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# the ACTivist

**In this issue:** the world after the war — analysis by NOAM CHOMSKY and a member of Kuwait's democratic opposition

**AND INSIDE**  
 Special Women's supplement  
**GOODBYE TO ALL THAT AGAIN**

Newspaper of the ACT for Disarmament Coalition • Volume 7, Issue 4 • April 1991 • Pay what you can

## After the Gulf war, war as usual

BY MARY BUNCH  
 THE ACTIVIST

American and coalition warplanes which used Canadian Forces Base Goose Bay for refuelling during the Gulf war did so without the permission of the rightful owners of the land, Innu leaders have charged.

"This will be largely an aerial conflict, fought by air forces that have been well trained to enter 'enemy' airspace, strike, and return unharmed," Peter Penashue, the new president of the Innu Nation, wrote in an open letter to Prime Minister Brian Mulroney. "This is precisely the type of training that several nations continue to practise over our land, Nlasi-sinan."

Now that the coalition planes have finished with their killing agenda in the Middle East, flying season begins once again in Nlasi-sinan. As they have each April for more than ten years now, British, German and Dutch jets will begin their low-level training over Innu land, flying as low as 100 feet and dropping "dummy" bombs, frightening and weakening the animals which the Innu have always hunted for survival, disrupting daily living in the towns, and especially in the bush, where the Innu go to practise, and pass on to their children, their traditional way of life.

The Innu "have never believed our security was improved by the military jets that were 'only training' over our people and lands, but now the world must see the true destruction that has been practised," Penashue said. "As if in further mockery of our justice, our

land, the base at Goose Bay, was used by the US Air Force as a refuelling stop for the transport planes that made 'Operation Desert Shield' possible ... Canada specifically has been prepared to sacrifice the rights of the Innu nation to practise for a war that is ostensibly to protect human rights."

Despite the good news, last year, that the proposed NATO base would not be built — a base that would have increased the flights to 40,000 a year — the Innu continue to live under a military occupation of a land they never signed over to Canada in any way. It is estimated that during the upcoming flying season, April to November, 7,500 low-level flights will take place. The Innu have protested the flights since they began in many ways, including non-violent blockades which have landed many Innu in jail from 1988 onwards.

Innu culture is based on a close relationship with the environment, which is currently being destroyed both by the military, and by colonialist Canadian culture. In addition to their struggle to end the flights and close the base, the Innu continue to work on gaining their right to self-determination in other areas.

• They are working towards control of curriculum and hiring practices in the school at Sheshat-shit, the village nearest to Goose Bay — the Sheshatshit Innu community may have their own, Innu-run school by 1992.

• They are also trying to have the Sparrow decision (a ground-

breaking supreme court decision giving native people rights to hunt and fish on their traditional territories without government regulation) implemented in Nlasi-sinan. Over the past 15 years, dozens of Innu have been arrested for "illegal" hunting and fishing.

Now that the war in the Gulf is over, it becomes evident that there are strong links between the oppressive foreign policies our government participates in, and the oppressive internal policies they continue to exercise. For the Innu and other First Nations peoples, the war continues. ☸

BY MAGGIE HELWIG  
 THE ACTIVIST

*"The pioneers of a warless world are the young men (and women) who refuse military service."* — Albert Einstein

On May 11, ACT for Disarmament will demonstrate at Queen's Park to call for "a world without armies." Clearly, there is much involved in building this world. Among the people who are starting to bring it into being are the many young men and women, who, during the Gulf War, lay down their weapons and refused to fight any more.

Some of them did this literally, like the Marine private at Camp Pendleton in California who actually put down his gun and refused to go on during training exercises. This private was paraded in front of the other Marines



Innu girl watches her mother being arrested at CFB Goose Bay.

## Trying to build a world without war

for ridicule, and the sergeant asked, sarcastically, if there was anyone else in the company who was going to refuse to fight. Nine more men then stepped forward and said that they too would no longer shoot.

Seven of these ten men are still in a military prison awaiting court-martial.

Many others who had joined the US military, either for economic reasons or because at that time they believed that it was right, have filed for Conscientious Objector (CO) status, saying that they have now come to understand that it is wrong to kill; some who object to this war in particular, others who have come to oppose all war. Reportedly, almost 3,000 soldiers filed for CO status during the war.

In many cases, this was ignored. Soldiers who declared themselves COs were often shipped immediately to Saudi Arabia. There are now at least six

confirmed cases of men shipped out in handcuffs and shackles — they are all in the Middle East still, and in many cases we don't really know what is happening to them.

Other COs were charged with desertion. Some of them are now coming to trial; three men have recently been given sentences of eight to ten months in military prisons. Many others are in jail awaiting trial. A group of fifteen is being held at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. One of them spent five days in a six foot by eight foot cell, in leg irons and handcuffs. Another has been beaten by Marine officers, according to his support group outside. One of the sergeants has been making the men line up regularly and chant "I am shit," over and over.

Dr. Yolanda Huet-Vaughan was an army doctor, a mother of three, who could no longer accept

Turn to Those, page 6

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## Ninth Annual Spring Protest for Peace

For a world without armies

Saturday, May 11  
 Queen's Park, 1 pm  
 Call ACT for Disarmament, 531-6154



# The war dividend

By Jo PEACENIK  
The ACTIVIST

They say that war is good business, and the latest conflagration has certainly proved that. Reports say that the Gulf war cost the United States \$35 billion to \$45 billion—a hefty sum, but far short of the \$54.5 billion in allied pledges to help pay for it.

The White House, meanwhile, denies it all. "Surplus? There's here's no surplus," splutters President George Bush.

One thing that gives America the right to walk in and impose its way of life on the rest of the world is that it is the freest country in the world, right? We're not so sure. Take freedom of the press, for instance.

Former US Attorney General Ramsey Clark visited Iraq after the war to see for himself the damage caused by the coalition bombing. Clark is no wild-eyed radical — as an administration functionary, he cracked down on dissidents like the Black Panthers with a vengeance. He came back from the war zone with videotaped evidence of the devastating effects of the air war on civilians.

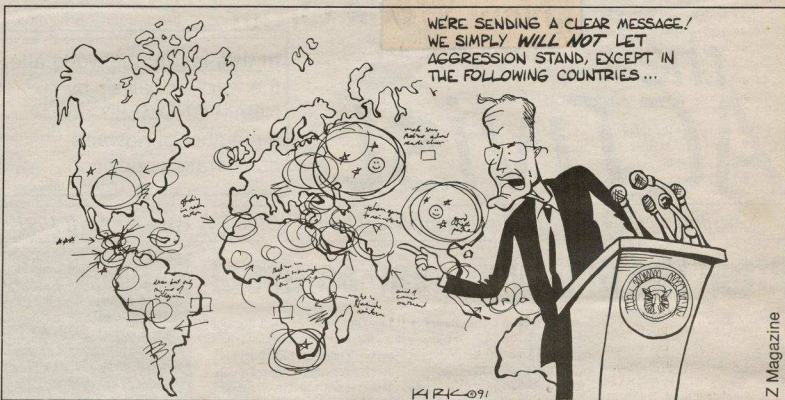
NBC News was set to air the video, when word came from the higher-ups: it was not to be shown. One of the video's producers, 12-year veteran NBC'er John Alpert, was fired for even offering the film to NBC. Could it have anything to do with the network's owners, military industry biggies General Electric?

No, of course not. America has freedom of the press.

Tales of political courage: word from the Queen's Park sandbox is that Premier Bob Rae was set to take a stand against the Gulf war, when polls showing his view wouldn't be popular were "brought to his attention."

A group of NDP women had been preparing to sit in at Rae's office calling on him to speak out against the war. Leaving nothing to chance, they contacted the Premier first and were told he would be only too happy to take the free publicity. (After all, he's no stranger to sit-ins, having been arrested for helping to blockade a logging road at Temagami. But then, Bob wasn't charged, was he? Fellow road-sitters were given jail terms of up to 60 days.)

But before the cosy arrangement could become reality, the bombing of Baghdad began. Rae first condemned it — causing the sit-in to be called off — then changed his mind on seeing the public reaction. Rae's peacenik sympathies evaporated — and so did the NDP protest. ☹



Z Magazine

# Is peace coming to write off the UN?

By MACDONALD SCOTT  
The ACTIVIST

Whether the force used in "Operation Desert Storm" was a United Nations force or an American one is a moot point, especially to 100,000 or more dead Iraqis. It suffices for this article merely to point out that the operation took place under the auspices of the UN, an organization with an original mandate to promote peace and security. It is depressing that despite this indisputable fact there are peace activists who still find cause to argue that the UN is a force for peace.

Superpowers will never be controlled from above. That's why they are superpowers. Theoretically, it is impossible for a world wide organization (i.e. the UN) to control a state by using armed forces supplied and controlled by that state (i.e. the United States).

Practically, we can see from the Gulf war how easily manipulated an organization like the UN is, even by a member state which had let its dues lapse, and had specifically ignored UN resolutions regarding its activities in Central America.

In order to gain the acceptance of the superpowers, and their financial and military support, the UN was structured in such a way as to give these superpowers a "little extra push", and thus was created the security council structure. Thus, to gain UN support for a war, the US had only to persuade those four other countries with a veto not use it. None did. China soon had reopened diplomatic ties with the US, and the USSR received only faint criticism from a hawkish US president when it invaded Lithuania. Coincidence? Yeah, right.

The "New World Order" of

George Bush has seen him adopting a "new" method of world politics — collective security. This is defined as a world governed in international relations by the UN Security Council, with the US backing it up with arms and armies. To anyone but the most naive, the horrors of a world where the country responsible for the refinement and creation of the Central American death squads provides the policing forces, is painfully obvious.

Even more horrifying is the way this same country can easily manipulate the Security Council. The only countries with equal power in the Council are first world countries with identical agendas to that of the United States (i.e. Britain) and countries currently (and probably into the future) courting the favour of the United States. And so you have the "Brave New World Order."

To a large extent, part of the blame for this situation lies with the peace movement. Leaving the job of world peace up to the UN has always been a dangerous tactical error, as dangerous or more so than leaving world peace up to individual governments. By doing so, we are merely taking our own personal power and transferring it further up the ladder; the potential for world peace is in you and me, not governments, be they world governments or federal. It is the agenda of the state which decides that war is a necessary means in international relations (especially the agenda of first world states to protect their domains in other sections of the world). And until we as individuals attack the states which create these agendas ourselves, for these states are built on our backs, there will never be peace, no matter how many superpowers claim to back the UN. ☹

Thanks for sending me your paper. I was especially glad to hear that the march with the Innu people arrived at the Parliament. I do hope that their cause is gonna win!

I wonder if you received any information about the act of the anarchists in Budapest last summer in solidarity with the struggle of the Innus. Here I'm sending you two pictures about this action at the Canadian Embassy. We were throwing paper leaflets and small airplanes (made of paper as well) to the building and made a big noise and were reading out a

solidarity statement and sprayed a graffiti on the pavement. Also, we mailed you a number of signatures supporting the Innus...

Judit  
Budapest, Hungary

I would like to convey to you on behalf of the Canadian Black Ribbon Day Committee our support for your open letter to the Soviet Government in support of Baltic freedom (The ACTIVIST, Feb. 1991, p. 6)

We too support the prin-

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We welcome your letters, but please keep them short. Deadline for advertising and copy for May issue: April 24.  
The ACTIVIST collective:  
Maria Arraial  
Mary Bunch  
Saul Chernos  
Stephen Dankowich  
Maggie Helwig  
Macdonald Scott  
David Webster



cles you set forward in this letter on the self-determination of nations, freedom of thought and peaceful assembly, and the need for nations to be free from the political and military domination of Soviet communism.

We, however, also support these principles in Canada and the need to preserve them. That is why we support NATO.

We wish you all the best in future such efforts.

Markus Hess  
Black Ribbon Day Committee  
Toronto

In a statement on the Middle East of January 1991, Veterans Against Nuclear Arms in Canada made the following observations: "VANA believes that Canada can play an important part in bringing about a peaceful solution by insisting that the entire operation be placed under the direct control of the United Nations Organization. The forces in the area should act under UNO orders ...

The forces for peace in Canada, as well as all over the world, can play a decisive role in the endeavour to do away with WAR. The UNO must become the Peacemaker and Peacekeeper that it was meant to become when the UNO was set up in 1945. Canada should continue to play a big part in supporting the UNO in its main task — to keep the world at PEACE.

Phil Gershuny  
Veterans Against Nuclear Arms  
Winnipeg

# New World Order

## A postwar analysis by Noam Chomsky

This analysis was written by internationally-known writer-Noam Chomsky for the National Campaign for Peace in the Middle East, and is reprinted with permission from the Campaign.

A truism about the supposed New World Order is that it is economically tripartite (the US, Germany and Japan) and militarily unipolar (the US). The recent events in the Gulf help understand the interplay of these factors.

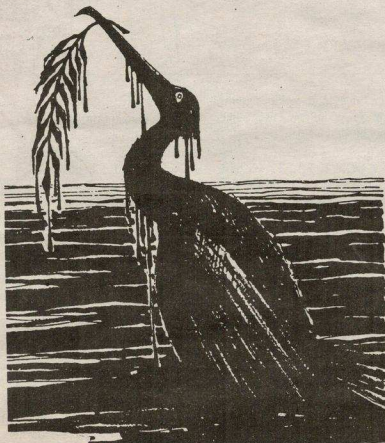
As the glorious "turkey shoot" began in the desert, the *New York Times* published a fragment of a national security review from the early days of the Bush administration, dealing with "third world threats." It reads: "In cases where the US confronts much weaker enemies, our challenge will not be simply to defeat them, but to defeat them decisively and rapidly." Any other outcome would be "embarrassing" and might "undercut political support."

"Much weaker enemies" pose only one threat to the US: the threat of independence, always intolerable. The US will support the most murderous tyrant as long as he plays along, and will labor to overthrow third world democrats if they depart from their service function. The documentary and historical records are clear on this score.

The leaked fragment makes no reference to peaceful means. As understood on all sides, in its confrontations with third world threats, the US is "politically weak"; its demands are not likely to gain public support, so diplomacy is a dangerous exercise. And a "much weaker" opponent must not merely be defeated, but pulverized, if the central lesson of World Order is to be learned: We are the masters, and you shine our shoes.

There are other useful lessons. The domestic population must appreciate "the stark and vivid definition of principle ... baked into [George Bush] during his years at Andover and Yale, that honor and duty compels you to punch the bully in the face." These are the admiring words of the reporter who released the policy review, then quoting the hero himself: "By God, we've kicked the Vietnam syndrome once and for all." No longer, the President exults, will we be troubled by "the sickly inhibitions against the use of military force," to borrow the terms of Reaganite intellectual Norman Podhoretz.

The ground had been well prepared for overcoming this grave malady, including dedicated efforts to ensure that the Vietnam war is properly understood—as a "noble cause," not a violent assault against South Vietnam, then all of Indochina. Americans generally estimate Vietnamese deaths at about 100,000, a recent academic study reveals. Its authors ask what conclusions we would draw if the German public estimated Holocaust deaths at



300,000, while declaring their righteousness. A question we might ponder.

The principle that you punch the bully in the face—when you are sure that he is securely bound and beaten to a pulp—is a natural one for advocates of the rule of force. Cheap victories may also mobilize a frightened domestic population, and may deflect attention from the domestic disasters of the Reagan-Bush years, no small matter as the country continues its march towards a two-tiered society with striking third world features.

George Bush's career as a "public servant" also has its lessons concerning the New World Order. He is the one head of state who stands condemned by the World Court for "the unlawful use of force." He dismisses with contempt the Court's call for reparations for these particular crimes (others are far beyond reach), while he and his sycophants solemnly demand reparations from Iraq. Bush opened the post-Cold War era with the murderous invasion of Panama, imposing the rule of the 10% white minority and guaranteeing US control over the canal and the bases that have been used to train the gangsters who terrorize Latin America. Since he became UN Ambassador in 1971, the US is far in the lead in vetoing Security Council resolutions and blocking the UN peacekeeping function, followed by Britain. Bush was called to head the CIA in 1975, just in time to support neo-genocide in East Timor. He then lent his talents to the war against the Church and other deviants committed to "the preferential

option for the poor" in Central America, now littered with tortured and mutilated bodies, perhaps devastated beyond recovery.

In the Middle East, Bush supported Israel's harsh occupations, its savage invasion of Lebanon, and its refusal to honor Security Council Resolution 425 calling for immediate withdrawal from Lebanon (March 1978, one of several). The plea was renewed by the government of Lebanon in February, ignored as usual while the US client terrorizes the occupied region and bombs at will, and the rest of Lebanon is taken over by Bush's new friend Hafez el-Assad, a clone of Saddam Hussein. The Turkish "peacekeepers" were also authorized to intensify their repression of the Kurds, in partial payment for their services.

Plainly, we have here a man who should be lauded for rare principle as he leads us to a New World Order.

The principles of the policy review were followed throughout the Gulf crisis. In July, Bush indicated that he had no objections to Iraq's rectifying its border dispute with Kuwait by force, or intimidating its neighbors to raise the price of oil. Misreading the signals, Saddam took all of Kuwait, thus demonstrating that he was not only a murderous gangster, which is fine by US-UK standards, but an independent nationalist, which is quite improper. Standard policies were then invoked.

The US and UK moved at once to undermine sanctions and diplomacy, which had unusually high prospects of success. From late August, Iraqi settlement of-

fers were released that State Department officials regarded as "serious" and "negotiable," including complete withdrawal from Kuwait on terms that would have been pursued by anyone interested in peace. Efforts to avoid the ground war with full Iraqi withdrawal, saving tens of thousands of lives, were contemptuously brushed aside. Diplomacy is ruled out, and since this third world country with its peasant army is plainly a "much weaker enemy," it has to be crushed, so that the right lessons are taught.

The intellectual community swung into action, portraying Saddam Hussein as a new Hitler poised to take over the world. When Bush announced that there will be no negotiations, a hundred editorials lauded him for his extraordinary efforts at diplomacy. When he proclaimed that "aggressors cannot be rewarded," instead of collapsing in ridicule, responsible commentators stood in awe of his high principles. Some agreed that the US and Britain had been "inconsistent" in the past (in fact, they had consistently pursued their own interests). But now, we were assured, all had changed; they had learned that the right way to respond to aggression is by the quick resort to violence. We can therefore expect that the RAF will be sent to bomb Damascus, Tel Aviv, Jakarta (after British Aerospace stops arming the killers), Washington, and a host of others. Oddly, these new insights were not accompanied by praise for Saddam Hussein for attacking Israel, though his sordid arguments compare well enough with those of his fellow-criminal and long-time friend in Washington.

In such ways, the ground was prepared for the merciless slaughter that a leading third world journal describes as "the most cowardly war ever fought on this planet." The corpses have quickly disappeared from view, joining mounds of others that do not disturb the tranquility of the civilized.

There also seems to be no concern over the glaringly obvious fact that no official reason was ever offered for going to war—no reason, that is, that could not be instantly refuted by a literate teenager. Again, this is the hallmark of a totalitarian culture, and a signpost to the New World Order. The few extra-official efforts to justify the rejection of peaceful means are no less revealing. Thus we read that this case was different: the US rejection was underway before the annexation, and continued unchanged after Iraqi proposals that would have reversed it, not to speak of the US-UK response to other cases of annexation, no less horrifying. Other arguments are equally weighty.

In one of the rare efforts to face the crucial question, Timothy Garton Ash explains in the *New York Review* that while sanctions were possible in dealing with South Africa or Communist East Europe, Saddam Hussein is differ-

ent. That concludes the argument. We now understand why it was proper to pursue "quiet diplomacy" while our South African friends caused over \$60 billion in damage and 1.5 million deaths from 1980 to 1988 in the neighbouring states—putting aside South Africa and Namibia, and the preceding decade. They are basically decent folk, like us and the Communist tyrants. Why? One answer is suggested by Nelson Mandela, who condemns the hypocrisy and prejudice of the highly selective response to the crimes of the "brown-skinned" Iraqis. The same is true when the *New York Times* assures us that "the world" is united against Saddam Hussein, the most hated man in "the world"—the world, that is, minus its darker faces.

It is understandable that Western racism should surface with such stunning clarity after the Cold War. For 70 years, it has been possible to disguise traditional practices behind the veil of "defense against the Soviets," generally a sham, now lost as a pretext. We return, then, to the days when the New York press explained that "we must go on slaughtering the natives in English fashion, and taking what muddy glory lies in the wholesale killing till they have learned to respect our arms. The more difficult task of getting them to respect our intentions will follow." In fact, they understand our intentions well enough.

For the people of the Middle East, the New World Order looks grim. The victor is the violent state that has long rejected any serious diplomatic approach to regional disarmament and security problems, often virtually alone. The US strategic conception has been that the local managers of Gulf oil riches should be protected by regional enforcers, preferably non-Arab, though bloody tyrants of the Hafez al-Assad variety may be allowed to join the club, possibly even Egypt if it can be purchased. The US will seek some agreement among these clients, and might finally even consider an international conference, if it can be properly managed. As Kissinger intended, Europe and Japan must be kept out of the diplomacy, but the USSR might now be tolerated on the assumption that it will be obedient in its current straits, possibly Britain as well.

As for the Palestinians, the US can now move towards the solution outlined by James Baker well before the Gulf crisis: Jordan is the Palestinian state; the occupied territories are to be ruled in accord with the basic guidelines of the Israeli government, with Palestinians permitted to collect taxes in Nabulus; their political representatives will be chosen for them, with the PLO excluded; and "free elections" will be held under Israeli military control with the Palestinian leadership in prison camps. New excises will be devised for the old policies, which

# Still no freedom in liberated Kuwait, dissident says

SPECIAL TO THE ACTIVIST

Although the United States says it fought to liberate Kuwait and defend democracy, a democratic system has not been put in place in Kuwait. Below we reprint excerpts from an exclusive interview with a member of Kuwait's democratic opposition living in Canada. His name cannot be published to protect members of his family living in Kuwait.

MAYBE THE AMERICANS liberated Kuwait from the Iraqis, which is fine, but they didn't liberate the country or the people yet. [President George] Bush has claimed that he's protecting us, and he's liberating us, and he's protecting democracy, and legitimate government in the country.

First of all, we don't have democracy. I'll give you some examples. All our newspapers are censored, we have people who are employed to censor all the articles, and they do exist in every newspaper in Kuwait. Even after the so-called liberation, there was one newspaper which started printing after the so-called liberation, and the government closed it down, because it criticized the government. We don't have free speech, we don't have freedom of association. If people want to have a public meeting they have to have police permission for it, and most of the time they have to know the agenda, they have to know what we're talking about, what will be the discussion, and who will be involved. And if it's something to do with politics, something anti-government, it will not be approved. We used to have a parliament—they closed it down twice, once in 1975-76 and the next time in 1985-86, and they always declared that it was unhealthy for the unity of the country. So, they considered parliament, elections, democracy, unhealthy.

So that's the kind of democracy we have. Security police have the right to do and to say whatever they want in the country, they can pick you up and put you in jail, with no charges, no questioning, no nothing, just because they think you are a threat to the security and

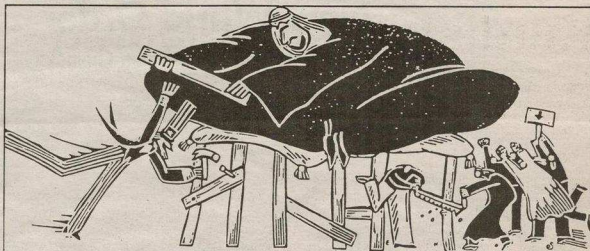
the unity of the country, and they don't say the unity of the country, they say the unity of the family, they consider all of us are one family.

Kuwait doesn't have freedom, doesn't have democracy yet. If Bush was really concerned about the Kuwaitis and really wanted to liberate them, he could have given them the so-called democracy he says everybody should have.

I still believe, and there's a lot of people in Kuwait who still believe, that the war wasn't really justified, the Iraqis could have left Kuwait without going into a war; the war have destroyed Iraq and Kuwait in the same time, Kuwait is still devastated by the war. We have a lot of bombs that didn't explode in the region, and the United Nations has declared Kuwait is unsafe because still they don't know where the bombs are. It's not only the mines that the Iraqi left, even the Allies' bombs that didn't explode are still there.

THE INVASION ITSELF, the Iraqi invasion could have been stopped before August 2nd, but the way our government treated the whole thing, especially the foreign minister ... they pushed the Iraqis so far, and the Iraqis felt that the only option left was war. Which is never justifiable, war and violence is never justifiable, and nobody can support it. And I don't think the Iraqis can justify that. But the Kuwaiti government, and especially the foreign minister, pushed them so far, and treated the whole situation so badly, before August 2nd.

Last year, and actually between 1980 and 1988 when the Iraqis were fighting the Iranians, Iraq was considered the best country as an ally, we were giving money to them. Anyone who was anti-Iraqi government, or, you know, in opposition from Iraq, the Kuwaiti government used to deport them back to Iraq and they were working with the Iraqi security police. Saddam Hussein's picture and articles about him was all over the newspapers in Kuwait and he was considered a hero, his posters were everywhere, and all of a sudden we changed our policy and we started pushing the Iraqis



out and away, and working against them. Why did we change the policy all of a sudden?

I DON'T THINK we have been liberated yet. I don't understand the American ... well, I do understand, but I don't accept what they're doing over there, so far they haven't done anything good for the region, and they won't do anything good for the region, especially if they keep all these puppet governments, not only in Kuwait, but all over the Gulf, the region will never be stable, and it will generate a lot of trouble. And so far it's generating a lot of trouble, for example look at what's happening in Iraq and also look what's happening in Kuwait.

AFTER PARLIAMENT WAS abolished in 1986, thirty out of the forty-five elected [parliamentarians] organized themselves in a movement called Pro-Democratic Movement, actually in Arabic it's called the Constitution Movement, that's the exact word for it, and mainly it was the thirty members of the parliament, some intellectuals, some teachers in university, and their supporters. In 1989, we started lobbying with the government, but we didn't go far. The government was not listening, and they were treating everybody arrogantly, and they say ... they actually mentioned a statement, they said "The people are not ready for democracy, and democracy is a Western privilege." And we are not ready for this yet.

We didn't take it, of course. We kept pushing, and this time we started pushing it publicly. And we started organizing meetings, we started organizing petitions. And the government answer was to put the organizers in jail. There was one guy who comes to mind right now, he's called Ahmad al-Khatib (see ACTivist #71 for excerpts from an interview with al-Khatib), who's a prominent member, he was in jail for three

days because of organizing one of these meetings. And that didn't stop us, and once we had a big meeting in an area in Kuwait called Farwania, and the government answered that meeting by sending the security police, special forces, dogs, tear gas, and water cannons, and started beating the hell out of people there.

One of the guys who was beaten is a 70-year-old ex-parliament member. A 70-year-old. Because he was there in the area where the meeting was held. They didn't care if you are there waiting for the bus, they didn't care if you are going there to see the meeting, they didn't care that you live in the neighborhood, they started beating everybody who was there. If he's not dressed up in a police uniform, or he doesn't have police ID, they beat the hell out of them, put them in jail. And what's the problem? People are asking for elections, they're asking for democracy. That's how they treated the whole thing. But again, that didn't stop us, we kept moving, we kept organizing, we still organize things.

After the invasion, the government was so afraid that they would lose power they started using the same thing again, the unity. And they asked the anti-government or the pro-democratic movement to meet, and they met on October 13 in Saudi Arabia. And they asked the movement, "Please, please, do not oppose the government now, let's unite against the Iraqi aggression, and we promise you elections, we promise you we respect the constitution and we'll make it work, and also we promise you that we might change the constitution and allow women to vote." That's basically most of our demands. We say, "Fine, if you promise that, we'll unite for getting the Iraqis out of Kuwait."

January, when they find that the Americans were really going into a war and everything would be goody-goody and the Americans are supporting a "legitimate government", the planning minister came and gave a statement, I'll give you a summary for what he said. He said, yes, we promised them democracy, yes, we promised them changes, and yes, we will do it, but ... "if we promise you democracy on Saturday," these were his exact words, "that doesn't mean we give it to you on Sunday." There is other things to

do, and changes needs time. That's always what they say — "yes, but." Our response this time was, "You promised democracy on Saturday. We want it on Friday."

That's what they're doing right now. When the Emir was asked in Saudi Arabia, before he went back to Kuwait, "Are you planning to give women the right to vote?" his answer was, "It's not in the constitution yet." In my understanding, that's a nice, polite, diplomatic way of saying no.

Now, we expect our women to fight against the Iraqis, to carry arms against the Iraqis, to get killed by the Iraqis, to get raped by the Iraqis, to lose their life, their dignity; and their work against the Iraqis, it has been asked and it has been demanded from them to do it and they have done it. And they have the right to do this, and they have the right to protect the country, while the royal family fled after two hours of the invasion and went to Saudi Arabia and stayed in Hilton and Sheraton having fun, and these women got killed.

These women are allowed to get killed, they are allowed to fight, but they are not allowed to exercise their right to vote, and they are not allowed to exercise their right to have a saying in the way the government is working. They are still second-class citizens. This is not acceptable. Everybody is equal in the country, and everybody should be equal, even the royal family.

WE'RE NOT ASKING the royal family to leave. We're not asking them to go in exile and we will treat them badly or put them in jail. No. We're not doing this. We'll never do this. We're not stupid, we're not a violent people. But we have to share everything together as human beings. They have no right to control anything. According to the constitution, the only right they have is the head of state, and a monthly allowance for each of their members. And the head of the state, or what's called Emir, he has the right to appoint the prime minister and he has the right to appoint the crown prince. But the parliament has to approve or disapprove the appointments.

Nowadays, we have the Emir, we have the crown prince, minister of defense, minister of interior, minister of oil, minister of information, minister of finance, all of them, five or six of them are all of

Turn to Kuwait, page 6



# Kurdistan: endangered people, divided land

KURDISTAN CULTURAL CENTRE

More than 25 million Kurds, with a distinct cultural and ethnic identity of their own, and a very high level of national consciousness, are living in an area called Kurdistan which was divided between Iran, Iraq, Turkey and Syria by colonial powers to sustain their interest in the area after the First World War.

They are the fourth largest people in the Middle East, following the Arabs, Turks and Persians. Despite their constant struggle for self-determination and democracy in the region, they do not have enough support, either from the Third World or from the West or

## Gulf Peace Team sends medical aid

THE ACTIVIST

On January 1, as the UN-sanctioned deadline for war approached, the Canadian office of the Gulf Peace Team began operating out of the ACT for Disarmament office. At that time, the Peace Team was trying to set up a camp as a peaceful, non-violent presence between the two armies, on the Iraqi-Saudi border.

A few days after the war broke out, the peace camp was forcibly shut down by the Iraqis. The Gulf Peace Team members in Jordan — including some of those who had been in the camp — and in the United States, Britain and Canada, then turned their attention to providing humanitarian relief for civilians in areas affected by the war.

Even with the war still in progress, two convoys of medical supplies travelled from Amman, Jordan to Baghdad. The convoys, one accompanied by Canadian Calvin Baumann, made their way through the war zone to bring medical aid to civilians in Iraq, operating in cooperation with the Jordanian Red Crescent Society and abiding by the UN Security Council sanctions.

After the ceasefire, the terrible condition of civilians in Iraq and Kuwait became even more obvious — widespread hunger, no clean water, most hospitals partly or wholly destroyed, drastic shortages of all medical supplies to treat the hundreds of thousands of civilians wounded in the war or the ensuing civil war. Canadian doctor Eric Hoskins visited Baghdad on March 8, and found people drinking from stagnant pools, mortality rates in the half-functional hospitals soaring, many people starving, and children left with permanent psychological scars.

"The civilian population,"

from the East. Following the Gulf crisis, most of the media coverage of the Kurds has concentrated on the chemical warfare waged against them by the Iraqi government in 1988. While this gives a clear picture of the brutality of Saddam Hussein's regime, the media lacks information on the history and the political struggle of the Kurdish people.

The history of the Kurds can be traced back approximately 5,000 years. A country called KARDAKA, mentioned in Sumerian inscriptions, dates back to 2000 B.C. At the time of the Arab conquest in the 7th century, the term 'Kurd' began to be used as an ethnic description of the Indo-

Hoskins said, "is, as in all war, left to bear the full force of the violence. They play no role except that of victim to the unjust and immoral acts of aggression perpetrated by military forces on all sides of the conflict. Civilians everywhere have a fundamental and uncontested human right to food and medicine. Withdrawing this right is both wrong and illegal."

The Canadian arm of the Gulf Peace Team, now operating out of its own office, has continued to collect money and relief supplies, working with the Canadian Council of Churches, the Canadian Arab Federation, the International Development and Relief Foundation, and other groups.

And the convoys have continued to move between Amman and Baghdad, carrying tons of medical supplies. The most recent convoy, sent out March 25, carried three tons of medicine from Germany, 1.5 tons of infant formula and \$20,000 of medicine from Canada, and 1.5 tons of infant formula and 1.5 tons of I.V. fluids from Japan. The Peace Team has also interviewed Palestinians who had been tortured in Kuwait and then deported to Iraq.

The Gulf Peace Team also organized a peace walk from Jericho to Jerusalem to demand a peaceful resolution of the Palestinian question, but it was stopped by the Israeli army en route.

Another convoy will be leaving this week for the southern Iraqi town of Karbala, where the civil war has been intense. It will include Eric Hoskins, as well as Calvin Baumann. Another peace walk is also planned, to begin May 17.

For more information on how you can help the Gulf Peace Team, contact Howard Breen-Needham at 531-4969. ☺

European tribes in that region. The first mention of Kurdistan, "land of the Kurds", dates from the 12th century.

The Kurdish language is an Indo-European language totally distinct from Turkish and Arabic. The most important Kurdish dialects are Kurmanji and Sorani; smaller dialects are Gorani, Luri and Zaza. Most Kurds speak Kurmanji.

Religious belief plays no part in Kurdish distinctiveness. Most of the Kurds are Muslims, but there are also Christians, Jewish, Yezidi and Zoroastrian Kurds.

As among many people whose formal education is slight, the oral literature of the Kurds is rich and extraordinarily abundant. Some of the stories go back to the 10th century. Music also plays a vital role in preserving Kurdish cul-

## Human Rights Watch

THE ACTIVIST

With the war officially over, most of the countries involved have returned to their normal everyday levels of human rights violations. In Iraq and Kuwait, however, the horror goes on.

In liberated Kuwait, a coalition of opposition groups says the government has formed death squads, who are executing suspected opponents of the regime. An official list of 600 prisoners destined to be executed for "collaboration" has been released, and there have been mass collective deportations, with thousands dumped inside the borders of Iraq. Many of the deportees said they had been tortured by Kuwaiti forces. Deportees included Palestinians, Jordanians, North Africans and Iraqis living in Kuwait (some of them born in Kuwait).

Palestinian paramedics claimed on March 21 that Palestinian and Iraqi torture victims were being held in secret hospital wards, with torture continuing in the hospital in at least some cases.

The first newspaper to resume publication in Kuwait was almost immediately shut down for "criticizing the government."

The most recent estimates of Iraqi casualties during the war suggest that about 150,000 soldiers and 135,000 civilians were killed. About 60% of the civilians were children. The death rate in Baghdad hospitals, operating virtually without medical supplies or even clean water, has risen from 6% to 20%, and most Iraqis are without adequate supplies of food.

Government troops seem close to winning the civil war, after brutal repression of Shi'ite rebels in southern Iraq and Kurds in the north. The Kurds were at-



Kurdish refugees in Frankfurt airport await permission to enter Germany, 1989 [Photo: Elaine Brière]

ture; 'denbej', singing story-tellers, have carried the Kurdish heritage of poetry and music down through the centuries.

More than 50 Kurdish dynas-

tacked with strafing by helicopter gunships, napalm, phosphorus bombs and heavy artillery, often directed against civilians. About 100,000 Kurdish refugees fled into Turkey then, on April 3, Turkey closed its borders, leaving at least 200,000 more Kurds stranded inside Iraq, without food or shelter, exposed to further Iraqi attacks. Even those who made it to refugee camps in Turkey are starving, and many children have already died of cold and hunger.

An estimated one million Kurdish refugees are now on the Iraq-Iran border, where they are gradually being allowed into Iran. Iran has vowed to keep the border open, but whether there will be resources to feed what could eventually be several million refugees is uncertain.

Napalm was also used in the south, with thousands said to have been killed in one napalm attack on March 17, on the Najaf-Karbala highway. An estimated 55,000 refugees have escaped southern Iraq to coalition-held territory, with estimates of 15,000 dead. There are still no estimates of deaths in the north, but they are probably much higher.

The coalition, led as usual by the US, has refused any help to the rebels, preferring to wait until a non-Shi'ite, non-Kurdish alternative to Saddam arises from the upper-class Westernized Iraqis. ☺

ties and principalities retained their independence until the 17th century. The first division of Kurdistan took place in 1693, as a result of war between the Ottoman Empire and the Persian Empires. In the 19th century, Sheik Ubeydullah united the Kurds in a revolt which is considered to be the beginning of Kurdish nationalism.

Unfortunately, united Kurdistan did not survive very long under that joint attacks of the Ottoman and Persian Empires. Following World War I, the Treaty of Sevres recognized an independent Kurdistan; but this treaty was never ratified. The final Treaty of Lausanne, in 1923, divided Kurdistan and created the present states of Turkey, Iraq and Syria.

The Kurds never accepted being a part of Iraq. A Kurdish revolt took place even before the first king of Iraq, King Faisal, was brought from Mecca by the British. At that time the British Air Force was the first to use mustard gas against Kurdish civilians to suppress the revolt.

Basic human rights are still denied in Kurdistan, to a degree that is shocking in its intensity. Countries with Kurdish minorities fear Kurdish ethnic strength and any activity towards self-determination. In Kurdistan, torture and arbitrary harassment are part of daily life (See *ACTIVist #72 for the recent history of Kurdistan*).

The Kurdish question has never gained enough international support because the major powers had little conflict with the governments occupying Kurdistan. It is a tragic fact that a people can be destroyed in a period during which there is so much talk of human rights in the Middle East. ☺

Toronto's Kurdish community is appealing for aid to Kurdish refugees on the Turkish-Iraqi border. To help, contact the Kurdish Relief Fund at (416) 929-3072.

## Survival

for: tribal peoples



The latest wregent action bulletin from Survival International follows. The full text of the bulletin is available from ACT for Disarmament.

### Papuan moved

The Indonesian government is using an earthquake as an excuse to move the Hupla tribal people off their land. The Hupla, whose lives were devastated by the earthquake which hit West Papua in August 1989, want to return to their highlands. They are arduous from lowland diseases at the new site and suffering from malnutrition.

The Hupla people number about 3,500 people. Their ancestral lands in the Woso valley were very badly hit by the earthquake: over 100 people died and many homes and gardens were destroyed by landslides.

The government seized the opportunity to move the Hupla to a lowland site under the pretext of providing them with geologically stable land. Significantly the Hupla lands are thought to be rich in mineral resources.

Most Hupla were not consulted about the resettlement scheme. Military helicopters simply arrived at the scene of the disaster and ferried them to the new site.

The resettlement area selected by the government is totally unsuitable for the Hupla people. The land, at Elelim, is already owned by another tribe and is infested with tropical diseases to which the highland Hupla have no resistance. Within the first few months of the programme, 15 people died of malaria or malnutrition. The importance of ancestral land to the Hupla way of life means that relocation is tantamount to destroying their identity.

The Indonesian Government claims it is moving the Hupla "for their own good." In reality the programme is in line with their policy to "civilize" tribal people throughout Indonesia by removing them from their resource-rich lands to more accessible sites where they can be "guided" into the "modern" world.

Please write to President Suharto (President RI, Istana Negara, Jalan Veteran, Jakarta, Indonesia) calling for a halt to the resettlement.

Series: 1) The resettlement program is coercive. The Hupla have not been consulted as a community; 2) The new site is unsuitable; 3) The future of the Hupla and surrounding tribes are threatened by resettlement.

# Kuwait still waiting for a real liberation

Continued from page 4

them from the royal family. The minor kind of jobs, and most of them have a lot of headaches, to deal internally with the country, are given to other so-called "friendly families" to the royal family. And every time they change the cabinet, those are the ones to be kicked out and new people to come in. The same royal family is still there all the time.

Last month [March], they say the cabinet resigned because of the pressure, and they're having a new government. Yeah. Who's the new prime minister? The same old prime minister. Who's the foreign minister? He's the same old foreign minister. They are not planning to change, they are so arrogant, they don't listen, they want to keep protecting their interest and keep controlling the country.

**PEOPLE BEFORE THE** invasion were afraid to lose things. Because if you go against the government, what will happen to you? You go to jail. Your ID will be confiscated. You lose your job. And if you're not really rich and well off, your family can't survive without your salary, they can't survive with the government services. And if you are in jail now and you're the head of the family, your kids can't go to school without the father's ID. They can't have welfare care without the father's ID. They can't have a free house without the father's ID. Sometimes they can't even go to the hospital without the father's ID. So they had a lot of things to lose, and that's why a lot of people stayed on the line, you know? They didn't like what's going on, but they had a lot of things to lose, and they didn't feel like they have to sacrifice. Because eventually, everybody had a job, everybody was okay, they are not poor, they are not being oppressed and killed. But they didn't have the other freedoms, the other rights that human beings need. Fine, we have all the materialistic requirements, but we don't have the other, emotional and other requirements like freedom of speech, freedom of association.

So people felt like they were losing a lot, they stayed on the line. But now, after the Iraqi invasion ... we lost everything. We have no jobs, we have no country, a lot of families lost a lot of beloved ones, so we don't have anything else to lose now. And that's why the movement's growing and growing, and amazingly, actually, some of the generals in the army and majors in the army, now, they've switched sides. On April 1, this officer, his name is Major Bad'r, he had no political ambition, he had no needs and want for him personally, but he was one of the guys who went with the pro-democratic movement to present five pages of demands to the royal family.

So a lot of people are now switching sides, and a lot of people

are becoming pro-democratic supporters, because again, we don't have anything left to lose now. And the royal family and the Western media and the Western countries have to understand. The royal family cannot stay in power and cannot control the country as they used to. If the Americans really want to protect their interests and protect the region from any problems, they should understand that the democracy they say they have in their country has to be exercised the same way in other countries. But the problem is, with the Americans, they only see democracy within their borders.

After they go out of their borders, democracy means nothing if it's not in the interest of big business.

But Kuwaitis are not stupid. Yes, we thank the Americans for "liberating" us from the Iraqis. But we will never thank them for keeping this royal family in power. And if they really want us to look at them as friends for the region, friends for us, they have to act like friends for the people, not friends for the corrupt elite.

This is really, really one of the things we feel that the Americans have to understand, that protecting their interests means the protection of human rights first. If

people are happy, they would be friendly. If people are oppressed and being killed, they will never be happy. And someday, they will change things.

So again, I just want to summarize it for you. The Americans didn't liberate us; war and violence will never solve any problem; the pro-democratic movement in Kuwait does not believe in armed struggle or violence; all we are asking for is — respect the 1962 constitution, change the immigration law, allow women to vote, freedom of speech, freedom of association, and that's it. That's basically it. ☺

## New world order for the few

Continued from page 3 will be hailed as generous and forthcoming.

Economic development for the Palestinians had always been barred, while their land and water were taken. They had been permitted to serve the Israeli economy as virtual slave labor, but this interlude is passing. The recent curfew administered a further blow to the Palestinian economy. The victors can now proceed with the policy articulated in February 1989 by Yitzhak Rabin of the Labor Party, then Defense Secretary, when he informed Peace Now leaders of his satisfaction with the US-PLO dialogue, meaningless discussions to divert attention while Israel suppresses the Intifadah by force. The Palestinians "will be broken," Rabin promised,

reiterating the prediction of Israeli Arabists 40 years earlier: the Palestinians will "be crushed," will die or "turn into human dust and the waste of society, and join the most impoverished classes in the Arab countries." Or they will leave, while Russian Jews, now barred from the US by policies designed to deny them a free choice, flock to an expanded Israel, leaving the diplomatic issues moot, as the Baker-Shamir-Peres plan envisaged.

The political leadership in Washington and London have created economic and social catastrophes at home, and have no idea how to deal with them, except to exploit their military power. Following the advice of the business press, they may try to turn their countries into mercenary

states, serving as the global mafia, selling "protection" to the rich, defending them against "third world threats" and demanding proper payment for their services. Riches funnelled from the Gulf oil producers are to prop up the two failing economies. German-led Europe, later Japan, will carry out the task of "Latin Americanizing" most of the domains of the collapsing Soviet tyranny, with the former Communist bureaucracy probably running the branch offices of foreign corporations. The rest of the third world will be controlled by economic pressures if possible, by force if necessary.

These are some of the contours of the planned New World Order that came into view as the beguiling rhetoric is lifted away. ☺

## Those who wouldn't go to war

Continued from page 1

her work, left the base to speak at anti-war rallies, then turned herself in. She is now confined to base awaiting court-martial. Sergeant George Morse, who refused to prepare shipments of supplies to the Gulf, is now in a military prison, and Amnesty International has declared him a prisoner of conscience.

In other coalition countries, it is the same story — even in Germany, where the soldiers could not possibly be sent to the Gulf because the German constitution will not allow it, soldiers filed as conscientious objectors. (In the Iraqi army, of course, the only choice was desertion with the possibility of immediate execution. Many did take this route, often in desperation, but surely sometimes out of a moral position.)

In Canada, though we sent so few troops to the Gulf, at least one man was driven to apply for a "psychiatric discharge" (since CO status is not available in Canada).



His discharge papers stated that, while in no way mentally ill, he had "religious and moral convictions that make him unfit for military service."

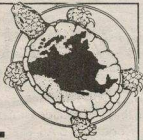
The list goes on — the consequences of the war are still unfolding not only in the Middle East, but for those who were brought, by this war, to the realization they could no longer accept war. A pattern does seem to be emerging. Those who went quietly AWOL and returned after the war are being given slight or no punishment. But

those who declared themselves COs, and especially those who spoke out publicly, are being treated with uncommon harshness.

Yet these people are among the small heroes who did emerge from this sordid war. They are the ones who took a second look at their whole lives, and chose a world without armies, and chose that they should be the pioneers of this world.

For more information on supporting military resisters, contact ACT for Disarmament. ☺

## Turtle Island Notes



### Redneck justice?

**LETHBRIDGE (Alberta)** — Supporters packed a courtroom in the heart of what they called "the Alabama of Canada" — conservative southern Alberta — on March 25, to see Patan Lenefighter Milnes in jail. Born With a Tooth sentenced to 1 1/2 years in jail. Born With a Tooth was found guilty earlier this month by an all-white jury in Fort Macleod of six weapons-related charges for a native-RCMP confrontation at the site of the Oldman River dam last September. He has been freed on bail while the case is appealed.

The sentencing of Born With a Tooth came the same day a federal-provincial task force released a report calling the Alberta justice system deeply flawed and riddled with racism. "The task force believes that aboriginal people are exposed daily to racism in our society," said the "Justice on Trial" report to the Alberta legislature.

### Logging talks break down

**BARRIERE LAKE (Québec)** — Negotiations have broken down between the Algonquins of Barriere Lake and the government of Québec regarding a conservation strategy for La Verendrye Wildlife Reserve.

La Verendrye, ancestral territory of the Barrière Lake band, has been subjected to clear-cut logging and other destructive forestry practices. The Algonquins have protested this for years, and put forward a proposal for a resource management plan that would include all forest users. But after long negotiations with the province, involving many compromises by the natives, Québec still would not accept their plan.

Québec's alternative agreement, the Algonquins say, is one they cannot sign, because it does not recognize the importance of their traditional way of life and provides no mechanism for changing forestry practices in La Verendrye. With this plan, they say, clear-cutting and destruction of the forest would go on unhindered.

The band is now calling on other native and non-native peoples to join them in a blockade during the summer cutting season "to assist us in maintaining a ban on forestry operations in our territory, until we reach a formal written agreement."

### Jail for logging blockaders

**N'DAKI MENAN (Ontario)** — Sentencing for the Temagami blockades of 1989-90 continues, and it is becoming clear that those arrested on the native-coordinated, non-violent, blockade are being sentenced more harshly than those arrested on the blockade set up by non-native environmentalists.

Non-natives arrested on the native blockade are getting fines of up to \$700 for a single mischief charge. It seems natives are being treated even more severely — one woman, a mother of several children, was being sentenced to sixty days in jail because she was unable to pay her fine of \$1,500.

### Shoshone lands bombed

**NEWVE SEGOBIA (Nevada)** — As the United States conducted its second nuclear test of the year in the Nevada desert on April 3, peace activists attempted to stop the 150 kiloton explosion by occupying the test area. The Western Shoshone National Council, legal owners of the land under the 1863 Treaty of Ruby Valley, continued to issue permits for activists to enter the test site. More than 700 atmospheric and underground tests have been conducted at the Nevada site since 1953, and jets from Nellis Air Force Base over fly their lands regularly.

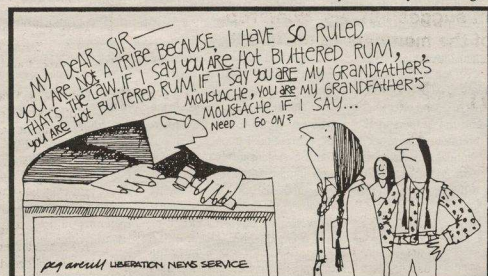
# Gitskan decision denies aboriginal land rights

BY MAGGIE HELWIG  
THE ACTIVIST

A three-year court case pursuing the land rights of the Gitskan and Wet'suwet'en peoples of northwestern British Columbia came to an end March 8, as B.C. Supreme Court Judge Allan McEachern handed down a stunning — indeed, bizarre — verdict, denying the native people any right whatsoever to their own unceded land.

rights to the land, based on traditional occupancy and use, may be said to have been extinguished. Is it when a treaty has been signed which clearly states that aboriginal title is relinquished? Is it when a treaty suggests this? Is it when there is no treaty, but simply acknowledgement of the non-native presence in the land and some Canadian government jurisdiction?

It is the uncertainty about which has made many native wary of entering a



According to the McEachern, the Gitskan and Wet'suwet'en do not own their land because they lack proper concepts of land ownership. Furthermore, the fact that the British settlers assumed that the natives had no land rights was sufficient to extinguish all native land rights. Besides which, aboriginal rights really exist only "at the pleasure of the crown."

Anyway, McEachern concludes, the only future for native peoples is to assimilate, accept good white Anglo values, and go out and make some money for themselves, possibly by levelling every tree in British Columbia. He supposes the Gitskan and Wet'suwet'en can do this, because, he generously allows, they have "already achieved a relatively high level of social organization."

But the McEachern decision is not only an offensive document and a serious setback for the Gitskan and Wet'suwet'en themselves. It is a dangerous precedent that could affect First Nations throughout the country.

McEachern's ruling directly affects the issue of comprehensive land claims — that is, land claims in which no prior treaty or agreement between the native peoples and the settlers exist, and the land is still formally unceded native land. There are virtually no treaties in B.C., and almost all land claims are comprehensive claims. The land claim of the Innu of Nitassinan (Québec-Labrador) is a comprehensive claim as well, and so are a number of others, mostly in Québec and the Northwest Territories.

The crucial question, in comprehensive land claims, is "extinguishment" — that is, under what conditions the aboriginal

comprehensive claims process, knowing that entering into any agreement with the government may be seen as extinguishing their prior rights to the land.

But McEachern was even more sweeping. According to his March 8 decision, aboriginal title was apparently extinguished by the simple fact that white people moved into the area.

Newfoundland Judge James Igloliorte, ruling in 1989 that the Innu could not be convicted of trespass on their land, derided the belief that "the Crown acquired magically by its own declaration of title" rights to the land. But it seems that Judge McEachern believes exactly in this magical process, by which white people come to own the land just because they say so.

Worse, the McEachern judgement is already being used as a precedent in B.C. courts. Fifty-nine Lil'wat people, charged with contempt of court for a blockade of a logging road in their territory in central B.C., argued that the provincial government had no authority to forbid blockades on unceded Lil'wat land. The judge, citing the McEachern decision, dismissed Lil'wat sovereignty as a non-issue, not even fit to be considered in court "unless and until (the McEachern decision) is reversed on appeal."

It hardly seems likely that the decision will be reversed on appeal. McEachern has now been promoted from the B.C. Supreme Court to Chief Justice of the B.C. Court of Appeal, where the Gitskan and Wet'suwet'en must take their case now.

The Gitskan and Wet'suwet'en will continue to pursue the court case, B.C. native leaders say. An emergency meeting

## The Artists' Environment Segato presents Project Indigenous Restoration

**Sunday, April 21 — Day 1**  
6 AM — TRADITIONAL SUNRISE CEREMONY at Queen's Park All day — NATIVE SPEAKERS representing indigenous peoples from the Amazon to the Arctic, with Native drumming and dancing at intermissions. FREE.

7:30 PM — CONCERT at the Royal Alexandra Theatre, featuring Daniel Lanois with Tanteo Cardinal, Gary Farmer, Lorraine Segato, Tom Jackson and friends. Tickets available from box office, from \$32.

**Monday, April 22 — Day 2**  
EARTH DAY IN SCHOOLS: Over 50 elders, chiefs and traditional teachers will spend the day in elementary and secondary schools throughout Toronto and Surround. They will share their wisdom and their knowledge on caring for our environment, our Mother Earth.

### Tuesday, April 23 — Day 3

A three-part public forum at OISE. Topics for consideration include:

- The sharing of ecological wisdom from elders
  - The sharing of spiritual reverence held by native peoples
  - Strategies of sustainable development by native communities
  - Caring for Mother Earth by traditional methods
  - Environmental degradation on the traditional native economy
  - The healing properties of medicinal plants as taught by natives.
- Tickets: \$5, students FREE.

Volunteers are still needed. If you can help, call Danny Beaton (Mohawk Six Nations), Executive Director of The Artists' Environment Forum, at 921-0014.

of chiefs will also, reportedly, be planning civil disobedience actions across the country. Some suggest that the anger and frustration of native peoples, abused by the Canadian system with an almost complete consistency, cannot much longer be prevented from breaking out in violence, especially after the example set last summer at Oka. But Ovide Mercredi of the Assembly of First Nations said protests would remain non-violent, and he hopes that a policy of non-violence will be agreed to by native leaders throughout Canada.

It is clear, though, that McEachern and others, in the courts and in the government, are doing nothing to prevent an explosion.

### Diploma Programme in Community Work

George Brown College offers a Diploma Programme in Community Work to persons with a strong commitment to human rights, social justice and community development in a multicultural society.

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WHEELCHAIR ACCESS

# World peace groups to meet in Toronto

By STEPHEN DANKOWICZ  
THE ACTIVIST  
WITH IPB FILES

Peace activists will have the unique opportunity to meet and share ideas with friends from around the world at a three day International Peace Bureau Conference, September 13-15, 1991.

Last September, ACT for Disarmament joined the world's oldest international peace organization, the International Peace Bureau (IPB). The IPB is a global network of independent and non-aligned peace organizations. A permanent secretariat is located in Geneva, Switzerland. The decisions and activities of the IPB are carried out by the member organizations, by the elected officers and by the secretariat.

The highest decision-making body in the IPB is the annual General Assembly, at which each

By FRANK SHOWLER  
THE ACTIVIST

The theme for this year's IPB Conference is "Building World Community: Reconciliation and Resistance." Peace involves reconciliation. Opposing forces, whether they be individuals, groups or nations, must be reconciled to one another in order to produce real or lasting peace. Yet we must resist militarism, racism, sexism, and violations of human rights. Otherwise, these forces will dominate society.

How do we resist such evils and yet bring about reconciliation — and often with the very persons and groups who have promoted or perpetuated them? When should we resist and when try to reconcile? Are the practices of resistance and of reconciliation really at odds with each other? Can they work together? If so, how?

These are the kinds of questions the Conference is intended to consider.

member organization has one vote. This body decides on IPB policy, the Program of Action and specific campaigns, and elects the president and the 12-person Executive Committee. The work is funded by annual fees from the member organizations, a trust fund collecting the Nobel Peace Prize

money (IPB received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1910), grants and donations.

The IPB exists to serve the cause of peace by the promotion of international cooperation and the non-violent and peaceful solution of international conflicts. The role of the IPB as defined by its member organizations includes: networking (between all kinds of peace organizations), informing (peace movements, governments and the public), monitoring (UN and inter-governmental negotiations) and campaigning (on the fields of action decided annually) by the member organizations.

The creation of the "permanent International Peace Bureau" as the executive office of the International Union of Peace Societies was decided at the third Universal Peace Congress in Rome in July, 1891. The IPB's rules and the council were approved and elected at the fourth Universal Peace Congress in Bern in August 1892. At its foundation the IPB began to organize annual Universal Peace Congresses promoting disarmament, a League of Nations (later the United Nations) and an International Court of Justice. It has worked for international cooperation, organized more than 80 seminars and conferences. pub-

lished reports on specific international problems and initiated international campaigns in the peace movement.

More recently the IPB has become a coordination and service institution for the global peace movement, bringing the demands of peace movements onto the international political agenda. For example: in 1967 the IPB and several other nongovernmental organizations made a study on conscientious objection to military service, which resulted in a recommendation to the UN General Assembly. In 1971 the General Assembly passed a resolution, broadly modelled on the IPB's recommendation, asking the UN Secretary General to make a report on the issue, and introducing the first discussion of conscientious objection in the United Nations. Another example is the adoption of the Bradford Proposals for Disarmament in 1974, initiated by Sean MacBride (president of the IPB from 1974 to 1985) at a conference convened by the IPB. This was one of the initiatives that led to the UN first Special Session on Disarmament in 1978, and for which (among other deciding factors) Sean MacBride won the Nobel Prize in 1974. The IPB has consultative status with

the UN/ECOSOC and UNESCO.

A special emphasis has been on the strengthening of international law. It is necessary to strengthen the United Nations and other international institutions, such as the International Court of Justice. The rivalry between the big powers and their domination of the world must be replaced by the idea of common security. The IPB seeks the right for all countries and peoples to self-determination and freedom from military, economic and political intervention by other countries. It aims for general and complete disarmament, both conventional and nuclear.

To achieve lasting peace there must be greater economic equality in the world. The resources of the rich countries must be used to eliminate underdevelopment, poverty and social injustice everywhere.

The human rights and democratic freedoms of each individual must be guaranteed. Special focuses for the IPB are the right to conscientious objection to military service, the right for peace activists to meet friends in other countries, and the right to demonstrate, protest and speak out against the international arms race and national armaments.

Concern for the welfare of the planet and all its life forms is an integral part of the work of the IPB.

Today the IPB is a rapidly expanding network, whose members include some of the world's major peace organizations. As of September 1990, there were 99 member organizations in some 37 countries. At Annual General Assemblies they decide together on a Programme of Action. The member organizations have played leading roles in the upsurge of the peace movement since the early 1980s, and in stimulating a new awareness of peace issues in public opinion and in the media. ☺

## Ontario Peace Conference

In conjunction with the IPB Conference, ACT Toronto will also be facilitating the reconvening of an Ontario Peace Conference (OPC). The last OPC was held in Belleville in 1989.

The OPC theme will be "Meeting the international peace movement." OPC 1991 will be a golden opportunity to learn and share ideas with activists from other countries.

On Sunday, September 15, the IPB will hold its Annual General Assembly for administrative decision-making.

On the same day, we Ontario peace activists can ourselves meet to discuss common goals, campaigns, strategies and ideas.

Please phone or write ACT for Disarmament to get involved in this exciting project. Now, more than ever, it is important that we in the peace movement strengthen our awareness of each others' activities.

The IPB/OPC Conference should accomplish much in strengthening our movement, locally, regionally and globally. ☺



IPB/OPC

Planning Meeting

Sunday, April 29

1 4 pm

ACT Peace Centre

736 Bathurst St.

(1 block S. of Bloor)

Toronto



Protesters blocked the main entrance to Pratt and Whitney's Mississauga plant for two hours on March 25, in conjunction with a blockade of the company's main plant in Montréal. Seven people were arrested at the Mississauga action. Pratt and Whitney is one of the world's largest exporters of military aircraft engines. [Photo: David Webster]

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# Well-made film unmasks hidden genocide in Papua

## Papua Merdeka!

Directed by Peter Monet  
40 minutes

REVIEWED BY MACDONALD SCOTT

Well, let's be honest. *Papua Merdeka!* is good and it's important. It covers an issue which few know much about (myself included, I knew zip before seeing the video), and yet one in which Canada has a nice big bloody hand, under the guise of companies like Noranda and Lavalin. There are faults, as there are in any low-budget, idealistic production, but they are not serious. The video is well documented, with expert opinions from Noam Chomsky, members of the West Papua Resistance, the Organisasi Papua Merdeka, and refugees from Papua itself.

And what an issue it is. Since Indonesia took over West Papua in 1963, planned genocide has been carried out against the indigenous Melanesians of the area. Aided by multinational corporations, foreign aid (from the Canadian International Development Agency, CIDA, among others), and the United Nations, Indonesia has killed thousands, forced others out as refugees, and then tried forcibly to assimilate whoever was left (sort of like Canadian policy on Native peoples here). The highlight of the entire fiasco was the "Act of Free (No) Choice" in 1969, in which a referendum was carried out by Indonesia, in West Papua, over whether the island wanted to



remain part of Indonesia or obtain independence. The 1,025 West Papuans who were permitted to vote (approximately 1% of the population), did so behind barbed wire, under military guard. Not surprisingly, they voted to remain with Indonesia. This vote was ratified by the UN, which had observers there.

Things have gone downhill since. Valiant resistance by the OPM guerrillas (I would like to have seen a little more coverage on non-violent resistance, if there is any) has been met with bombing, strafing, napalm, the destruction of entire villages. The guerrillas, often armed with little more than bows and arrows, have managed to last more than twenty years, and have also managed to keep the Indonesian army off balance. The Indone-

sian solution? Transmigration; the movement of thousands of Javanese settlers into West Papua, where they are intended to overwhelm and force the assimilation of the uprooted Papuans. And the story goes on.

One problem with *Papua Merdeka!*, I found, was the overuse of talking heads. Unfortunately, I don't think this could be avoided, since the video was mainly shot in North America, and the only film coverage from West Papua itself was news footage and old films. However, this film coverage, accompanied by still shots and montages, added a fair amount of variety, keeping the "heads" from getting too monotonous.

Also interesting was the use of interspersed explanations, which both

appeared on the screen in print and were read by a narrator. These helped keep the viewer informed on the issue, while the human side was presented by the interviews.

Go see *Papua Merdeka!*, find out for yourself. And then go tell Lavalin and Inco, the two main Canadian companies involved in West Papua, just what you think of their aid to genocide. And tell Joe Clark, who thinks Indonesia has an excellent human rights record. I highly recommend you see this video, and then do something about what you are seeing!

*Papua Merdeka!* is available through: V-Tape, 183 Bathurst St., Toronto, Ont. M5T 2R7, (416) 863-9897. The Toronto premiere will be held at the Euclid Theatre in late May; contact V-Tape for more information. ☺



## TV for people

The Barefoot Channel  
By Kim Goldberg  
New Star Books  
pp. 176  
\$14.95 (pb), \$24.95 (hc)

REVIEWED BY STEPHEN DANKOWICH

The Barefoot Channel is a valuable resource book for all social movement activists. B.C.'s Kim Goldberg has constructed an easy-to-read popular manual on how to gain access to the 300 community television stations across Canada.

For 3 years, Goldberg was the program coordinator at the community access television channel in Nanaimo. She has worked in alternative and mainstream media for the last 12 years.

Her main message is that community television is for our use as social movement activists. Access to community television provides the opportunity to explain your group's message fully without having it edited or reduced to a headline, as often occurs in mainstream media. The Barefoot Channel provides useful insights into the internal dynamics of this relatively new communications tool.

She also reveals how "cable giants" have gained control, and why it's important that social movement activists reclaim community television themselves.

Goldberg provides answers to almost all questions anyone might have when approaching the use of community television. Such involvement can enhance coalition building, empower many, and "has enormous potential to liberate the public from the controlled flow of information, experience and thought." ☺

## Stories and time of Dimlahamid

A Death Feast in Dimlahamid  
By Terry Glavin  
New Star Books  
pp. 200  
\$14.95 (pb), \$24.95 (hc)

REVIEWED BY MAGGIE HELWIG

A *Death Feast in Dimlahamid* had already sold out its first printing when Judge Allan McEachern handed down his decision on the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en land claim. In the wake of that decision, the book becomes perhaps even more important and relevant.

*Death Feast* tells one small part of the Gitksan-Wet'suwet'en story, the fall of 1989 when the land claim was being fought both in court, as the case proceeded before McEachern, and on the land, as the natives proclaimed themselves sovereign territory, set up non-violent blockades to stop the logging on their land, and began to issue hunting and fishing permits on their own, circumventing the provincial government.

Terry Glavin, a reporter for the *Vancouver Sun*, spent time on one of the blockades, and he does not pretend to be an impartial observer. His heart is with the Gitksan; he has listened to their traditional stories and believed them to be true. He has slept in a tent blocking the Bulkley River Road, attended the clan feasts, and talked at length with the hereditary chiefs and others. He believes in the ancient natural "laws" called the ada'ox by the Gitksan, and the kungax by the Wet'suwet'en; he believes in the healers called the halais, and the destructive secret society of the haldowgets.

This is what gives *Death Feast* its particular value. It is useful, certainly, to know the background of the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en struggle, and Glavin provides that, giving brief histories of native-settler relationships since the non-natives first arrived. But it is more important to gain some sense of who these people are, and what their work towards sovereignty means to them; and to the non-natives as well.

The title comes from the story of Dimlahamid, the Gitksan-Wet'suwet'en empire that is said to have existed thousands of years ago, a highly advanced civilization that was scattered by the spirits when the people treated animals with disrespect. Glavin accepts Dimlahamid as having had a historical existence, but he also sees Dimlahamid as a future, a possibility in Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en territory. Dimlahamid can mean also the sovereign society envisioned by traditional chiefs Don Ryan (Mas Gak), Wii Sekes (Ralph Mitchell) and others, which could include the white settlers as well as the native peoples, could combine the halais and the fax ma-

bush. "My Uncle Pete said, 'Go out there. Live out there. Talk to the trees.' So I did. But they don't talk back. They just stood there. I was just, I don't know, doing it. Nothing happened. But then after one sixteen-hour day, I was just beat, and I stopped in my snowshoe tracks and lay down, and they said, 'Oh, you poor thing.' I looked up. Well, it was a lot easier to go that last four miles to the cabin... There are times when I feel like singing at the top of my voice out there. I don't think I ever feel so good as when I'm out there."

*Death Feast* is not a systematic study of the land claims in northwest B.C.; it is not even a careful history, and the chronology is sometimes confusing. And you could say that Terry Glavin is yet another white guy writing about the natives, and that is not untrue. But he is a white guy who has listened carefully, and realizes that the First Peoples have a worldview and a system of values that may not be those of "mainstream" Canadian society, and may well be superior. A *Death Feast in Dimlahamid* is not a book to pass off lightly. ☺

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But that can't happen without your help. ACT for Disarmament is an all-volunteer, independent, non-aligned peace group. We accept no government grants or corporate "gifts." We depend entirely on the generosity of our supporters — people like you. Here are just a few of the ACT campaigns you will be supporting:

Ninth annual spring protest for peace + Support for the Innu and other First Nations menaced by militarism + Work against ongoing wars like East Timor and Lithuania + Abolition of the military worldwide + General Electric boycott + 1991 conference of the International Peace Bureau + Efforts to make conscientious objector status available in Canada + Raising awareness, through education and action, about the Middle East + High school organizing + Publishing Toronto's only peace newspaper + Joint campaigns with independent eastern European activists through the Helsinki Citizens Assembly + End cruise missile and other weapons testing in Canada + Work to halt the expansion of nuclear power in Ontario and uranium mining across Canada + get Canada out of the international arms trade + Make the links between peace, ecology and human rights + and more + and more

# PEACE Magazine

Special issue on Native Rights

Featuring — John Bacher • Anabel Cathrall • Linda Champagne • Don Gaspé • Doug George • Tony Hall • Dawn Hill • Chief Jacob Thomas

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**Dearest Emma; I'm OK.** Thanks for asking. I'm too tired — OK, hun? With much love, despite the sarcasm. Lucas. P.S. — I would like to meet over a bowl of water and puppy chow of your choice (except jello) but am tired of running down the street to be refused.

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### Western Canada Wilderness

Committee needs environmental canvassers. We are a non-profit organization based in Canada working for the preservation and protection of Canadian and international wilderness through research and education. We promote the principles which achieve ecologically sustainable communities. Phone Michael or Tonya, 324-9827.

**Peace needs you!** Volunteer for ACT for Disarmament, the peace group without leaders. Office staffing, street outreach, poster, fundraising and much more needs doing. Call ACT, 531-6154.

**Oil, Golf Courses and War:** Kanesetake and the Persian Gulf as Occasions for Discovering the Weapons of the Spirit. Towards a Fuller Understanding on Nonviolent Power. A booklet available from: Project Ploughshares, Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ontario N2L 3G6.

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**Layout and design** assistance at reasonable prices. Contact The ACTivist, 416-531-6154.

Deadline for next issue: **April 24.** Please send payment with ad. \$10 for up to 25 words, \$15 for up to 50 words.

## Coming in May

5th special spring protest issue, including the programme for ACT for Disarmament's annual **spring protest for peace** on Saturday, May 11. Reach over 10,000 peaceful readers! **Advertise in the May issue of The ACTivist.** Call 531-6154 for rate-sheet and details.

# EAST TIMOR WANTED



In December 1975, just ten days after declaring its independence from Portugal, the tiny country of East Timor was invaded by its neighbour Indonesia. In the decade-and-a-half since, an estimated 250,000 people — over a third of the population — have been killed. Genocide and massive human rights violations — including rape, forced abortions, torture, indiscriminate killings and mass executions — go on to this day. But so does the struggle for freedom of the East Timorese people. It is largely the support of countries like Canada that allows Indonesia to maintain its occupation.

*East Timor Update* is edited in Toronto by the East Timor Alert Network. Contact the Network for more information:

National/West: PO Box 354, Ladysmith BC, V0R 2E0.

Toronto: PO Box 562, Stn. P, Toronto, M5S 2T1.

Ottawa: 27 Third Ave., Ottawa Ont., K1S 2J5.

Eastern Ontario: 217 Glengarry Rd., Kingston Ont., K7M 3J6.

Western Ontario: Dr Peter Eglin, Wilfred Laurier University, Waterloo Ont., N2L 3C5.

East: 1592 Vernon St., Halifax NS, B3H 3M7.

## UN chief speaks out on East Timor

A delegation of Parliamentarians for East Timor met United Nations Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar on March 25 to demand that the UN give the same consideration to East Timor, invaded and annexed by Indonesia in December 1975, as it has to Kuwait, invaded and annexed by Iraq in August 1990. "Recent events in the Gulf show that firm action can be taken against aggressors" a memo from Britain's Lord Avebury, leader of the delegation, said. "It is to be hoped that the principles established at a high cost in human lives and destruction of the environment in Kuwait will be applied equally to all other instances of the kind, including particularly East Timor."

Perez de Cuellar told the parliamentarians that, in his view, East Timor had the same rights to determine its own status as Namibia or the Western Sahara. Namibia became independent in 1990, while the UN hopes to resolve the situation of Moroccan-occupied Western Sahara this year.

"He said the people of East Timor had the same rights to self-determination that those other peoples have, that East Timor is just as important as those other struggles," said Australian parliamentarian Garrie Gibson. Members of parliament from Australia, Britain, the Netherlands, Japan and Portugal were part of the delegation.

The meeting was "open and promising," said Dutch MP Rob van Gijzel. Van Gijzel said Perez de Cuellar wants to be closely involved in a visit by Portuguese MPs to their former Timor colony, scheduled for June, and that the UN will try to bring about a ceasefire between Indonesian troops and pro-independence Fretilin guerrillas, at least for the duration of the visit.

The parliamentarians group called on the UN to enforce General Assembly Resolution 37/30 of 1982 and Security Council Resolution 389 of April 1976, as well as earlier resolutions calling on Indonesia to withdraw from East Timor and allow self-determination and humanitarian aid to its people. (Canada abstained on these resolutions until 1980, but has voted against East Timor ever since.) Negotiations under the Secretary-General's auspices between Indonesia and Portugal must be expanded to include representatives of the East Timorese people themselves, the parliamentarians said.



## EC criticizes East Timor human rights violations

The 12-country European Community intervened on behalf of East Timor at the United Nations Human Rights Commission hearings in February. The EC said it was "gravely concerned at the human rights situation prevailing in East Timor. Whilst access to certain districts continues to be prohibited, reports have reached us of arrests of short or long duration, mistreatment, torture and executions, whereas non-respect for the right of peaceful assembly and freedom of expression continues to be inflicted on the inhabitants of East Timor by the Indonesian forces."

## Australian oil theft on

Despite a case launched by Portugal in the World Court against its illegal diversion of the oil riches of the Timor Gap with Indonesia, the government of Australia is pressing ahead with oil exploration in the seabed below the Gap. International law recognizes the Timor Gap as part of the territorial waters of East Timor.

Although the case is now before the court, Australian companies are being encouraged to start exploration. Prospective bidders for contract areas should start seismic surveys for oil immediately, said the Australian Energy Minister, Mr Griffiths.

## Indonesian group wants E. Timor referendum

On January 14, on the eve of the Gulf war, a new Committee Against War in the Gulf made the first-ever public call in Indonesia for a referendum on independence for East Timor and Indonesian-occupied West Papua. A statement from the anti-war group read, in part: "So that such a crisis as the Gulf crisis, which in its essence stems from and is a rejection of human rights, is now repeated again, than other similar cases and problems should also be resolved. Such cases include: the case of the Palestinian people,

the East Timor people, the West Papuan people, the South African people, the Cambodian people, the Panamanian people, the Northern Ireland people, the Filipino people, and so on. These peoples should be allowed to resolve their situations through referenda."

## Land seizures protested

At least 150 people of Manatuto, a town on the southern coast about 60 km from Dili, were chased by Indonesian soldiers because of a two-day religious march organized by the parish priest of nearby Hilimanu in June 1990. The march culminated in the lowering of Indonesian flags from military posts. It was called to protest the seizure of Hilimanu-area lands, which are rich in marble and sandalwood, by the wife and son-in-law of Indonesian president Suharto, Ibm Tien Suharto and Prabowo.

Suharto's son-in-law Prabowo is the commander of the Indonesian 328th Battalion, which has executed many Timorese on his orders. In August 1990, reports just out say, Prabowo's soldiers threw two grenades into a group of Timorese farmworkers, causing several injuries. Events like this one contribute to what observers have described as a general atmosphere of terror in East Timor.

## 13-year old tortured

In the Indonesian-occupied areas of East Timor, especially Dili, teenagers and children have been waging a campaign called "Kapan Pulang," Indonesian for "when are you going home?" This campaign, in which Indonesian settlers and soldiers are asked "kapan pulang?" has been going on since early 1990. Its aim is to let them know that Timorese reject the Indonesian presence.

In response, Indonesian soldiers have started to beat and arrest children. One case is that of José Ly, a 13-year old boy who was accused of using a telephone box to phone people and ask them, "kapan pulang?" He was arrested, tortured and held for four days and nights. His family had to pay a bribe of 20,000 rupiahs to get him out of jail.

## East Timor Alert Network Resources

### From BC address:

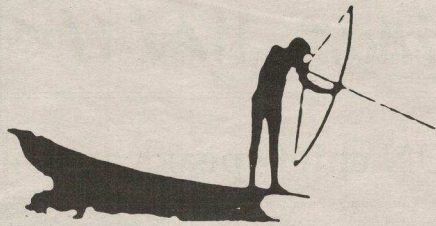
East Timor: A Chronology, by John Taylor \$30  
West Papua: The Obliteration of a People, by Tapol \$15

### From Toronto address:

East Timor and Kuwait background (NEH) \$1  
Report on Torture in East Timor \$1  
FUNU: The Unfinished Saga of East Timor, by Jos Ramos-Horta \$10

### Also:

East Timor: Betrayed But Not Beaten, directed by Peter Monet (VHS, 32 mins) loan only  
Free East Timor! buttons \$1  
Other materials are also available.



# SURVIVAL INTERNATIONAL

for the rights of threatened tribal peoples

"Without the land, the people are nothing. Without the indigenous peoples, the land is nothing"  
— Declaration of Indigenous Rights, 1987

"Any discussion about the tropical forests should begin by looking at the people who depend directly on them for their livelihood ... The main focus of concern must be on the remaining tribal people for whom the tropical forest has been their home for many generations ... These people are accomplished environmental scientists, and for us to call them 'primitive' is both perverse and patronizing."

— HRH Prince Charles, 1990

We are a group of concerned people interested in setting up a **Canadian section of Survival International**, one of the foremost groups in the world campaigning for the rights of indigenous peoples, threatened with the destruction of their way of life and their very existence.

**Survival International** has national sections in Brazil, Britain, France, Italy, Spain, and the United States, but no group in Canada is doing similar work. We want to change that.

Why? Just a few of the reasons:

+ The **Barabaig** pastoralists of Tanzania have been burned out of their homes, had their cattle taken and been forbidden to pass through farmland to get to water sites as a result of a government push to turn their land into giant prairie-style wheat farms. The push is being funded by the Canadian International Development Agency.

+ The native peoples of **West Papua** (called Irian Jaya by its Indonesian rulers) are being displaced

from their homes by the largest transmigration project in the world, with the aid of the Canadian engineering company Lavalin.

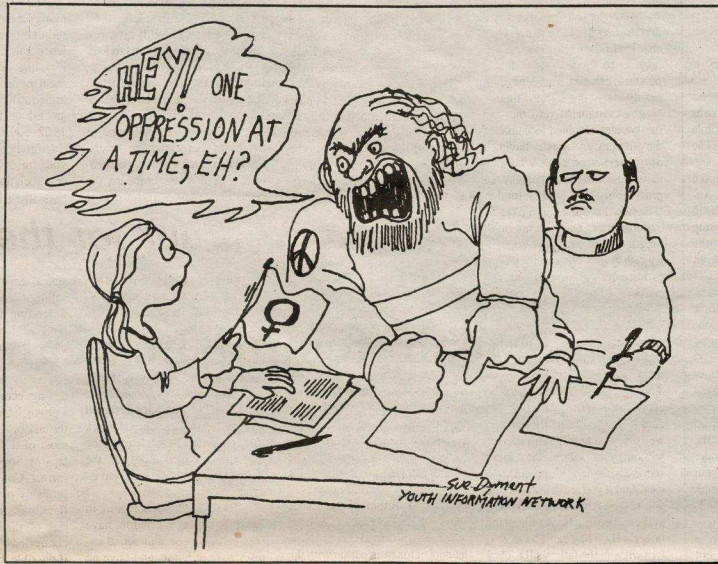
+ The Jumma peoples of the **Chittagong Hill Tracts** of Bangladesh have been invaded by government forces, causing mass evacuations, indiscriminate attacks and massacres of tribal villagers. Bangladesh is the single largest recipient of Canadian development aid.

+ Canada's native peoples, from the Haida of the Pacific to the Innu of Nitassinan (Labrador) need the international support that only a group like Survival International can provide.

Are you interested in being a part of it? A Survival planning committee has been set up in Toronto, and will be holding a public organizing meeting on **Wednesday, May 1** (place to be announced). We need your input, ideas, and donations.

Contact **John Bacher**, c/o ACT for Disarmament, 736 Bathurst St., Toronto, M5S 2R4, 416-531-6154.

# Goodbye to all that again 'Cause it didn't go away the last time!



## A special supplement on women in the "movement"

When I was 17, I moved from Small Town Nowhere to join the full-time, all-volunteer staff of a fledgling disarmament organization that wanted to make it to the Big Time. I owe it to my tremendous typing skills.

I was the only woman, in a staff of 5 men.

Armageddon was imminent. I wasn't likely to reach 25 before the End came. Everything not focussed on that was a waste of time, time that could be better spent saving the planet. How could I be so selfish as to complain? I should be grateful to serve such noble individuals, working so hard in such a noble cause. Maybe, one day, I would be allowed to do

more than type and clean, if I ever showed any abilities for anything else. In the meantime, the Director wanted his lunch.

As the years went by, the joy of working for something beyond the borders of my own paltry existence ran into conflict with the daily pain of typing men's letters, cooking men's meals, doing men's dishes, and washing men's socks. It was no accident that I typed in the kitchen.

Despite the men's best efforts, feminism sneaked into my life in the form of strong women who were highly critical of the behaviour and policies of these men, and forced me into an internal question of loyalties. As I got older, I lost some of my stupidity. I began to choose myself.

In the summer of 1982, I hitchhiked to the Michigan Women's Music Festival. Sixty-five hundred women, playing in the woods, if not without scars, at least struggling to heal their own wounds.

I began to think about rape.

Dawn had just begun when I got back to the house in Ottawa that served as the home and headquarters for the peace group and its men. I had picked up a ride back with two women who had been to the festival, and I climbed the front porch wrapped in a cocoon of emotional ecstasy, safety and possibility. The early rays of the sun were just starting to touch the street. I felt stronger for the risks I had taken and the shit I had to put up with to make the trip. I actually felt good about myself as I opened the front door of the house.

Then I saw The Chair.

A simple kitchen chair, a useful if not particularly decorative object. My Chair. In front of the typewriter. As benign as the electric chair.

Despair crashed through my cocoon. I could not enter the house. I backed back onto the porch, but it was too late, the safety was gone. In its place was rage.

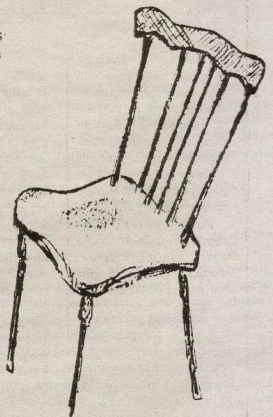
That rage stuck with me for the next 5 months, until I freed

myself, and is with me still, as I remember. What angered me most was the betrayal. It was not what it should have been. They were not who they told me they were.

I should not have been so naive.

I never will be again.

Deb Ellis



This tabloid was originally produced as a supplement to the ACTivist Vol. 7 #4. Opinions expressed here are not necessarily those of the ACTivist or of ACT for Disarmament.

## On being a "reasonable" feminist

By Kate Sandilands

I consider myself to be a fairly calm sort of person. Whenever possible, I prefer discussion over brawling, empathy over verbal manoeuvring, consensus over tyranny. I genuinely believe that other people have something important to say, even if their ideas differ considerably from my own. For the most part, I am a very "reasonable" person.

But there are moments when "being reasonable" is a weapon used against me. Actually, there is a fairly consistent pattern to its invocation: "reasonable" is what I am not, apparently, when I speak or act as a feminist.

When I dare to suggest that a certain behaviour *might* be considered sexist; when I point out that there *seem* to be systemic patterns of misogyny in a given structure or situation; when I put forward that a feminist perspective on an issue *may* cast it in a slightly different light — *these* are the moments when I am called "unreasonable", *especially* if I replace the tentative conditional verbs with "is" or "are".

"Be reasonable," men say when I transgress their preferred political etiquette. "Be rational," they say when I refuse to agree with an otherwise "politically correct" but profoundly sexist position on an issue. "You are being unreasonable," they insist when I demand strong support for feminist issues, organizations, or projects.

"Unreasonableness," along with its corollary, "irrationality," is seen as an affront to Western, liberal notions of "humanity." Citizens are supposed to deliberate calmly to achieve a representative, egalitarian solution to any problem. Steidestepping, for the moment, the fact that this model has not proven very successful for women and other minorities so far, the



"You remember, we don't discuss sexual politics in front of company."

invocation of "irrationality" is designed to suggest that we haven't quite achieved this "liberal" (read: white, heterosexual, Western, adult, male) vision of what it means to be fully human. "Unreasonableness" casts the speaker as "Other," as opposite, and as inferior.

Particularly for women, our "irrationality" suggests that we have not yet emerged from the tyranny of our biology: "hormones gone mad"; "that time of the month". Men, it appears (to themselves, at least) are free from such constraints: they can transcend the body, the emotions, the dictatorship of the unrestrained passions (note the contradiction: men's "passion" for the arts, for scholarly pursuits, or for politics, is a different thing altogether, they say).

So if feminists transgress this shifting and elusive boundary of "reasonableness," it is seen as a *result* of our sex. We are not supposed to be passionate about issues that *we* think are important (although it seems to be acceptable to exhibit such emotion over issues that *men* find important). We are told that we



## "Yeah, feminism, yeah ..."

By Ilza Holly

My assumption that men would be less sexist or more responsible for their sexism in the progressive movements when I joined various organizations (peace, environment and solidarity groups) ten years ago was both unfortunately hopeful and a very painful one.

As long as the political agenda of these organizations is "a bigger and more important" one than the horrendous experience of racism and sexism will continue. When I say horrendous, I mean it. Yes, it might be more subliminal than as we classistly laugh at the boys lined up at the Brunswick House, but in my experience there is no difference; it's just done with more "class".

What is our agenda? Our agenda seems mostly far away from our own realities. Wars far away, solidarity with other struggles; I feel I have to say this so it can't be used as an excuse — yes, of course, these agendas are important. But where are the links that over and over again I have heard men say they make? War, racism, sexism, poverty, all these crimes are linked; and yet the degrading treatment of wominn, through sexism, racism and classism, continues both in meetings and demonstrations, and — what's harder — at home in men's relationships with wominn.

It seems all a man has to say is, yeah, feminism, yeah, I've read Alice Walker or Starhawk, and that's it, no work, no more responsibility.

Time and time again when I have told men (which by the way takes a lot of courage still; that's why so many wominn do not challenge men still, which must be some indication) that they have offended, ignored, contradicted, or tried to manipulate me they tell me, oh, come on, you're overreacting, too emotional, and besides it's not important compared to ... I'm not being sexist! It's the same as when a wominn of colour

is raising the issue of racism and her concerns are dismissed.

But this doesn't happen very often, of course, within these groups, because the majority of people in them are white. I wonder why. And the majority of the white people are men. I wonder why.

As a white working class wominn, I have experienced a lot of frustration when men tell me what my experience is or is not, and when the socialist, educated elite of the progressive movements tells me what the working masses want and then laughs when I tell them what my job is. Or says, "Isn't that cute." And we all internalize it.

Over the past few years working with native wominn and wominn of colour I have learned a lot. A lot about myself, my racism, and my privilege as a white wominn.

I've had to swallow my pride and face a lot of truths. It's ongoing work. I would have been more comfortable staying the way I was.

In terms of racism, classism, sexism, homophobia, ageism, ableism, everything that we see and feel as the privilege and power that the state uses to continue this insanity, we must see how we use the same privilege and power over other peoples in what we call progressive movements. Our groups, our communities and the same pain that it causes.

Back to my own experience, as a wominn, with sexism. I see that men have to listen to wominn. If a wominn has told you she's offended, she is. But it's not only up to us, it shouldn't be. Men must challenge each other. How much courage does it take?

How comfortable are you in your life of resistance? If it's not scary, it's not courage, and the more comfortable we are, the more comfortable the state is with us.

are hostile if we put forward alternative (and not necessarily complimentary) definitions of reality, if we choose to organize autonomously, if we demand, rather than request, changes in process or policy.

Perhaps it's because men have relied on women for so long, in the peace movement as elsewhere, to be the nurturers, to soothe anger, to act as go-betweens, that when we begin to act autonomously, there's nobody to mediate. Perhaps it's because white Western men have never really had to question their own humanity that they feel so comfortable defining its parameters to exclude the "unrea-

sonableness" they see as characteristic of others. Most likely, it's because "reason" itself is elusive (and dependent on context) that those in power feel the need to defend its boundaries so strongly, to invoke its legacy so often, in defense of their own definitions of what full humanity, and hence reason, are all about.

And being a "reasonable" feminist means challenging that definition of white, adult, male humanity. After all, look at where that model of "reason" has got us.

# The way we live now: from the inside out

By Maggie Helwig

"We are the women that men have warned us about."

Robin Morgan, "Goodbye to All That"

"The oppressors are indeed *fucked up* by being masters (racism hurts whites, sexual stereotypes are damaging to men), but those masters are not *oppressed*. Any master has the alternative of divesting himself of sexism or racism; the oppressed have no alternative ... In the long run, women's liberation will of course free men — but in the short run it's going to *cost* men a lot of privilege, which no one gives up willingly or easily. Sexism is *not* the fault of women."

Robin Morgan, "Goodbye to All That"

"Meeting after meeting, at some point I go to the bathroom and vomit. I tell myself it's the stress of the revolution."

Robin Morgan, "The Demon Lover"

Stop me if you've heard this one before.

- A prominent male member of a social change group sexually assaults a female member. Afraid of damaging his credibility, she never tells anyone but a few close women friends.

- A woman who raises problems with the decision-making process in a group she is involved with is told she has "a problem with men".

- A woman who tries to raise, with the men she is working with, questions of sexism within the organization, is attacked for "hurting their feelings".

- In a close-knit political community, there is one man who almost all the women have serious problems with — he is unpredictable, possibly violent, known to harass women, and many of them fear both for the credibility of the group and for themselves. The men respond simply that he "has a good heart".

- After a party attended by members of a peace organization, a number of people stay overnight at the host's house. Two women are sexually assaulted while they are asleep. Later, people who know the man who did it will not tell them, so they are unable to confront him with his behaviour.

- After a rally at which most of the speakers are women, the media quotes almost exclusively men. The ratio of men to women, when the media chooses to profile the peace movement, is usually about three to one. Several of the women who are quoted with some frequency by the media are criticized for this within their groups.

- Women who are personally involved with men who they also work with find they are expected to be fully accountable for the behaviour, and the political positions, of these men.

- A woman points out that, in meetings, a few verbally aggressive men are speaking far more often and longer than anyone else, and that women in particular are speaking hardly at all. She is told that women are as free to speak as men "if they really want to", and that making space for those less confident or experienced in verbal jousting would be patronizing. However, when anyone (especially a woman) speaks haltingly, emotionally or without much verbal-intellectual sophistication, she is interrupted or ignored.

- When women in a mixed group want to hold an action that is to be for women only, it creates a crisis in the group as men demand to know why they are being "excluded".

- At a spontaneously organized rally, two men stand up in front of the crowd and begin to lecture. A woman points this out and suggests that



more women should be heard. The men respond, "Well, we just stood up." The group then breaks into five small discussion groups, four of which are led by men.

- A male member of a peace group wears a button that says **Stop Violence Against Women**. Other men in the group tell him the button is sexist because it says "women", not "people". One of them tells him that "as many men are raped by women as women by men, it's just that men don't report it."

- Two men and one woman who work together politically are meeting socially. The men begin a discussion of types of women who appeal to them. The woman asks if they could not talk about this in front of her, as it is making her uncomfortable. They get angry, objecting that they were "not talking about women just about personality types."

- Women working in mixed political groups discover that they can get a positive response by criticizing feminism. Already insecure about their place in these groups, many choose to do so, even though they may feel terrible inside.

- Women who are uncomfortable being touched by men they do not know well must either explicitly say so over and over, and always at the risk of being attacked for "sexism", or put up with hugging, patting, stroking, etc. that they clearly do not welcome.

- A new member of a group regularly refers to the women as "chicks", "girls", "broads". Privately, the other men admit that this is not acceptable, but none of them will challenge him. When women bring it up, it is treated as a joke.

- A woman who has considerable responsibility in a political organization discovers that she is a "threat" to men she works with, although other men in the same position are not. When she is bullied, intimidated, criticized on minor points, spoken to rudely and even abusively, she is expected to understand how threatened the men feel, and not complain or try to stop them. Or else her complaints are not taken seriously — she is told this is not really happening, or is not really a gender issue.

Isn't this supposed to be where it all started twenty-five years ago?

Is the only new thing that if we criticize men as

men, we can be accused of sexism?

Are women encouraged to take on responsibility just so they can be bullied into giving it up?

And why is it that "just treating everybody like people" ends up meaning that everyone is supposed to act like men? That we can now be respected by The Movement as long as we are aggressive, verbal, tough, undemonstrative — though this still means that we will be seen as overbearing and pushy and "undesirable" and probably lose both male and female friends?

Think of all the ways we have had to twist ourselves around to fit all these conflicting demands, knowing that no matter what we are like we will never be okay in your eyes.

How many meetings have any of us sat through wanting to vomit? How many offices have we left to throw up in the washroom while we worked? And how often have we been able to admit this even to other women?

Remember these things —

We have been brought up to seek male approval. We *know*, through long and hard experience, that to be self-assertive, creative, questioning, will lose us that male approval. We find it very hard not to care about that.

We have suffered violence at the hands of men — in childhood, at school, at work, in the peace movement. Remember there is probably no woman you know who has not been raped or abused, assaulted or threatened. Even if we know that you, an individual man, would never hurt us, the fear cannot be dismissed.

We have not been taught to speak in public. We have not been encouraged to engage in intellectual sparring and think of it as fun. We have not been educated with the care that you have, even if we went to the same schools. We have not learned to think in abstractions and verbal concepts.

We have learned to cry, but not to get angry. We have later learned that when you get angry, people take you seriously, and when you cry the rest listening to what you are saying. We do not take our own complaints seriously. Or if we do, we cannot convince you that when we cry, we are still thinking rationally.

Try to understand our language for once. Try to understand that an idea put in concrete, personal, emotional terms is just as valid as when it is put in abstract, intellectual terms. Realize too that those of us who are verbal and intellectual and self-directed have paid a heavy price for this. Don't expect us to pay any more — don't set us up in competition with our sisters.

Listen to what we mean when we do not speak. Understand what different ways of touching and not touching mean to us. Do not dismiss what we are saying when we cry. Realize why we are not comfortable being "in authority", especially over other women.

And realize that if we learn to speak your language also, you have no right to attack us for that.

Realize that you will lose some degree of privilege by giving us back our power; just as white people will lose some privilege when native people are given back what is theirs, just as the rich will have to give up some of their privilege if there is to be a fair distribution of resources. And you know what? You are just going to have to live with that. Don't take it out on us. We are only asking for justice.

We cannot be expected to live this way much longer.



# The War at Home

• Research suggests that one out of four women in Canada are abused by their male partners. This means 6.25 million women. (Smith, *Violence and Victims* #2, 1987)

• In 1986-7, 31,689 cases of wife abuse were reported in Ontario. Only 20% of women who escape to shelters report their abuse to the police — women who never reach shelters are less likely to report. The Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses estimates that there may be half a million abused women in Ontario, based on an assumption that only one in eight women are abused. If we accept the figure above, there are almost one million abused women in Ontario.

• In those cases of abuse that were reported, the police filed charges less than half the time. The most common sentences received by the men charged were absolute or conditional discharges.

• The average age a woman will first experience physical abuse from a partner is at fifteen.

• Government estimates say that one in four Canadian women will be sexually assaulted at some time in their lives. Again, only about 20% ever report to the police. Only 1% of date rapes are ever reported. Studies suggest that in 63-83% of cases, women were raped by men they knew.

• In 1987, 15% of all murders in Canada involved husbands killing their wives. 96% of women killed in Canada are killed by men; 62% of them by their male partners.

• Worldwide. In the United States, a woman is beaten every 15 seconds. In the state of Gujarat, India, 1,000 women are burned alive each year in dowry-related incidents. In Bangladesh, 50% of all murders involve husbands killing their wives.

• According to the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses, "Men who abuse women are expressing a ... perceived patriarchal right to control women ... Tactics listed in Amnesty International's *Report on Torture* for mistreatment of prisoners of war coincide exactly with the experiences of most abused women."

This is war.

If we saw these figures for any other group of people, we would recognize it as a war.

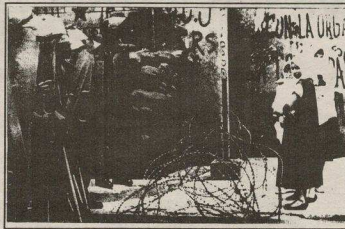
But violence against women is never seen as a peace issue. The peace movement does not even make rhetorical gestures towards addressing it in our literature, much less take any action on it — as some groups have taken action on human rights issues in Central America or issues involving native peoples in Canada. We do not see transition houses or our co-workers in the way we see solidarity organization and development organizations. At a time when many members of peace groups are rightly insisting that development issues be linked to peace and that this form a major part of our agenda, no one is demanding that violence against women be similarly treated.

And the women in peace groups are not raising this either, are not insisting that violence against us be treated seriously — because we are afraid of being laughed at? Because we are afraid to be directly told that something so painful and crucial to our lives is not part of the peace agenda? Or is it because we do not take our own issues seriously enough, dismiss the violence we and our friends have suffered as a side issue?

No one is talking about it.

And I have only one comment — why the hell not?

# Amnesty: Women in the front line



On March 8, International Women's Day, 1991, Amnesty International issued a report called *Women in the Front Line*. It has been described as "the first

major report on women victims of human rights violations" (at least, those that

fall within Amnesty's mandate, which is, as they admit, strictly defined — to seek the release of prisoners of conscience, to work for prompt and fair trials for political prisoners, and to oppose torture, executions and the death penalty).

The report details human rights abuses perpetrated largely on women — for instance, rape as a method of torture or a tool for interrogation. In many countries, rape by male police or guards is a routine part of arrest for women, especially women charged with political offenses. They may also be raped in order to extract "confessions", like María Juana Medina of El Salvador, repeatedly raped in an attempt to make her "admit" she had a connection with the trade union federation. In many societies women are afraid to admit they have been raped because of the stigma that would come upon them, so government agents can commit rape with impunity, knowing they will not be charged.

The physical vulnerability of pregnant women may also be taken advantage of by police; women in prison are often separated from their newborn babies; police may also arrest the children of women they are targeting.

Women prisoners of conscience may be arrested for many of the same political activities as men, but they may also be arrested for trying to work for women's rights, or for exercising

freedoms which men may be allowed to speak publicly, to write for publication, to drive a car ...). Nezha Al Bernoussi of Morocco is in prison due largely to her work in teaching illiterate women to read and write; Dhabia Khemis Mahairi of Abu Dhabi was arrested after publishing an article on issues facing women in Arab cultures. Many women are also arrested and detained simply for being the mothers, sisters, wives or partners of men the authorities consider "undesirable".

The report contains a series of recommendations to "protect women's human rights", many of which are relevant in North America, as well as around the world. They include:

• Stop rape, sexual abuse and other torture and ill-treatment by government agents...

Female guards should be present during the interrogation of female detainees and prisoners, and should be solely responsible for carrying out any body searches ... measures should be taken to prevent the opportunity for rape and sexual abuse, for example, by prohibiting contacts between male guards and female detainees and prisoners without the presence of a female guard ... All female detainees and prisoners should be given the opportunity to have a medical examination promptly after admission to the place of custody and regularly thereafter. They should also have the right to be examined by a doctor of their choice. A medical examination by a female doctor ... should be provided immediately for any female detainee or prisoner who alleges she has been raped.

• Stop persecution because of family connections.

Any woman detained or imprisoned solely because of her family connections should be immediately and unconditionally released. The practice of torturing or ill-treating women in order to bring pressure on their relatives should not be tolerated ... The imprisonment of a mother and child together must never be used to inflict torture or ill-treatment on either by causing physical or mental suffering. If a child is separated from its mother in prison, she should be immediately notified and continuously kept informed of its whereabouts and given reasonable access to the child.

• Provide adequate health care to all detainees and prisoners.

Provide all necessary pre-natal and post-natal care and treatment for women detainees and prisoners and their infants. Provide resources to treat conditions exclusively or primarily affecting women.

• Release all prisoners of conscience immediately and unconditionally.

Release all prisoners of conscience ... detained or imprisoned because of their sex, beliefs, ethnic origin, language or religion, including those so detained for their peaceful participation in the ... life of their society. No woman should be detained or imprisoned for peacefully attempting to exercise basic rights and freedoms enjoyed by men.

• Prevent human rights violations against women who are members of ethnic minorities.

Governments should recognize the special vulnerability of women who are members of ethnic minorities and indigenous populations and take urgent steps to protect them against human rights violations.

Copies of the report are available from Amnesty International, 322 1/2 Bloor St. W., Toronto, M5S 1W5.

## If you need help: Numbers to call

- Assaulted Women's Hotline \_\_\_\_\_ 929-9743
- Toronto Rape Crisis Centre \_\_\_\_\_ 597-8808 (hotline)
- Women's Counselling and Referral Service \_\_\_\_\_ 534-7501
- Nellie's Hostels for Women \_\_\_\_\_ 461-1084
- Women's Hassle Free Clinic \_\_\_\_\_ 922-0566
- Native Women's Resource Centre \_\_\_\_\_ 963-9963
- Anishnawbe Health \_\_\_\_\_ 360-0486
- Wimm Prisoners Survival Network Box 770, Stn. P, Toronto M5S 2Z1
- Sistering Drop-In \_\_\_\_\_ 366-0001



## Domestic violence and the Native community

A number of Native organizations were visibly upset by the findings and the release of the study to the press. The response ranged from a survey challenging the validity of the report by the Native Canadian Centre, to a number of outspoken leaders stating that the statistics were exaggerated. Overall, Paul Capon, policy analyst for the Native Women's Association said, "the response has not been as enthusiastic as we would have liked." But, he added, "some organizations, such as the Chiefs of Ontario, are now taking up the challenge to address the nature of family violence."

The overall criticism of the report seems to focus on two major problems. One leading critic, Trish Fox Roman, an Ojibwa who is the public relations representative of the Native Canadian Centre, says the survey method was faulty, and the Ontario Native Women's Association should have been more careful in releasing the study to the mainstream media. Not only is the media non-Native, but it is sensationalist.

Trish Fox Roman also felt the survey did not reflect the true situation for most Native women, including herself. "You have to look at the intricacies, like who asked the questions, who they asked, and also if the Native women really knew the ramifications of their answers, they might have answered differently." She felt the report was very damaging to the image of the Native community, and the image in the mainstream media (which was front page) placed a stigma on Native people — as if most Native people are abusers...

In response, the Ontario Native Women's Association points out their methodology. The association distributed 680 surveys (with 50 questions) on province-wide basis (including to urban and reserve areas in southeast and northwest Ontario). They got back 104 (or 15 per cent) of the surveys. Although this response rate was low, the researchers found that the degree of the response consistency (uniform patterns such as more than 90 per cent affirmative responses in some inquiries), indicated that there was good reason to believe the answers. In addition, they supplemented their report with 167 contacts by telephone and other interviews with social service workers, court and police workers, band chiefs and councillors, elders, and others who are involved with the issues. The study included 45 per cent who live in reserves, 30 per cent who live in urban centres, 17 per cent who live in rural settings, and 8 per cent from isolated communities. Over 62 per cent were from communities of less than 2,000 and over 50 per cent said they lived in communities where over 90 per cent of the population was Aboriginal.

The association was not too pleased with the media coverage either. Holly Hughes, communications officer for the association, called the press "an unfortunate by-product of a necessary process." According to Hughes, "these are real issues we have to deal with. They are far too real and important to bury. It has to be dealt with, and to be honest, the least of the worries (of the Native women and families going through this violence) is the image in the press."

According to the Ontario Native Women's Association, their study indicates that the problem is bad, but the same conditions exist in many other areas. The Native Women's Association of Nova Scotia did a similar survey and found that seven out of ten women had been abused. A women's group in London, Ontario did a similar study (much more exhaustive, according to Paul Capon of the ONWA) and found that seven out of ten had been abused.

And, in an interview with Brenda Small, a Cree from Northern Ontario currently researching national data for the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services, she indicates the same figure. Part of the problem, Small notes, is that the definition of abuse is broad, meaning that in this case, abuse could include both ongoing physical assault, and a less frequent mix of verbal/physical assault. Small, however, maintains that the figure is probably accurate.

Shelly McIntyre, an Ojibwa from Grand Portage, of the Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Centre and a leading researcher on issues of Native women in the US,

said the study "did not sound unreasonable, from what we find here." McIntyre reports that the national figure on the abuse of women in the United States is one out of four mainstream American non-Indian women will be sexually assaulted by the time she is 18. The problem is a national problem, not just a problem of the Native community.

McIntyre points to interviews with women coming out of chemical treatment centres in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area, and says that 100 per cent of these women in the treatment centres are battered women. Conservatively, she estimates that 80 per cent have been sexually abused. In interviews, and participation in multi-racial support groups in the Twin Cities, McIntyre says that eight out of ten men the women encountered were batterers. "That means," according to McIntyre, "you have a pretty good chance that four out of five men you work with or have relationships with may have a history of abusing women."

"To me," McIntyre continues, "the point is that we have to look at how this violence gets into the intimate sphere of relationships. And, instead of saying that colonialism and racism are just problems of the larger community, we need to understand how it affects us and how we deal with it."

McIntyre points to the need for more research on the problem, and to begin solving the problem. There is no research on Native women, and only one occupational study in the US on sexual abuse of women, according to McIntyre. There is, of course, no national work, and very little local work, on Native women. As McIntyre points out, "if there is no evidence, there is no problem."

Holly Hughes, of the Ontario Native Women's Association, echoes McIntyre's words: "This study was something to back up what these women have been saying all along." Now, across Canada, there are women's associations and Native organizations taking up the challenge. Hughes says that the response to the report has been very encouraging. From British Columbia to New Brunswick, people are looking at doing similar studies. As well, Native organizations like Nishbawbe Aki Nation and the Chiefs of Ontario are now beginning to address the issue. And the province is considering support for a Native Women's Healing Centre in Thunder Bay.

Small also points out the need to look at the problem in a larger context. She says, "the report does not go far enough — it doesn't talk about all the other forms of violence Native people are subjected to — not only in the family, but by the government, companies, the state, etc. We have survived all these forms of violence."

Small says the problem also needs to be addressed outside the framework of "white feminist" or Anglo thinking. In her opinion, "criminalization" of the batterer is not the solution, but new wholistic treatment programs need to be developed. In addition, she specifically points to the need for treatment for men.

Essentially, Small says, "Right now, Indian men have adopted the dominant/colonial view of women, and are looking at Native women through that light. When an assault is committed against the woman, right now, she is forced to leave the community and go to a shelter. The reality is that the man should be banished, and not the woman."

Whatever the solution, most people will agree that there is a need for more discussion, and more communication to deal with the problem. The problem exists in both the non-Native and Native community. Many people will say that the problem is a consequence of colonialism. The reality is, whether the figure is two Native women out of 10 or eight out of 10, the figure is too high. It is ugly, whether it is carried on the front page of the Globe and Mail or in Wawatay News. It is not easy to deal with and it is not popular. Family violence and domestic abuse, however, are not traditional parts of indigenous culture. We need to reject them and heal ourselves.

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By Winona LaDuke

Domestic violence is a disease. Amidst great controversy, the Ontario Native Women's Association completed a study on Aboriginal family violence in Ontario. The results were shocking and a call to action. The report's release became a subject of great controversy and the object of attack by a number of Native groups. The reality, however, is that the disease does exist in the community, and these issues are being grappled with in Native as well as non-Native communities. The Native community of Ontario is not alone.

The Ontario Native Women's Association is a group composed of a number of local Native women's associations. In 1980, they completed an exploratory report on the status of Native women in the province. The report concluded that over half of the families interviewed were headed by single parent mothers. They had a family of four and earnings of less than \$10,000 a year. In addition, over 50 per cent lived off reserves in rural and urban communities. These findings led the Ontario Native Women's Association to believe that family separation was a result of social problems, possibly including family violence. As a result, they decided to do a report on family violence.

The report came from a province-wide study which was completed in November 1989. The results of the study revealed that "the depth of violence and the serious deterioration of the embodiment of the Aboriginal family over the years." The study included the following findings:

- One in every ten Canadian women has experienced a form of abuse (*ed. note: this figure is probably too low*), while eight of every 10 Aboriginal women have been abused or assaulted or can expect to be abused or assaulted.
- Children are also highly victimized at a rate of four out of ten.
- The batterer was the husband in 84 per cent of the cases.

• In 82 per cent of the cases, the woman leaves the home; seldom does the batterer.

• There are no distinguishable, culturally-appropriate services in Ontario directed at the batterer, and only a few Native-run crisis centres that exist for Native women and their children.

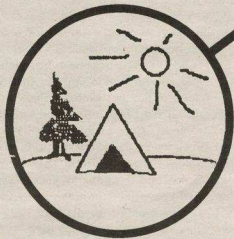
The association also made a list of recommendations to address the problem, including: the provision of resources for women (regardless of status or residence), a network of healing lodges (reflecting Aboriginal vision and treatment), a treatment program for male batterers and other recommendations.

# A woman at the Queen's Park Peace Camp

By Vannina Sztainbok

The Queen's Park Peace Camp was set up during the Gulf War not only as an act of opposition to the war, but also as an attempt to create an anti-authoritarian, non-violent, non-sexist, non-racist community. Although no one expected Utopia, and indeed there were many problems, I feel it's important to tackle the problem of sexism within alternative communities. Unfortunately, and I share the blame for this, the issue was not given extensive discussion while the camp lasted. However, I didn't want to let that prevent me from making some observations about the experience.

One of the realities of the camp was that there were significantly less women than men (there were also very few people of colour). I feel that at least part of this could be attributed to the nature of the camp. A woman who didn't know anyone staying at the camp wouldn't have been as likely to stay overnight as a man in the same position — and so not get to know anybody — making it a Catch-22 situation. It might have helped to set up specific measures such as designating women-only areas, especially for sleeping. This was discussed but never fully implemented. The camp did have an explicit policy against any kind of harassment and campers were to watch out for and intervene in such circumstances. However, it takes a more planned, concerted effort to make a community a comfortable, safe place for women. As women, those of us who



there could have established a more visible, constant presence, thus encouraging other women to join us by organizing ourselves as women at the camp, i.e. by forming a women's caucus.

There were several incidents of sexist behaviour, usually verbal, from members of the camp. Such people, I felt, didn't need to be excluded outright from the camp. On the contrary, these incidents could be, and sometimes were, turned into educational opportunities.

However, there were some individuals who exhibited consistently offensive, sexist behaviour. They were repeatedly made aware that it was not acceptable. But I felt that their behaviour was tolerated to the point of offending and excluding women. It seemed that not hurting these men was more important than not offending, and in some cases driving away, women. The actions of individuals do reflect back on the community, and at a certain point the community has to answer for the actions and attitudes with which it is willing to live.

Another experience of the camp was that even in this experiment in anti-authoritarianism, leadership-like roles (dare I say) did emerge, and more often than not they were assumed by men. While trying to create an alternative community, we are still carrying around a lot of baggage from living in a society which is predominantly hierarchical, violent, sexist, racist. Men are encouraged to be loud, outspoken and aggressive, while women are taught to be quiet and have little confidence in themselves. The result of growing up this way isn't easily erased.

To counter it, it is not enough to proclaim our organizations non-sexist. We must take steps in affirmative action, creating spaces for women's full participation. These are not steps to be taken by men to help women, but something to be done by the community as a whole for everyone's good. It is a process which requires a lot of thinking, a lot of discussion, and a lot of work.



Everyone who attends demonstrations must have been handed a flyer about Mark Curtis sometime over the last three years. His case is presented as an example of police harassment of labour. Ultimately, it may say as much about sexism and the left.

Mark Curtis, a college-educated white man, a member of the Socialist Workers Party, is accused of sexually assaulting a fifteen year old black woman, daughter of civil rights workers. He was found in the back bedroom of her house with his pants down around his ankles, and both the young woman and her brother testified that he had pushed his way into the house and attacked the woman, who

was bleeding, dirt-stained, and naked from the waist down. Her brother had phoned 911, and whispered, "A man is raping my sister," (a call logged into the police dispatcher's computer at 8:51 p.m. A police car parked nearby arrived two minutes later). The woman's story has never varied, whenever she has told it. Nor has her brother's story. Both are supported by forensic evidence.

Mark Curtis' story has changed in accounts he has given at different times, though the substance of it is that the police pushed him into the house, pulled down his pants and arrested him. In his original version, he claimed that the young woman herself flagged his car

## Justice for Mark Curtis?

down and lured him to her house. Later, he said that it was not her, but another young woman, who disappeared after he arrived at the house. He has not been able to explain how the young woman came to be naked and bleeding. He has not been able to explain any of the other evidence against him.

It seems that there is only one reason to believe that Mark Curtis is telling the truth. He is a "politically correct" man. And that is apparently also enough to paint a young black woman who says she has been raped as a liar.

A member of the Boston chapter of the American Friends' Service Committee says that he thinks Curtis was "framed by the feminists."

On the other hand, Charles Adams, author of a book about the case, says, "When your gut reaction is to sympathize with an accused rapist of a young girl (and Black), then you have to investigate not only the facts, but such a reaction."

There is a long history of denial, of claiming that "good" men, men on "our side" — whether that means mayors and doctors and priests, or union workers, or indeed anarchists — do not rape. The reality is that there is no group of men that does not include rapists.

The reality is that women do not lie about men raping them. Black women do not lie about white men raping them.

"There is, of course, a long and tragic history of rape survivors being silenced by the criminal justice system ..." writes Fred Pelka in *On the Issues*, Spring 1991. "Dr. Judith Herman, author

of *Father/Daughter Incest*, has concluded that "this society doesn't prohibit rape, it regulates it" ... The Mark Curtis case is precisely about rape. It is about the insidious and pernicious myths that work to silence rape survivors and protect their abusers ... It is about how easy it is for a rapist and his friends to recruit allies in their attack on a courageous young woman who dared to speak out against her abuser."

**The reality is, women don't lie about men raping them. Black women don't lie about white men raping them.**

It is possible that Mark Curtis is being persecuted by the police, although it seems that his political activity before his arrest was not as significant as his defenders make out. It is quite possible that he was, as he claims, beaten by police while in custody — if this is true, it is a thing that should not have happened and further proof of police violence. It is certain that imprisonment in the prison system as it currently exists is massively unlikely to reform or heal a man who rapes, and that we need to seek better solutions.

But we cannot let ourselves believe that it is ever politically correct to think that a woman is lying about being raped. And we cannot let ourselves believe that a man cannot be a rapist because he is "one of us" — whoever the "us" may be.

## Fires of Transformation

A documentary film

The story of VOICE, a theatre troupe of women survivors of violence

Premiere Screening, April 22 and 23

NFB Theatre, 150 John St., 7:30 & 9:30 p.m.

suggested donation \$10

# Power as a political picnic

By Mary Bunch

I start with frustration I WANT TO SCREAM! I want people to be nice to each other or at least honest and I'm so tired of hypocrisy I want to curl up and never come out again. Tell me I'm dreaming tell me I've imagined it tell me. Fuck no, stop telling me about your theories and how politically correct you are and how much work you've done for peace and how many feminist books you've read. Show me you mean it. Start by treating people with RESPECT. I started wondering about respect. It turned into thoughts of pwer of power and privilege, of the way people crave power personal, political and it wipes out that basic respect. But why? I wrote a dozen beginnings on an examination of power.

I am writing  
about it all the time, at home.  
I write. Just like every year, the winter peeling back like an old snakeskin, the grey March sky, the blue March sky, suddenly, with sunshine. I sit on the steps in front of my house and think about power. The first definition of power, in the Concise Oxford Dictionary, is: 'Ability to do or act, vigour,energy.' Power is not painful to think about this way. Laura sits with me for a while, and from the steps we see something green under the leaves and garbage, between the cemented drive and the fence. Laura and I pull up the rubbish and free the green buds so they can grow in the sunshine, like the other years. There is a good feeling tha comes from doing this, and the joy and contentment I feel are powerful. It's a power that is not violent, or static, or dependent on domination or subordination. Power that is fluid and creates a feeling of strength or worth without taking anything away from anyone else. Sitting in the sunshine in front of my house, thinking about power, I celebrate this feeling.

Thinking about the abuse of power we accept as normal is painful enough that it's difficult to say anything I begin to say. My emotions interfere. Sometimes change seems hopeless, it saddens me. Think about the definition I've learned to believe in. Power.. AUTHORITY. UNDER ONE'S CONTROL. DELEGATING AUTHORITY. The family, the churches, the work ethic, hospitals, personal relationships between people in general, between women and men. All based on this structure of power over. It's making me so angry I want to paint SMASH THE STATE on every wall in the city. It's one thing to hate the power in politics but it keeps creeping into my personal life. I am mad mad mad. the Institution of Psychiatry says so. Call such feelings madness.

It makes me even angrier to know that I am somehow invested in this notion of power. I was raised in a society that demands a belief in the abuse of power as legitimate, unquestionable, necessary. It's so subtle at times that I don't even notice it right away in my relationships and community. Other times it's so obvious and ugly. It always seems to be there. Because we live in a Patriarchy that worships this kind of power. Because some people inherit power automatically, by being white or rich or male. Because if someone's going to win with this kind of power someone else has to lose. And if you are not rich, or white, or male, or the right combination of these, you have to struggle for it.

For what, though? For a mutated interpretation of a concept that does not result in anything, not even any concrete real joy, just costs pain.

And thinking about what constitutes joy, creation, community, intimacy, beauty, movement. We've been duped.

I think we have to get over thinking about power the way we do. Power itself isn't inherently a nasty word. We've just made it that way.

I've started with the personal is political. The mantra of the feminist movement. Not difficult to grasp, but somehow, does not stretch past the women in the spectrum of peace and social change is not whispered shouted wept in the halls in the offices in the livingrooms by men as by women but not so difficult to grasp, a truth, our experiences have a larger significance so, in every moment, movement, murmur responsibility to the struggles we call our own against (say it again) sexism, racism, classism, homophobia and so on.

so long as women are being treated like shit (read the articles) women are being treated like shit. Profound. This is called Patriarchy.

It's good to start with a clarification of terms. The Concise Oxford Dictionary, on Patriarcy:  
PATRIARCH: Father and ruler of the family or tribe  
PATRIARCHY: Patriarchal system of society, government

Robin Morgan, on power,  
And power over, as differentiated from power to, is now so enmeshed with world culture as to be thought to be human culture, when it more accurately reflects male human dynamics... Sexism therefore becomes a perfectly normal invisible state of affairs — even in the private lives of liberal men who make (heroic) public shows of denouncing it.  
"The Demon Lover" p. 61

It is certainly not enough to point a finger at the State and its institutions and demand they divest from the absurd attachment to the abusive form of power. That would make an ending. It's no accident that in writing about power I've gotten stuck on a series of openings, beginnings. Got to start at the beginning. We have to work on getting over the desire for patriarchal power ourselves.

With hope, one day I'll write an ending to what I've started to say. As it rests, here's to getting started once again.



## What is to be done? Ideas for groups

• Is any record kept of who speaks, and how often, in meetings? Are quiet people encouraged to speak? Is space left for people — especially women — who do not speak in a verbally aggressive or 'so-phisticated' way, or are just not used to speaking in public?

• Who represents the group to the media, at rallies, etc.? Care should be taken to rotate these roles among the whole membership, and to make sure that they are filled *at least* half the time by women.

• Is there an awareness that women may be afraid to go home alone after events or meetings which go on until late? Or do women have to make the choice between going home alone at night, paying themselves for a taxi, or simply not attending the events?

• People in the group should recognize sexual harassment, and be they prepared to intervene. Do people know what date rape means?

• When women say they are offended, it means they are offended. If a woman says she doesn't want to be touched, it means she doesn't want to be touched. Men should not question a woman's sense of what is offensive to her as a woman, or her sense of her personal space. Be sensitive also to discomfort which women may not express verbally.

• Child care should be offered at meetings, teach-ins, seminars; even rallies may require child

care.

- In communal living, and especially communal sleeping, situations (peace walks, peace camps, conferences, etc.), make sure women-only spaces are available

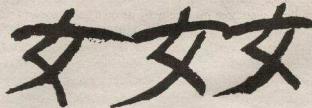
- Is social bonding in your group based on rough-housing, play-fighting, community drinking in bars, or similar activities which women are not usually comfortable with? To be really a part of the group, is it necessary to be "one of the guys"?

- Are women's issues discussed by the group, or just by women among themselves? Do men become personally offended or defensive when discussing sexism?

- If a man is behaving in a sexist way, who deals with it? Will he be challenged by other men in the group, or will it be left for the women to deal with?

- Is your group open to the idea of women-only actions, meetings, etc.?

- Can men in the group deal comfortably with expressions of emotion other than anger?



We would like to thank all the people who made this supplement possible, in many different ways. Especially:

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## Books We Liked

Robin Morgan, **Going Too Far**, Vintage Books, 1978: out of print, hard to find and includes some wacky stuff, but also includes "Goodbye To All That", the groundbreaking essay on sexism and the New Left.

Robin Morgan, **The Demon Lover**, W.W. Norton and Co, 1989: about violence, revolution, men, women, terrorism ... challenging and powerful

Janet Silman, ed., **Enough is Enough: Aboriginal Women Speak Out**, Women's Press, 1987: Mohawk women of the Tobique Reserve take on the band council and the Indian Act in the late seventies.

Alice Walker, **Meridian**, Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1976: a black woman's experiences in the civil rights movement and in discovering her own identity.

bell hooks, **Yearning**, Between the Lines, 1990: As the subtitle says, "race, gender and cultural politics". Very academic at times, but full of brilliant insights.

ACT UP/NY Women and Aids Book Group, **Women, Aids & Activism**, Between the Lines, 1990: Good wide-ranging collection of essays.

Jane Meyerding, ed. **We Are All Part of One Another: A Barbara Deming Reader**, New Society Publishers, 1984: collected writings of a trailblazing civil rights, peace and lesbian rights activist.

Lynne Farrow, **Feminism as Anarchism**, 1986: pamphlet from BOA, reprinted by AANN Publishers, Box 915, Stn. F, Toronto, M4Y 2N9. Probably no longer available. Excellent introduction to anarchy-feminism.

Shulamith Firestone, **The Dialectic of Sex**, Bantam, 1970: dated but worth reading, early seventies radical feminism.

James Miller, **Democracy in the Streets**, Simon & Schuster, 1987: some interesting material on women in the early SDS (Students for a Democratic Society, founded 1962).

Sara Evans, **Personal Politics**, Vintage Books, 1980: how the women's movement of the sixties emerged from experiences of sexism in the civil rights movement and the New Left.

Jane Alpert, **Growing Up Underground**, William Morrow and Co., 1981: Another ex-Weatherwoman turned feminist.

Pam McAllister, ed., **Reweaving the Web of Life**, New Society Publishers, 1982: a collection of essays on women and non-violent activism.

Barbara Harford and Sarah Hopkins, eds, **Greenham Common: Women at the Wire**, The Women's Press, 1984: the history of the first and longest-lived all-women peace camp.

Lynne Jones, ed., **Keeping the Peace**, The Women's Press, 1983: women's peace activism around the world.

## A BOOK!

We are hoping to produce a book on the issues dealt with in this supplement. We are seeking contributions

from women involved in political activism, especially women of colour, native women, lesbian and bisexual women. Any thoughts and opinions about women working in mixed-gender political groups are welcome.



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