

# THE INDYPENDENT



## THE REAL ENERGY CRISIS

### POWER PLANTS TAKE TOLL ON CITY'S KIDS

by JOHN TARLETON

Ray Berly is a polite, soft-spoken 10-year-old with short, dark hair and a sky-blue ribbon pinned to his neatly pressed Catholic school uniform. He dreams of being a paleontologist and has a small library of dinosaur books. Basketball is his favorite sport, but he gets red in the face when he tries to run around with other kids.

"Most parents say to their kids, do you have your lunch?" when they leave for school," said Ramon Marrero, 48, Ray's stepfather. "We have to say, 'do you have your nebulizer?'"

Ray's asthma may get worse starting June 1 when the New York Power Authority (NYPA) brings ten new mini-power plants on-line in poor, heavily polluted neighborhoods along the East River. Four of the new power plants will be installed in the South Bronx, which has the nation's highest asthma rate. They will be just upwind from Ray's school on East 145th St.

Invoking the spectre of California-style

blackouts this summer, NYPA is also installing one power plant in Williamsburg, Brooklyn; two in Sunset Park, Brooklyn; two in Long Island City, Queens and one in Rosebank, Staten Island. The neighborhoods within a half-mile of the power plants are all poorer and have higher percentages of minorities than the city as a whole, according to a NYPA assessment that was first made public by the *New York Times*. The study also reported each site has, on average, 100 other facilities with air pollution permits within one mile of them.

"I feel like he (Governor George Pataki) is sending out a death warrant on our children," said Darlene Santiago of

Mothers on the Move, a South Bronx-based civic organization. Santiago's 12-year-old daughter suffers from asthma and has made repeated trips to the hospital. "On any given day you can find the asthma wards in the Bronx hospitals full," Santiago said.

NYPA spokesperson Joe Leary said that site selection was based on existing electrical hook-ups and that environmental racism was not a factor.

"These are the cleanest plants in the city," Leary said.

However according to the same NYPA assessment, each 44-megawatt, gas-burning turbine could produce as much 61 tons per year of pollutants such as sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, particulate matter, nitrogen oxides and (continued on page 9)



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INSIDE: WHITE HOUSE ENERGY PLAN RUNNING ON EMPTY - p.8,  
GOVERNOR PATAKI GIVEN ENVIRONMENTAL HONOR - p.9,  
ROLL YOUR OWN BLACKOUT! - p.9, ENERGY NUMBERS CRUNCH - p.10

Clockwise from top left: Construction of new power plants goes forward at Port Morris in the Bronx. Young people protest in Sunset Park, Brooklyn. Ray Berly, age 10, breathes from his asthma inhaler. Photos by John Tarleton



## New York City independent media center

### WHAT IS THE IMC?

With autonomous chapters in over 40 cities throughout the world, the year-old Independent Media Center has quickly grown into an international network of volunteer media activists.

The IMC's mission is to create a new media ethic by providing progressive, in-depth and accurate coverage of issues that affect us daily. We are a community-based organization using media production and distribution to support and facilitate communities' political and cultural self-representation. We seek to illuminate and analyze local and global issues impacting individuals, communities and eco-systems by providing media tools and space to those seeking to communicate their issues to the world.

Unlike corporate media, we do not pretend to be unbiased. Subjectivity comes with the human package. Rather, we espouse open dialogue, and the importance of placing the means of communication and creativity back in the hands of the people, and away from the drive of profit.

The IMC's work in cyberspace—please visit the local website at [www.nyc.indymedia.org](http://www.nyc.indymedia.org) or the global site at [www.indymedia.org](http://www.indymedia.org) for up-to-the-minute reports on actions and news near and far—features self-published stories as well as a wide sampling of photos, videos and audio clips. The New York City chapter's print publication, the *Independent*, looks to broaden the IMC's reach through the written word by literally putting the news in people's hands on NYC streets.

### WHAT CAN I DO TO GET INVOLVED?

In aiming to tear down the walls between media producers and consumers, we encourage you to take part in this growing media (r)evolution. The options for involvement are numerous: write for the *Independent*, film events and rallies, self-publish articles to the web, take photos, etc., or just help us run the office. As an organization relying entirely on volunteer support, we encourage all forms of participation.

Stop complaining about the media and all of its shortcomings—take action by voicing your insights and analysis. If you would like to become involved, email us at [imc-nyc-print@indymedia.org](mailto:imc-nyc-print@indymedia.org), call us at (212) 684-8112 for general information on the NYC IMC or visit [www.nyc.indymedia.org](http://www.nyc.indymedia.org).

### SUBMISSIONS

The *Independent* seeks submissions from readers to cover news, cultural events, opinion, etc. Include contact information and be diligent in citing sources. Articles should be less than 1,200 words in length. Letters should be under 300 words. Pictures and graphics are always needed. If possible send stories via email and disc, although hard copies can also be accepted. All mail should be sent to NYC Independent Media Center, 34 E. 29th St. 2nd Floor, New York City, NYC 10016.

We also urge readers to write or email letters to the IMC for publication. Unsigned letters will not be published. The print team reserves the right to edit articles for length, content and clarity but please give us detailed information on how we can contact you to review edits. We welcome your participation in the entire editorial process.

### CONTRIBUTORS

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# INDYMEDIA HARASSED BY FEDS

by ANANOGUEIRA

The Independent Media Center (IMC) may be forced to hand over server logs, containing user information from 36 of its websites, to U.S. government agencies who subpoenaed them as part of two separate criminal investigations.

The subpoenaed logs reportedly contain over 1.5 million Internet Protocol addresses, electronic data that could be used to identify visitors to the IMC's online presence, which has quickly become a leading international news portal for the anti-globalization movement.

Via the first subpoena, the FBI and the Secret Service say they seek information regarding two posts to the IMC Montreal "open publishing" newswire, which describe police infiltration of protest groups and tactics to contain anti-free trade protests. The information was allegedly stolen from a police car during protests of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) treaty in Quebec City last month, which drew 60,000 people.

The second subpoena was served on May 8 after a cryptic death threat against a Cincinnati police officer was posted to the Ohio Valley IMC site.

But unlike the Ohio subpoena, where police asked for one IP address relevant to the post in question, the other subpoena casts a far wider net: it covers a 48 hour period, with a log record 1.5 million IP addresses long. It also contained a gag order forbidding the IMC to announce or discuss the existence of the order, which was challenged and later lifted.

"This is obviously not about tracking the identity of people who stole docu-

ments," says Evan Henshaw Plath, a member of the IMC Tech Collective. "It is about the government's ability to track users of IMC websites. It is like asking for membership lists."

The 48-hour period coincided with the FTAA protests, which generated unprecedented traffic to IMC news coverage, a total of three million hits that weekend.

Lee Tien, Senior Staff Attorney for the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF) says "this kind of fishing expedition is another in a long line of overbroad and onerous attempts to chill political speech and activism." He says this order, "even without the 'gag,' is a threat to free speech, free association and privacy."

The EFF stands alongside other well-known communication law experts including the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR), the Electronic Privacy Information Center (EPIC), and the Perkins-Coei law firm, who are all representing the IMC pro bono.

So far the government has not received any of the subpoenaed logs. IMC counsel is considering a legal challenge that will strike at the heart of the 1986 Electronic Communications Privacy Act (ECPA),

which has never been tried in open court before.

While the ECPA ostensibly protects the electronic communications of private citizens from undue surveillance, it

nonetheless provides an opening for government agencies to monitor the existence and patterns of that communication. The *Nation* magazine called it "a wish list for the law-enforcement community."

Under the law, the government is barred from accessing the content of a private email message, for

example, but it can use computer programs to analyze communication patterns "that illuminate invisible social networks and identify key members," say critics.

These logs could "provide a virtual who's who of people associated with the IMC and its political views," said Nancy Chang, Senior Litigation Attorney for the CCR.

Technical experts say that the requested "user connection logs" could reveal personal information about Internet surfers, but they are unreliable as sources for identifying suspects in almost any crime. For one, with the use of common

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*The sweeping inquiry leads many to believe that the order has little to do with a criminal investigation and more to do with the surveillance of a growing political movement.*

## LATEST ON THE NYC IMC

While this revolution may not be televised, the audio, photo, print, and video working groups at the New York City Independent Media Center are all working to spread the news and events that the mainstream media misses.

In its third month of operations, the audio team's Tuesday night Internet radio broadcasts have featured more voices of the people's media— from in-house interviews with "Medical Marijuana Barbie" (see photo) to listener call-ins and audio reports from the WBAI legal hearings. Contributors to Free Speech Radio News, an alternative news broadcast, have been collaborating with the IMC for its month of daily programs since mid-May.



Kevin Prichard interviews Medical Marijuana Barbie for the weekly webcast.

The photo working group continues to deliver scenes from the streets, along with major events local and national, that color the *Independent* and the web news features. Collective photo projects for both media are in their formative stages. Contributions are always welcome.

The print team is now gearing up for a DIY Dance Party benefit to keep the *Independent* alive and growing. This evening of fun and dance will be held June 1 at 220 Grand St. (@Driggs Ave. in Williamsburg, Brooklyn starting at 8 p.m.).

Now feeding its footage nationally, the NYC Video Team broadcasted its first

Indymedia "Newsreal" spot on the Freespeech TV satellite network last month. In addition, the video team is kicking off a weekly radical film series on Thursdays at Tribeca's Walker Theater. For more information about the launch party-along with a benefit screening at Galapagos Bar, Brooklyn and feature-length documentaries now in the works-check out the website for dates and locations.

The New York City Independent Media Center, located at 34 E. 29th St. (@ Park Ave.). General meetings are every other Wednesday at 7:30 p.m.; June 6th is the next meeting date.

# CITY CONSIDERS TRANSGENDER RIGHTS BILL

by HEATHER HADDON

Transgender advocates marked a victory recently when the New York City Council moved toward outlawing anti-trans discrimination. On May 4, after nine months of stonewalling, a Council bill was introduced to legally ban discrimination based on "gender identity and expression."

Initiative 754, also known as the Perkins-Lopez Bill, after Bill Perkins (District 9) and Margarita Lopez (District 2), would amend the New York City Human Rights Law to outlaw discrimination against transgenders. The legislation has protected people based on "sexual orientation" since 1987.

The term "transgender" refers to transsexuals who have had or plan to have a sex-change operation, along with cross-dressers and others who do not live fully in the sex in which they were born. The measure would also cover gender-variant people, who do not clearly identify as male or female.

"It was a great, very personal hearing," said Councilwoman Christine Quinn of District 3. For hours, members of the trans community vividly shared individual encounters of discrimination. Quinn and 27 other council members, have signed onto the bill.

"This is only going to start the ball rolling," said Sylvia Rivera, head of the Street Transgender Action Revolutionaries activist group, about the lobbying process. The proposed measure

has strong support from civil rights groups and political leaders, including mayoral hopefuls Public Advocate Mark Green, City Comptroller Alan Hevesi, Bronx Borough President Fernando Ferrer and Councilman Peter Vallone. In a March forum, Vallone indicated that the bill would probably pass the council.

Ordinances protecting gender variant peoples exist in almost two dozen cities, including Los Angeles, New Orleans, Minneapolis and Louisville.

"We are not safe until everyone of us is safe," declared one transgender activist during a rally outside of City Hall following the hearing. Many of the 50,000 to 100,000 transgender individuals living in New York experience daily harassment and discrimination, according to Pauline Park of the New York Association for Gender Rights Advocacy (NYAGRA), which is lobbying for the bill.

"[The bill] sends a signal to the employers, landlords and merchants that discrimination will not be tolerated in this city," said Park. This discrimination can take the form of violence and even murder. There was a groundswell of activism and attention last year for transgendered people after the death of Amanda Milan, an African-American transgender woman whose throat was slashed in front of the Port Authority Bus Terminal.

"Her murder last June galvanized the community as nothing else has," stated



Transgender activists and supporters rally on the steps of City Hall.

Rusty M. Moore from the National Transgender Action Coalition.

Perhaps the most well-known of such incidents, portrayed in the film *Boys Don't Cry*, is the 1993 rape and murder of transgendered man Brandon Teena in Falls City, Nebraska. (The state Supreme Court recently held accountable Richardson County Sheriff Charles Laux for his failure to protect Teena.)

"[Transgendered people] are perceived as freaks, and they're perceived as people making decisions about their lives that are off-the-wall," said Councilman Bill Perkins in June. "If these people were black, it would be called racism." This prejudice extends beyond violence to a daily discrimination that still goes largely silent, say advocates.

A 1996 Department of Public Health study conducted in San Francisco found that out of almost 400 transgender individuals surveyed, 80 percent had been involved in sex work; 34 percent had injected illegal drugs; 65 percent had

been incarcerated; 52 percent had no health insurance; 13 percent were homeless; and 32 percent had attempted suicide. "Gender-based discrimination often leads to pariah status including the loss of a job, the loss of an apartment, and the refusal of service in public accommodations such as restaurants or stores," states a section of the bill's text.

The protection based on gender identity was originally included in the 1987 Human Rights Law amendment to protect gays but gay leaders removed the section to ensure passage of the law.

"We have been waiting 31 years to have this protection," said Rivera, one of the leaders of the 1969 Stonewall riots that launched the modern gay rights movement. Advocates are hopeful about the bill's passage, and its promise for transgender individuals. "Its clear to me that our time has come as a transgender community," affirmed Rivera. "As a political movement our moment has arrived."

## Indymedia Harassed...

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Internet Service Providers (ISP) as a way to connect to the Internet, unique IP addresses no longer necessarily trace back to one individual computer, much less one individual person. This could mean that the order fails to meet standard criteria that subpoenaed information be relevant, specific and non-speculative.

But from a surveillance standpoint, the timing couldn't have been better. Many IMC sites saw near record traffic due to the protests in Quebec City and the solidarity actions happening simultaneously around the world. Even the infant Vermont IMC site received 145,985 over the course of those 48 hours.

Many believe that the intent of the order was to discourage association with the non-traditional news organization. "It all fits in nicely with the general campaign of intimidation that was waged all around the FTAA event — activists, journalists and politicians being harassed by CSIS [Canadian Intelligence]," wrote one commentator on IMC newswires.

Observers also say the case highlights how different the government treats the corporate press versus the alternative press. Assistant U.S. Attorney Steve Schroeder told the Seattle Post-Intelligencer that while the "established

media gets a great deal of deference, this (IMC) is akin to a bulletin board," implying that it should not enjoy the same press freedoms.

However, "The First Amendment protects the right to communicate anonymously with the press and for political



The Ohio Valley IMC's subpoena.

purposes," says David Sobel, General Counsel for EPIC. "To provide the same protection to the press and anonymous sources in the Internet world as with more traditional media, the government must be severely limited in its ability to demand their Internet identity — their

'Internet Protocol addresses.'

"Just because a journalist with a non-traditional news organization might post something that looks like a lead should not allow them (the FBI) to demand the identity of the anonymous source," says IMC counsel David Burman, a partner with Perkins-Coie. The mainstream press has often published or leaked documents obtained by theft - most notably the Pentagon Papers, the top secret government report that exposed controversial U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War."

While government officials such as Schroeder have described the IMC as more bulletin board than news outlet, IMC activists claim otherwise.

The IMC has "open web pages, but also newspapers, radio casts and video casts," says one media activist. "The IMC employs a different paradigm for its newswire, not like the 'traditional news media,' which has an 'elite' that chooses what gets on the page. When the IMC is not considered a news medium, what is really being said is that it does not conform to some other paradigm. The point is not to let the courts, the U.S. Attorney, or the FBI decide who can be called a journalist. It is not up to some professional society."

## 99¢ DREAMS (AND WAGES)

In a recent out-of-court settlement, owners of a chain of discount dollar stores agreed to pay \$100,000, mostly in back wages, to nearly a dozen Latin American workers who were underpaid and mistreated.

With the help of the North Bergen's United Immigrants Association, 11 workers in January filed a lawsuit against the New Jersey-based Universal Distribution Center, which operates over 40 stores, including 99-Cent Dreams, mostly in New York City. In the suit, the employees charged they were forced to work under almost slave-like conditions. Often when store closed at night, workers would be locked inside until morning and left to sleep on cardboard boxes and eat from the store's stock of cheap food. Even bathrooms were unavailable.

Workers were also forced to work up to 70 hours per week without overtime for just \$180 - roughly \$2.50 per hour, less than half the minimum wage.

"We were treated like animals, the bosses treated us with the point of their shoes," one worker Oscar Roldan told *City Limits*. "How much money are you going to need to pay for losing your respect? How much does it cost to win your dignity back?"

## GM BABIES IN NJ

A New Jersey medical facility announced in early May that it had overseen the birth of 15 genetically modified babies over the last four years.

The Institute for Reproductive Medicine and Science of St. Barnabas Medical Center in West Orange has used a new procedure that allows sterile women to conceive by giving them an ooplasmic transfer from a fertile woman.

Dr. Jacques Cohen, scientific director of assisted reproduction at the institute, recently published the results of the experimental procedure in the journal *Science*. A veil of secrecy had hung over the controversial project, which sometimes results in babies born with a mix of genetic material from both “mothers.”

According to Reuters, doctors take an egg from an infertile woman, the egg from a donor woman and the sperm from the infertile woman’s mate. The doctors then suck out a little bit of the contents of the donor egg — the cytoplasm — using a microscopic needle manipulated by tiny robotic arms. The cytoplasm is then injected into the infertile woman’s egg along with the sperm to fertilize it.

“(This) should trouble those committed to transparent public conversation about the prospect of using ‘reprogenetic’ technologies to shape future children,” wrote Erik Parens of The Hastings Center in Garrison, New York, and Eric Juengst of the Center for Biomedical Ethics at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland in a commentary in the journal *Science*.

## CUOMO WON’T STOP EXECUTIONS

Andrew Cuomo, the New York gubernatorial candidate and son of death penalty opponent Mario Cuomo, has vowed to carry out executions if he is elected, the *New York Post* has reported.

Although the governor is granted the power to commute death penalty sentences, Cuomo, who claims he opposes capital punishment, said he would not automatically commute any sentences or work to overthrow the death penalty.

“The law doesn’t say if you don’t like the death penalty, you automatically commute the sentence. Commutations are for special occasions, with special circumstances, and that’s how I would view it.”

Cuomo’s Democratic opponent Carl McCall, state comptroller, voiced a similar view: “I’d have to be willing to enforce the law. Even though it would be tough and I’d find it distasteful. I’d have to do it.”



## Vieques Supporters Seek U.N. Help

by PETER HOLDERNESS

Chanting “U.S. Navy out of Vieques, Puerto Rico,” 27 activists were arrested in front of the United Nations Headquarters in Manhattan on May 15. Members of the David Sanes Rodriguez Brigade said they occupied the 44th street entrance to the U.N. for over an hour in solidarity with the people of Vieques.

Since 1999, over 1,100 people have been arrested in Vieques for trying to stop the U.S. Navy’s bombing exercises there. The New York City arrestees, who range in age from 20 to 81, will go to court on June 28.

The Brigade, a collective of activists and community leaders in New York City, charges that the military actions in Vieques violate the human rights of residents by endangering lives and health.

“We believe that the human rights abuses of the U.S. Government against its own citizens should be addressed by the international community,” explained Marinieves Alba in the shadow of the

U.N. buildings.

Since naval expropriation of the island of Vieques began in 1941, residents have faced forced migration, high unemployment rates and the destruction of natural resources and the local economy, mostly based on fishing. The Navy now owns over two-thirds of Vieques.

The 9,300 residents of the island live sandwiched between two firing ranges where napalm, uranium depleted bullets, and explosives are regularly deployed. They have a 26 percent higher rate of cancer than other Puerto Ricans, according to the Puerto Rico Department of Health.

In November, residents will vote on a carefully worded referendum on continued Naval bombings. The Navy will either be forced to leave at the end of 2003, or will be allowed to stay and provide an additional \$50 million to the island. The government of Puerto Rico says these options are unacceptable and it has filed a federal lawsuit seeking to stop

the bombing.

“Take it for three more years? When something is wrong and it damages your health and your security and your rights, it has to be stopped immediately,” Governor Sila Calderon told Reuters News Service last month.

The Navy defends the bombings as necessary training for real assaults. Despite an increasing public outcry and the arrests of prominent actors, politicians and intellectuals from all over the U.S. and Puerto Rico, bombings continued in May. Military police used pepper spray and tear gas in a futile attempt to keep citizens off the bombing range.

The David Sanes Rodriguez Brigade, named after the Vieques resident who was killed by an off-target navy bomb in 1999, said that the U.S. actions demonstrate why it no longer deserves a place at the U.N. Human Rights Commission. The commission mandates that the U.N. respond to “serious violations of human rights.”



## Protestors Slam GE

by MICHAEL MUENCH

While NBC previewed its 2001-2002 TV lineup inside Radio City Music Hall on May 14, activists from the Friends of a Clean Hudson touted another story outside: General Electric’s (NBC’s parent company) refusal to clean the Hudson River.

The Friends, a coalition of 12 local and national environmental and public interest groups, passed out flyers issuing a

“call to action for NBC’s advertisers.” The group also engaged in Rockette-style dancing and chanting. Cardboard squares held high in the air spelled out, “G-E + N-B-C = P-C-B’s.”

Between the years of 1947 and 1977, GE dumped over one million pounds of Poly-Chlorinated Biphenyls into the Hudson River from GE’s plant at Hudson Falls, approximately 200 miles north Manhattan.

Cleaning up the mess would cost General Electric about \$460 million. GE’s PR budget in the Albany region has reportedly already topped \$60 million.

April 17 also marked the end of a New York City Council public comment peri-

od on a bill proposed by the Environmental Protection Agency in December that would require GE to carefully dredge 100,000 pounds of PCB’s from the various “hot spots” in the river’s bottom. Friends of a Clean Hudson aimed to call attention to the fact that NBC Chief Executive Bob Wright personally pressured Council members to vote against the clean-up plan.

Activists claim Wright’s lobbying is a blatant abuse of NBC’s power due to the network’s power to shape public opinion, especially with city elections on the horizon. One of the Council members NBC’s Bob Wright lobbied was mayoral candidate Peter Vallone.

# Democracy When?

## WBAI Suspends Show During Fundraising Drive

by JOHN TARLETON

WBAI (99.5 FM) began its spring fundraising drive by banishing its most well known program — “Democracy Now!” — from the New York airwaves.

The award-winning morning news show was pre-empted on May 16 (though it is still being aired nationwide except in Los Angeles) for the duration of WBAI’s three-week spring fundraising drive. While the show’s host Amy Goodman broadcast from an auxiliary studio, “Morning Show” host Santiago Nieves urged New Yorkers to contribute money in support of radical, cutting edge radio.

“To take that program off the air for three weeks is unconscionable,” said Judy Solomon, a 30-year listener who was picketing outside the station’s headquarters at 120 Wall Street.

WBAI, one of the five member stations of the left-leaning Pacifica Network, has been in turmoil since Pacifica’s national management fired the station’s general manager, program director and other longtime employees and volunteers last December in what critics have dubbed the “Christmas Coup.”

Goodman’s preemption helped spark hundreds of irate calls to the station’s pledge number (212-209-2950), tying up phone lines. Randy Credico of the William Kuntzler Fund said his sources

inside the station tell him the fund drive is going poorly.

“It’s about as busy in there as the Des Moines Airport at 3 o’clock in the morning,” Credico said.

Dan Coughlin, former director Pacifica Network News (PNN), suspects Goodman’s preemption may be permanent.

“It’s about testing the waters to eliminate the program entirely,” Coughlin said. WBAI’s interim general manager Utrice Leid was unavailable for comment.

Earlier in the week, Michael Palmer, treasurer for the Pacifica National Board, resigned in the face of mounting nationwide protests outside the real estate brokerage firm where he works. On the same day, Congressman Major Owens (D-Brooklyn) held a three-hour hearing on the Pacifica crisis.

Meanwhile, Free Speech Radio News, founded by striking Pacifica stringers, has begun a daily half-hour newscast that will be carried for a month on more than 20 community radio stations around the country. FSRN has 90 stringers scattered across 20 states and six continents, and former PNN anchor Verna Avery Brown is hosting the show.

“They (Pacifica) want to shut down this cast,” said Eileen Sutton, a banned WBAI reporter. “But, they can’t. It’s a



Thirteen hundred supporters rallied outside the station on April 28.

constant reminder of what PNN isn’t.”

FSRN’s daily newscast, which is being produced in San Francisco, Washington, D.C. and Tampa with support assistance in New York from the NYC-IMC, will run from May 18-June 15. Someday, it

may become a permanent program.

“We’re making history here,” Sutton said.

The strikers’ news broadcast can be heard at [freespeechradionews.org](http://freespeechradionews.org).

## Superbarrio Eludes NYC Police on May Day

by DAVID WILSON

Police arrested five activists during a street theater performance that formed part of a peaceful May Day march for immigrant workers’ rights here on May 1. New York police claimed that the performance had violated an old city ordinance that prohibits masks in an organized demonstration.

Hundreds of marchers stopped outside the East Natural Food Market, at Fifth Avenue and 13th Street near Greenwich Village, to watch Mexico City’s popular “Superbarrio” wrestle various enemies of immigrant workers, including “INS Agent” and “Greengrocer Unionbuster.” The masked and colorfully costumed Superbarrio — whose name roughly translates as “Superneighborhood” — has been a regular fixture at community demonstrations in Mexico City for the past 15 years. His New York appearance was intended to highlight a two-year campaign by mostly Mexican workers in local delis to be represented by UNITE Local 169.

Superbarrio’s performance was in progress when police suddenly charged the crowd, destroying some props and banners, and hauled off five activists. Police reportedly roughed up several participants and spectators, including an Associated Press photog-

rapher. Superbarrio himself vanished before the police could reach him.

Police arrested a sixth demonstrator at a later rally on the same day but quickly dropped the charges. The other detainees were held until early in the morning of May 3; one is being charged with felonious assault.

East Natural was selected as the site for the street theater because of the especially bitter labor struggle there.



Superbarrio unmasked on May Day.

On May 2, the day after Superbarrio’s performance, New York State Attorney General Eliot Spitzer announced a \$500,000 suit against the deli’s owners on behalf of 31 present and former employees who had been paid as little as \$2.61 an hour.

The May Day events, sponsored by the Organizing Committee for Workers Rights, began at noon with musical performances, poetry readings and political speeches in Union Square and proceeded on a three-and-a-half mile march that took the demonstrators to a rally in the Garment District and finally to the International Monetary Fund’s New York headquarters on Second Avenue, nearly seven hours later. The march, which had nearly 500 participants at its high point, demanded general amnesty for all immigrants.

The march drew a broad range of groups and nationalities. Among the groups participating were the Filipino Workers Center; the Palestine Education Committee; “Workers in Action,” a project of Make the Road By Walking; the

Garment Workers Solidarity Center; AZUL (Amanecer Zapatista Unidos en la Lucha); the Workplace Project; Sons and Daughters of Jamaica; South Asian Action and Advocacy Collective; the Mexican-American Workers Association (AMAT); the Global Sweatshop Coalition; and the Coalition for the Human Rights of Immigrants (CHRI). The National Coalition for Dignity and Amnesty organized the rally at the IMF building; Reclaim the Streets sponsored Superbarrio’s wrestling match.

“This is the second year in a row that the police have arrested May Day marchers on the basis of this mask law,” said Jerry Dominguez of AMAT. “This year they brought out hundreds of cops to arrest a few guys in tights. Apparently they’re terrified of a peaceful demonstration that brings immigrant workers and their native-born supporters together to demand the right to organize.”

Superbarrio was not available for comment, but sources close to the masked crusader said that he feels he is needed in New York and that his brush with the law is unlikely to keep him from continuing his work here.

(David L. Wilson works with the Global Sweatshop Coalition and the Coalition for the Human Rights of Immigrants)

## EU's GOT MAIL (YOURS)

The European Union is considering legislation that would require telecommunications companies to archive records of all phone calls and emails for seven years for use in criminal investigations.

Statewatch, a British civil-liberties watchdog group, unveiled the plan after obtaining secret documents, which the EU had classified.

"Authoritarian and totalitarian states would be condemned for violating human rights and civil liberties if they initiated such practices," said Tony Bunyan, editor of Statewatch. "The fact that it is being proposed in the 'democratic' EU does not make it any less authoritarian or totalitarian."

Businesses may resist the plan due to the huge archiving costs. But government leaders from the UK, Belgium, Germany, France, Netherlands, and Spain are pushing the rest of the 15-member Council of the European Union toward the change.

## SRI LANKA BANS GM FOOD IMPORTS

Days after Sri Lanka became the world's first nation to ban outright the import of genetically modified foods, the U.S. requested a World Trade Organization investigation on the legality of the ban which took effect May 1.

"Many foreign scientists have criticized the bio-technology and its health risks. The Food and Advisory Committee of the Ministry of Health after a research study on the subject for a period of one year had imposed the ban on the importation of genetically modified foods, materials, organisms and food additives," said S.Nagiah, the nation's Chief Food and Drugs Inspector of the Ministry of Health defending the ban.

The WTO, however, has requested that Sri Lanka back its ban with scientific data that GM food is unhealthy.

"We know of no credible scientific evidence justifying Sri Lanka's ban. We believe it is totally unwarranted," said Weyland Beeghly, agricultural counselor of the U.S. Embassy in India.

# Living Wage Crashes NYC Harvard Club

by JOHN TARLETON

Local supporters of the Harvard living wage campaign made their voices heard during the three-week student sit-in that focused national attention on the labor practices of the world's wealthiest university.

On May 3, 50 to 60 New York-based Harvard alumni held a sit-in, made impassioned speeches and passed out flyers at the venerable Harvard Club of New York. They came to express their support for a group of 35 or so students at Harvard that had occupied Massachusetts Hall since April 18 demanding that their university pay all its workers a living wage of \$10.25 per hour. The New York alums also came to prod the consciences of their fellow Harvardites.

"We are here today to remind ourselves and our classmates that poverty and lack of dignity should not be the foundation of Harvard's economic existence," said Mark Engler (Class of '98). "...As Harvard Alumni we are privileged for the rest of our lives by virtue of the University's wealth of resources. We are outraged that this privilege is built on the backs of workers who cook, clean, build, and maintain an atmosphere of luxury in exchange for poverty wages."

Engler was one of six alums who sat down in the front lobby, formed a circle and locked arms. They were surrounded by supporters while other members of their group stood at the entrance passing out flyers and seeking petition signatures. The club's management declined to have anyone arrested. Most of the protesters were young professionals who have graduated from Harvard in the past three years.

With an endowment of \$19 billion, Harvard is the wealthiest not-for-profit institution in the world except for the Vatican. Yet close to 2,000 Harvard employees make less than \$10.25 per hour, the living wage that the city of Cambridge, Massachusetts pays its municipal employees. Harvard's



Living wage supporters lock down at the Harvard Club of New York.

Progressive Student Labor Movement (PSLM) launched its living wage campaign on campus in 1998 and has repeatedly been rebuffed by the University.

A contingent of unionized workers at the Harvard Club came out at one point to express their support for the sit-in and the living wage campaign at Harvard. The protesters received a call via cell phone from their comrades at Mass Hall. Meanwhile, one bemused alum claimed he hadn't seen such an uproar at the Harvard Club since the University changed the wording of its diplomas from Latin to English.

Almost all Harvard students live on campus for four years and their every need is attended to. The employees are supposed to be invisible. But for those who refused to ignore their presence, the plight of the workers finally became unbearable.

"I think there's a real sense of shame, a sense of injustice," said Laurel Rayburn (Class of '00).

Roslyn Wuchinich (Class of '99) received a taste of what Harvard workers have to endure while cleaning dorms for several weeks as a part of her

freshman year work study program. She quit after encountering a men's bathroom that was soaked with the stench of urine, had a sink coated in shavings, tubs of beer and ice water blocking the way and stacks of porn magazines on both sides of the toilet. Later, she moved off-campus, to co-op housing.

"I felt like I was living in a hotel," she said. "Everything is structured there so that students don't have to think about anything but their studies."

The standoff ended on May 8 with the University agreeing to a moratorium on outsourcing of jobs while a non-binding 20-person committee of faculty, staff, students and workers formulates new policy recommendations.

Engler, who has been involved in anti-sweatshop and living wage campaigns for the past five years, is hopeful that the Harvard sit-in will have a galvanizing effect on campuses across the country.

"It's like Berkeley in the '60s where an action can resonate across the country," Engler said. "This is something that could be one of those signs of the times."

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# POLICE WHACK WEED MARCH

by JOHN TARLETON

The aggressive police response to the annual Million Marijuana March on May 5 came under heavy fire from protest organizers and participants as they sifted through the debris of an event in which 193 people were arrested.

"I have seen skirmishes before at pot rallies," said Steve Bloom, a senior editor of *High Times* who was pepper sprayed in the neck. "But, I've never seen anything as bad as what I saw on Saturday. It was absolutely appalling."

The day's events began with a festive 1 p.m. march down Broadway by 3,000-4,000 people calling for the re-legalization of marijuana, which was criminalized in 1937. The cannabis sativa plant can be used to produce food, fuel and fiber. It provides relief to people going through chemotherapy and is also known for its recreational benefits.

Chanting "we smoke pot and we like it a lot!", the crowd poured into Battery Park at the southern tip of Manhattan. There were several stages and the crowd sat on the grass listening to music and speeches. The Statue of Liberty stood in the distance. And, dozens of undercover officers began moving through the crowd while hundreds of uniformed police ringed the perimeter.

"I knew the moment I got there that a lot of people were going to get busted," said Geoffrey Campbell of Berkeley, California.

Campbell, who began pointing out undercover police to crowd members, soon found himself being chased onto the stage where two more undercover police grabbed him. Campbell wiggled loose and dove into the crowd only to have people back away. The police pounced on him once more and dragged him off.

"It was insane that they would dare to come on the stage in the middle of a First Amendment protected event," Bloom said. "That was disgraceful. It set the tone for the day."

In spite of Campbell's spectacular arrest, crowd members continued blithely firing up joints only to find themselves being led away in handcuffs.

"I think they knew they could get

arrested," said Willie Duncan, 26, of New York. "But, they didn't care at least until they were arrested. And then they started crying."

Duncan himself was arrested for following a trio of undercover police and shouting "Pig! Pig! Pig!" He said each undercover officer had a quota of five arrests.

"It was obvious from the way police interacted that they had collar quotas," Duncan said. "I heard them asking each other, 'How much did you get?' 'How much did you get?' or saying, 'I've got two.' 'I've got three.' 'I'm finished.'"

Officer Luis Cruz, a spokesman for the New York Police Department, said the police acted properly.

"There were arrests by officers in uniforms and by officers in plainclothes," Cruz said. "We are not aware of any police acting in an overly aggressive manner."

127 of the 193 arrested were charged with various offenses including possession of marijuana and resisting arrest, and 66 more were given tickets for "Obstructing a Government Agent" (OGA), according to Dana Beal of Cures Not Wars.

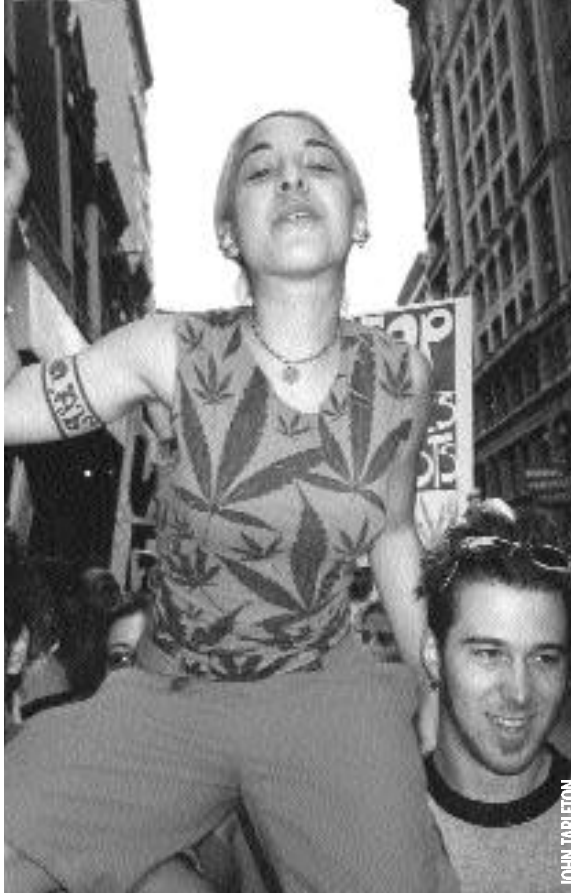
The lead legal liaison for Cures Not Wars had a family emergency on the following day, Beal said. Most of the arrested were represented by public defenders.

"I wanted to plead innocent and go to trial but the judge, prosecutor and the public pretender were all working in cahoots to give me ACD," Duncan said. "They want to move you out real fucking quick."

Under the terms of ACD (Adjournment in Contemplation of Dismissal), defendants were released on unsupervised probation (ranging from 6-12 months) and their records will be expunged if they make it through the probationary period without any further arrests. However, anyone taking ACD is unable to sue the police for their actions.

"We needed a committee to coordinate legal response," Beal said.

Campbell, a veteran of various environmental and



Riding high down Broadway.

anti-globalization protests, suggested that protesters at next year's marijuana rally take a more pro-active approach to their own self-defense. He pointed out that demonstrators could tightly cluster themselves in a large circle, making it more difficult for police to enter their ranks, and then all light up at once.

"Part of the plan is for a huge plume of smoke to hang over the crowd," Campbell said. "But, I didn't see that happening."

Beal said that posters have already been printed for next year's rally and that he hopes to fill the park so tight that police can't even get in. Bloom said more police-protester dialogue might help, especially with a new mayor coming into office next year.

"Giuliani is on his way out. This is his last year," Bloom said. "He hates drugs. He hates potheads. He's a DA with a vengeance."

At last year's marijuana rally 312 people were arrested. From 1992-2000, annual marijuana arrests in New York jumped from 1,000 to 70,000 per year, according to Bloom. Ten percent of all marijuana busts in the country last year occurred in New York City.

The four leading Democratic candidates for mayor have all promised to reduce the policing of people who possess small amounts of marijuana. Beal sees the light at the end of the tunnel.

"We kept the struggle alive for the 8 years Giuliani was in power," Beal said. "We're like the guerrillas. We'll win because we'll still be there when the army withdraws."

## FREE-FIRE AREA OF THE AMERICAS

The Bush administration has pledged an additional \$550 million to the controversial Plan Colombia to "regionalize the Colombian conflict, so that the countries in the area recognize that this is their problem as much as it is Colombia's," according to U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell.

The new "Andean Initiative" is designed to draw neighboring countries, including Ecuador, Bolivia and Peru, into the Colombian civil war to help the United States put down Colombian rebels. The March 12 announcement has provoked fierce criticism from Latin American leaders, including a group of 100 academics, journalists, government officials and community leaders who signed an open letter to Bush describing the potentially dire consequences of the plan: "The expected environmental damage, increase in forced displacement, and worsening of the humanitarian crisis will affect the entire Andean region."

The letter joined earlier criticisms made by Andean leaders last year, as well as a vote in the European parliament condemning the military approach

## R2K: LEGAL BATTLE CONTINUES

Almost 10 months after mass arrests rocked last year's Republican National Convention in Philadelphia, activists continue fighting their charges in court.

Five people still face felony charges (including three accused of assaulting Police Commissioner John Timoney) and 17 more have misdemeanor cases pending, according to William Beckler of the R2K Legal Collective.

"I wouldn't say we are successful yet," Beckler said. "The legal battle continues and there is no guarantee that it will be successful. The hardest cases are the ones that are still open."

R2k Legal was founded to defend the 420 people who were arrested during the Republican Convention. They originally faced thousands of years in potential prison time. Over 90 percent have since been acquitted or had their charges dropped.

So far, R2K Legal has raised and spent \$230,000. Three to twenty volunteers work 50 hours or more per week. Beckler estimates that volunteers in Philadelphia and around the country have spent 40,000 hours working on these cases.

"It's overwhelming to think how many lives have been changed and how much time has been spent on this subject," said Beckler, a Columbia Law School graduate who was recently acquitted of felony charges incurred while volunteering as a legal observer at the Convention protests.

When the criminal cases wrap up later this summer, R2K Legal plans to pursue a civil suit against the City. "When every lying cop is brought to justice, I'll call us successful," Beckler said.

For more information, see [www.r2kphilly.org](http://www.r2kphilly.org)



Marijuana supporters pour into the streets on May 5.

# WHITE HOUSE ENERGY PLAN RUNNING ON EMPTY

by SIMON FINGER  
*News Analysis*

After months of closed-door deliberations led by Vice President Dick Cheney, the White House on May 17 released a plan to combat what it calls an energy supply crisis by focusing on increasing production, sweeping away environmental regulations and opening public lands to exploration for new sources of energy.

In his speech formally introducing the “national energy policy,” Bush opined that at least 1,300 new power plants would have to be built over the next 20 years, along with 38,000 miles of new natural gas pipelines and thousands of miles of power lines; nuclear power, which he called a “clean and unlimited source of energy” would have to be revived; and that environmental regulations must be loosened and public lands opened to oil, coal and gas exploration.

The speech echoed Cheney’s April 30 address in which the Vice President dismissed renewable energy and conservation in favor of supply-side solutions.

But the Bush plan is founded on numerous assumptions that have been unchallenged by the mainstream media and even many of the plan’s critics.

Contrary to the evidence, the energy plan assumes that a national energy crisis exists due to supply shortfalls brought about by excessive environmental legislation. Former President Jimmy Carter took issue with the “supply” crisis in a recent opinion piece in the *Washington Post*. “No energy crisis exists now that equates in any way with those we faced in 1973 and 1979,” wrote Carter.

*Forbes* editor Dean Ackman recently pointed out in the on-line magazine *Salon*, “Although consumption has risen in absolute terms, there has never been a greater abundance of known oil, natural gas and coal reserves... the United States has never had more abundant supplies of power selling at very low prices.” As Ackman explains, the California energy crisis, which brought the issue into the national spotlight, has not been caused by burdensome environmental regulations, but by an ill-plotted deregulation scheme.

Similarly, Cheney lamented the fact that no oil refineries have been built in 20 years, but he ignored the reason why: They haven’t been needed. Until last year, says *New York Times* columnist Paul Krugman, “refining was a persistently depressed business, plagued by overcapacity.” Oil companies had so glutted the market in 1995 that they successfully petitioned the Clinton administration to lift a ban on exporting Alaskan oil — a ban designed to stave off price shocks in the event of future shortfalls.

The acceptance of the notion that a shortfall in supply exists reflects the broader public willingness to let Bush and Cheney dictate the terms of the debate over the causes and cures of the current energy “crisis.” The White House argues that excessive regulation has prevented energy supply from keeping pace with demand. But since 1999, California still licensed 11 new plants, making suspect industry claims that it is being stifled by environmentalists. Moreover, the efficiency and conservation measures instituted after the crises of the 1970’s have dramatically increased the availability of affordable energy.

According to journalist Jim Hightower, such energy efficiency measures, recently slashed under California’s deregulation policy, saved enough energy for the Golden State to avoid building 20 new power plants in the last 25 years.

As effectively as the administration has controlled the debate on the causes of the “crisis,” equally masterful has been its ability to frame controversial issues in terms of the “energy crisis,” making their prospects for political success all the more likely.

Foremost have been the environmental rollbacks that the new President has so vigorously pursued. Energy was a problem during the Clinton administration, too, but it never became a great crusade. As *Slate* magazine

columnist William Saletan has observed, the reason last year’s rolling blackouts and \$2-a-gallon gas prices never became a national issue is because Clinton and Gore had nothing to gain by framing the debate in such a way, and their environmental record was hardly sterling. (During Clinton’s two terms, the automobile fuel efficiency standard dropped to its lowest levels since the ’80s because of booming sales in the ’90s of gas-guzzling sports utility vehicles.)

While having promoted many of the same policies as Bush currently is, Clinton often couched them in the rhetoric of environmental policy. Since Bush can’t win the environment debate, he emphasizes energy. In contrast, carbon dioxide emissions, river damming and the use of public lands were treated by Clinton, however shabbily, as environmental issues, which put some limits on White House policy making.

The energy issue is also driving the Bush-Cheney foreign policy, from the scuttling of the Kyoto Protocol on curbing greenhouse gas emissions to the decidedly belligerent tone of America diplomacy. To Bush, these are not issues of diplomacy, but of energy. We live in a world, warns the President, where “a state like Iraq could hold us hostage.”

Amid such saber-rattling, recently echoed by Bush-confidant and South Dakota Governor William Janklow discussing the need “to deal with these people in the Middle East,” Americans may be forgiven for forgetting that the leading provider of foreign energy is not some Middle Eastern state, but Canada.

U.S. military planning in the post-Cold War world is increasingly focusing on “resource” conflicts, especially oil, according to Michael Klare, director of the Five College Program in Peace and World Security Studies at Hampshire College in Massachusetts. Klare calls attention to the staging of wargames based around energy scenarios, and notes that the largest U.S. arms transfers in recent history have been to oil-rich countries like Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Similarly, conflicts over energy could flare up in the resource-rich Caspian region or the disputed oil fields of the South China Sea.

The energy springboard has even boosted the Pentagon’s plans to dominate outer space. The space lobby has long sought the use of nuclear energy for propulsion in space, which has long faced public resistance, as demonstrated by the outcry against the 1998 launch of the nuclear-powered Cassini probe to Jupiter. The Oval Office’s enthusiasm for nuclear energy has apparently rubbed off on NASA chief Daniel Goldin, who announced in May ambitious plans of landing a manned craft on Mars by 2010, in all likelihood using nuclear propulsion. Advocates of nuclear power claim it is the only way to mount a mission to the outer planets, a proposition belied by the recent announcement of a joint project between the German and European Space Agencies to launch a craft to Jupiter using a solar-powered sail.

Nuclear energy is also needed to produce fissile material for a new generation of nuclear weapons being pushed by the administration, and would likely power Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld’s planned network of space-based weapons to wage war in or on the heavens.

Critics, such as Greenpeace, say “America’s insatiable energy appetite — already the planet’s most rapacious” is what drives such misguided policy. Americans account for less than 5 percent of the world’s population, but consume almost one-quarter of all oil produced.

Even the Vice President recognized that “as a country, we have demanded more and more energy.” His subsequent failure to address that insatiable demand, but rather to subsidize it, reflects what the *Washington Post* called “the construction that Americans are entitled, as a birthright, to as much cheap energy as we can find a use for.”

It’s this assumption that undermines efforts at conservation — energy efficient technologies exist, after all. But the White House, through Spokesman Ari Fleischer, has implied that conservation is un-American: “The president also believes that the American people’s use of energy is a reflection of the strength of our economy, of the way of life that the American people have come to enjoy.” Cheney was more explicit, snidely dismissing conservation as fine as a “personal virtue,” but not any basis for an energy policy.

It’s not that conservation can’t work. A Department of Energy sponsored study, which the White House tried to suppress, concluded that simple measures could reduce 47 percent of the expected growth in energy use over the next 20 years. But Bush and Cheney, both former oil company executives, understand that there is little profit in conservation, at least for fossil fuel providers.

Most sides in the debate submit to the same assumptions about what is possible. By describing some things as inevitable and others as impossible, the White House has foreclosed real debate and dismissed real solutions.

For example, it is widely believed that we want to enjoy continued economic growth, resource use must rise as a result. But since 1980, the gross domestic product has grown by 90 percent, while overall energy and oil consumption have grown by only 26 and 12 percent respectively. In the case of water, usage has actually dropped over the last decade of the booming economy.

Similarly, Cheney uses the fact that non-hydro renewable energy sources only make up 2 percent of current electricity production to imply that renewables can never produce a significant share. Yet the European Union, for one, plans renewables to constitute 22 percent of total energy use by 2010. Some veterans of the Clinton administration argue that similar gains could be made in the U.S.

While the administration argues that Americans will not stand for regulations, another arena in which the official Bush interpretation of reality has prevailed emerges: it has successfully positioned itself as the champion of freedom and the free market, fighting against regulators who tell producers how to produce and consumers how much to consume. But the administration plan is no less coercive. It says we must use more oil, more coal, more natural gas.

As Klare argues in response to the Cheney claim that the U.S. cannot “simply conserve... our way out” of the current squeeze: “Cheney has it all wrong. It’s really the other way around. There is simply no way that we can build one new power plant a week over the next 20 years to increase our energy supply. Even if we can find the money and procure sufficient oil and gas for these plants, American communities are not going to make room in their backyard for that many new refineries, nuclear reactors, nuclear waste dumps, coal-burning power plants and gas pipelines. Even a determined president cannot force American citizens to permit this. So the only way to meet our future energy needs is to bring demand into better alignment with supply.” (In New York City, the construction of 10 new mini-plants has galvanized considerable opposition. See related article, p. 1)

Even more striking is that Bush seeks to use eminent domain, by which the government may seize private assets for public use, to take the necessary land on which to build his countless acres of energy infrastructure.

By controlling the spin, the Bush administration has not only improved its chances for legislative success, but more so, it has limited the range of solutions. By bundling controversial issues into the energy debate, the White House has evaded public scrutiny. And by avoiding discussion of a “demand crisis,” it has prevented the nation from finding a long-term solution to its energy problem. It’s not too late to change the policy — the first

background photo by JOHN TARLETON



## ROLL YOUR OWN BLACKOUT!

JUNE 21

To protest the Bush Administration's draconian new energy policy, a world wide voluntary rolling blackout has been called for the first day of summer, June 21. "It's a simple protest and a symbolic act. Turn out your lights from 7pm to 10pm on June 21," read an announcement circulated widely on the Internet. "Unplug whatever you can unplug in your house."



DICK CHENEY'S CONSERVATIVE ENERGY POLICY

# Governor Pataki Given 'Environmentalist of the Year' Award

by JOHN TARLETON

Governor George Pataki was honored as New York's "Environmentalist of the Year" on May 14 by the League of Conservation Voters while a group of neighborhood activists blasted the governor as being out of touch and indifferent to grassroots concerns.

"I would say to Pataki that you make token visits to a place like Vieques where it's easy to show concern about people's health," said Pat Deangelis of the East River Environmental Coalition (EREC). "But when power companies like Con Edison seek to pollute neighborhoods in your own backyard, you cave in and do nothing for the people."

Deangelis and about 10 other activists conducted a low key protest on the sidewalk outside Chelsea Piers. They held up signs and passed out leaflets to dinner attendees. They said the state had allowed power plants in their neighborhoods without taking into account their health concerns.

"Pataki has a bad record in every area except protecting the environment for rich white folks," said Brielle Epstein of Communities United for Responsible Energy (CURE). "This administration has been completely unopen to public input."

The New York League of Conservation Voters was founded in 1989 by Paul Elston, Frances Beinecke, Robert F. Kennedy Jr. and Larry Rockefeller. It has promoted upscale public-private "waterfront revitalization" projects like

Chelsea Piers at 23rd and Hudson where the ceremony was held. According to the group's website, the governor was being honored because "no one in New York has done more than Governor Pataki to protect, expand and improve our coastal environments".

Sigourney Weaver was the keynote speaker and Senator Hillary Clinton was among the special guests at the \$300 per plate dinner. Activists stood near the entrance until they were confronted by police who threatened to arrest them for being on private property.

Susan Stetzer of EREC was one of those passing out leaflets describing Con Edison's plans to expand a controversial power plant on E. 14th St. in Manhattan. She has battled Con Edison in court for years and had talked with several of its lawyers just before she was forced to leave by police.

"They are denying our freedom of speech," Stetzer said of the police. "Giuliani's police force is being true to form in calling us a security risk for trying to pass out this information."

City Councilwoman Kathryn Freed happened to be walking by. She asked the lead officer why the activists couldn't remain where they were and was told it was a "safety issue". She asked if they could stand off to the side, away from where cars were dropping off dinner guests, and was told no.

"You're just trying to protect Chelsea Piers' profits," Freed said before she disappeared inside.

## POWER PLANTS TAKE TOLL ON CITY'S KIDS

(continued from page 1)

volatile organic compounds such as benzopyrene and formaldehyde.

"I don't think people understand what they mean by 'clean,'" said Ana Maldonado of Pueblo en Marcha, another South Bronx-based organization. "It might be cleaner than what they used before. But, it's still going to pollute."

Maldonado also points out that General Electric, which polluted the Hudson River for decades with PCBs and has yet to comply with state cleanup laws, manufactures the turbines. "How can we trust this company?" Maldonado asked. "They don't have such a great track record on the environment."

### Grassroots Resistance

A citywide network of neighborhood activists has emerged to fight the new power plants. Two people were arrested outside Governor Pataki's midtown Manhattan office on May 7 and protesters picketed outside a \$300 per plate dinner ceremony on May 14 in which the League of Conservation Voters honored the governor as New York's "Environmentalist of the Year."

Protests have also occurred at construction sites in Sunset Park (May 12), Long Island City (May 19) and Williamsburg (May 22), which is also battling a proposed new 1,000-1,500 megawatt co-generation plant at the Bayside Fuel Oil site at North 12th St. and Kent Ave.

Local Democratic politicians, including Congresswoman Nydia Velasquez (D-Brooklyn) and Bronx Borough President (and mayoral hopeful) Fernando Ferrer, turned out for the Sunset Park protest.

While cars roared overhead on the Gowanus Expressway, Velasquez noted that she now had seven power plants in her district. Ferrer criticized NYPA for wiggling out of doing a full Environmental Impact Review, which would have required a six-month public comment period. When people were asked to raise their hand if they had asthma or knew someone with asthma, almost everyone in the crowd of 75 people raised their hand.

"Will these plants make parents and their children sicker than they are?"

Ferrer asked. "We deserve an answer to that question."

New York City has 13,474 megawatts of energy available, almost 30 percent more than is needed during the hottest summer days, according to the National Resources Defense Council. The ten new plants will augment the area's power supply by 3-4 percent, an amount that could be covered by increased energy conservation and the development of less-polluting energy sources like solar or wind.

"The technology is feasible," said Beth Cullenane of Clean Power for the People. "But, the state needs to be more proactive in using it."

### The Nebulizer

Ramon Marrero compares an asthma attack to drowning on land or having to breathe through a straw. He had to pick his stepson up at school seven times last semester. Ray's most recent asthma attack occurred in mid-April just before Easter vacation. It lasted a week.

"You can't breathe," Ray said. "You're coughing and wheezing and stuffs coming up in your throat. It makes me think

of death."

In his lunch box-sized nebulizer, Ray has a mini-power plant of sorts. When an attack begins, he plugs the machine into a wall and clamps a transparent mask over his mouth and nose. The pump inside the nebulizer makes a noisy hum and sends warm air up a 3-foot long plastic tube. The warm air mixes inside a filter with liquid albuterol and Ray breathes the mist deep into his lungs.

"It's too much to put a kid through, if it can be avoided," said Marrero who also volunteers at Pueblo en Marcha.

Marrero expects the battle against the power plants to continue past June 1, both in the courts and on the streets.

"I take the approach that we haven't lost as long as we're fighting," Marrero said.

Meanwhile, a fifth grader in the South Bronx is hoping that the state of New York will rethink its current energy policies. "I don't want more power plants," Ray said. "It's bad enough already."

For more information, see [www.williamsburgwatch.org](http://www.williamsburgwatch.org)

# ENERGY NUMBERS CRUNCH

Number of permitted repositories that can legally store commercial reactor and defense nuclear waste in the U.S.: 1  
Number of states through which waste will be shipped on its way to the sole repository of Yucca Mountain, Nevada: 43  
Maximum number of accidents that the Department of Energy estimates may occur during the 24 years of planned shipments to Yucca Mountain: 310

Total number of tons of high-level radioactive waste that Congress has permitted Yucca Mountain to store: 77,000  
The number of tons of nuclear waste that will need to be stored over the next 40 years if no more nuclear plants are built: 120,000

The number of tons of waste that will need to be stored over the same time period if construction of nuclear plants resumes at the rate proposed by the Bush Administration: 500,000 to 700,000

Per capita annual electricity consumption in kilowatt-hours in the U.S. in 1997: 12,133  
Per capita electricity consumption in kilowatt-hours in the rest of the world in 1997: 1,381

Average tons of oil consumed per American in 1999: 8.93  
Average of tons of oil consumed per African in 1999: .4

Revenue of the U.S. electric industry in 1999: \$216,700,000,000  
Revenue of all African governments in 1999: \$124,000,000,000

Percent of total electricity used in a regular light bulb that is wasted as heat: 90  
Reduction in pounds of carbon dioxide emitted into the atmosphere by replacing one traditional light bulb with a compact fluorescent bulb, over the bulb's lifetime: 1,000

Amount of carbon dioxide, in tons, saved by one 500 kW wind turbine each year: 750  
Number of trees required to absorb 750 tons of carbon dioxide in a year: 57,000

Amount an Iowa farmer would make annually from 1/4 of an acre of corn: \$100  
Amount same farmer would make annually in royalties leasing the same land for a wind turbine: \$2,000

Total amount of profit in dollars of California's nine major power suppliers in 2000: \$7,745,000,000  
Average percentage increase over 1999 profits for the same nine companies: 54  
Total amount donated by these nine companies to the Bush campaign and other Republicans during the 2000 election: \$3,748,000

Number of homes that could be powered by energy being saved from a program to cut energy use in federal buildings by 20 percent below 1985 levels: 1,250,000  
Percent by which the Bush Administration has proposed cutting the budget of the same conservation program: 48

Number of new power plants Vice President Dick Cheney says is needed to meet national demands by 2020: 1,300  
Number of new power plants that wouldn't be needed if the Bush Administration had not reduced new energy efficiency standards on air conditioners from 30 percent to 20 percent: 138

Number of new power plants that wouldn't be needed if all the conservation and efficiency measures were adopted as outlined in a government report that the Bush administration tried to squelch: 612

Percent of total U.S. electricity currently produced by non-hydro renewables: 2  
Percent of total electricity that will be produced by non-hydro renewables in 2020, as estimated by Vice President Cheney: 6

Percent increase expected in the generating capacity of wind power in the U.S. this year alone, as estimated by the American Wind Energy Association: 60

Number of asthma attacks caused annually by fine particle emission from the dirtiest power plants: 603,000

Amount of oil that could be saved daily in barrels by increasing automobile fuel efficiency standards by 3 miles per gallon: 1,000,000

Maximum amount of oil in barrels that is estimated could be pumped out daily if drilling occurs in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge: 1,000,000

# World Bank Flees Spain for Web

Citing fears of disruptive protests, the World Bank has cancelled a meeting scheduled for Barcelona in June.

"Victoire!" screamed a headline on the French Indymedia site after the bank decided to conduct its business online instead.

Thousands of activists had planned to converge in Barcelona in what was expected to be one of the largest antiglobalization protests during the "Summer of Resistance."

"This cancellation constitutes a clear proof that citizen mobilization can be decisive to change the current neoliberal model," wrote the Campaign Against the World Bank, which announced planned protests would proceed Barcelona.

"The motives which had inspired the protests still exist, and therefore the mobilizations will carry on as expected, despite the cancellation of the official meeting," the group stated.

While the World Bank, like the International Monetary Fund, is often criticized for its undemocratic and secretive ways, a spokesperson from the Bank claimed the protesters were the true "threat to free discussion."

"Years ago people used to burn books to try and clamp down on academic freedom; now they try to prevent academics from reaching debating halls," said World Bank spokesperson Caroline Anstey. "This is hardly progress. Fortunately the Internet means that academic debates can now take place on line."

But activists predict that the World Bank may still face direct action protests — albeit virtual ones.

"If they are going to meet online, the fact is we have plenty of people who are tech savvy enough to disrupt this meeting via 'hacktivism,'" said one New York activist who credited the Quebec protests against the Free Trade Area of the Americas for convincing the World Bank to cancel its Barcelona meeting.

"No city wants to become the next Quebec or Seattle," she said.

"The fact that the World Bank has cancelled its meeting because of anticipated protest shows how successful this movement has been in terms of confronting these institutions, but at the same time they continue their policies anyway — it is a qualified success."

Protests also raise awareness of secre-



Protests in Quebec City helped convince World Bank leaders to stay home.

tive organizations and agreements.

"The FTAA would still be a closely guarded secret, withheld from the public, except for the phenomenal citizens' trade movement that has arisen in America and all around the globe," wrote Jim Hightower recently in his newsletter "The Hightower Lowdown."

## DEMOCRATS KEEP FAMILY PLANNING GAG RULE IN PLACE

On May 16, 33 House Democrats crossed the aisle, providing the crucial swing votes to reinstate a measure that would deny international non-governmental organizations U.S. funding if they provide any kind of abortion counseling.

While using American dollars to directly fund abortions abroad has long been illegal, the new policy forbids organizations from even talking about the issue. Such a measure would be an unconstitutional violation of the freedom of speech if attempted on U.S. soil, but because the policy only affects overseas agencies, it is considered legal. It would even bar organizations from advocating the decriminalization of abortion in nations like Nepal where performing an abortion carries a 20-year sentence

Often referred to as the Mexico City Policy or the "global gag rule," it was first

adopted by Ronald Reagan in 1984 during a summit in Mexico City. It was then overturned by President Clinton in his first days in office in 1993, only to be reimposed by George W. Bush earlier this year.

The matter came to the House during the debate over the foreign aid budget in the House International Relations Committee, which revoked the gag rule, reinstating funding earlier this month. When it went to the House floor for a full vote, however, 33 Democrats threw their support behind the President, ensuring passage of the rule, which was carried by a narrow 8-vote margin.

The plan has been roundly lambasted as anti-health and anti-woman by women's groups, family planning advocates and health experts, who consider the policy a disaster for women in developing countries. According to NOW Executive Vice President Kim Gandy:

"Doctors everywhere must be allowed to give women patients complete and medically-sound information... Hundreds of thousands of women with unplanned pregnancies die every year due to complications in pregnancy and childbirth. The U.S. can do much through its aid to family planning programs to reduce that toll." Clinics would be forbidden even from treating women suffering the effects of a botched abortion.

Because the groups that provide abortion counseling are the same groups that need American funding to respond to health crises including AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, malnutrition and all of the other ills plaguing poor nations, they are effectively blackmailed into closing their mouths on an important issue that touches the lives of countless thousands of the world's most vulnerable people.

## WOMAN CONVICTED OF KILLING STILLBORN

On May 17, after 15 minutes of deliberation, a South Carolina jury declared Regina McKnight guilty of killing her fetus. McKnight, now 24 years old and a recovering cocaine addict, was sentenced to 12 years in prison for delivering a stillborn baby in May, 1999.

Prosecutors claimed her addiction to crack cocaine caused the death. The defense argued that any number of factors can cause stillbirths. Four doctors testified, presenting conflicting views.

South Carolina law defines a third-trimester fetus as a person. This statute was first applied in 1997, when Cornelia Whitner was convicted of child abuse for using drugs while pregnant even though

she gave birth to a healthy child. In January, a South Carolina hospital considered using the statute against a woman who refused a Caesarean section after 40 hours in labor.

Doctors claimed the prolonged labor could harm the fetus, but the woman delivered a healthy child without the operation. McKnight's case is believed to be the first homicide prosecution of this type in the country.

A study published in the March issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* supports the argument of McKnight's lawyers. Debunking the myth of the crack baby, the study concluded, "Many findings once thought to

be specific effects of in utero cocaine exposure are correlated with other factors, including prenatal exposure to tobacco, marijuana, or alcohol, and the quality of the child's environment." In an accompanying editorial, Dr. Wendy Chavkin explained that the crack baby "has become a convenient symbol for an aggressive war on drug users because of the implication that anyone who is selfish enough to irreparably damage a child for the sake of a quick high deserves retribution... This image, promoted by the mass media, makes it easier to advocate a simplistic, punitive response than to address the complex causes of drug use."

## CRACKDOWN ON OREGON ANARCHISTS

Two Portland, Oregon anarchists have been indicted on assault and kidnapping charges following a massive police response to a punk rock house party.

Partygoers told the *Willamette Week* that after police arrived to respond to a noise complaint, Sgt. Michael Fort attacked one man who refused to answer a question. Other partygoers allegedly started to yell at Fort, who — police claim — was then dragged into a house by three men and beaten.

Forty-three officers in 20 cars answered the call for backup and declared an emergency zone for blocks around the house. People were reportedly beaten and tear gassed.

Two of the three men were indicted by a grand jury on charges including kidnapping, which carries a mandatory minimum sentence of seven-and-a-half years.

The police response to the March 29 party comes on the heels of increasing surveillance by police, say local activists. In recent months there have been numerous reports of police stopping anyone who looks like an "anarchist," questioning them about their political beliefs, photographing them, and copying address books.

Local observers say the police scrutiny may be linked to the establishment last year of the Joint Terrorism Task Force, which brings together local and federal law enforcement personnel.

In response, Portland activists and punk rockers have formed an instant response team to monitor the police in similar situations, along with a "buddy system" to assist those who are unexpectedly arrested.

Oregon anarchists jailed on felony charges include Robert Thaxton, who is serving 7 years for assault after a 1999 Eugene Reclaim the Streets action and Craig "Crittter" Marshall, who recently accepted a plea bargain of 5 1/2 years in connection with an arson in Eugene.

# FTAA'S MANY FACES

by MIKE BURKE

On April 22, in a fortified compound in Quebec City, 34 hemispheric leaders agreed to continue negotiations on the Free Trade Area of the Americas and set a goal of January 1, 2005 to finalize the deal. But the FTAA, which would create the world's largest trade bloc, remains far from a reality. It has been characterized by critics as "NAFTA on steroids" and faces widespread opposition among the general population of many nations and some international leaders.

As with NAFTA, opponents fear the FTAA will give corporations extraordinary rights over citizens and governments as well as degrade environmental and labor conditions across the hemisphere.

"While the FTAA represents an ambitious new attempt by trade ideologues to push the envelope of trade and investment liberalization in the Americas, the good news is that there are many cracks in the armor of the FTAA," writes Marc Lee, a research economist with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. "The process surrounding it, and the political will of the nations involved, are not nearly as fortified as the walls of Quebec City."

Citizens and leaders of many countries have expressed many misgivings about the proposed FTAA. Below is an outline of some of their concerns:

## ARGENTINA

On April 5, over 10,000 unionists, farmers, students, and leftists protested in Buenos Aires, where the final drafting session of the FTAA took place. The demonstrators demanded that the FTAA delegates stop their secretive ways and allow citizens to view the text of the proposed trade pact.

## BRAZIL

The nation's main industries — machine tools, chemicals, and electronics — may be unable to compete against mammoth U.S. and Canadian corporations if all trade restrictions were lifted, domestic critics of the FTAA fear. "The U.S. and Canada have enormous industries. In such an environment, how are we going to compete and develop our industry?" asked Samuel Pinherio Guimaraes, a government official, shortly before the Quebec talks. While Pinherio's statement was retracted by the Brazilian government, it reflects a common fear among Brazilians.

A few weeks prior to the Quebec talks, Brazil was successful in stalling a U.S. plan to push up the deadline for trade negotiations from January 1, 2005 to January 1, 2003.

Brazil will likely insist that U.S. remove tariffs on steel and orange juice, which would be difficult for any U.S. President to do because of the importance of those products in the respective economies of Pennsylvania and Florida, two key electoral states.

## CANADA

Public distrust of the FTAA has reached extraordinary levels. Prior to the FTAA protests in April, a Canadian Labour Congress poll found that 21 percent of adult Canadians, or 4.4 million people, would have protested in the streets if they could have afforded to and had the time. According to the poll, 74 percent of citizens want a national referendum on the FTAA and 90 percent want open parliamentary public hearings and debates.

Many Canadian concerns center on preserving national sovereignty and public services, including health care. As a sign of what could come, UPS has challenged the legality of the Canadian government's parcel post delivery operation claiming that the very existence of a publicly subsidized delivery system is not allowed under NAFTA.

*A Canadian Labour Congress poll found that 21 percent of adult Canadians, or 4.4 million people, would have protested in the streets if they could have afforded to and had the time.*

## JAMAICA

Many small Caribbean countries, including Jamaica, depend heavily on tariff income collected when goods are imported into the country. Jamaica is lobbying to extend the schedule for tariffs to be reduced.

## LATINAMERICA

From 1960 to 1980, when most Latin American economies were "welfare statist", the per capita income in Latin America grew 73 percent, according to the Canadian Financial Post. During the last two decades, when the region has undergone unprecedented trade liberalization, the per capita income increased only 7 percent.

## MERCOSUR

Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay are already in a four-nation trade pact known as the Common Market of the Southern Cone, or MERCOSUR. A 1997 study by the Getulio Vargas Foundation in Brazil predicted that Brazil and Argentina's economies would expand far more quickly if a trade liberalization pact was signed with the European Union instead of the FTAA. The Brazilian economy, the study predicted, would expand at an additional rate of 5 percent annually under an EU agreement, compared to only an additional 2 percent under the FTAA.

The potential economic growth discrepancy was even greater for Argentina:

6 percent under an EU deal compared to 1 percent under the FTAA, as European demand for its agricultural products would be much higher.

## MEXICO

While Mexican leaders have backed the FTAA, some private business interests hope to delay ratification in order to benefit from special access to U.S. markets. "Who wants to share such privileged access?"

The longer Mexico can hold on to that, the better," says Luis Rubio, who heads the Center for Research and Development, a Mexican think tank. Under NAFTA, Mexican exports have tripled with 88 percent of all exports heading to the U.S. But Mexican workers have not been as fortunate: wages have fallen, the income gap has widened, and an economic geographical divide has formed between the northern and southern states. According to a 2000 study by the Centre for Economic Research and Teaching, 90 percent of foreign investment under NAFTA has gone to the northern states of Nuevo Leon, Chihuahua, and Baja, California, as well as the western part of Jalisco.

## UNITED STATES

A recent study by the conservative Institute for International Economics determined that the American public is split on globalization. "It is not just vandalizing 'anarchists' in Seattle, or union workers from trade-impacted industries, who oppose globalization policies," write Kenneth F. Scheve and Matthew J. Slaughter. "It is a much broader share of U.S. citizens, divided across skill groups in all industries as a result of domestic labor-market competition."

Although NAFTA has resulted in a loss of 400,000 jobs, according to the Justice Department, Bush backs FTAA and plans to seek fast-track authority (he dubs it "trade promotion authority"), which would eliminate the role of Congress in amending any trade agreements.

Progressive Democrats are expected to insist on incorporating labor and environmental standards into any agreement.

## VENEZUELA

Among hemispheric leaders, President Hugo Chavez is the FTAA's most vocal opponent. "For Venezuela the FTAA is only a possibility, only an option and not a destiny," said Chavez, who has explored entering into smaller trade agreements with neighboring nations.

In June, Chavez plans to formally request that Venezuela, South America's largest oil producer, become an associate member of the MERCOSUR.

Chavez also criticizes the U.S. ban on Cuba from negotiations.



All photos taken in Quebec City, April 20-22. Photo credits (clockwise from bottom left): Peter Holderness, Peter Holderness, Heather Haddon, Peter Holderness, John Tarleton, Peter Holderness, John Tarleton, Peter Holderness

# AFTER QUEBEC, WHAT NEXT?

by JOHN TARLETON  
*News Analysis*

On April 20, thousands of people marched through Quebec City to the 11-foot fence that organizers of the Summit of the Americas had thrown up to keep protesters at bay while hemispheric leaders met inside to negotiate an ambitious new Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA).

Parts of the fence, which was the subject of months of debate, were torn down in a matter of minutes. The police responded with a barrage of tear gas that lasted for two days. Young militants battled security forces while as many as 60,000 workers, environmentalists and other concerned citizens marched through another part of town. Then, everyone went home.

The Quebec protests were another milestone in a still nascent movement against corporate globalization. They turned the spotlight (at least in Canada) on the FTAA and the secretive negotiations behind it. But now what? How far can this new direct action movement grow beyond its countercultural base? Will it be able to affect real changes in a society dominated at every level by giant, transnational corporations? Are the mass actions that have defined the movement since Seattle still relevant? And, will a growing acceptance of using "a diversity of tactics" give this movement more flexibility or isolate it from the broader public it seeks to influence?

## The Globalization of Resistance

As Quebec emphatically restated, the urge to get in the way of those who wield global power continues to be irresistible, and a diverse, teeming ecosystem of protest has emerged in the past year and a half as demonstrators around the world contest the values and priorities of corporate-driven globalization. The protest monoculture of the past — neatly structured groups falling in line behind recognizable leaders — is giving way to something distinctly different as scruffy anarchists, university students, renegade farmers, environmentalists, trade unionists, pagans, radical cheerleaders, Gandhian pacifists, unrepentant '60s radicals and others make common cause against a deregulated global capitalism.

"We're facing down hundreds of years of colonialism and imperialism that's now called globalization," says Warcy of the New York City Direct Action Network. "We've taken on a lot, but that's O.K. That's what we want to do with our lives-to work to create a decent planet."

Ironically, the US military anticipated the emergence of a decentralized, global resistance years before most radicals did so.

In the 1993 article "Cyberwar Is Coming," Pentagon analyst David Rondfelt wrote, "the rise of networks, especially all-channel networks, in which every node is connected to every other node, means that power is migrating to non-state actors who are able to organize into sprawling multi-organizational networks more readily than traditional, hier-

archical state actors can."

A year later the Zapatista uprising erupted in Southern Mexico.

Springing into action on the day (January 1, 1994) that the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) went into effect, the Zapatistas offered a new paradigm for leftists. Instead of trying to seize state power like all previous guerrilla movements, the Zapatistas have sought to create more democratic spaces in their communities as well as in wider Mexican society. They have called for "a world that contains many worlds" and have offered Zapatismo as one example of resistance, not a template to be slavishly duplicated. The mass actions from Seattle forward have, at least in part, reflected that pluralistic vision. The tendency of protesters to hop from summit to summit has come under fire from both inside and outside activist circles. Yet, people keep on going.

"There's definitely a crowd of 20-somethings who've been traveling from summit to summit," says Evan Henshaw-Plath, founder of the protest.net website. "I'm one of them and it's a lot of fun...the biggest benefit is that all the people who are doing local actions are given a chance to connect and network. Whereas before, I think there was a pretty severe case of isolation."

There will be mobilizations this summer in Cincinnati (anti-police brutality), Sweden (European Union), San Diego (Biotech), Genoa, Italy (G8) and Bonn, Germany (climate conference). A June 25-27 World Bank conference in Barcelona was recently cancelled in the face of potentially large protests. For Paul Rosenberg, 51, a longtime Los Angeles activist, these mobilizations are indispensable.

"Big mass actions are a necessity," Rosenberg says. "They're exhilarating and they expand people's sense of the possible. Continuing to challenge plutocratic planning meetings simply cannot be stressed too much. The basic notion of physically challenging these meetings is an incredibly powerful one."

Challenging powerful institutions can have powerful repercussions. Anti-globalization activists have been subject to scare campaigns in the media, infiltration of their meetings and organizations and trumped up charges in the criminal justice system.

In one of the most controversial crack-downs to date, the 400 or so protesters arrested during last summer's demonstrations at the Republican National Convention in Philadelphia originally faced over 1,500 charges that could have collectively landed them thousands of years of prison time. For Marina Sitrin, 30, of the New York Peoples Law Collective, and other volunteers like her, keeping the Philly activists out of jail became a full-time occupation. To date, the R2K Legal Office has raised and spent \$230,000 and required 40,000 volunteer hours to successfully exonerate

hundreds of activists.

"I think the time and energy is [not only] worth it but absolutely necessary," Sitrin says. "We need to protect and take care of each other. The way we organize and take care of each other today is a reflection of the type of world we want to create. It takes energy but imagine if we didn't defend each other."

## Localizing the Global

Gretchen King, 24, is a media activist and a graduate student in social anthropology in the declining rust belt city of Syracuse, New York. King says activists should take the large issues raised at the mass actions and make them relevant in their own communities.

"I think this movement has to start talking about the kind of survival issues that slap people when they walk out the front door," she adds.

FTAA teach-ins were held in Syracuse and the roster of speakers was sprinkled with local activists who could put global issues in focus — a union organizer talking about the globalization of trade in services and the plight of university workers, an anti-nuclear activist talking about the deregulation of the nuclear power industry under free trade, a local farmer relating the effort to produce regional organic food to the globalization of the agro-industrial complex.

"It was an opportunity for people to both learn and to plug into stuff going on right where they are," King says. "They were engaging real people on these issues and I think that was important."

Paul Engler is an organizer for both the Western Massachusetts Global Action Coalition and the Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union. A recent graduate of Hampshire College, he considers himself an anarchist, did jail solidarity after being arrested at last year's IMF/World Bank protests in Washington, D.C. and is well-versed in the "Seattle model" with its emphasis on affinity groups (autonomous cells of 5-20 people), spokescouncils (the looseknit decision making bodies that affinity groups use to coordinate their actions) and direct action. However, Engler also contends that radicals need to know when to shed some of their countercultural trappings in order to forge alliances with labor and other more mainstream allies.

"When labor people or African-American people have to organize within the consensus model they are uncomfortable with it and the culture that comes with it," Engler says. "You have to reach out to people where they are at. Often you have to organize along pre-existing social patterns and institutions."

The mass action model will face a new challenge in November when world leaders try to vanish into the Arabian Desert to hold the next WTO Ministerial in the Emirate of Qatar. Lisa Fithian of the Los Angeles Direct Action Network said the first thing activists should do is "claim victory" in forcing the WTO into hiding. She suggested that activists may look to

(continued on page 14)



# Vietnam: Atrocity was the Policy

by A.K. GUPTA  
*News Analysis*

Flick on your television to the History Channel and you'll be treated to a seemingly unending cavalcade of shows extolling the heroism and valor of our armed forces. The content is often the same — tales of derring-do under fire, interviews with battle-scarred veterans, grainy combat footage — though the setting may vary from WWII to Korea, Vietnam, Panama, the Persian Gulf.

While disputes may linger about the justice of a particular war, so the narrative goes, all can nonetheless agree that our troops in the field fought bravely and honorably.

The revelation that former U.S. Senator Bob Kerrey may have committed war crimes in Vietnam has punctured this Hollywood-inspired myth of combat heroism. Kerrey, who currently serves as head of the Manhattan-based New School University, has been accused by one of his fellow veterans of leading a mission on February 25, 1969, during which soldiers knowingly claimed the lives of 21 civilians.

Kerrey claims the purpose of the mission was to capture a local leader of the National Liberation Front, or Viet Cong as termed by its opponents. The guerrilla leader they were after, though, was not a soldier, but the village secretary, basically the mayor.

Gerhard Klann, who served on the seven-member team of elite Navy "Seals" led by Kerrey, says upon entering the target village of Thanh Phong in the sprawling Mekong River Delta, the soldiers found only women and children.

Klann says after executing an elderly couple and their three grandchildren, with Kerrey holding down the old man while his throat was slit, the special forces rounded up 16 other civilians and "slaughtered them" under orders from Kerrey.

Kerrey claims his troops were fired upon and the civilians died in a chaotic night battle that ensued. However, Klann says the Seals (which stands for Sea-Air-Land units) never came under fire, and a villager who says she witnessed the killings has corroborated his account of the massacre.

Confronted with the evidence in an interview with CBS News, Kerrey said to call it "an atrocity . . . is pretty close to being right." He added that he's "got to be prepared to tolerate any consequences of this . . . up to and including somebody saying this is a war crime."

While Kerrey says he is haunted by "guilt" and "shame" for the incident, he has waffled on his culpability. In a press conference on April 26, Kerrey said the assault took place in a "free-fire zone" where anyone was fair game. In an earlier interview with Gregory L. Vistica, the journalist who broke the story in the *New York Times*, Kerrey claimed, "We were instructed not to take prisoners."

But "Kerrey's Raiders," as his team was dubbed, had descended upon Thanh Phong less than two weeks prior to the killings to look for the secretary. In their after-action reports, the Seals noted that they "interrogated 14 women and small children." From the report, which contains Kerrey's name, it seems likely that the Seals knew what they

were going to encounter upon their return to the village.

Kerrey may be correct that the village was in a free-fire zone, but historians say there was hardly a place in the region that wasn't. There were few prohibitions on bombing anywhere in Laos, Cambodia and North Vietnam. Outside of cities, the Pentagon indiscriminately bombed virtually all of South Vietnam. Throughout all of Indochina, by some estimates, U.S. forces killed over 1 million civilians.

Col. David Hackworth (Ret.), who says he served in the same area at the same time as Kerrey, claims his division killed over 20,000 guerrillas during that time and a "large percentage of those were civilians."

Currently a journalist, Hackworth recently told TV personality Bryant Gumbel that "Vietnam was a massacre. It was an atrocity from beginning to end."

Because of considerable support among South Vietnamese peasants for the NLF, the Pentagon considered anyone outside of U.S. control to be an "unfriendly." Capt. David Marion (Ret.), who served as an adviser to the senior South Vietnamese official in the region covering Thanh Phong, says his superior's attitude was, "You support me and the government of Vietnam, we get along O.K. You do not, you're Viet Cong, you die."

In hopes of crippling the NLF, its enemies went after its civilian infrastructure. The Central Intelligence Agency initiated the "Phoenix Program" in 1968 to coordinate all terror programs in operation against the guerrillas' civilian supporters. Anywhere from 20,000 to 70,000 Vietnamese were assassinated during the program's three years of operation.

Former CIA agent Ralph McGehee says, "one of Phoenix's main results was the mass and indiscriminate murder of Vietnamese civilians." Other aspects of the program included detaining thousands of civilians and turning them over to the Pentagon's South Vietnamese allies. Most of these detainees, claims McGehee, were women and children. One Phoenix agent who testified before Congress in 1971 said during his year and a half in the program, he "never knew an individual to be detained as a [Viet Cong] suspect who ever lived through an interrogation."

Another Phoenix agent who appeared before Congress, Michael Uhl, testified that "because of command pressure" all civilian detainees were listed as part of the "Viet Cong Infrastructure," even though "not one of these people ever freely admitted to being a cadre member."

Special operations forces, such as the Seals and the Army's Green Berets, trained South Vietnamese police and paramilitary units to carry out the Phoenix missions of assassination and kidnapping.

In the Mekong Delta, where Kerrey's Raiders carried out some of their assaults, SEAL advisers led local forces on an average of 15 missions a month, according to Kevin Dockery, author of *SEALS In Action*.

For his role in the incident, Kerrey received the Bronze Star for "courage under fire." An accompanying citation noted he served with "friendly foreign forces," suggesting the Seals were leading local forces.

Thus, it appears, Kerrey was leading a group of paramilitaries on a mission to kill civilians. Two recently declassified military reports dated February 25, 1969, refer to "21 VC KIA(BC)," meaning, "21 Vietcong

Killed In Action (Body Count)." His Bronze Star citation also refers to his team killing 21 "Viet Cong communist aggressors."

Trying to comprehend Kerrey's role in the conflict is not some academic exercise. The Pentagon is currently embroiled in the Colombian civil war. There, paramilitary forces, often trained and supplied by the U.S., have killed thousands of civilians in a Phoenix-like terror campaign against suspected guerrilla supporters.

The question remains of what punishment should be meted out to Kerrey. CBS News, which gave prominence to the incident, claims in an accompanying article on its website that Kerrey can't be prosecuted for war crimes because he no longer serves in the military.

This is disingenuous at best. There is no statute of limitation on war crimes; prosecutions are still occurring of WWII-era Nazis. At the Nuremberg trials in Germany, the victors, including the United States, established that there was no justification for war crimes. No soldier can use the excuse, "I was only following orders" to defend their actions, which Kerrey has attempted.

Given the United States' zealous pursuit of selected war criminals from the Balkan conflict, the proper course would be for Kerrey to surrender himself for prosecution.

Some may object that the architects of the war, like former Defense Secretary Robert McNamara or ex-Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, should be the ones in the docket. And they should.

But what happened on that night 32 years ago was not a made-for-television episode of combat valor, but quite likely the

## AFTER QUEBEC...

(continued from page 13) shut down stock exchanges around the planet when the WTO convenes on November 9.

King has worked with microradio.net and the Emergency Broadcasters Bloc at several large actions and she suspects the genie is out of the bottle. "They (the protests) will become more localized," she said. "Just because we don't have access to their meetings, doesn't mean this will stop. We'll find new forms of protest. And that may be the best thing for the movement."

British activists recently scored a coup when police practically shut down London on May Day in response to activists well-publicized plans to do "direct actions" at a "Monopoly board" of 26 pre-selected areas that contained hundreds of potential targets. In another vein, Rosenberg suggests that activists could converge on various cities and then disperse through the streets in bands of 10 — each with a puppet, a banner, a drum and several leafleters dressed as clowns — before converging once more on a central location.

"Having established the reality of protest whenever these meetings are held,

we should feel free to RESHAPE what protest means," Rosenberg said, "particularly when they hide from us."

### Ongoing Debates

The FTAA protests in Quebec were among the fiercest to date. Security forces fired off almost 5,000 rounds of tear gas in two days, blanketing the population in a cloud of chemical irritants. Protesters, in turn, hurled everything from stuffed animals to hockey pucks to Molotov cocktails at the police. Whereas the action guidelines in Seattle called for protesters to forsake weapons, violence or property destruction, organizers in Quebec embraced the call for "a diversity of tactics", which some, like Engler, read as a euphemism for "anything goes".

In the diverse new ecosystem of protest, Engler sees formations like the Black Bloc as a kudzu-like weed that threatens to overrun other life forms.

"Violence is breaking apart the movement from the sides," Engler said. "It's a small minority that unilaterally forces what they think should happen at an action, whether they recognize it or not. Once you accept the phrase, 'diversity of

tactics', you've lost the argument, because violence totally discredits people who are doing non-violent CD."

The "Next Big Event" in the United States will occur when the IMF/World Bank meet October 2-4 in Washington, D.C. Veteran activists like Fithian find themselves trying to both embrace and defuse more radical elements like the Black Bloc even as they grow in popularity. It is a dilemma that predates this new movement by 30 years.

"The Black Bloc has captured the imagination of thousands of people," Wacry said. She spoke slowly as she gathered her thoughts. "We can't define our resistance by what they (the media) define as acceptable. If we turn our backs on each other, then this thing will fall apart."

A year and a half after Seattle, the trajectory of this most unorthodox (and unexpected) of movements remains uncertain.

(Other stories and interviews by John Tarleton can be found at [www.cybertraveler.org](http://www.cybertraveler.org))



The Zapatistas are greeted with a welcome rally in San Cristóbal de las Casas, the colonial capitol of Chiapas, upon their return from Mexico City.

# ZAPATISTAS REJECT REVISED PEACE PLAN

by BILL WEINBERG

On April 28, Mexico's Chamber of Deputies approved a package of constitutional reforms on indigenous autonomy sought by the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) and its Indian supporters. But the rebellious Indians say changes made by the Senate rendered the package unacceptable and broke off dialogue with the government in response.

President Vicente Fox had signed the reform package, known as the San Andres Accords, upon assuming office last December. The pact is named for a village in the Zapatista home state of Chiapas where congressional negotiators hashed out the agreement with EZLN leaders in 1996.

Twenty-four EZLN "comandantes," including the charismatic Subcommander Marcos, had just completed an historic cross-country tour to Mexico City to demand government action on the Accords. On March 11, over 100,000 Mexicans rallied in the capital's central plaza to greet the rebel leaders, who were unarmed but wearing their trademark ski masks. For weeks, the Indians pressed for a chance to publicly address both houses of Congress, which barely approved their request by a 10-vote margin. On March 28, the Maya comandantes — minus the non-Indian Marcos — took Mexico's highest podium for a nationally televised address. But of Mexico's 648 federal legislators, only 207 attended. Most Congressional members from Fox's own National Action Party (PAN) — which is at odds with the president over the Accords — refused to attend.

In deliberations following the Zapatista address, Fox, the PAN and many opposition legislators closed ranks behind the revised pact, which passed the lower house by a margin of 386-60. With this development, the EZLN declared that none of the "three signals" they had established as a precondition for returning to the peace table had been met. Passage of the Accords is the first "signal."

An April 29 EZLN communiqué said the compromise "betrays the San Andrés Accords." It claimed government hardliners "want to turn the March of Indigenous Dignity into a defeat" and are "closing the door on dialogue and peace." It concluded, "There will be no more contact between the Fox government and the EZLN. . . . The Zapatistas remain in resistance and in rebellion."

The second signal is the removal of army bases from Zapatista communities in the Chiapas rainforest. But observers say the troops are merely reconfiguring their positions rather than withdrawing from the conflict zone. Fox's Chiapas peace pointman Luis Alvarez was on

hand for a photo-op on April 20 when 700 soldiers pulled out of the jungle settlement of Guadalupe Tepeyac. But the troops established a new base at the next settlement up the road, Nuevo Momón.

The release of over 100 Zapatista sympathizers from prisons throughout Mexico is the third signal rebels are demanding. Of these, 11 remain behind bars in state prisons, mostly due to the intransigence of state governors.

Although the EZLN communiqué did not threaten a return to war, a statement by the National Indigenous Congress (CNI) warned of a "resurgence of the armed movement in Chiapas," and called on supporters to prepare resistance nationwide.

The EZLN and CNI say the new text of the revised bill is closer to the version proposed by the previous President Ernesto Zedillo (and rejected four years ago by the EZLN) than the original text agreed to at San Andrés.

The original text guarantees indigenous communities "the use and enjoyment of the natural resources of their lands and territories," defined as all lands "indigenous peoples use and occupy, except for those whose direct control corresponds to the nation." The new proposal makes an exception for the more vague "strategic areas." The original version held that "the location of the indigenous peoples should be taken into account" in drawing electoral districts. The new proposal says this should be done "when feasible."

Meanwhile, violence in Chiapas between pro-government paramilitaries and Zapatista loyalists, which had ebbed since the presidential transfer of power last December, has started to re-emerge. On April 20, in the highland village of Venustiano Carranza, eight Maya Indians were killed in a land dispute between the pro-EZLN Emiliano Zapata Campesino Organization (OCEZ) and the Bartolome Alliance paramilitary. The eight were all Bartolome Alliance followers, gunned down while working their fields by masked men with machine guns. Four days earlier, paramilitaries in Chilon had attacked pro-Zapatista peasants. A woman was raped, a youth wounded, three houses burned and 25 people displaced. It was the first major paramilitary attack since Fox took power.

Venustiano Carranza has been the scene of considerable bloodshed between the paramilitary and Zapatista sympathizers since the Chiapas revolt began in 1994.

For news from Chiapas, visit [www.chiapas.indymedia.org](http://www.chiapas.indymedia.org)

## COCA GROWERS TURN UP THE HEAT IN BOLIVIA

by BILL WEINBERG

Over 300 peasant coca growers or "cocaleros," mostly Aymara Indians, marched on the Bolivian capital of La Paz on April 23, following a 200-mile cross-country trek from Cochabamba, to demand water rights, agrarian reform and an end to forced eradication of their crops. The "March for Life and Sovereignty of the Peoples" was publicly warned away from the capital by Interior Minister Guillermo Fortún, who thundered, "I said: you're not going to arrive marching!"

More than 1,500 cocaleros from the coca-growing regions of Cochabamba and Los Yungas formed feeder marches from their villages, but were repeatedly blocked and attacked by police, who threw tear gas and arrested hundreds, thinning the protesters' ranks.

Cocalero leader and Congressman Evo Morales, along with 10,000 workers and urban supporters, greeted the protesters just outside La Paz and joined them in marching to the city center. After being chased out of the centrally located San Francisco Plaza by police firing tear gas, the marchers were welcomed by striking students at a nearby university campus, where they were again attacked by police.

The following day, Morales announced that if the government did not respond to cocalero demands, the protesters would return home and start blockading roads in the Department of Cochabamba. The next day, cocaleros felled trees, blocking the road between Cochabamba and Santa Cruz. Police responded with tear gas, and 2,000 army troops were sent in. The Coordinating Committee in Defense of Water and Life, which is part of the nationwide umbrella group Unified National Mobilization Coordinating Committee (COMUNAL), organized the cocalero protests.

Bolivians championing other issues also took to the streets. In Southern Taria, police fired tear gas at peasants who blocked roads, demanding repairs on the highway linking their remote region to the outside world. Transportation workers staged a 24-hour strike in La Paz

April 24, calling for toll reductions. They blocked streets and were met with yet more chemical weapons. During the confrontation, a tear gas canister struck and killed a striker, and an elderly woman died when another canister smashed through her nursing home window.

After attending the Free Trade Area of the Americas summit in Quebec City, President Hugo Banzer returned to La Paz on April 25 only to be confronted by four hunger-striking Congress members demanding the government negotiate with protesters. The left-opposition is calling for Banzer, a former military dictator, to step down.

On April 26, as more roadblocks went up on the Cochabamba-Santa Cruz road, the government announced a program of debt forgiveness for the region's campesinos, a key peasant demand. But Santa Cruz business leader Jorge Valdés warned, "If the cocaleros want corpses, they'll have corpses."

Banzer is unlikely to budge on dropping the U.S.-mandated eradication program, in which cocaleros are forced to burn their crops or have elite police units do it for them. Peasants say the eradication will devastate them economically at a time when they already face pressure from banks and creditors. Cochabamba's water company is also in debt, and has broached charging campesinos for access to water. An uprising last year over skyrocketing water fees ended with government compromises on these issues, but protest leaders say Banzer is dragging his heels on debt relief and other demands while charging ahead with the eradication.

Cocalero leader Evo Morales has gained a congressional seat, but he is being challenged for leadership of the peasant movement by the more radical Felipe Quispe Huanca, who goes by the name "El Mallku" (Aymara for "condor") and is less disposed to negotiate with the government. El Mallku recently won leadership of the United Bolivian Worker-Campesino Confederation, the key cocalero group and a pillar of the Water and Life movement.

# IN THE FIRST PERSON

## HOW I HELPED START A UNION

by STEPHANIE GREENWOOD

Here's how you start organizing a hospital residents union: page someone. If they call back, ask them if they've heard of the union campaign and if they would be able to come down and talk with you for a few minutes. If they are not busy dealing with a major trauma, crushed under oceans of paperwork, past the 24-hour mark in a call shift or ideologically opposed, they may say yes.

I sweated through my first two conversations, both with friendly medicine residents interested in forming a union chapter at St. Lukes-Roosevelt Hospital. When I left the hospital, I was sure I had "eject this union organizer" stamped on my jacket. As I headed back to my Manhattan office, where I work for the 11,000-member Committee of Interns and Residents, I mused over whether it was worthwhile to bring better working conditions to a group of young professionals making \$37,000-\$55,000 per year, and who will soon be earning twice that much and living lives of individual prestige. The next eight months gave me answers that I won't soon forget.

### Disaster Zone

I quickly learned that most interns and residents (medical school graduates who have entered a three-year training program that will certify them to be practitioners) often work under disastrous conditions. They are required to be "on call" virtually all the time — admitting, caring for and documenting the conditions of patients — while learning medical procedures and how to function within the hospital's hectic hierarchy.

They typically put in more than 80 hours per week, while paying exorbitant rents for housing adjacent to their hospitals, repaying school loans and, often, raising families.

For what often amounts to less than \$10 an hour, residents not only take responsibility for front-line patient care, but often pick up the slack as hospitals cut support staff, resources and training.

Dependent on the institution for their licenses, their jobs and in the case of many immigrants their visas, residents are particularly vulnerable to exploitation.

With managed care and cutbacks in Medicaid reimbursements, more "throughput" (moving patients quickly from admission to discharge and collecting whatever money is possible) is promoted while "overproviding" services is strongly discouraged.

One doctor told me, "If I didn't have medical school loans, I would quit tomorrow. This is not about caring for patients anymore. The way things are now, I regret becoming a doctor."

Less profitable departments such as pediatrics are especially hard hit. In the hospital I was working at, the pediatrics department lost its Intensive Care Unit, its pulmonologist, its asthma clinic and a number of specialists in the previous year due to decreasing admissions. Infants with complications would often have to be referred to better-equipped facilities.

During the union campaign, the hospital announced that the pediatrics residency program could not be sustained due to its low returns and competition from elsewhere. The program was to be "phased out" in favor of

higher-margin services, such as the new "aroma therapy" center rumored to be opening soon.

One of the pediatrics residents said the decision was an abandonment of children's healthcare needs. "Right now I would not want my child to get care here," he said.

Residents hold a fairly high position on the hospital ladder and are supposed to ally with management. Their unionization is an exciting trend in a growing coalition of organized hospital workers who are uniting with community groups, activists and progressive politicians to force hospitals away from a relentless bottom-line logic and toward maintaining essential social services.

### Small Steps

In practice, the process of organizing a union has only flashes of idealism and high-road inspiration. Most of the day-to-day work — getting petitions signed, passing out buttons, doing outreach for meetings, following up on meetings, planning for meetings, conducting meetings,

*Dependent on the institution for their licenses, their jobs and in the case of many immigrants their visas, residents are particularly vulnerable to exploitation.*

scheduling more meetings — is mundane.

The fights we really wanted to win — saving the pediatrics residency for example — couldn't even be fought for lack of resources and organizational groundwork. I was learning that organizing does not bring solutions; but lack of organizing guarantees that things get worse.

Necessary but insufficient applied to most steps of the campaign as well. Each meeting, conversation, trip to a legislative member's office or to a community board, each letter of support, each day another person wore a union button was another small piece of pressure brought to bear on a complicated, financially distraught institution. Since we didn't know in advance which combination of tactics would be effective, all the pieces were important.

For residents whose overriding problem was a lack of time and energy for out-of-work activity, the piecemeal nature of building a campaign required lots of faith and motivation to keep going. How will we get the union? Well, come to a meeting with Community Board 9 and ask for its support. Will that work? No, but it will help.

This approach doesn't always move someone who has put in 28 hours straight, dealing with crises and paper-

work, usually having gone without meals for much of the shift (a major issue for the residents was the high cost of food in the hospital and its unavailability after 2 p.m.).

Once we get the union, will we get free meals, a raise and better staffing? No, but it will help. Both the residents and the organizers had to balance between patience and anger, keeping expectations in line while maintaining enough optimism to see the work through.

Not to say that the whole process was monotonous. When enough signatures had been gathered to demand union recognition, over 30 people assembled in the cafeteria and marched to the CEO's office to deliver the petitions in person. We were met by a nervous secretary who had a handwritten note from the CEO instructing her to tell us to talk to Human Services.

The administration was headquartered in a fancy building several blocks from the hospital. Residents had neither time nor permission to leave their posts. Their march succeeded in bringing together people from different specialties for the first time to make a direct demand on top management. That the bosses promptly hid behind their bureaucracy could not obscure the significance of the move from talk to action or the desire for an organized voice that was coming from a broad spectrum of departments.

Building the political pressure to force recognition of the union seemed slow. But it was much faster than going through the tangled legal process that the National Labor Relations Board has established for unions seeking official government recognition.

Waiting for the legal process to finish and the government to schedule a vote would probably take five years. Most residents graduate in three. In this campaign, the hospital agreed to an early election due to the political pressure exerted by Local 1199 (which represents over 200,000 health care workers in the New York area), local politicians and the residents themselves, as well as the possibility that the licensed physicians might also begin organizing.

After nine months of discussions, doubts, arguments and committee building, the residents voted 283-44 to unionize. They are currently negotiating their first collective bargaining agreement with the hospital administration.

The union will give them a position from which to advocate for themselves—to improve their ability to deliver quality care and to get a good education that will make them better doctors in the future. I also hope it will be a vehicle through which they can join with other residents around the country in agitating for better healthcare policy.

Small campaigns like these aren't enough to bring about global economic justice. But, they are a step in the right direction.

Do you have a story about your community or a political struggle? Tell us about your battles, accomplishments, disappointments. Tell us in the First Person. We are always looking for contributions to this monthly column. Contact us at [imc-nyc-print@indymedia.org](mailto:imc-nyc-print@indymedia.org) or at (212) 684-8112.