

“Only a working class/liberation-based media can help bring about change in society”

REPORT ON THE RAZA PRESS AND MEDIA ASSOCIATION (RPMA) GENERAL MEETING OF AUG. 28TH, 2010

BACKGROUND TO RPMA GENERAL MEETINGS

Continuing the struggle to build progressive and revolutionary media, the RPMA (Raza Press and Media Association) held its next “General Meeting”, at the Centro Cultural Francisco Villa, on August 28, 2010, in Los Angeles, California.

The RPMA general membership meets at least 3 times a year with the objectives:

1. Discuss issues of importance to Raza communities and how the media impacts these issues.
2. Create plans of action or projects that the RPMA membership feels are important to assist our communities in their struggles for self-determination, justice, and peace.
3. Enable members to share the work they are doing and learn from each other.
4. Continue one of our primary aims, which is to unite media workers into an association that would pull its resources into a powerful weapon for liberation.

The August 28th meeting was held in the morning (9 to 10:30 AM) to enable those attending to participate in the historic 40th commemoration of the anti-Viet Nam war march of “August 29th, 1970”, which took place later that day.

Twelve people attended the meeting, most active in producing some form of media (photography, art, writers, etc.). The meeting agenda was divided into three sections: (I) Introduction and Reports, (II) Update On RPMA Projects/Work Plans of action, (III) and Discussion On Current Issues/Dialogue, which centered specifically on a collective analysis of the media and racist-nazi atmosphere in Arizona.

RPMA is the only Raza journalist grouping, that we know of, that holds open and transparent meetings. The following is a brief overview of the areas of work covered by the RPMA general meeting..

I. Introduction and Reports

A. Those present reported on the various media work they are doing. Samples of *La Verdad* newspaper, *Las Calles y La Torcida*, and other publications were circulated.

B. RPMA Mesa Directiva Members gave brief updates on their particular duties.

**At the next RPMA General Membership, which will be held in Jan. of 2011, the association will have its annual mesa directiva elections.*

II. Update On RPMA Projects/Work Plans

A. RPMA Web Page:

(1) You will find “on the ground” coverage of the 2010 U.S. Social Forum (USSF) that took place in Detroit. A team of RPMA members, organized by Jose and Luis Moreno, wrote articles, created podcasts, and videos of some of the activities that took place at the USSF.

(2) There is also a “Books for sale section”. There are limited copies available of books that should be of concern to those active in the field of Raza journalism or those interested in the political struggles of La Raza (Chicano Studies students, social justice activists, revolutionaries, etc.).

(3) Work on the webpage has been tremendously effective. It is a page actually representing an organization of various publications, not that of an individual. It is updated with a variety

of articles from progressive and revolutionary perspectives. Blogging, pod-casts (Dispatches From The Frontline, Clavo En El Corazon, Is Another World Possible?, etc.), youtube, articles, etc. are posted on a regular basis. The RPMA is also working with “Radio Free Aztlan”. The person in charge of our web is Luis Moreno

B. *The Guerrillas de La Pluma*. The summer issue, co-edited by Jose and Luis Moreno, is now posted. It has excellent informative articles. This issue addresses the question of terrorism and current situation in Arizona, where colonialism has exposed itself as being “alive and well”. You will also find articles on Raza Studies, Colonialism, and the role of the Liberation media vs. media of the capitalist-colonialist oppressor. The target date for our next issue is Sept 15, 2010. All members are encouraged to be part of our journal (writing, submitted fotos or drawings, etc.).

C. *Finances/Fundraising*. Compa Antonio Velasquez explained that fund raising plan to support the work of the RPMA has to be formulated. At his suggestion, the RPMA “mesa directiva” will take on this task at its next meeting.

D. *Membership*. Compa Francisco Romero, mesa member in charge of organization and membership, led a brief discussion on this issue: building a movement of progressive/revolutionary journalists and media workers. The idea to recruit personally, post how people can become members, and encourage new membership was highlighted.

E. *International Delegations*. Compas Francisco Romero and Ernesto Bustillos presented on fact that we have some solid contacts giving us the ability to send “working delegations” to nations such as Venezuela, Nicaragua, Bolivia etc. The mesa will send out to all members some concrete suggestions with the objective of sending our first “RPMA International Delegation” no later than April of 2011.

F. *Publications (books, etc.)*. The RPMA is working on two publications *Education, Chicano Studies, and Raza Liberation* and *Chicano Studies y Que?: Reflections On History, Politics, and Activism*, with the objective of also publishing Compa Antonio Velasquez collection of commentaries. Jose Moreno/Luis Moreno will be in coordinating these publications.



RPMA general meeting, 8/28/10, Los Angeles, CA

G. *General announcements*: Compa Ernesto Bustillos explained that many conferences take place during the year where the RPMA has participating in coordinating/presenting workshops on topics re Raza and the media. He announced the Teachers 4 Social Justice Conference (Oct. 2010) and the MEChA San Diego State High School Conference (Nov 2010). We encourage the

participation of our members in these conferences as a way of moving forward our goals and objectives. Members were asked to forward to the mesa directiva information on conferences that should be of interest to our memberships; this information will then be forward to all of our membership.

III. Discussion On The Media And White Supremacy/Nazi-settler Violence In Arizona

A “Round table” discussion on developments in Arizona. Members explained that there is a need to “break down” the essence or roots of the attacks on Raza from a liberation vs reformist analysis and written in a way that the masses of our community could understand. The RPMA coordinator handed out (as part of the agenda) a written proposal centered around a 5 month plan of actions/work that the RPMA could take on. As time did not permit for a thorough discussion on the proposal, it was agreed that it would be sent by e-mail to the RPMA for enrichment and editing. A timeline for response from our members will be identified. Once the feedback takes place, it would be adopted as a plan of action which all RPMA members will be required to implement to the best of their ability.

Conclusionary Remarks

The following was weaved together from RPMA general meeting announcements and comments made by Ernesto Bustillos (RPMA coordinator) at the Aug 28, 2010 meeting.

The sad reality is that our community continues to exist without an effective media that represents its interests, needs, and aspirations. The great majority of today’s “Raza media outlets” are assimilationist or reformism, or at best, “individuals doing their own thing”. In the main, it aims to “work within the system”, “improve it”, or fight back without “organization or strategic goals”. History has taught us that this approach doesn’t work and never will. Capitalism is a racist/colonial-fascist and rotten system that will never benefit Raza or the working class communities of the world (the great majority of humanity); hence reformation is a waste of time.

The RPMA takes the position that to end poverty and racism we need revolutionary change. And, that only a working class/liberation-based media can help bring about change in society. It is towards this goal that RPMA is committed to.

We are calling all Raza media workers to unite with us to share skills, resources, and network into a powerful weapon in our struggle against colonial-fascism, capitalism, and racism –wherever it exist on planet earth.

Venceremos



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