away, towards the housing units, because we have to be inside at 9:00. A lieutenant came running to see what had happened — pulling on his black leather gloves. He yelled, "Hey, you! Stop!" When no one stopped, he grabbed the first Black woman he saw, lifted her in the air, and body-slammed her to the ground. Other women yelled at him that she wasn't even involved in the argument, but he kept on attacking her — putting his knee in the back of her neck and smashing her face to the pavement. He pulled her hands behind her back, cuffed her, dragged her to her feet, and another guard took her to the lieutenant's office.

This was witnessed by about 100 women. They were all very upset by it, and they gathered to talk to the Captain. At 9:00, all but about 15 returned to their housing units, after being assured that the beaten woman would be released back into general population, and that a thorough investigation would be undertaken.

But on Thursday morning, it turned out that the woman had not been released, and that some of the women who had witnessed the incident had been put in the hole ("segregation") as well. And, despite the promise of an investigation, by 3:00 PM prisoners were told that the investigation was completed, and no further statements would be taken.

This was not the first instance of physical brutality at Lexington — nor, certainly, of racism. The male guards have been putting their hands on us more and more — both in frequent pat searches, and whenever they want us to move, or to stop, or whatever. This particular lieutenant had threatened several women with brutality. The normally high level of racism had also recently heightened, following the LA verdict and the uprisings there. Several Black women who had complained of

prejudice had been put in the hole for "inciting to riot." But this time, it all struck a nerve. On Thursday word traveled: don't go in for the 4:00 PM "standing count." Stay out in Central Park and demand that the woman be released from the hole and the lieutenant suspended.

At 3:50 PM, when the hourly "movement" began, the scene in Central Park was tense and exciting. Usually, it's rush hour — 1,900 women, in the largest women's prison in the world, rushing to the units to try to get a few things done before the 4:00 count. On this Thursday, instead, it was like gridlock: everyone moved slowly, if at all, waiting to see what would happen.

At 4:00, an announcement ordered us all to go inside for count. Many did, but 90 of us stayed out, and moved into the center of the Park. We sang Bob Marley's "Stand Up for Your Rights," and chanted "Stop Police Brutality," "We Want Justice," "Let Them Out of Seg," and "Figueroa [the lieutenant] Must Go." Ringed by guards — including a SORT [SWAT] team in full regalia — we demanded to speak to the Captain. While we demonstrated, we heard shouts of support from the windows of the housing units, and at least two calls for "all available officers" to report to different units — meaning that the women who had returned to the units for count were doing some kind of support actions, too.

We had to shout the Captain down, when he finally came to talk to us, because he was telling too many lies. Finally he said that the lieutenant would be back at work on Monday, and we all knew there was no point in any further discussion. We were hand-cuffed and escorted to seg — most of us being taken to the old High Security Unit, which has been out of use almost entirely since the BOP was forced to close it in 1988. Seven women to a cell, no blankets, no water — it was payback time.

The next day, 12 of us were taken out and chained up on a bus to Marianna, Florida (the new women's high security unit). As each of us was taken out of the prison, the whole place was locked down. But it was midday, so there were over 100 women in Central Park on their lunch breaks. As each of us was escorted through the Park, we were cheered — loudly, enthusiastically, joyfully — by everyone there.

I've since learned that while we were in transit to Marianna, a smaller group of women repeated the action in Central Park at 4:00 on Friday. There were also quite a few small fires set in various housing units during the night. And a number of women were shipped out to Pleasanton after we 12 were shipped here to Marianna.

### WHAT IT FELT LIKE

The most common thing you hear people say at Lexington is "If the men [prisoners — the place used to be co-ed] were here, the police wouldn't get away with this. Women don't stick together, so the prison can put anything they want on us."

But we proved that that's not true. The racism and brutality that go down every day just didn't go down on this day. We'd had enough, and we trusted and respected ourselves and one another enough to stand up together. The demonstration was international — inspired primarily by Jamaican, Haitian, and African-American women, it was joined by Latina women and some white women as well. It was clear, for once, that if the police could continue to attack Black women (as

they do every day — for example, at any given time the hole holds more Black women than any other nationality), then no one would be safe.

Anger is a constant reality in prison, and the entire prison system is designed to ensure that that anger is turned inwards, to destroy one's own self-respect and humanity, instead of being turned outwards towards the system and the oppressors. It took courage to resist all that, in the context of the total control, abuse and disrespect of women that constitutes women's prison. We had to trust one another that we would not be standing out there alone. As we looked around, we knew that our demonstration was a victory, no matter what punishment might follow. A small flame of power, sisterhood and dignity had been rekindled. □

## Dhoruba Bin Wahad Threatened with Reimprisonment

**A**n August 17 New York Supreme Court ruling may lead to the reimprisonment of Black activist Dhoruba Bin Wahad.

Manhattan Judge Peter J. McQuillan refused to grant summary judgment freeing Dhoruba from further prosecution in the 20-year-old case. Two and a half years after his March 1990 release from prison, Bin Wahad's case will be turned over to a new judge who may move to reimprison the Black activist. No court date has been announced. McQuillan's decision is seen as an attempt to circumvent the widespread and ever-increasing public support for Dhoruba. McQuillan ruled against the former Black Panther despite voluminous legal evidence submitted by Bin Wahad and his attorneys documenting illegal government and prosecutorial misconduct. McQuillan's ruling could ultimately limit the scope of an upcoming evidentiary hearing that was ordered in December 1991 by the Court of Appeals, New York State's highest court.

McQuillan released Bin Wahad on MARCH 22, 1990 after he had served 19 years of a 25-years-to-life sentence for attempted murder of two police officers. Bin Wahad has vociferously maintained his innocence and has provided FBI and New York City Police Department documents substantiating his claim that he was framed because of his leadership role in the Black Panther Party. Bin Wahad was a target of the US government's Counterintelligence Program (COINTELPRO), which sought to destroy radical Black political dissent in the US by murdering, framing, and incarcerating its leaders or forcing them into exile.

Although Dhoruba won his release on March 22, 1990, his conviction was reinstated December 19, 1991, when the Court of Appeals ruled that crucial evidence withheld at trial by the Manhattan DA's office was not grounds for reversal of a criminal conviction. The Court of Appeals decision broke its own longstanding precedent that withholding of evidence in and of itself was automatic grounds for a reversal. The decision was seen by many legal experts as providing an incentive for

prosecutors to illegally withhold evidence from defendants until their direct appeals are exhausted, thereby denying them the automatic right to a new trial.

Defense attorneys and supporters view McQuillan's latest action as the most recent in a series of behind-the-scenes legal maneuvers aimed at silencing the Black activist, who is an outspoken critic of police brutality and institutional racism. Despite earlier attempts by Bin Wahad's attorneys, McQuillan refused to remove himself from the case. Bin Wahad sought McQuillan's removal based on a conflict of interest stemming from allegations of misconduct by John Keenan, the prosecutor in the original case that dates back to 1971. Keenan is presently a sitting federal court judge who is a professional colleague and friend of McQuillan. Immediately following his decision in the Bin Wahad case, McQuillan announced his retirement from the bench.

A new judge in the case has yet to be publicly announced. However, it is expected that once the new judge is chosen, the Manhattan D.A.'s office will make a formal application to reimprison Dhoruba pending outcome of evidentiary hearings which would be the first public legal forum to address the role that COINTELPRO played in criminalizing political dissent and targeting Black activists.

Bin Wahad's "criminal" case has gone through legal twists and turns for over twenty years. At every juncture, he has been subjected to a type of legal roulette which has placed his life in the balance. His civil suit — against the FBI, New York Police Department, and several former FBI and NYPD employees for targeting him because of his leadership in the Black Panther Party — is one of the longest standing in the Southern District. His is a case of political intrigue that reached the highest levels of the US government and involved former FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover, former President Richard Nixon, and a sitting federal court judge.

*For more information, contact the Campaign to Free Black Political Prisoners and POWs in the US at 718-624-0800.* □



# FROM DEATH ROW

## THIS IS MUMIA ABU JAMAL

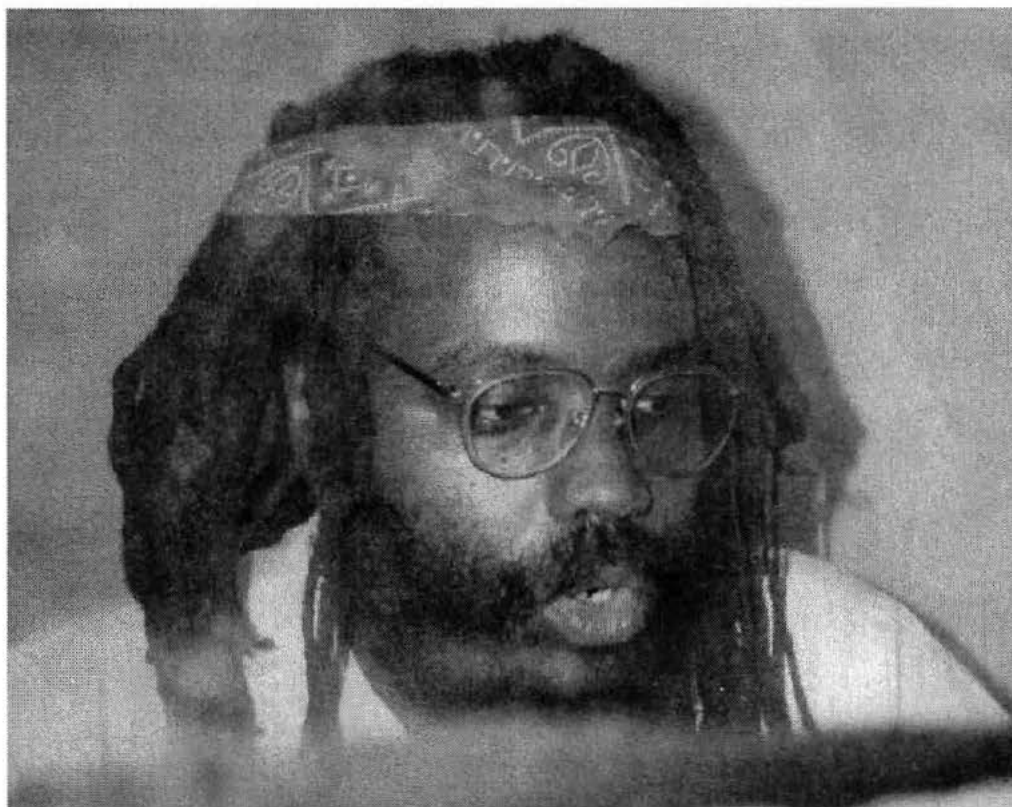


photo credit: Jennifer Beach

**M**UMIA ABU JAMAL began his career in journalism in 1968 at the age of 16 as the Minister of Information of the Philadelphia Black Panther Party. By 1981, he was President of the local Black Journalists Association, filing for National Public Radio affiliates and local FM radio. He was hailed by the *Philadelphia Inquirer* as a new breed of journalist — tough, insightful, and unrelenting in his exposes of Philadelphia's corruption.

Mumia became a supporter of the Philadelphia-based MOVE organization after the murderous siege on their Powelton Village house by more than 600 heavily armed cops in 1978. He exposed the city's criminal conduct and his journalism was instrumental in building support for imprisoned MOVE members. His support of MOVE brought down on Abu Jamal the wrath of the Philadelphia authorities.

The trial record shows that on December 9, 1981, at approximately 3:55 AM at the corner of 13th and Locust in downtown Philadelphia, a Volkswagen driven by William Cook, Mumia Abu Jamal's brother, was pulled over for a traffic violation. Jamal, who was driving a cab, intervened when he discovered his brother William being beaten by a police officer. In the struggle that

ensued, Mumia was seriously wounded by a gunshot to the chest, and Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner was shot and killed. On July 3, 1982, Mumia Abu Jamal was sentenced to death.

On September 14, 1992, Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia Abu Jamal, a new and very active grassroots Black coalition in Philadelphia, sent a delegation that included local Black politicians to meet with a representative of the Governor's office to demand Mumia's release. National mobilizations around Mumia's case are being called for early November. For more information contact the Campaign to Free Black Political Prisoners and POW's at 718-624-0800.

Mumia Abu Jamal is held in the most brutal death row in the country, Huntingdon State Prison, in south central Pennsylvania six hours from Philadelphia. It is a testimony to his will and his talent that he remains a prolific and brilliant journalist publishing articles and commentaries in newspapers around the country. *Breakthrough* is pleased to present a selection of these commentaries, beginning with Mumia's first following the denial of his appeal, "From Death Row — This is Mumia Abu Jamal." Readers can write to Mumia Abu Jamal, M-8335, Drawer R, Huntingdon, PA 16652.

## FROM DEATH ROW THIS IS MUMIA ABU JAMAL

**D**ON'T TELL ME about the "valley of the shadow of death." I live there. In south central Pennsylvania's Huntingdon County a 100-year-old prison stands, its gothic towers projecting an air of foreboding, evoking a gloomy mood of the dark ages.

I, and some 45 other men, spend about 22 hours a day in a 6 by 10 foot cell. The additional two hours may be spent outdoors, in a chainlink fenced box, rung by concertina razor wire, under the gaze of gun turrets.

Welcome to Pennsylvania's Death Row.

I'm a bit stunned. Several days ago, Pennsylvania's Supreme Court affirmed my conviction and sentence of

death, by a vote of 4 justices (3 did not participate). As a black journalist who was a Panther way back in my yon teens, I've often studied America's long history of legal lynchings of Africans. I remember a front page of the *Black Panther* newspaper, bearing the quote, "A black man has no rights that a white man is bound to respect," attributed to US Supreme Court Chief Justice Robert Taney, of the infamous *Dred Scott* case, where America's highest court held neither Africans, nor their "free" descendants, are entitled to the rights of the Constitution. Deep, huh? It's true!

Perhaps I'm naive, maybe I'm just stupid — but I really thought the law would be followed in my case, and the conviction reversed. Really.

Even in the face of the brutal Philadelphia MOVE massacre of May 13th, Ramona Africa's frame-up; Eleanor Bumpurs, Michael Stewart, Clement Lloyd, Allan Blanchard, and countless police slaughters of blacks from NY to Miami, with impunity — my faith (!) remained. Even in the face of this relentless wave of anti-black state terror, *I thought my appeals would be*

## 500 YEARS CELEBRATIONS OR DEMONSTRATIONS December 31, 1991

**A**S THE YEAR 1992 comes roaring out of time, minds turn to the upcoming marking of 500 years since the Spanish Conquest and European "discovery" of what came to be called the "New World."

Depending on one's perspective, October 1992 is either cause for celebration or condemnation in belated response to the confused arrival of Admiral Christopher Columbus, or as the Spanish prefer, Cristobal Colon.

His colossal error in navigation resulted in naming

the red-skinned inhabitants "Indians," a mistake based upon his firm reckoning that he landed in India. Initial logs of his landing spoke admirably of a warm and friendly meeting with the dark inhabitants who received the Europeans with, in Columbus's words, "great amity towards us." They were:

[a] loving people without covetousness, [who] were greatly pleased and became so entirely our friends that it was a wonder to see.

Sadly, the same could not be said for the Christians, who coveted not only the tiny islands, but the lion's share of the mainland, and after instituting slavery and causing widespread suffering and death, the land they so coveted was stolen.

There are no descendants of the "Indians," actually the Arawaks, who met Columbus. The tribe was exterminated in the space of a generation under pressure of European slavery, genocide and diseases.

Not content with stealing land from the native people, the colonists stole people from another land,

## A NATION IN CHAINS June 13, 1992

**P**RESIDENTS REAGAN AND BUSH have ensured that the federal courts will not be representative. Instead, they are a bastion of White America. They stand as a symbol of White Power." — Can you guess who said these words?

I'd wager most folks missed the identity of the speaker. Stephen Reinhardt, Justice of the 9th Circuit US Court of Appeals, made those remarks during commencement for law school graduates at Golden Gate University, San Francisco, California, Spring 1992.

Reinhardt told the throng of potential attorneys, "What the African-American community perceived from the Supreme Court's decisions was that the federal judiciary is no longer interested in protecting the rights of minorities, that federal judges are far more concerned with...protecting the interest of white males."



successful. Even with all I knew, I still harbored a belief in US law, and the realization that *my* appeal was denied was a shocker. Now, I could intellectually understand that American courts are reservoirs of racist sentiment, and have been historically hostile to black defendants, but a lifetime of propaganda about American "justice" is hard to shrug off.

I need but look across the nation, where, as of October 1986, blacks constituted some 40 percent of men on Death Row; or across Pennsylvania, where as of August 1988, 61, out of 113 men, some 50 percent, are black, to see the truth, a truth hidden under black robes, and promises of equal rights. Blacks are just over 9 percent of Pennsylvania's population; just under 11 percent of America's.

As I said, it's hard to shrug off, but maybe we can try this together. How? Try out this quote I saw in a 1982 law book, by a prominent Philadelphia lawyer named David Kairys: "Law is simply politics by other means." Such a line goes far to explain how courts really function, whether today, or 130 years ago in the *Scott* case. It

ain't about "law," it's about "politics" by "other means." Now, ain't *that* the truth?

As time passes, I intend to share with you such truths in this column. I continue to fight against this unjust sentence and conviction. Perhaps we can shrug off and shred some of the dangerous myths laid on our minds like a second skin — such as the "right" to a fair and impartial jury of our peers; the "right" to represent oneself; the "right" to a fair trial, even.

They're *not* rights — they're privileges of the powerful and rich. For the powerless and the poor, they are chimera that vanish once one reaches out to claim them as something real or substantial. Don't expect the big networks or megachains of Big Mac media to tell you, for, because of the incestuousness between the media and the government, and big business which they both serve, they can't.

I can.

Even if I must do so from the "valley of the shadow of death," I will!

From Death Row, this is Mumia Abu Jamal.

launching a Black Holocaust that sent millions of Africans into a nightmare of dehumanization, deculturation, slavery and death via the dreaded Middle Passage.

Central to this epoch of historic criminality was the use and global manifestation of racism to justify this carnage. One early British apologist for European theft of Red lands, pamphleteer Robert Gray (1609) wrote:

Although the Lord hath given the earth to children of men, the greater part of it [is] possessed and wrongfully usurped by wild beasts, and unreasonable creatures, or by brutish savages, which by reason of their Godless ignorance, and blasphemous Idolatrie, are worse than those beasts which are of most wilde and savage nature.

Today, five centuries after Columbian contact, a bare 750,000 Indians live in some 27 US states, scattered over roughly three hundred reservations, where once well over ten million Indians lived free. The vaunted "progress" boasted of hardly touched Indian communities, where alcoholism is endemic, and rates of unemployment range from 14 percent to 67 percent, with a national average unemployment rate of

over 43 percent.

It would seem that the most directly impacted and affected of peoples touched by the landing of Europeans at Hispanola in 1492 have the least reason to celebrate in the subsequent 500 years.

They, misnamed "Indians," became the "New World's" first slaves, the most deprived, the most exploited, the most neglected in an intentional pattern of conquest and mass liquidation in the face of white thirst for *lebensraum*.

Even when they renounced their traditional faith and folkways, as did the Cherokee of New Echota, Georgia, who converted to Christianity, built housing and buildings and government in the European manner, and even kept Black slaves, it did not stop them from massive land theft, a corrupt government steal of their property and the gun-point march to reservations that left thousands dead, Black and Red, on the Trail of Tears.

Many will mark 500 years with tears and bitterness.

Reinhardt pointed to the recent *McCleskey* decision, where the US Supreme Court rejected overwhelming evidence of racial disparity in death sentences, the dismissal of a civil suit filed by a Black man injured by the infamous Los Angeles police chokehold, and a host of rulings narrowing civil and voting rights laws, to support his argument.

And that ain't all.

Across the US, an astonishing number of people in the "land of the free" are caged up in pens.

In fact, the US now imprisons over a million people, with

over 4 million under "correctional control."

The number of Blacks, especially Black males, is striking. In numbers per 100,000, over 3,109 persons were locked up in the US; in South Africa, the number is 729 Black males per 100,000 population, meaning the Pretoria regime imprisons less than one-quarter of the US Black male population.

Look at it this way: The number of people

continued on next page

## A NATION IN CHAINS, cont'd

imprisoned in the US is more than the number of people who live in 13 states; the number of people in US jails and prisons would constitute the 11th largest city in the nation; and the number of all people under "correctional control" (meaning prison, jail, probation or parole) is one and a half times greater than the population of Chicago or Nicaragua.

While Judge Reinhardt speaks solely of the federal system, surely the same or worse can be said of state court systems, where politics is more overt as an influence on who goes to jail and who doesn't.

This system of encagement is accompanied by a severe and reactionary reign of constitutional and statutory repression, from America's highest court,

the Supreme Court, to the local justice of the peace.

The Fourth Amendment, said to "guarantee" freedom from search and seizures, has been scuttled by the state.

The First Amendment is an afterthought violated daily by the state, where dissidents are imprisoned for refusing to renounce their faith (as in MOVE) and Indian sacred lands are violated for the All-American god of business.

As evidenced by the recent instances of martial law in San Francisco and Los Angeles, not to mention the mass deportation of Spanish-speaking Americans back to Mexico, without notice or hearing, the Constitution is possessed of all the power and relevance of toilet paper.

This is America 1992 — the largest, Blackest prison population on earth; a judiciary of white, male, biased millionaires; a land smoldering in racial, class, sexual, ecological conflict; a nation in chains.

## THE LOST GENERATION?

June 1, 1992

A RECENT PUBLISHED REPORT has lamented the fact that Afro-American youth are remarkably resistant and virtually unresponsive to traditional, big-name public relations and big-time sports figures when they utilize the major media to attempt to communicate with younger Blacks.

The study found deep and profound alienation amongst youth, and a fundamental streak of fatalism about the promise of tomorrow — a sense that "tomorrow may not come, so let's live today" permeates youth consciousness.

The youth, while they view large blocks of TV, perceive it from the position of outsiders, knowing that the dramas, comedies and news programs are not designed for their consumption.

Only the urbo-tech musical form known as Rap touches them, for it is born of urban youth consciousness, and speaks to them, in their idiom, about lives lived on the marginalia.

It is this profound disassociation that forced members of the nouveau middle-class Blacks to lament the youth as "the lost generation."

But are they really "lost," and, if so, to whom?

The Martiniquan Black Revolutionary, Frantz Fanon, once opined that every generation must find its destiny, fulfill it, or betray it.

In my father's generation, southern-born of the late 1890s, their destiny was to move their families north, to

lands with a promise of a better life away from the hateful homelands in Dixie.

The dreams of that generation, sparked by visions of new homes, better education, new cars and prosperity were, in relative terms, realized by some, but north-bound Africans were never able to outrun the stigma of racism.

By the time the 50s and 60s generations came of age, during the Nixon-Reagan-Bush eras, race once again defined the limits of Black aspirations, and with the shifting of manufacturing jobs back down South and abroad, so went dreams of relative prosperity. The children of this generation, born into sobering poverty amidst shimmering opulence, their minds weaned on Falcon Crestian TV excess while locked in want, watching while sinister politicians spit on their very existence, these youth are the Hip-Hop/Rap Generation.

Locked out of the legal means of material survival, looked down upon by predatory politicians and police, left with the least relevant educational opportunities, talked at with contempt and not talked to with love, is there any question why such youth are alienated?

Why the surprise?

They look at the lives they live and don't see "civil rights progress," but a drumbeat of civil repression by a state at war with their dreams. Why the surprise?

They are the children of the LA Rebellion, the children of the MOVE bombing, the children of the Black Panthers, and the grandchildren of Malcolm; far from "lost" they are probably the most aware generation since Nat Turner's; they are not so much "lost," as they are "misaid," discarded by this increasingly racist system that undermines their inherent worth.

They are *all* potential revolutionaries, with the historic power to transform our dull realities.

If they are "lost" — then, *find* them. □



## BACKLASH from p. 40

hold and have helped thousands of young women, and some men, to develop a knowledge of feminist theory and methods. In fact, many of the young women currently active today participated in women's studies courses. Although male professors and a patriarchal academic tradition dominate the university, increasing numbers of feminist social scientists are challenging the definitions, approaches, subjects, sources, results, underlying assumptions and theories that form(ed) the bedrock upon which their misogynist world was built.

In my (Melinda's) job as a lawyer, it's too simplistic to say I just experienced a backlash. On the one hand, I constantly fight with male attorneys who try to intimidate me and make me doubt myself. For instance, they often ask me, "Are you really an attorney?" On the other hand, I see more women attorneys and more women judges whose impact is felt in the courts.

A recent Illinois law has made orders of protection easier for women to obtain. New legal procedures make it easier for women with custody of their children to get child support. I mainly represent poor Latina women who want divorces. I see the increased strength and confidence that getting a divorce gives these women. Never has a woman come back and said she regretted getting a divorce. They only regret that they waited so long.

These examples are not meant to refute the reality of a backlash, nor to suggest that the 80s was a decade of intense feminist struggle. Yet, we see in them signs of an ongoing struggle that Faludi appears to overlook. While some women rejected feminist demands, others continued to struggle for, and in some cases get, desired changes in their lives. Many men were reluctant or hostile to the idea that they should stop being men and start being human beings. In other words, most men remained as sexist as they had always been. This situation produced a certain amount of tension. While much of the tension remained submerged in the 80s, it has begun to erupt in the 90s.

In the last year, women have struggled on many different levels to make our voices heard, our demands listened to, and our needs respected. To view the last year, or even the last decade, merely as a series of successfully manipulated defeats presents a false view of what women are doing. True, Thomas was confirmed. But by whom? Seven white, rich and powerful men decided Thomas was their man. He is. But many, many more women in this country rejected him and confirmed Anita Hill's experiences and testimony. Her words correlated to our lives. We knew she was telling the truth, despite what the polls said about both women and men equally supporting Thomas. To deny Anita Hill's testimony would have meant to deny our own reality. Our reality will not be constructed by those men in Congress, nor by media reports of what we think. Women have a different consciousness than do men,

based on our divergent experiences.

Sexual harassment, which we all know has existed since day one in the military, is now being openly discussed. Women in the military have stepped forward to denounce the abuse they have been subjected to during the Persian Gulf War, at the Tailhook Convention and on a daily basis. Their reports, at last being heard, have shaken up the Navy and forced the Secretary of the Navy, H. Lawrence Garrett III, to resign. His resignation, along with the ongoing hearings on sexual harassment, are a result of women's increasing anger and willingness to confront such treatment.

Membership in NOW has skyrocketed, with an unprecedented number of new members joining every month. And two new feminist women's organizations, Women's Action Coalition and Third Wave, are receiving national media attention as they travel around the country to set up chapters.

We know that 1992 is not the year of women and won't be as long as patriarchal power exists. Nevertheless, we do see signs of increased confrontation and political motion against male power. Where we differ, perhaps, with Faludi and others is in the relationship between the 1980s and the upsurge in women's political activity of the last year. The events of the last year have helped galvanize women into action and to focus our anger. But this anger did not develop overnight. It's difficult to gauge the response of women when much of what we think and feel is not recorded, publicized, legitimized or even acknowledged. A demonstration of 700,000 women demanding choice is tangible and visible. But what about the beliefs and actions of those women the day before and the day after the demonstration?

When feminist historians first began to do research on women's history, male historians scorned their efforts. "Impossible," they declared, "no sources exist to do research!" Yet, these women historians persisted and in the process not only uncovered an inexhaustible amount of material, but redefined history, sources and subjects for research.

The 1980s is no distant past. Yet, in many ways some of the same problems still persist. As the article on post-modernism in the last issue of *Breakthrough* pointed out, contemporary society controls and manipulates images to define our views of ourselves and reality. We don't own the media or the corporations. We don't run the government. We have very little say in how the image of women is packaged or presented. Yet, beyond — or in addition to — this projection of our reality, there is a reality or many realities that are seldom portrayed or examined.

Susan Faludi has made an important contribution in *Backlash*, but the mirror she holds up is cracked. Her exclusive focus on the war against women, which ignores the battles waged by women, ends up presenting a distorted picture of the reality we face. Perhaps the fires of the 60s and 70s were not extinguished in the 80s. Instead they smoldered, waiting to burst into flame again. □

# 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 Oxford  
Box 1000  
Oxford WI 53952-1000

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**

Norman Ramirez Talavera #03171-069  
FCI Danbury  
Pembroke Station  
Danbury CT 06811

Luis Colón Osorio #03172-069  
FCI Otisville  
PO Box 1000  
Unit 5  
Otisville NY 10963

Antonio Camacho #03587-069  
FCI McKean, Unit 2  
PO Box 8000  
Bradford PA 16701

Juan Segarra-Palmer #15357-077  
FCI Marianna  
100 FCI Road  
Marianna FL 32446

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

Hilton Diamante Fernández  
FCI Englewood  
Littleton CO 80123

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

Orlando González-Claudio  
#03173-069  
FCI Sheridan  
Sheridan OR 97378

## **New Afrikan/Black Prisoners of War and Political Prisoners**

Herman Ferguson #89-A-4621  
Attn: Joan Gibbs  
666 Broadway  
New York NY 10012

Herman Bell #79-C-262  
PO Box 338  
Napanoch NY 12458-0338

Abdul Haqq #89-T-1710  
s/n Craig Randall  
Greenhaven State Prison  
Drawer B  
Stormville NY 12582

Teddy (Jah) Heath #75-A-0139  
Mohaman Koti #80-A-808  
Jalil A. Muntaqin #77-A-4283  
s/n Anthony Bottom  
Shawangunk Corr Facility  
PO Box 700  
Wallkill NY 12589

Abdul Majid #83-A-483  
s/n Anthony LaBorde  
Sullivan Corr Facility  
Box A-G  
Fallsburg NY 12733

Maliki Shakur Latine #81-A-4469  
PO Box B  
Dannemora NY 12929

Albert Nuh Washington #77-A-1528  
PO Box 2001  
Dannemora NY 12929-2001

Bashir Hameed #82-A-6313  
s/n James York  
135 State Street  
Auburn NY 13024

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

Robert Taylor #10376-054  
Attica Corr Facility  
PO Box 149  
Attica NY 14011

Thomas Warner #M3049  
Drawer R  
Huntingdon PA 16652

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

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

Richard Mafundi Lake #79972-X  
100 Warrior Lane 4-93B  
Bessemer AL 35023

Sekou Kambui #113058  
s/n William Turk  
PO Box 56 7E-2-18  
Elmore AL 36025-0056

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

Ahmad Abdur Rahman #130539  
141 First St.  
Coldwater MI 49036

Richard Thompson-El #155229  
Box 10  
Stillwater MN 55082

Sekou Odinga #05228-054  
Kojo Boman Sababu #39384-066  
s/n Grailing Brown  
USP Marion  
PO Box 1000  
Marion IL 62959

Sundiata Acoli #39794-066  
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  
84156 — Ash 4  
Angola LA 70712

Rickie Green #84244  
DCCC  
Box 220  
Hominy 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

Mutulu Shakur #83205-012  
Lompoc Fedl Penitentiary  
3901 Klein Blvd  
Lompoc CA 93436

geronimo ji-Jaga (pratt) #B40319  
PO Box 1902B 1C-211U  
Tehachapi CA 93581

Ruchell Cinque Magee #A92051  
Pelican Bay CF  
PO Box 7500 SHU 4C-105  
Crescent City CA 95531

Hugo Pinell #A88401  
Pelican Bay CF  
PO Box 7500 SHU C8-101  
Crescent City CA 95531

Mark Cook #20025-148  
FCI Sheridan  
Sheridan OR 97378

## **MOVE Prisoners**

Charles Sims Africa #AM-4975  
PO Box 99901  
Pittsburgh PA 15033

Michael Davis Africa #AM-4973  
Mumia Abu Jamal #AM-8335  
Drawer R  
Huntingdon PA 16652

William Phillips Africa #AM-4984  
RFD 3  
Bellefonte PA 16823

Edward Goodman Africa #AM-4974  
PO Box 200  
Camp Hill PA 17001-0200



Ramona Johnson Africa #006564  
PO Box 180  
Muncy PA 17756

Debbi Sims Africa #006307  
Consusuela Dotson Africa #006434  
Janine Phillips Africa #006309  
Merle Austin Africa #006306  
Janet Holloway Africa #006308  
Sue Leon Africa #006325  
PO Box 180  
Muncy PA 17756

Delbert Orr Africa #AM-4985  
Carlos Perez Africa #AM-7400  
Drawer K  
Dallas PA 18612

### *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  
Odom Correctional Center  
Rt 1 Box 35  
Jackson NC 27845

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

Standing Deer #83947  
s/n Robert Hugh Wilson  
DCCC  
Box 220  
Hominy OK 74502

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

### *Mexican Political Prisoners*

Alberto Aranda #300823  
Ellis 1 Unit  
Huntsville TX 77343

Luis Rodriguez #C 33000  
Pelican Bay CF  
PO Box 7500 C-12-202  
Crescent City CA 95532-7500

### *Cuban Political Prisoners*

Ana Lucia Gelabert #384484  
Rt 2, Box 800  
Gatesville TX 76528

### *Irish Political Prisoners*

Gerard Hoy #17480-038  
Richard Johnson #17422-038  
PO Box 900  
Raybrook NY 12977-0300

Martin P Quigley #41064-U3A  
PO Box 8000  
Bradford PA 16701

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

Kevin McKinley #27801  
FCI Jesup  
Jesup GA 31545

Seamus Moley  
MCC Miami  
15801 SW 137th Ave  
Miami FL 33177

Joseph McColgan #27803-004  
FCI Talladega Unit G  
565 E Renfro Road  
Talladega AL 35160

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

Noel O Murchu  
FCI Oakdale  
Oakdale LA 71463

Ciaran O'Reilly #103810-052  
Reeves County Law Center  
PO Box 1560  
Pecos TX 79772

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

### *Japanese Political Prisoners*

Yu 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

Roy Bourgeois #01579-017  
PMB 1000  
Tallahassee FL 32301

Silvia Baraldini #05125-054  
Marilyn Buck #00482-285  
Susan Rosenberg #03684-016  
Laura Whitehorn #22432-037  
FCI Marianna  
PMB 7006  
Shawnee Unit  
Marianna FL 32447

Carol Manning #10375-016  
FCI Lexington  
3301 Leestown Road  
Lexington KY 40511

Bill Dunne #10916-086  
PO Box 33  
Terre Haute IN 47808

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

Timothy Blunk #09429-050  
Raymond Levasseur #10376-016  
Thomas Manning #10373-016  
USP Marion  
PO Box 1000  
Marion IL 62959

Larry Giddings #10917-086  
Jaan Laaman #10372-016  
USP Leavenworth  
PO Box 1000  
Leavenworth KS 66048

Richard Williams #10377-106  
3901 Klein Blvd  
Lompoc CA 93436

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

Ed Mead #251397  
PO Box 777  
Monroe WA 98272

Paul Wright #930783  
Box 500 HC63  
Clallam Bay WA 98320

### *Ploughshares/Disarmament Prisoners*

Randy Kehler  
c/o Traprock Peace Ctr.  
Keets Road  
Deerfield MA 01342

William Frankel-Streit #03809-052  
PO Box 1000  
Unit 5  
Orisville NY 10963

Moana Cole #91-891  
Blair County Prison  
419 Marker Sq Alley  
Hollidaysburg PA 16648

Margaret Millrett #32118-008  
FPC  
37900 North 4th Ave  
Dept 1785  
Phoenix AZ 85027-7006

Mark Davis #23106-008  
FPC  
MB064  
Box 1000  
Boron, CA 93516

Elizabeth Walters, IHM  
Helen LaValley  
Arete Community Corr Ctr  
709 LaPeer  
Saginaw, MI 48607

Fr. Peter Dougherty  
Bay County Jail  
501 3rd St  
Bay City, MI 48708

Peter Lumsdaine  
Keith Kjoller  
c/o Tubman/O'Conner Brigade  
Box 11645  
Berkeley, CA 94701

### *Convicted Military Resisters*

Jody Anderson #243-43-8434  
Robert Beard #568-31-3629  
Kenneth Boyd #384-76-9267  
Paul Cook #500-64-1670  
Clarence Davis #382-95-4163  
Tahan K "TK" Jones #564-43-9553  
Kendall Langley #437-49-1308  
Glen Mulholland #147-54-5186  
Marine Corps Brig  
Bldg 1041  
Camp LeJeune NC 28542

Faith Grasso  
William Walker  
Confinement Facility  
MP Co Bldg 1490  
Ft Sill OK 73503-5020

*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, please contact us at Breakthrough, PO Box 14422, San Francisco, CA 94114.*

who decides **Alabama** a chill wind blows **Alaska**  
who decides **Arizona** a chill wind blows **Arkan-**  
**sas** who decides **California** a chill wind blows  
**Colorado** who decides **Connecticut** a chill wind  
blows **Delaware** who decides **District of Colum-**  
**bia** a chill wind blows **Florida** who decides  
**Georgia** a chill wind blows **Hawaii** who decides  
**Idaho** a chill wind blows **Illinois** who decides  
**Indiana** a chill wind blows **Iowa** who decides  
**Kansas** a chill wind blows **Kentucky** who de-  
cides **Louisiana** a chill wind blows **Maine** who  
decides **Maryland** a chill wind blows **Massachu-**  
**setts** who decides **Michigan** a chill wind blows  
**Minnesota** who decides **Mississippi** a chill wind  
blows **Missouri** who decides **Montana** a chill  
wind blows **Nebraska** who decides **Nevada** a  
chill wind blows **New Hampshire** who decides  
**New Jersey** a chill wind blows **New Mexico** who  
decides **New York** a chill wind blows **North**  
**Carolina** who decides **North Dakota** a chill wind  
blows **Ohio** who decides **Oklahoma** a chill wind  
blows **Oregon** who decides **Pennsylvania** a chill  
wind blows **Rhode Island** who decides **South**  
**Carolina** a chill wind blows **South Dakota** who  
decides **Tennessee** a chill wind blows **Texas**  
who decides **Utah** a chill wind blows **Vermont**  
who decides **Virginia** a chill wind blows **Wash-**  
**ington** who decides **West Virginia** a chill wind  
blows **Wisconsin** who decides **Wyoming**

Kerr & Malley

# WHO DECIDES