

El Barrio No Se Vende –Se Defiende!

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As part of the Save Our Barrios Coalition (SOBC) efforts to inform the Mexican-Raza community of the process of Gentrification or so-called community “Redevelopment” (which in fact is nothing but the destruction of working class communities for the benefit of the rich corporate developers and middle/upper class white people) organized a “Walk Through The Barrio”.

The walk, organized under the slogan “El Barrio No Se Vende –Se Defiende!” (We Don’t Sellout Our Community –We Defend It!) took place on Sat. June 4, 2011 and consisted of members of the SOBC walking through the community of Logan Heights, handing out pamphlets on the truth behind “redevelopment”,

and speaking one-on-one to community people on the issues affecting our communities.

POLICE/MIGRA TERROR IS PART OF THE GENTRIFICATION PROCESS

More than 400 pamphlets were disseminated and the dozen members of SOBC who participated in the “Walk Through The Barrio” were able to speak with over 100 community residents on the realities and truth of “redevelopment”. The SOBC explained to the community that racism, on-going harassment/terrorizing by the police ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement), destruction of homes, and forced relocation residents –were all manifestations of Gentrification.

Representatives of groups such as the Chicano Park Steering Committee, Brown Berets, and Unión del Barrio founded the SOBC in late 2009. These are organizations, with decades of activism in the struggle for Raza self-determination, are independent of government or corporate funding. Their only commitment is to the liberation of Raza and an end to oppression of all people.

A STRUGGLE FOR SURVIVAL AND SELF-DETERMINATION

The SOBC understands that only a conscious, organized, and militant community, can end the ongoing manifestations of gentrification. The SOBC refuses to “play the games” of those racist-corporate-government officials and “flunkies” (Black and Brown) who sit on the various city-sponsored “Community Development” committees and boards. To the SOBC, the struggle against Gentrification is a question of the survival community, its history and culture, and one for Self- Determination.

The “Walk Through The Barrio” ended with a community picnic where members of the SOBC, family, and residents were able to socialize and create the unity that will ensure that our movement wins/is victorious.

RAISING CONSCIOUSNESS AND BUILDING COMMUNITY POWER

The next actions/activities of the SOBC are:

1. Community Forum to inform residents about the SOBC’s “Community Declaration The Rights” and alternatives to the current Redevelopment/Gentrification being forced upon our communities.
2. Cultural Fair where the community will be invited to participate in social-cultural activities of music, art, and political platica.
3. Development of an SOBC “Community Garden” where the focus would be centered on the issues of space, land, health, clean environment, organization, and community power.

FOR MORE INFO: See website: <http://saveourbarrios.wordpress.com/>
Or e-mail: saveourbarrios@yahoo.com



Above: June 4, 2011, SOBC members walk through barrio and hold community picnic at Chicano Park [photos by M.Bernal/C.Espitia]

