



GUERRILLEROS DE LA PLUMA

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• La Verdad • La Calles y La Torcida • Voz del Pueblo • Voz Fronteriza • AMATE •

GETTING TO “PROTECT, DEFEND AND UPHOLD”

BY ANTONIO A. VELÁSQUEZ

As independent Raza press and media advocates and activists, our work is too often overly burdened trying to defeat the tendencies of our community to follow models laid out by external influences that do not always have our best interests in mind. Generally, our community too easily accepts what has been predetermined for us by a minority that arrogantly takes on an un-requested and unwanted leadership role that assumes to know what is best for us. The chokehold has become so widespread and established in the overall society that it now goes largely unperceived in our community although it may be influencing every stage of our activities.

Not by coincidence, the U.S. has provided society with both a liberal and conservative element that worked relatively well while mainstream interests walked in lock step. We historically provided the problem of the so-called downtrodden and the introductory connection to dignify their participation in our communities. In the process, not surprisingly, we find we are minimized and even our problem solving is in the hands of these others. Were it left to our own devices we might develop effective solutions to our condition, but we easily distract and lose ourselves in the Euro-American promise of equality and justice that deceptively is to appear magically without any more struggle than that of practicing voting rights. Whichever side wins they win, we lose.

Worse, the predictable pattern that is established is that of our protesting this or that attack on us, making our actions no more than responses after the fact. That is, an action manifested in reactions to decisions against Raza that will be systemically implemented regardless of our outcry. Our community is lost in a cycle of repetition that has not gotten to a point of developing the effective sting, so to

speak, to our responses in order to take down one obstacle and go to the next.

Our general political activism can still be characterized as limited to the tried and failed to appease perhaps the inaction guilt of many that find themselves in a revolving door of vain effort. The automatic conditioned reaction is to fall back on the law of least effort and tail along with foreign or external organizing activities where we have minimal or no control of strategies, tactics, or direction. This result often occurs even when Raza initiates the call to action. Rather than develop work groups composed of tested elements, we are quick to open doors to all. We expect as our criteria for entrance not much beyond the ability to walk in the door. We, perhaps due to an erroneous perception of our own potential, or lack thereof, assume there is strength in numbers and opt for creating collaboratives, alliances, or open-ended organizations composed of individuals not necessarily sharing our interests. Moreover, we do this without first developing an effective managing core group. In these groupings, we often end up being outmaneuvered, playing second string, and working on solutions to their strategic ends. This leads oftentimes to justifying liberal positions or decisions due to an initial error of accepting others' participation without questioning their motives, objectives, or ultimate impacts on what would be our interests.

However, for a self-conscious Raza activist, self-censorship is the rule, unless of course, he or she now has been conditioned to follow routinely a politically correct line. The aforementioned obviously meaning that a wave will never be made, no conflict will occur, and no change will be had. Disappointingly, we drop our guard and follow without even doubting whether our own efforts might not produce a better outcome. Why we do not protect, defend, and uphold an independent thought plan is initially difficult to make out. However, time

and experience is beginning to identify and expose the infiltration, highlighting our biggest shortcoming of lacking basic organizational skills and resources to provide the necessary consistency and historicity to our work.

Our most important political asset is our numbers. It would logically follow that unity of resources and action would be our salvation. However, we see very clearly, how a system that has confused individual freedoms with individual opportunism has created through this dichotomy a false leadership of confused individuals, cowards, or opportunistic traitors acting as gatekeepers to their masters. We become a fragmented community by highlighting and encouraging individual or special interest groupings, and for lack of a better term, what could be considered idiosyncratic development. This, even as we think ourselves as creating community.

In fact, nothing of the sort happens. What occurs is that individuals of like mind or interests only separate themselves from the community and start confusing and believing their positions as primary community interests. In actuality, what is created is fragmentation, which is the entire endgame strategy of the liberal/conservative mindset to stay in control. In true Orwellian fashion, the mass feed of disinformation coupled with the silent coercion towards individualism attempts to make us believe that superficial differences within our alienated condition are in fact positive building blocks to create positive change for our Raza community. In reality, we create nothing but more chaos. This process of fragmentation works well in a racist society where even the confused and duped Euro-American gain from the farce. So long as they play along while helping maintain the machine, either by being liberals playing at revolution or opportunist conservatives masquerading as concerned for the general welfare, they

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Guerrilleros de La Pluma: 2007 Report

Editor's Note: The following article was put together by the staff of ¡La Verdad! newspaper, which has been part of the Raza Press and Media Association (originally named the Chicano Press Association) since its re-establishment in 1990. This assessment comes from ¡La Verdad! staff, and not necessarily from the RPMA.

During the past three months (Sept-Nov, 2007) the RPMA mesa directiva has held three extraordinary meetings: September 22nd in Oxnard, November 3rd in San Diego and November 10th in Los Angeles. The purpose of these juntas were to address the problems that have beset the Association since its re-establishment in 1990. Central to these difficulties has been the RPMA's inability to attract new members and the unwillingness of much of the existing progressive and reformist media workers to struggle in a unified, structured, and accountable fashion based on concrete principles. Of specific concern to the RPMA, has been the failure to realize the goals and objectives it set for itself at its last retreat, which was held on January 20th of this year (2007).

WE NEED A MEDIA THAT CHALLENGES THE GROWING ATTACKS AGAINST LA RAZA

Furthermore, as we witness the growing attacks against Raza, in all fronts and in multiple ways, the question of a lack of Raza media is becoming more crucial by the moment. It is obvious to most, that La Raza, throughout the belly of the beast (or what people call the United States) is going through a crisis of enormous proportions: economically, socially, and politically. Central to tackling and effectively dealing with this situation demands a Raza press and media that can wake up the people, help organize them, and actively participate in the liberation struggle. The staff of ¡La Verdad! believes RPMA is the only formation that can take on this challenge.

Objectives:

- 1) To Establish A Raza News-Wire Service.
- 2) Hold On-Going Workshops And Conferences To Advance Raza journalism.
- 3) Establish An Editorial Board To Oversee Joint Publications.
- 4) To Pool Existing Resources To Assist Publications And To Establish New Ones.
- 5) That A "Collection" Of Periodicals, Past, And Current, Be Established.

Principles Of Unity:

- 1) Must Be Raza Publications Independent Of Govern-

The RPMA has a long and rich history, one that is rooted in the "Chicano Power Movement" of the late 1960's and early 70's, and re-established in 1990 under the name of the Chicano Press Association (CPA); an Association that included the participation of over 20 publications during the Chicano Power Movement. The group later changed its name to the Raza Press Association (RPA) in 2004. The RPMA acquired its present name at its last retreat held in San Diego, on January 20, 2007, as we recognized the technological advances in using electronic and other forms of media in our struggle.

Since its re-establishment (in 1990), dozens of publications have been associated with the RPMA, including La Gente, Voz Fronteriza, Nuestra Cosa, El Andar, Pueblo Unido and ¡La Verdad!. Throughout its two decades of existence, the RPMA has organized dozens of conferences and workshops, book fests, and has produced literally hundreds of publications and other forms of media. The RPMA is the only progressive/revolutionary-oriented media association (that we are aware), which functions in an organized way; by this we mean that it has clearly defined goals and objectives, meets on a regular basis, has a structure and leadership, and is completely independent of corporate and government funding. Today, RPMA is anchored by AMATE, ¡La Verdad!, Voz del Pueblo, Pueblo Unido and Clavo En El Corazon.

RPMA AND THE PRESENT SITUATION

At the retreat of January 20, the RMPA set for itself a long list of objectives, that included:

- To conduct a series of educational workshops throughout Aztlán with the objective of raising consciousness and training future media workers.
- To undertake an ongoing recruitment drive of active media workers/or those seriously interested in this form of struggle.

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ment Agencies (Excluding University Publications).

2) Must Support The Struggles Of All Raza, Within And Outside The U.S.

3) Must Adhere To Democratically Reached Decisions.

Membership Criteria:

1) Membership Is Limited To Raza Involved In Media And Press.

2) Members Must Work/Link-Up With Existing Publications In Their Areas.

3) Representation/Input To The RPA Will Be Through Official Representatives Of Members Publications.

4) To Be A Member In Good Standing, Members Publish Or



Guerrilleros de La Pluma

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2007-2008

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Post Information on a regular basis.

5) Membership In Not Extended To Multinational Organizations.

Structure:

1) Mesa Directiva/Editorial Board Will Consist Of Chair, Secretary, And Treasurers.

2) Mesa Will Serve As Coordinating Body To Insure Communication And Completion Of Tasks.

3) Mesa Will Also Serve As Editorial Board For Joint RPA Publications.

4) Standing Committees Will Be Established As

Media Tactics:

The Civil Gang Injunction in Oxnard

BY FRANCISCO ROMERO

Three years ago, the Oxnard Police Department and the Ventura County District Attorney announced the first civil gang injunction (CGI) in Oxnard. A gang injunction is a police suppression strategy, or as local police officer called it, one more tool in our toolkit, that sues an entire gang and all of its members under the label of an "unincorporated association". As part of the civil lawsuit against a targeted gang, the police and DA outline a set of New Rules for Living, which usually include up to 10 different already illegal activities such as carrying weapons, selling drugs and trespassing to name a few. These prohibited acts are also coupled with two or three restrictions that are coming under public scrutiny and community resistance. These include the wearing of certain clothes, association with other known gang members, and curfew provisions within the Safety Zone, which is the area demarcated by police usually encompassing from one to six square miles.

In October of 2007, an appellate court ruled that the curfew provision was unenforceable and that police officers would have to immediately withdraw from enforcing the curfew that targeted individuals under the injunction from being out after 10pm. The hearings, trial and appellate court battles, were a result of grassroots community organizing that led to the Public Defender and several independent pro-bono lawyers to take on the case to challenge the provisions that limited civil liberties (association and curfew). From the beginning, community organizations led the struggle to expose the civil gang injunctions for what they are, a suppression tool, or more appropriately, a weapon on the war on gangs. Anyone that challenged the injunction's constitutionality, or critiqued its effectiveness was immediately labeled a gang member sympathizer or associate of the gang. Even the word community activist was framed in a negative connotation, in an attempt to de-legitimize community members and organizations challenging the gang injunction.

The language used in the media tactics by the police and the DA is clearly and strategically planned out Framing of the Issue. The use of Positive Terms and Vocabulary such as New Rules for Living and Safety Zone, along with consistent systematic repetition of themes such as stating that gang injunctions are a community effort to improve the Standard of Living, addressing Public Safety and promoting Alternatives to Gangs. These messages and themes are not only presented in the courts, they are also presented in press releases, television interviews and opinion columns in the mass media outlets. These repeated bombardments are used over and over across the state of California when gang injunctions are being rolled-out in other cities. The coordination by law enforcement of sharing this information is now packaged neatly and presented at state-wide suppression model conferences where police, district attorneys and city officials come and pick up their new tool.

Once this propaganda foundation has been laid out, community members find it difficult, if not impossible to Re-Frame the Issue. Oxnard organizers collectively worked on the developing a counter-message that exposed the oppressive nature of this weapon of criminalization. For example, The New Rules for Living of the gang injunction were countered and re-framed by presenting pamphlets such as Ten Things You Should Know About Gang Injunctions, and Myths and Realities of Gang Injunctions. The Safety-Zone was re-framed for what it is in militarization terminology which is a Target-Zone. Also, community activists organized a coordinated effort to Re-Frame the Issue in the mass media by submitting letters to the editor, setting up a website, and organizing community actions such as vigils, protests, informational forums, as well as press conferences where youth and community leaders re-centered the focus toward the root causes of gang violence, such as lack of relevant education, access to jobs, and poverty, which stem from the historical oppression of the Mexican com-

munity, as well as the African communities, which are the two peoples' targeted by the gang injunctions.

As part of the ongoing networking between communities facing gang injunctions, the Oxnard organizers led by the Committee on Raza Rights-Project of Union del Barrio and the Chiques Community Coalition (CORE), organized the first state-wide conference entitled, Social Justice and Civil Rights: A Case for Alternatives to Gang Injunctions. Community organizations, lawyers and youth from Sacramento to San Diego gathered in Oxnard to share the different struggles, tactics and strategies being utilized in communities as well as in the courtroom to counter the spread of civil gang injunctions across the state. The lessons learned in the Media Tactics used by law enforcement and our community's response must be shared whenever possible. Training and analysis of these Media Tactics and Strategies is an essential component in our struggle to defend our dignity, rights and freedoms.

RPA Reading list

**Inventing Reality: The Politics
Of News Media**
By Michael Parenti

**Chicano Journalism Its History
and Its Use As a Weapon
for Liberation**
By Ernesto Bustillos

**Manufacturing Consent: The
Political Economy Of The Mass
Media**
By Noam Chomsky and Edward S.
Herman

The New Media Monopoly
By Ben H. Bagdikian

**Media Control: The Spectacular
Achievements of Propaganda**
By Noam Chomsky

Por Una Prensa Libre y Popular**THROUGHOUT LATIN AMERICA AND INSIDE THE BEAST,
THE MEDIA SUPPORTS THE CAPITALIST
OPPRESSION OF THE MASSES**

Editor's Note: The following article was reprinted from the July-November 2007 issue of La Verdad, the political organ of Unión del Barrio.

THE CASE OF VENEZUELA

With the recent cancellation by the popular and democratic government of Venezuela of the pro-Yanqui, military coup supporting, "RCTV" (Radio Caracas Television), a campaign supposedly in "defense of freedom of the press" has hit a fever pitch throughout Latin America and inside the political borders of the US. It is a capitalist-imperialist campaign which tells us, to the point of obsession, that an "attack on freedom of speech" has occurred and that we should be offended and indignant at this steamrolling of human rights. But before anyone is swept up in this campaign that is orchestrated by the same people who recently tried to convince us of the "justness" of the Iraq war, we should analyze the role of the media in Venezuela, here in the occupied territories (Aztlán Mexico), and under capitalism in general.

Living under capitalism (where all the means of production are in the hands of the rich) means that what is most important to those who rule society is not the common good for most human beings; all this ruling class cares about is the concentration and accumulation of wealth. For this reason, the media, just like the educational system, functions as elements of social control. Their job is to force upon the masses the "values of society" -that tells us that we must identify with big business and rich people, and that we alienate from and hate our own class (the workers, colonized people). One excellent example of this brainwashing is how many workers identify themselves as middle class, and speak of the class they really belong to (working class), with contempt and disgust.

JUST LIKE PARIS HILTON, THE CAPITALIST MEDIA CRIES CROCODILE TEARS

We can see this brainwashing clearly in the case the Venezuelan government's cancellation of the RCTV contract to re-

main on the air. RCTV, owned by a corporation of the richest people in Venezuela, was established in 1953, openly promoted a military coup against the popularly elected government of Hugo Chavez (in 2002) and is slavishly pro-Bush. It was a TV station that was notorious for its racism. The coup, designed and brought about by the US Embassy in Caracas, failed because the brown and black masses of Venezuela (the majority of its people) took to the streets and defended the Bolivarian Revolution at any cost.

In May of 2007, RCTV's license ended, and with reason. If we are to believe the cries of foul by the supporters of RCTV, then we believe that Bush and his cronies would allow a television-radio network that exhorted people to overthrow the government on the airwaves. The truth is that there has never been a form of "mainstream media" in the US that has not, in one form or another, supported capitalism and its evil products, lock stock and barrel.

When this broadcaster of reaction (RCTV) finally went off the air, we could see the true contradiction. We were able to watch as a group of "journalists", all white, in an Indigenous/African country, acting like Paris Hilton when she got sentenced to 15 minutes in jail, crying crocodile tears about "freedom of expression."

If we exam what the rich consider freedom of the expression, it does not something that should be accessible to the people. It is not the property of "heroic journalists" tirelessly searching for the truth. The freedom of expression they speak of is the property of conglomerates, transnational corporations, and globalized companies who finance them. Simply put, these so-called journalists publish what is convenient to WalMart, Coca Cola, Citibank, and any number of huge businesses that treat Latin America like an ATM machine. We must understand that these are not small struggling newspapers, but mega businesses receiving subsidies from the US to mold conscience and public opinion in support of the rich.

For decades, RCTV was a solid pillar of

the right wing elite, who along with gringo loving traitors, controlled public opinion and image, In Venezuela, to RCTV, the African, Mestizos, and Indigenous peoples (the great majority of Venezuelans) were invisible. RCTV gave a false image of Venezuela as being blond, white, and blue eyed. It maintained and reinforced racism. just like Televisa does in Mexico, where all the main characters are hueros; the classical self-hate promoted in Latin America by the ruling class.

RAZA IN VENEZUELA CHALLENGES THE ESCUALIDOS

With the election of Hugo Chavez and the people's power in Venezuela, the people, through the participative process, have challenged and began to address the racism of the rich, or "escualidos" as they are known in Venezuela. Many compañeros who have been able to visit Venezuela and have seen this process with their own eyes, tell us of a reality totally different than what Televisa, Univision, Telemundo, and RCTV want to make us believe.

Those of us who believe in humanity and the liberation of our peoples know that "freedom of speech" is not an absolute value. Capitalist society hypocritically manipulates and suppresses information when it feels the need, and then howls in protest when a country takes on measures to protect its freedom and sovereignty from foreign sabotage.

THE CASE OF CUBA

The case of Cuba perfectly shows this double standard. The US laments and protests that there are no media in Cuba to provide a different point of view other what its socialist government allows, and ignores that in Cuba there is a democratic process of the most profound. This is a process in which 98% of the people participate in elections, through the mass organizations and the vanguard of the Cuban Revolution, the Communist Party. It is a democratic process in which the aspirations of the people are represented, as they could never be in gringolandia. This builds a truly Cuban consciousness, a love for culture, and solidarity with the

peoples of the world.

So what rights exactly is the US defending in Cuba? Do they defend the right to exploit women, through pornography and objectify them? Are they defending the right to portray African, Indigenous, and poor people in grotesque and degrading images as happened before the Revolution? Or, maybe, the lack of the alienating, stupid telenovelas that make fun of poor people, and where the heroes are always rich and white?

THE CASE OF MEXICO

This brings us to the current Mexican reality, north and south of the imposed border. South of this line we are subjected everyday to disinformation by Televisa, TV Azteca, and the majority of bought off newspapers that bombard us with their ultra right wing line, who lick the boots of the military, police, and other repressive forces, and praise the militarization of our communities. They attack social and revolutionary organizations without mercy, peddle manipulated, distorted images of Cuba, Venezuela, Bolivia, and any country that is not a puppet of the US.

Last year, the Mexican bourgeois media distinguished themselves with dishonesty and showed that they truly are a tool of global capital, when they covered up, and tried to legitimize the electoral fraud—one the most blatant and massive in history. This fraud comes following a year of slanderous, negative campaigning by Fox, Calderon, and Jose Maria Aznar (the fascist ex-president of Spain) against Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, the legitimate winner of the presidential election and candidate of the Revolutionary Democratic Party.

More evidence of this web of vicious lies promoted by the Mexican media can be seen in Oaxaca. A strong people's movement is viciously and cowardly repressed by police, soldiers, and armed gangsters, from helicopters and with expensive weaponry, assassinating students, campesinos, and teachers— and the media shamelessly attacks the Asamblea Popular de los Pueblos de Oaxaca (coalition of popular and community based organizations) for “violating the rights of third parties to move freely” and the right of “commerce” being restricted by demonstrations. The true interests and just aspirations of El Pueblo Mexicano are not represented anywhere in the so-called

media.

THE CASE WITHIN THE BELLY OF THE BEAST

It is the same or worse in the north, in the Occupied Territories (Aztlán). If we look at the Spanish Speaking media, we can understand why our gente exist in a state of confusion. Huge media chains like Univision, Telemundo, etc. with their reality shows, entertainment programs, and the so-called news, flaunt their right wing, reactionary tendencies for all to see. We never see anyone among the main characters in shows or anchors in the news that look like the majority of Raza; instead, just like in the most of Latin America, we see white, blue eyed characters; an image we are bombarded with every night.

The role of the media, in Latin America and within the borders of the so-called US, exist to socialize the masses of our gente to the “American way of life” and the supposed values it represents. This process tries to steer workers and poor, away from realizing their class interests and to identify and sympathize with their oppressors.

The media's job is to transmit imperialism's message to workers who can't speak English and castrate their instinct to struggle. This should not surprise us, since Univision and Telemundo are owned and operated by the ultra right-wing Miami Cuban mafia (elitist, white racist) who see our people as a moneybag.

THE CAPITALIST MEDIA DERAILS THE PEOPLES RIGHTOUS STRUGGLE

Anyone who needs a clear example of this can only look at the ‘immigration reform’ debate, where “Hispanic leaders” (the tame Democrats), with the support of the Spanish Speaking media, were able to divert the combative struggle for our gente's rights and as workers. During the mass marches of May of 2006, they were able to take away the beautiful flags from Latin American countries and replace them with gringo flags -turning a time of struggle into a time of begging with sombrero in hand. Our people were convinced to call themselves “immigrants” (even though we are the original people of this land). The net result: people voted for the Democratic party, they won majorities in the Senate and Congress of the US, and the persecution, deportation, and the hunting down of our gente continues as never before.

Now we have news personali-

ties like Jorge Ramos of Univision. a right wing prostitute of the Cuban traitors of Miami, who tells us to accept an immigration reform that would require many of our people to return to their “country of origin” and has provisions for an unprecedented militarization of the border. Ramos tells us that the solution is to support bloodthirsty puppets in the regimes like Calderon (Mexico) and Alvaro Uribe (Colombia). He parrots the U.S. imperialist policies and demonizes Fidel Castro, Evo Morales, Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, and Hugo Chavez, because according to him, they are a threat to democracy and stability for helping the poor.

Another sellout that Bush should give a little doghouse to is Sergio Sarmiento, of TV Azteca. This little rich boy shows his hatred for mexicanos and his love for gringo imperialism, every time he opens his mouth. Besides attacking socialism and slandering any social organization struggling for justice, he has given to supporting racists like Samuel Huntington (right wing academic) who calls Mexicans a “security risk”. According to Sarmiento, we bring problems upon ourselves in the US, because we segregate ourselves in barrios and refuse to learn English. Sarmiento has supported the right of the gringos to execute Mexicans on death row, supported the right of the US to protect its “borders”, and shows his open racism for workers, campesinos, and indigenous people every time he writes and speaks.

Lately also, we can see the media bombard our youth with images of soldiers fighting in Iraq, playing on our gente's bravery to make us cannon fodder and kill people we have nothing against. We must take the obscene: Yo soy el Army and turn it into “no soy el army, soy el movimiento, soy la lucha, soy la huelga, soy la revolucion, my war is here in Aztlán/Mexico Ocupado”. Our youth must defend the dignity of our people, not the oil fields controlled Vice President Dick and company.

JOIN AN ORGANIZATION AND STRUGGLE FOR LIBERATION

For all of these reasons, it is more important than ever that we build a Raza press that speaks to the realities and the struggles of our people. We must strengthen Pueblo Unido, La Verdad (publications of Unión del Barrio), and the Raza Press And Media Association.

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- To maintain a public on-line resource with current news/opinions, library, and archives of relevant historical documents.
- To engage in an anti-war propaganda campaign titled “La Campaña del Pueblo Contra La Guerra: Luchando Contra La Guerra por la vía Cultural, Artística y de Prensa”
- To organized a Book Fest on October 2007, in Los Angeles.

Also at the retreat, a new Mesa Directiva was elected: Antonio Velazquez (Coordinator), and mesa members Paula Reynoso, Jose Moreno, David Rodriguez, and Luis Moreno. The RPA name was changed to Raza Press and Media Association (RPMA) as way ensuring that everyone understood that the Raza press was not limited to print journalism.

As stated earlier, the RPMA was not able to meet most of the objectives, which were agreed upon at the retreat. Within months, by May of 2007, the RPMA found itself unable to fulfill in any significant way, the goals it set out to accomplish. This situation was based on three fundamental and concrete

factors: (1) Unfortunately, within three or four months, three members, found themselves in personal circumstances that did not permit them to continue as members of the mesa. This crippled the structure and the available human resources of the RPMA. (2) The goals developed at the Jan 20th retreat were unrealistic, as they did not correlate to the resources possessed by the RPMA. And (3), the objective conditions within our movement (which is both extremely small and weak) were not suitable to attaining the goals developed at the retreat.

THE STRUGGLE SHOULD NOT BE BASED ON EGO-TRIPPING OR SEEN AS A HOBBY

The “conditions” of our movement, as identified in factor three, is something ¡La Verdad! has attempted to grapple with since the re-establishment of the Raza (Chicano) Press Association (1990). We have found that our movement is saturated with radical petty bourgeois elements that practice a media that is individualistic, ego-tripping, and hobby-based. These elements despise organized struggle -which calls

for discipline and sacrifice- and choose to function as individuals or loose collectives; some despise accountability so much that they openly opposed those forces in our movement who work in a disciplined manner or call for media workers to unite and work under some kind of accountable fashion. They have not come to terms with the fact that only a well-organized and united movement can liberate us from the oppressive chains of capitalism and imperialism.

WORDS AS WEAPONS

In an effort to align its objectives to the material reality, as it relates to its resources and the current conditions of our movement, the RPMA came up with the following objectives:

- That a Barrio Book Fest, under the theme “WORDS AS WEAPONS” be held on April 2008, in South-Central Los Angeles and coordinated by a committee made up of Daniel Flores, Reymundo Reynoso, and Francisco Romero
- That we publish several works by the end of year: Antonio Velazquez’s writings, Ernesto Bustillos’ compilation of articles, possibly the publication of an organizing manual on civil gang injunctions by

Francisco Romero and the Committee On Raza Rights (CRR), and a bounded copy of the last twenty years of ¡La Verdad!

- That the journal of the RPMA, Guerrillero/a de la Pluma, be prioritize and that Antonio Velazquez push the work forward and Luis Moreno be the production/layout editor
- That we focus on recruiting more members and the creation of a network of active “writers and media workers”
- That the focus of the content and context of materials produced or promoted by the RPMA be “local” issues that are current and the people’s minds, or are part of the struggle coming down in the occupied territories. There was a general agreement that the best way we can unite with the progressive/revolutionary international press, is for the RPMA to actively engage in struggle in the occupied territories.

The staff of ¡La Verdad! is committed to working with the RPMA in creating the type of media our people’s struggle demands. Our words must be weapons of liberation.

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continue reaping the benefits of their democracy. We, on the other hand, only progress figuratively speaking, from a condition of poorer to poor. This will continue to exist until we create the groundswell to force a break from imposed positions and mindsets.

I propose that we get back to basics and view our struggle as a prolonged conflict that must have, both strategic and tactical planning to meet both short and long-range goals. Our dependence on resources outside of our community, which naturally demands a payback of some kind, have caused for our community, and consequently its leadership, to experience a lack of coordination and an all too apparent uncertainty as to what path our overall organizing efforts should be taking. This situation, coupled with the lack of resource consolidation on common issues continues to

fragment the existing limited human and monetary resources that are presently available to us. To overcome this we must:

- Develop our own resource means by which to support our varied activities so as to circumvent the problem of logistical dependency imposed or implied by those providing resources,
- Identify our basic common interests, which are not negotiable and not focus on positions, which are,
- Analyze alliance and coalition relationships so that concessions of the fundamental Raza interests are not made,
- Provide security measures to safeguard our continued development.

Differences in opinions will always exist between and among individuals and organizations and in the end they are beneficial because

it is this conflict that causes activism to become a reality. However, sometimes in the process of resolving differences, we find that accountability voids are left unresolved and in slip those that are truly dangerous to our progress. We are good at protecting our extremes but careless with our center. Throughout the years, we have seen just how detrimental inter-group conflicts, fragmentation, and our own-created Frankensteins have been. In a system that demands assimilation these representatives acting on behalf of their opportunism, confuse the issues by exposing the community to many conflicting class interests.

Apparently, when one speaks of justice and equality, there is a positive to be gained working within the - I want to help you people - so-called liberal or progressive communities, whether external or ours. One might even

believe this if the acceptable result is only to get, figuratively speaking, from starvation to hungry. Nevertheless, if seen clearly from the standpoint of the oppressed, this participation is detrimental to the development of our community dynamic. As politically incorrect as it may seem, we do not need outside assistance. That is, unless it is completely in solidarity with our interests without the usual expectations by the givers of supplanting our interests for theirs.

Until we can resolve some of these basic issues, this condition will continue to be the measure by which to gauge the impact, or lack thereof, of our community’s political action on society and world stage. As Raza press and media workers, it is our obligation to take a strong uncompromising stand in this regard.

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A Call For Articles On Raza Press, Media, And Popular Expression For The Upcoming Issue...

Statement Of Purpose:

The Raza Press Association is the only national group of progressive journalists working towards winning justice, peace, and freedom for all Mexicano-Latinos (Raza). We meet on a regular basis, have an organizational structure, principles of unity, objectives, and we consistently published journal, Guerrilleros de La Pluma.

In response to the continuing and growing assaults on the right to information and freedom of expression, especially as it relates to Raza and other oppressed nationalities and peoples within the current borders of the United States, the Raza Press Association (formerly known as the Chicano Press Association) is making another call on Raza (students, journalists, community activists, and academicians) active in the field of media (journalism, radio, TV, popular art, spoken word, computer information, etc.) to submit articles related to the question of The Role of Raza Press, Media, And Popular Expression In Our Struggle For Democracy, Justice, And Self-determination.

The articles must address the historical/current onslaught on progressive and alternative thought. We see this fascist-racist attack coming down both "within the belly of the beast" from FBI, Police, Mainstream Media, Christian Right, Vendidos, etc., and externally from the CIA, Military Industrial Complex, Global Capitalism, and so forth.

A major objective of these attacks on progressive thought is a conscious racist-capitalist effort to eliminate all programs which were initially developed for the purpose of advancing the educational and cultural development of the Raza community; for example: Chicano Studies, Ethnic Studies, Progressive Publications and Programs at Colleges and Universities, Raza Cultural Celebrations at elementary and high schools, Centro Culturales, and Bilingual/Multicultural Education.

Selected articles will be published in the Guerrilleros de La Pluma, which will be available in April 2008. Issues of Guerrilleros de La Pluma are distributed widely. Copies are circulated at political actions, col-

leges, libraries, and conferences; they are mailed Raza prisoners and a subscribers list; the journal is also posted online (Internet). Literally thousands of people read the journal.

Criteria For Articles:

- (1) articles must be between 3 and 5 pages (no longer please), typed and doubled space (Fonts 10 or 12 points). If you submit a research type working paper, when quoting, or referring to data, use footnotes or endnotes and a bibliography for documentation purposes. Writing styles that could be use are the following; Chicago, APA, and MLA.
- (2) articles must be submitted no later than March 15, 2008, (no exceptions).
- (3) send your articles via e-mail (info@razapressassociation.org) or on a floppy disk/CD (i.e. MS Words, etc.) to the following address:

Raza Press Association
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