

"Schooling, Media, and Consumerism Play Key Roles In The Pacification Of Our Communities"

RAZA PRESS AND MEDIA ASSOCIATION GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The following is a summation of the proceedings and outcomes of the Raza Press and Media Association (RPMA) general membership meeting held on Sept. 3, 2011, at Mama's Tamales, a restaurant and cultural center collective located across the street from MacArthur Park in Los Angeles. The agenda consisted of (a) Welcome/Introduction, (b) Report From Mesa Directiva, (c) Reports From General Members Present, (d) Update On RPMA Projects, (e) Discussion/Political Education, (f) and Outcomes of Meeting.

A. WELCOME/INTRODUCTION

Present: Marc Baca, Ernesto Bustillos, Grace Diaz, Jesse Diaz, Carlos Martell, Luis Moreno, Benjamin Prado, David Rico, Francisco Romero, and Antonio Velazquez.

B. REPORT FROM MESA DIRECTIVA

1. Coordinator (Ernesto Bustillos):

Since our last meeting of April 23, 2011, relatively speaking (compared to other groups and relative to our resources, etc.), the RPMA continues to do a significant amount of work:

- Podcasts are being produced monthly, thanks to Luis and Francisco.

- A timely article was written on the "Murdoch Media Scandal" that tied it to oppression of Raza and white supremacy.

- Updates have been posted on our Facebook and Website.

- Production of *La Pluma* has been excellent with articles from several members (Pablo, Ernesto, Francisco, etc.), as well as from guest contributors.

- Regular communication, at least once a month, has taken place among members.

- A high degree of transparency is projected by the association (our minutes and reports are posted on the web).

In the areas in which we find ourselves lacking is in recruitment, building of a network of progressive Raza media, and failure to follow-up on tasks and decisions we make at meetings.

2. Finances (No report)

3. Website/Guerrillera/os de La Pluma (Luis):

- Website, along with Facebook is updated on a regular basis.

- La Pluma has been consistently published four times a year.

- Podcasts are being produced on time and of good quality.

- We are assisting/working with other groups with their websites. For example Save Our Barrios Coalition, Xicano Development Center.

4. Membership/Organization (Francisco Romero):

- We continue to expand our outreach capacity via the Internet mainly.

- We send out podcasts, webpage updates and facebook (combined) to over 1,000 of our contacts.

- We currently have 503 fans that follow our Facebook page.

- We continue to do outreach as a means of recruiting members to the association.

C. REPORTS FROM GENERAL MEMBERS

A round table of announcements took place, providing general members with a space to briefly describe their media work, inform, and network.

D. UPDATE ON RPMA PROJECTS

1. International Delegation. This project has been put on hold due to lack of funds.

2. Publications. We are extremely behind in projected publications for the year 2011.

3. *The following are the outcomes of last general meeting. More details of these outcomes are posted on our website. Members must use these as guides as to the work that we should be doing:*

(a) That we begin a campaign in cooperation with progressive Raza educators (Chicano/a Studies, progressive teach-



Raza Press and Media Association meeting –Sept. 3, 2011, Los Angeles. Foto by Luis Moreno.

ers, counselors, etc.), with the aim of assisting each other through the sharing of resources.

(b) Continue with practice of working with mass based groups (help, assist in anyway the RPMA can). Need to hit the streets, go to community meetings/events/actions, etc.

(c) That we make a concerted call for media workers, specially youth, to post their material (whatever form of media) on our website. This will help in building future Raza media workers and help "promote" the work of new writers, filmmakers, artists, etc.

(d) Work towards networking/joining with establish international media groups. Find other groups and organizations who are progressive.

(e) That we identify-locate spaces of struggle and do everything we can to implant ourselves in these spaces (colleges, community groups, social media outlets, etc.).

(f) In regard to fund-raising, that we focus on "a speaking tour" where our members would provide workshops and seminars in return for honorariums to fund the work of the RPMA.

E. DISCUSSION/POLITICAL EDUCATION

Two discussions took place.

Discussion I. "How can Raza Media raise the political consciousness, agitate, mobilize the masses into struggle?" Discussion was led by Francisco Romero and was centered on an article titled "8 Reasons Young Americans Don't Fight

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Back: How the US Crushed Youth Resistance”.

List of the reasons outlined in article: 1. Student-Loan Debt, 2. Psychopathologizing and Medicating Noncompliance, 3. Schools That Educate for Compliance and Not for Democracy, 4. “No Child Left Behind” and “Race to the Top”, 5. Shaming Young People Who Take Education—But Not Their Schooling—Seriously, 6. The Normalization of Surveillance, 7. Television, 8. Fundamentalist Religion and Fundamentalist Consumerism.

General response from members included:

(1) Excellent points as to why mass resistance is non-existent within the current borders of the U.S. —nevertheless, this article is based on a Euro-centric and white-privileged perspective.

(2) Perhaps, white-privileged youth may not have been resisting for the past 519 years, but we have. Nuestra gente have been relentlessly fighting and organizing against colonialism and imperialism for centuries.

(3) Resistance has been a matter of life or death for us. It is not a new analysis, rather, it is the status quo.

(4) The children of the settlers and occupiers have been living off the backs of the colonized, indigenous peoples’ of this continent, along with Africans that were kidnapped from their homeland and brought onto this continent as slave labor.

(5) Since the European invasion, the oligarchs/capitalist structures of control and domination have endured and advanced.

(6) The lifestyle, privilege, and luxury of Europeans (white people) and structures that have maintained imperialism are now rotting at the core.

(7) “Schooling”, media, and consumerism play key roles in the pacification of our communities —thus they are counter-revolutionary measures/tactics that keep the masses from dialoguing, meeting, and organizing for liberation.

Discussion II. Discussion regarding an

education to decriminalize the perception of “immigrants” The discussion was led by Marc Baca.

The following is a brief summation and outcome of the discussion: “Criminalization of Immigrants, Both Perceptually and As A Policy”

What we are witnessing is a concerted effort to criminalize all “immigrants”. The undocumented are demonized as resource usurping invaders; corporations use the criminalization of immigrants to deflect attention from their oppress-



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ing activities; politicians use it to bolster the impression that they are tough on crime; white supremacists use it to unite around a common issue of “their sacred nation” being invaded; the prison industrial complex uses it for vile profits; and “common white people” use it to satiate their own hegemonic needs and ignorant patriotism.

A most remarkable aspect of this “anti-immigrant” policy is the fact that crime and the perception of crime is being manufactured through a hysteria created by media sensationalism along with the need to find a solution to the “crime problem” advanced by right-wing politicians. Once the crime element is manufactured and planted in the minds of the populace, through selective statistics from law enforcement (Dept. of Homeland Security, Police, etc.) and white supremacists think tanks —we see that a plan is developed to deport “criminals” and impede their “legalization” in the U.S.

What can the RPMA do?

1) Actively expose the fact that the labeling of immigrants as criminals is manufactured through policy and perception by the government and elements within the ruling class.

2) Engage actively in changing of paradigms and perception of “immigrants” among activists and community.

3) Expose the conflict of interests such as that of the prison industrial complex and immigrant detention centers that lobbyists promote for profit.

4) That the RPMA take a stand calling upon all nations to refuse to accept the crime that is created in the U.S., then “exported” (deported) to other countries.

5) That the RPMA continue to inform the community of the historical truth that Raza/Latin Americans are not “immigrants” —rather, that this is our homeland.

6) That the RPMA effectively expose the “vendido” politics of organizations and individuals who assist in the criminalization and in brokering away the human rights of the undocumented.

7) Actively combat the dumbing down of the Raza-Latino community, which is used to reduce activism related to immigration and the criminalization of immigrants. **Please note that Marc Baca has a more extensive report on this question; we have only printed a summation.*

F. OUTCOMES OF MEETING

1. Continue to concretely work on the outcomes from our last meeting and members report on their efforts to implement these objectives.

2. We support the general concern and suggestions raised by Compa Marc Baca and work to implement his proposal.

3. The Mesa Directiva of the RPMA will sum-up meeting and highlight things that need to be done before next general meeting. This information will be send by e-mail to all members ASAP.

H. MEETING ADJOURNED