



"If there is no struggle, there is no progress..."
"Agitate, Agitate, Agitate...." Frederick Douglass



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CALL FOR A STATEWIDE CONFERENCE ON THE U.S. WAR IN IRAQ: IMPACT & OPPOSITION IN OUR COMMUNITIES

(Statement by Lawrence Hamm, Chairman, People's Organization For Progress)

Stop The War

The U.S. war in Iraq is causing death and destruction abroad and at home. The war must be brought to an end as soon as possible. The Bush administration is intent on pursuing the war and occupying Iraq on a permanent basis. The only way that this war can be brought to an end is through sustained, vocal and visible opposition from the people. Although African Americans and other people of color strongly oppose the war they have not been mobilized against it in large numbers. To address this problem the People's Organization for Progress calls for a statewide conference on the war and its impact on urban communities.

I. Education

One of the purposes of this conference would be to educate the community about the unjust nature of the U.S. war in Iraq and how it is affecting our communities and neighborhoods. This would include a discussion of the relationship between the war abroad and repression at home, and increased military spending while spending on domestic and social programs is decreased.

It would also include building awareness about the depth and breadth of opposition to the war in our communities and making people aware of the positions of our congressional representatives and other elected officials on the war. Most importantly, the conference would educate people about how they can use their numbers, their votes, and their dollars to effectively oppose the war.

II. Organization

Another important purpose of the conference would be to make clear the position of our communities on the conflict which is: an immediate end to the war, bring all the troops home now, and take the money that is being wasted on the war and spend it on jobs, housing, health care, education, and other needs of the people. The conference could accomplish this by issuing a milestone declaration on the war.

A key goal of the conference would be to build the broadest possible coalition of organizations based in our communities to actively oppose the war. This can actually be accomplished in the organizing process up to and through the conference itself and can continue after its conclusion. Conference activities such as workshops and other sessions can be arranged to facilitate the formulation of strategies, events, and activities that aid in building the anti-war movement in our communities.

III. Mobilization

Public opinion polls have shown again and again that African-Americans have the highest percentages of opposition to this war and to the Bush administration. Yet, their numbers in anti-war rallies, marches, and other activities have been noticeably small. A major goal of this conference would be to increase the presence of African Americans and other people of color in the anti-war movement and its activities and to build an anti-war movement within our communities. This conference can be a springboard for anti-war action in urban communities throughout the state of New Jersey. One of the outcomes of the conference could be the announcement at the conference of a major "Statewide March for Peace, Jobs, and Justice." The objective would be to mobilize 5,000 to 10,000 people to participate.

To find out how you can get involved with this Conference, call the People's Organization for Progress at (973) 801-0001.



POP Preamble To The Constitution

PREAMBLE TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE PEOPLE'S ORGANIZATION FOR PROGRESS

We, the members of the People's Organization for Progress, have founded this association to work for the fundamental transformation of the society in which we live. It is our desire to build a more just social order. Our primary goal is **nothing less** than the complete elimination of poverty, all forms of social, racial, and economic exploitation, oppression, degradation, human misery, suffering and injustice.

We shall unify and organize working, poor, and progressive people and strive to foster cooperation, self-reliance, and a militant fighting spirit among them. We shall build our organization so that it may become a viable political vehicle for the oppressed and a significant force for progressive politics. We shall work to unite the greater progressive community, increase its ranks, and build a broad mass movement at the local level which will be an integral part of the national and worldwide struggle for social and economic justice.

Our concern is not only for society as a whole but for the individual as well. We seek not only social transformation but the transformation of the individual through involvement in the struggle for human liberation. We believe that in order for the struggle to transform society to succeed it must be carried out and supported by people imbued with revolutionary values. We want to make the individual socially aware and concerned, more responsible and compassionate, committed and active in the struggle for social change.

We support and involve ourselves in advocacy, self-help, and reform efforts to improve the conditions of the people; however, we believe that the major social, economic and political problems confronting working and poor people cannot be solved unless there is a radical redistribution of power and wealth in our society and a restructuring of our socioeconomic system that will result in the empowerment of the masses over all institutions that affect their lives.

We vow to uphold the legacy of struggle which we have inherited and not to rest until justice, equality, dignity, and peace are a reality for all.

Stop the Violence Committee

POP School Project Takes Off

By Darrell Graham

Over the last few months, POP launched a project to get signs into as many middle and high schools as possible, to try to bring a "Stop the Violence" awareness to young people, who are bombarded with violent messages every day. POP "Stop the Violence" and "Peace in the Streets" signs have been posted in all Newark high schools, with the approval of the Superintendent and local principals, and in some middle schools. Plainfield High School, with the assistance of Plainfield Branch chair, Steve Hatcher, has also taken up this project. In some schools in other Essex County towns, like Irvington, parents and teachers have taken the initiative and posted POP signs and held vigils on their own. Signs are being posted in schools as far away as Trenton, by local POP members.

Recognizing the fact that most of the violence faced by youth is outside and not inside the schools, POP works with other organizations and parents and teachers to mobilize against the tide of violence. At Barringer High School in Newark, POP worked with Mrs. Cynthia Moseley, co-chair, a concerned parent and community resident, to hold an emergency demonstration in front of the building after students had been assaulted. With the support of other POP members and residents, it was acknowledged by school staff and others that the demonstration most likely prevented a gang fight that was threatened for that day.

Today, Barringer plays "Stop the Violence" as a running message on the lighted sign outside the school. POP welcomes everyone to join in this work!!



POP - Aims And Purposes

The People's Organization for Progress has been formed for the following purposes:

- To educate the people about relevant social, economic and political issues.
- To continuously organize and mobilize the grassroots community so that it can effectively solve its problems and fight for its needs.
- To improve the social and economic conditions in our community.
- To work for the total elimination of racism and sexism.
- To further develop and increase the political power of working and poor people.
- To strive for a more just and equitable distribution of wealth in our society.
- To serve as an advocate of human and civil rights.
- To support the struggles of people at home and abroad against oppression and exploitation.
- To promote world peace.
- To build unity with other organizations and individuals whose goals are similar to our own.



East Orange Branch of POP, local residents and other POP members protest to demand justice for Dennis Howard, a boy who died after he was hit by a car being chased by police through the community.

Residents and POP members from New Jersey wait outside the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia to view the body of Coretta Scott King, the wife of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. who died earlier this year.

BROAD COALITION NEEDED TO SAVE MUMIA ABU JAMAL

By Bella August

Attorneys, activists and supporters of Mumia Abu Jamal met at Fordham University Law School in New York City in March, to provide an update on the status of his legal case.

Law Professor Brian Glick, gave some context for the time of Mumia's arrest and trial. It is now possible to look at public records of the FBI and its attacks on the Black Panther Party (BPP). Some documents had been revealed at the time of the Media, PA. action. But now there is a fuller public record.

The FBI spread lot of disinformation on the BPP, and carried out infiltration and disruption., including the murder of Fred Hampton in Chicago. Many false criminal charges were brought against BPP members, for example, the BPP 21 in NYC. Outlandish charges of plotting to blow up various sites were brought against them. The notorious frame-up of Geronimo Pratt in L.A. is another infamous case.

In Philadelphia, under Police Chief and then Mayor Rizzo, there was a campaign of arrests against the BPP. As the organization declined, Mumia remained active. He was a radio broadcaster, the Voice of the Voiceless, doing consistent exposures of police brutality and of Rizzo. In a press conference, Rizzo openly threatened that they would "get" Mumia one day.

Deborah Smalls, head of Break the Chains: Communities of Color and the War on Drugs, spoke about the poli-

cies that have resulted in incarceration of so many African American men. Robert Meeropol, of the Rosenberg Fund for Children, emphasized the broad nature of the coalition that almost stopped the execution of his parents, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg. In the same way, he urged, the movement to save Mumia needs to be able to be broad enough to include those who may have differing views on his case.

Robert Bryan, Mumia's current lead attorney, is a longtime opponent of the death penalty and has specialized in these cases for three decades. He described the current status of Mumia's case. Mumia is in his 25th year of incarceration! A new appeal is set to be heard later this year in the 3rd Circuit court, on the basis of three key issues:

1. At the end of the trial to determine guilt or innocence, the prosecutor turned reasonable doubt on its head. Essentially, he told the jury that if Mumia was found guilty, he would have appeal after appeal, so they did not need to worry, even if they were not sure. But if found innocent, that would be it and there would be nothing further they could do.
2. The Batson ruling, which says that a prosecutor cannot remove potential jurors due to their race.
3. Blatant bias of Judge Sabo at an evidentiary hearing. Also, note that he was the number one death sentence judge in the US and most victims were African American.

But the legal struggle is not enough—speakers urged supporters to work in a broad coalition that needs to be strengthened, if Mumia's life is to be saved and he is to receive a new trial.

Pages from Our History

Reparations Now! The 1898 Wilmington Massacre

by Jon Levine

On the morning of November 10, 1898, 2,000 "red shirts" raided the armory in Wilmington, North Carolina. This army of terrorists (racist thugs organized against the democratic aspirations of African-Americans following the Civil War) burned the printing offices of Wilmington Daily Record newspaper to the ground. When 500 heavily armed white supremacists marched on the city government and then burned and razed the Black community, it was with the expressed goal to rid Wilmington of Alexander Manly, the editor of The Record, and "Negro rule" (in the raiders' own words) "even if we have to choke the Cape Fear river with (black) carcasses."

When the Federal Government agreed to withdraw the troops from the South in 1877, it was to end Reconstruction (which the Democratic Party and their KKK allies called "Negro Rule" in the former slave states). But the immediate impetus was a constitutional crisis that feels much more like it occurred yesterday, or perhaps four years ago, than in 1887: a disputed presidential election where one candidate won the popular vote and the other claimed an Electoral College victory, based on stolen votes. The "Great Compromise" was the end of Reconstruction.

But in Wilmington, North Carolina, a major South-

ern port and the largest city in the state at that time, the African-American majority maintained their alliance with elements in the white community and still controlled aspects of their own lives. The postmaster and the Port of Wilmington's director were both Black. That era of self-determination came to an end with the 1898 Massacre.

The significance of the Wilmington Massacre goes far beyond its role in the end of Reconstruction. The armed insurrection against the duly elected authorities in Wilmington gave license to state governments and local thugs throughout the former Confederacy to unleash terror on a scale previously unimagined. While night-riding Klan raids had been outside the law, after Wilmington the era of Jim Crow legal terror began.

One-hundred-and-five years later, the State of North Carolina has finally issued an official apology with publication of the report from the "1898 Wilmington Race Riot Commission" (see <<http://www.ah.dcr.state.nc.us/1898-wrrc/report/report.htm>>). **Within this report is a call for reparations for the victims of this terrorist attack on the African-American community of Wilmington.** This makes the publication of the report a significant victory, since it is almost the only time an official government document has called for reparations for victims of the African Holocaust in the United States.

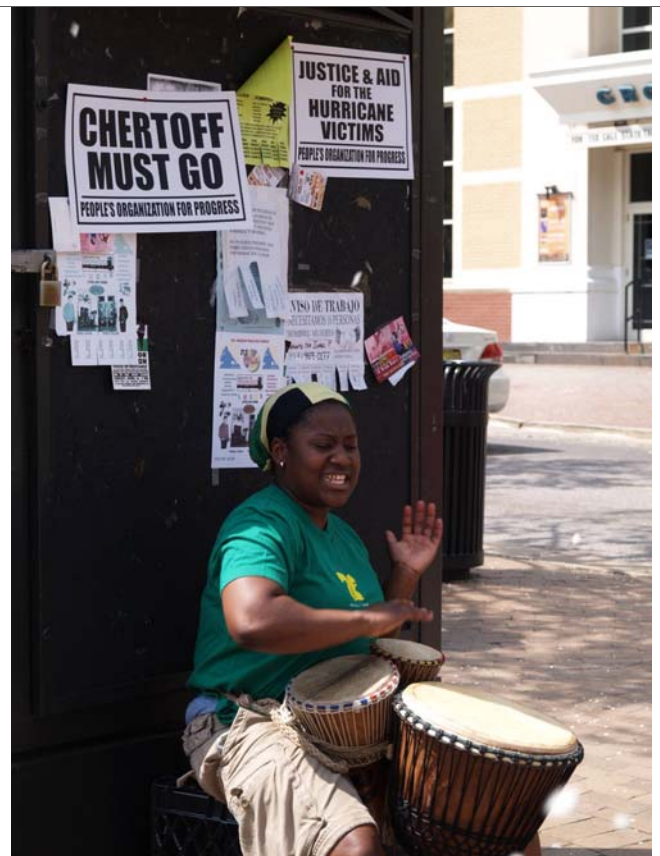
ACLU-NJ and POP Win Fight vs. East Orange For Rights To Speech and Assembly

The City of East Orange tried to require a one million dollar insurance policy and a "hold harmless" agreement before issuing permits for rallies, vigils and memorials for Randy Weaver, the son of POP Co-Vice Chair and Secretary, Mary Weaver. Randy was killed by East Orange police, while riding in the back seat of a car.

Together with POP Chair Larry Hamm, Mary decided to fight this illegal requirement that would have curtailed the right to free speech and peaceful assembly. The New Jersey ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union), representing them, informed the City of East Orange that they would sue if they did not remove this requirement from the permit process.

Although the city allowed a memorial, it did not agree to remove these requirements for future activities. In 2002, therefore, the ACLU sued the city, and it agreed to waive these requirements while the case is pending. It has also been ordered to pay much of the ACLU's attorney fees.

As a result of this action, the right to free speech and assembly can be exercised by people in East Orange.



Nell Sanders drums during demonstration where the POP Central Jersey Branch demanded justice for Katrina survivors and firing Michael Chertoff, head of Homeland Security.

News From The Branches.....

Bergen County Branch: (submitted by Margaret White) Bergen County Branch of the Peoples Organization for Progress sponsored or participated in several events in March and April, 2006. On March 7, the Branch co-sponsored a seminar on Immigrant Detainees and the County Jail, with Bryan Lonagan, Attorney, Legal Aid Society of New York Immigration Law Unit. On March 25, members participated in a demonstration led by New Jersey Residents Against Racism and members of Casa Freehold, in opposition to a meeting of the United Patriots of America and the newly formed New Jersey Citizens for Immigration Control. Both of these groups are known for their white supremacist, anti-immigrant, and racist views. On Tuesday, April 4, the Branch held a ceremony commemorating the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., in MLK Park in Teaneck. Chairman Hamm spoke to a group of more than 50 people. Following the ceremony the participants gathered at nearby St. Mark's Episcopal Church for discussion with Mr. Hamm, and the launch of the Branch's Jail Watch Task Force.

Central Jersey Branch: Led by Vickie White, this Branch, in coalition with other community groups and churches, is planning to take several high school students to New Orleans in June to help in clean-up work and to meet local youth. A successful fund raising dinner was held to help fund the trip, and monthly rallies to focus on the issue of Justice for Katrina Survivors and the Right of Return take place in New Brunswick, at the corner of George Street and Livingston Avenue, at noon on the 3rd Saturday of the month.

Montclair Branch: (submitted by B. August) POP members spoke out for affordable housing, joining with other local activists at a Town Council meeting to call for approval of an ordinance calling for a defined number of affordable units to be included in all new construction. Although this measure has been delayed on the agenda for a long time, it finally was written into law. Unfortunately, however, a huge number of newly constructed buildings were excluded as they were in the pipeline before the ordinance was passed. The Branch and other POP members led a spirited contingent in the African American Heritage parade, which was very well-received by Montclair residents along the route.

Plainfield Branch: (submitted by Barbara Stewart)

*Hooray, Hooray,
the Plainfield Branch is here to stay,
we are not afraid and we will not be
frayed!*



Bergen POP members protest racism against immigrants.

The Plainfield Branch has conducted an Anti-War demonstration at the Front street "Recruitment Center" for the last TWO YEARS, and the support keeps coming, thanks to chairman Steve Hatcher's undying commitment to this cause. Yes, we have been blocked by trucks and been told to go and join those in Washington, DC, but we will not be moved!

In local papers, articles have noted the impact that our efforts, and those of like-minded people around the country, have had on military recruitment. The Defense Department is trying everything. One article stated, "Hit by one of its most difficult recruiting periods in decades, the Defense Department is paying United Airlines to show passengers a Pentagon-produced video touting military jobs. The Defense Department is paying United about \$36,000.00 to run the video from April 17 through May 17, said Lt. Bradley Terrill, project officer for the video. United said it's not unusual for companies to pay for promotional spots on flights". The Branch will continue its monthly pickets in front of the Center. Join us!

The Plainfield Branch also is involved in support of other marches, such as Mrs. Ruby White's "J.A.M.E.E.L. Just Another Mother Endless Effort to save Lives" which took place May 13th, 2006. From 75 to 100 people were in attendance, including POP's Darrell Graham, from our Stop the Violence Committee. Some comments on the march: "Mrs. Ruby White took a stand and did what we all should do when it comes down to trying to stop Black on Black crime that continues to happen in our community," said Steven Hatcher. "I am working for the Victims of violent crimes that have experienced the suffering and pain of losing their loved ones, just trying to give extra support to parents in need," said Mrs. Ruby White. "Plainfield is united in an ongoing effort to sustain our fight against violence. Government, Schools and community united to stop the violence," added Mr. Don Moye. "I am here to support a movement geared towards change in our community. The violence in our communities has reached an epidemic that seems to be a cancer that has grown into a cyst. However, it's the responsibility of us all to unite and help rid our families, youth and communities from the self hatred we inflict upon self," said Bro. Abdul Muhammad. The Plainfield Branch would like to say "thank you" to all who have supported us in our Anti-War marches, and all we do in Plainfield to make our community a safer and better place to dwell.

Newark Branch: An anti-war demonstration has been called for July 8. Voter registration will take place in the summer at Clinton and Bergen avenues and POP will have a table at the African International Festival on August 4-6 at Military Park. Call POP for specific times and information.



POP protests gas prices. Newark residents join in calls to lower prices.



POP marches in the Montclair African American Heritage Parade.



7th Anniversary of killing of Earl Faison. Earl's father calls for re-opening criminal investigation into his torture and death at the hands of the Orange police.

5 Police Officers are currently serving time in jail for violation of Earl's civil rights.

P.O.P.
Meets Every Thursday
6:00 p.m.
Abyssinian Baptist Church
 224 West Kinney St.
 Newark, NJ
All are invited.

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