



COMMUNITY INSURRECTION

Issue Number One

Summer 2005



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Community Insurrection is a publication of the Anticapitalist Community Forum (ACF). While the opinions expressed are those of the authors, we hope they all contribute to a conception of life without capitalism and oppression. The ACF can be contacted as follows:

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MAIL: Box #157, 345 East Broadway, Vancouver, V5T 1W5

The next Anti-Capitalist Community Forum is currently being organized. We expect the date to be approximately mid October. Keep an eye on our website as well as watch for announcements concerning the details. If you or your organization would like to present something at the forum or get involved with the organizing itself please contact us as we will soon be starting the planning.

PROCESS

We recognize the importance of creativity and community-building in developing alternatives which stand outside of the capitalist system and in strengthening the anti-capitalist movement; as such, we aim to support artists and others creatively opposing capitalism and to provide not only a political, but a social and cultural space. We believe that every process is a creative process and aim to be inclusive. We are a self-critical, democratic organization that works within the principles of consensus decision-making.

VISION

We believe that creating a just future is a process that must start today if we are to be successful. We support a diversity of tactics in building alternatives to the capitalist system in the face of opposing forces; we also support a diversity of tactics among people who support our principles of justice in countering those forces. We strive for the self-determination of individuals and communities, and support resistance of internal power dynamics. We envision a world free from divisive national borders. We have every intention of being successful in our struggle.



OUR BASIS OF UNITY:

PURPOSE

We, the Anticapitalist Community Forum, have come together to collectively oppose capitalism. Our purposes are to provide support and neutral ground to individuals and groups working within this mandate, welcome newcomers to collective political action, provide a forum for critical discussion and debate within this mandate, facilitate communication and skills-sharing and to unite people across differences in building a more inclusive anti-capitalist community.

JUSTICE

We condemn white supremacy, patriarchy, imperialism and colonialism, oppression of the poor by the rich, enforced heterosexuality, wage slavery, environmental destruction and all other forms of structural oppression, domination and exploitation. Thus we do not tolerate manifestations of the above, including racism, sexism, poor-bashing, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, age discrimination, discrimination against immigrants or any other form of oppression or disrespect of difference. We recognize that capitalism and neoliberalism enforce and perpetuate the above. We aim to be open and accessible to all people who oppose the capitalist system, and to provide a space that strives to counter oppressive power dynamics, to empower historically marginalized groups, and to reaffirm the dignity of all persons. In keeping with the above, we do not recognize the legitimacy of nation-states, and in particular those, including the Canadian state, which stand on violently appropriated land.

What is the Anticapitalist Community Forum?

The Anticapitalist Community Forum came together early in 2004, under the name “Vancouver Area Anticapitalist Convergence”, with the intention to create a community space wherein people could learn, discuss and debate about issues surrounding social justice in an explicitly anti-capitalist setting.

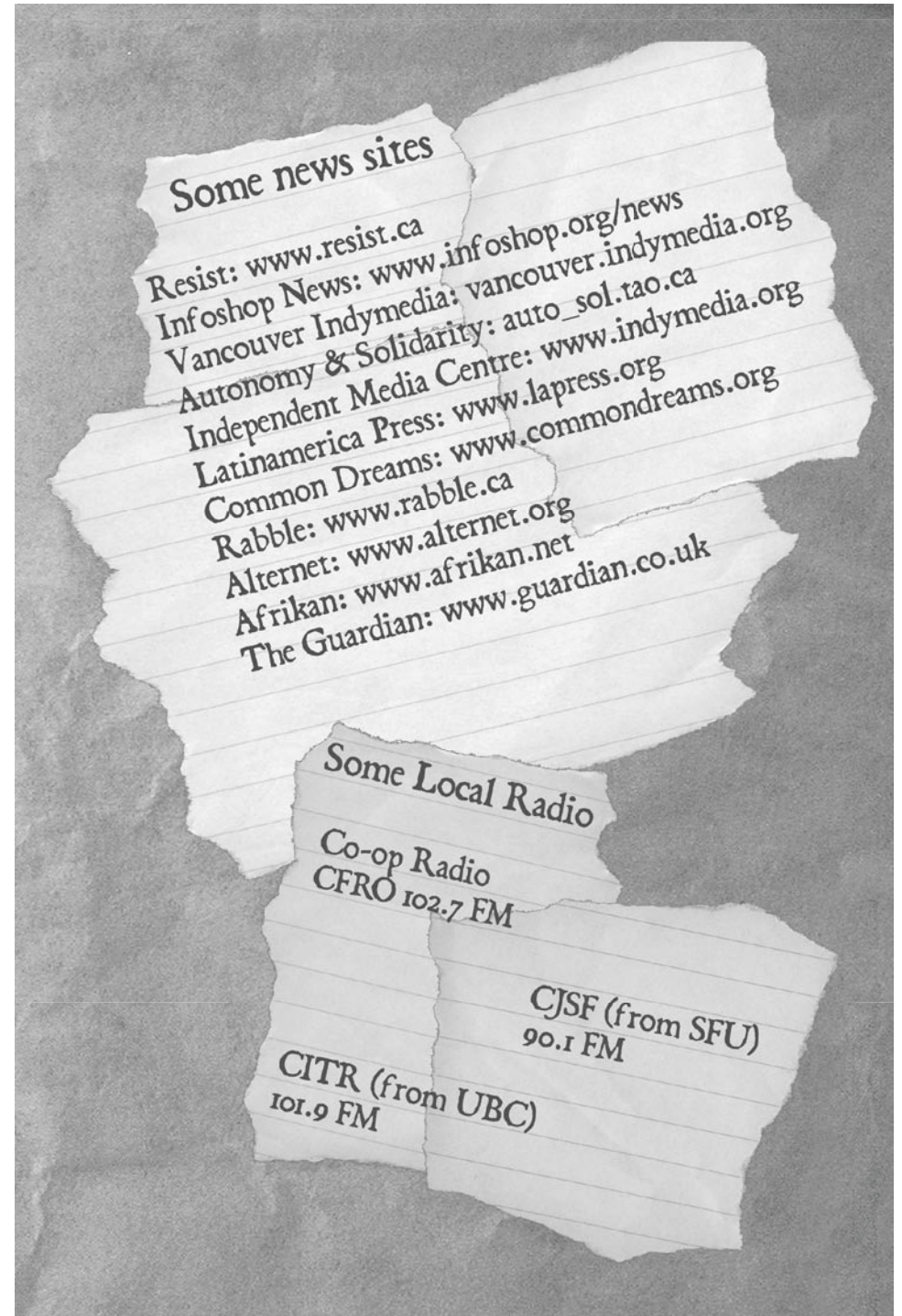
Not only was the forum intended as a means of sharing skills, ideas and information among individuals, but the hope was that such a forum would allow for further interaction and better communication amongst groups and organizations already involved in struggle. Increased interaction, it was believed, would help facilitate the growth of larger projects and campaigns as well as the development of an anti-capitalist commons, a community. With this in mind, we held five community forums over the course of several months last year. We all spent many hours developing the basis of unity you will find at the back of this zine and discussing our plans.

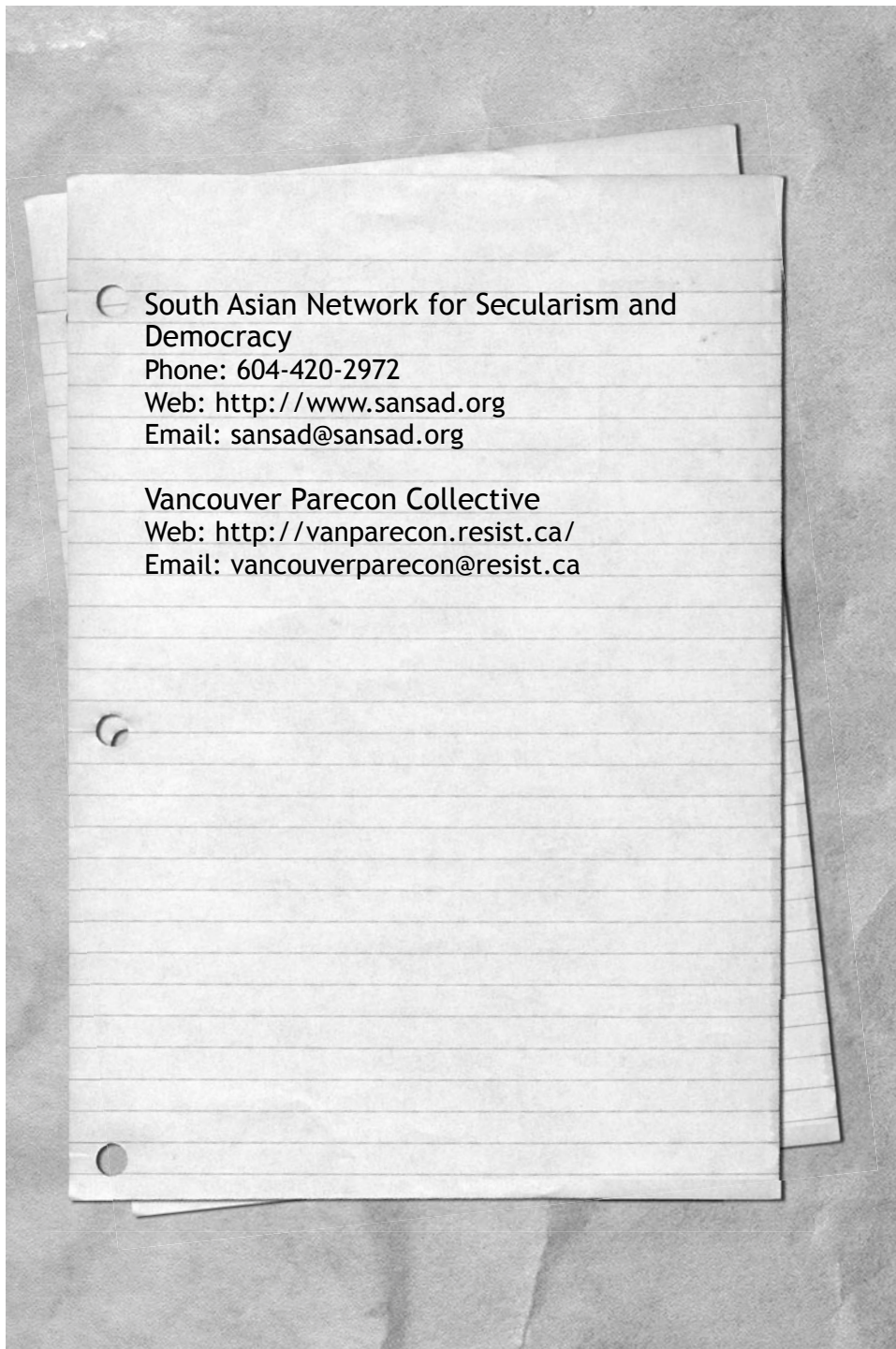
We received much in the way of encouragement from other groups, however, participation was less than had been hoped. We also had difficulty with incorporating an anti-oppression analysis into our practice; we learned that a bunch of students putting up posters and inviting people to attend an “anticapitalist” meeting is not the most effective way to organize the marginalized working class, the majority of whom are white women and women and men of colour. So we took a break and tried to figure out what could make the ACF more successful. What could we do to make such a community resource more useful to people? So we came up with this magazine, the idea being that it would act as a paper version of that physical space and reinforce those activities. We hope the magazine will be engaging for both activists as well as people beginning to develop their own political analysis of their experiences. This has been a difficult balance to try to achieve, but we think we have done our best.

We would like to thank our members, contributors and supporters for their patience in seeing this magazine come to fruition. We would also

like to thank the Simon Fraser Public Interest Research Group (SFPIRG) for their financial support. Our magazine will appear 4 times per year. Comments, criticisms, letters to the editor and submissions for our next issue can be sent electronically to acf-van@resist.ca or to our mailing address listed on the first page. The due date for our next issue is October 1st, 2005. In order to make the next issue happen, we would greatly appreciate donations, which can be sent to the address above. We would also appreciate your help with distribution of the zine. The zine itself as well as instructions for download can be found on our website which can be found at <http://www.resist.ca/~acf-van>

-The Anticapitalist Community Forum zine working group





South Asian Network for Secularism and
Democracy

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Welcome to the New World Order

~an introduction

by Ian B

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, it is now obvious that international capitalism is rapidly reverting to the form in which it existed in the nineteenth century. In the “First World” countries, that is, the nations at the top of the imperialist world system of domination and exploitation, the liberal-democratic welfare state is being dismantled at an alarming rate. Important social reforms such as public healthcare, unemployment insurance, legal recognition of trade unions, old-age pensions, minimum wage laws, environmental protection, workplace health-and-safety regulations, and limited pay equity were instituted after the Second World War through a combination of popular pressure and a recognition by some sections of the capitalist class that having a healthy, well-educated, and docile workforce was good for business. The implicit understanding between the representatives of capital and the reformist leaders of the working class was that in return for these concessions, the demands of the labour movement would be kept within the limits acceptable to the system.

For reasons known best to themselves, the ruling class has now changed its mind. The historical period in which the social-welfare-state apparatus was constructed is definitely over; the capitalist state is returning to its traditional function as purely a machine for the defence of ruling class wealth and power. Capitalist “democracy” has by now been reduced to the meaningless Coke-versus-Pepsi choice between neoliberalism and neoconservatism: two slightly different public relations campaigns for essentially the same program of subjugation and enslavement. The civil and human rights which the majority of the population might use to resist the corporate elite’s assault on their conditions of life are disappearing as well. Freedom of speech and association, the right to hold public demonstrations, privacy rights, and trial by jury are being progressively eroded under the pretext of “counter-terrorism”.

In the “Third World”, the countries comprising three quarters of the world population, whose assigned function in the imperialist system is to provide cheap labour and resources for multinational corporations, the situation is somewhat different; most of these societies never had any significant social welfare programs. Their indigenous populations were essential to the historical development of capitalism; millions were enslaved to work on plantations, mines, railroads, and canals, either when their own countries were colonized by Europe, or when they themselves were transported by force across the oceans to someone else’s newly

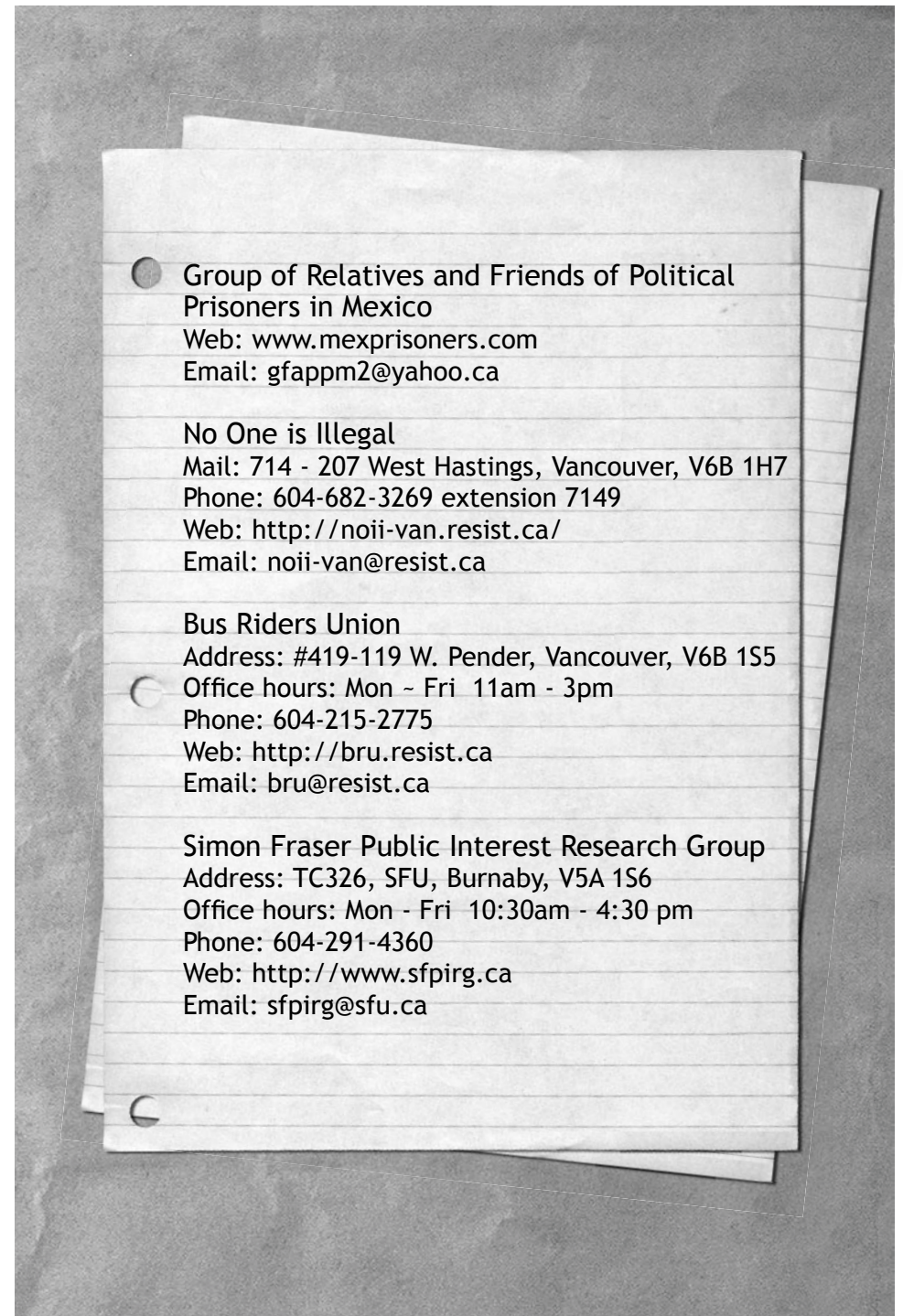
subjugated homeland. Under the pressure of various national liberation movements, and in order to remove the obvious ideological contradiction with their own pretence of "freedom and democracy", the Masters of the Universe allowed a gradual transition from the traditional European model of direct colonial occupation to the American neocolonial model of compliant puppet regimes, supported continually by CIA "covert operations" against popular movements, and only when necessary by imperial stormtroopers.

Here too, multinational capitalism is returning to its earlier form, although the contrast is less than in the imperial homelands. The bipolar geopolitical system resulting from the Second World War, centered around the United States and the Soviet Union, provided a certain amount of room for independent nationalism and economic development in some of the former colonies, which managed to expel the proxy regimes imposed on them by the rulers of global capitalism. With the effective reversion of one of the poles of imperial power to its former status as a semi-colony of the other pole, no further disobedience will be tolerated. National governments which resist, even partially, the role assigned to them in the neoliberal world economy will be targeted and eliminated by force, as has already happened to Iraq, Yugoslavia, and Haiti. Future wars are planned against Iran, North Korea, Cuba and Venezuela. The inhabitants of the Third World neocolonies often endure desperate poverty and oppression at home, or attempt to migrate to the centres of imperial power, where they serve as super-exploited workers, enduring racism and wage rates and labour conditions below those of the white working class.

The capitalist economic system originated in northern Europe in the late Middle Ages. The capitalist class attained state power there about two hundred years ago, and conquered most of the planet over the next century. Their ascent to world dominance was not unopposed. Peasants thrown off their land, independent craftworkers, plantation slaves, factory workers, the populations of the colonies, and indigenous societies targeted for genocide, understood clearly what capitalism was doing to them and resisted in any way they could. With few exceptions, they were not successful.

Capitalism is a political and economic system which exploits and oppresses the large majority of society in the interest of a tiny minority. This has always been the case, even in its liberal-democratic welfare-state form, which, seen from the point of view of world history over the last three hundred years, is clearly the exception rather than the rule. The end of this period in the centre of the global capitalist system only makes plain the social reality which has persisted throughout its history.

If this is a correct description of the world we live in, an obvious question is why the working population of the advanced industrial



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Phone: 604-215-2775

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Email: bru@resist.ca

Simon Fraser Public Interest Research Group

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Web: <http://www.sfpirg.ca>

Email: sfpirg@sfu.ca

OUR COMMUNITY LISTINGS

The idea behind this section is to serve as a posting space for groups and individuals within the anti-capitalist community. The content of this section is completely open for speculation. At present we have chosen to use it to list contact info for some local organizations you might be interested in as well as some media sources that we on the ACF zine working group enjoy.



If you or your organization would like to be added to the contact list or would like to announce an event please send us an email at acf-van@resist.ca or get in contact via mail, the details of which are listed at the beginning of the magazine. Likewise, if you have further media sources or other ideas as to what this space can be used for please contact us.

countries tolerates this system? Nineteenth-century factory wage-slaves and modern third-world peasants have consistently rebelled against their exploiters using the much more limited opportunities available to them. If the workers of the industrial countries decided to overthrow capitalism, they could stop the operation of its economy in a day. The state that protects the rich and the corporations would collapse in less than a week. How does the system survive when those who it exploits and oppresses have the ability to destroy it whenever they wish?

There are two answers to this question. The first is that the capitalist ruling class and the state which they control are highly organized and conscious of their interests as separate from the rest of the population. For the majority to overthrow capitalism, a comparable degree of organisation will be required. However, the forms of organisation which currently exist for the defense of working-class interests against capitalism, trade unions and social-democratic political parties, are part of the problem. Their leadership and internal structure are thoroughly adapted for coexistence with capitalism, not its destruction. Without a complete transformation, they will always compromise with the system, and if necessary divert and disrupt a revolution against it. The recent sabotage by the BC Federation of Labour of a threatened general strike is a typical example of this problem. This has happened many times before, in many places, and there is no quick solution. The traditional left, and the working class generally, remain divided by racism, sexism, and other oppressive power dynamics. New and revolutionary forms of organisation must be created to replace the existing exclusive and reformist ones.

The second answer partially explains the first. The ruling class controls an enormous apparatus of propaganda, disinformation and mind control, including the mass media, the public school system, and the fake “democratic” parliamentary political show. This apparatus operates twenty-four hours a day, pumping out capitalist ideology in predigested, bite-size globs of brain-rotting, toxic lies. From early childhood, people in capitalist society are taught to understand their lives and the world in a way which obscures and mystifies the way things really work. As long as people believe that capitalism is natural, fair, or inevitable, they will not organize to overthrow it. The credibility of capitalist ideology depends heavily on the existence of parliamentary “democracy”, civil rights, and the welfare state. With these features of advanced capitalism being reduced to obvious fraudulence or eliminated entirely, there are now greatly increased opportunities to dispel people’s socially-conditioned beliefs about society and expose the system for what it really is.

This will not be an automatic process. All the major institutions of capitalist society, even those that criticize some aspects of the system, are fundamentally committed to its continued existence, and unwilling to demolish the ideology which sustains it. The corporations which control the mass media and the culture industry are the property of the

capitalist ruling class, as are all others. The state, along with its phoney “democratic” political system, is effectively a wholly-owned subsidiary of those corporations. The universities, while slightly more independent of the state than the public school system, are heavily influenced by corporate power, and the academics who staff them are sufficiently insulated from social reality that most have little or no interest in biting the hand that feeds them. The bureaucrats who control the trade unions and social-democratic political parties made their accommodation with the ruling class a long time ago; they understand that their relatively comfortable existence depends on keeping dissent and opposition within the limits acceptable to the system. The same can be said of almost all “non-governmental” and “non-profit” organizations. While they serve an important purpose, that of reforming or resisting the worst abuses of capitalist society, a task which social-democracy used to perform but has now largely abandoned, their existence depends on money donated by corporations and the upper middle class, who they consequently cannot afford to permanently offend.

If capitalism is going to be discredited, and proposals for alternative forms of social organization widely discussed, we cannot rely on existing institutions to contribute much to that effort. We’re going to have to do it ourselves. Fortunately, “we” are the large majority. The illusion that most people in industrial society are “middle-class”, with the rich and poor only at the extreme ends of the social spectrum, is now so obviously in conflict with economic and social reality that it can no longer be sustained. As in the nineteenth century, society is more and more sharply divided between those who own the economy and those who own only their ability to work. It will soon be clear that eighty or ninety percent of the population have no rational reason to want to defend the capitalist system. To make that obvious to everyone, to defeat the ideology which disguises and protects the ruling class, will require an extensive process of public discussion, education, and organizing. This magazine is intended to be a small contribution to that process.



keeps us so busy trying to survive we neglect and degrade our health and the health of the animals and ecosystems that are so important to our future
Poverty is losing hope in the face of a world that tries maximally, to use, abuse and kill some of us

Poverty is a veil behind which the privilege of others is hidden
Poverty is not a symptom, side-affect, or temporary ailment curable with time and tinkering; it is a result, a structure, an emblem of class

Poverty jades our minds
making it hard to keep breathing
It crushes the ribs of our hope,
It poisons, it destroys,
it kills

But poverty can also inspire

Change our perspectives, our goals our hopes our dreams
Can make us humble
Living in poverty requires the constant building of hope, takes strength to endure
dismiss each other
individualism is something that only privilege and wealth can buy and that without each other we are lonely, bankrupt and truly impoverished creatures
Makes us see our common humanity
Makes us innovative, creative, less willing to
Makes us realize that capitalist

Poverty can be a lens through which we see that the empire has no clothes
incredible violence, and taking ours lives to sustain itself
That it is through the exploitation of our lives and labour and the rape of our earth that keeps this capitalist machine running all over this planet
That our participation and continued legitimation of the system is what allows it to hurt us so
Poverty can be the lens through which we see that other worlds are possible
It can and is the motivation to organize ourselves, our families our neighborhoods for our survival and in resistance
And indeed it is in spaces of deprivation and exclusion that we have space to create, experiment, reinvent, rebuild, include and resist.

-in honor and dedication to struggling peoples everywhere-

raven taylor is happy to be alive. angry about more things than there are words in the colonial english language, fiesty as fuck and yet too nice to hurt anyone. She lives in Vancouver.

We Who are Poor

A Meditation on Poverty

by Raven Taylor

Poverty leaves us standing around the periphery of power
Renders us perpetually looking in from the outside
From the Other world, beyond borders, behind fences, outside
in the cold,
Looking in through guns, bars, chain links, plexiglass, from the
street
Locked out from a system that demands our slavery but not our voice
It is colonization and enslavement in the name of money
It is occupation of life by the invisible fist of the market
It is knowing that without money you could be abandoned by humanity
Left to suffer alone, kicked for falling out of the handcuffs of wage
slavery It is having people spit in your face both literally and
figuratively not because the system is flawed but because we are
somehow responsible for making it look bad

Poverty is, not knowing from where our next rent check, meal,
or place to rest will come It is uncertainty, insecurity and
destruction Poverty is watching our kids go without food,
get sick and sometimes die No matter how hard we fight
Poverty leaves scars on our children, our women, our men, our elders,
our earth Poverty is having hunger and being forbidden to
eat while others are eating in front of us Poverty is
being told that water is essential to life on earth as a corporation buys
our communities' water supply, as our waters are polluted and traded
globally, as yet one more person discards the remnants of a plastic
water bottle into a stream while we thirst, our children have thirst,
our crops thirst and we are told we must rely on the ever evaporating
dollar to quench our every need. Poverty is being
deprived of sleep, rest, relaxation and time to just be
Poverty is finding we are under siege by surveillance, security, police,
paramilitary and military occupation, not because we are dangerous
but because we are poor and because our potential desperation
is perceived as a threat to other peoples' security & sensibilities
Poverty is finding all or most of our friends in jail, the guards
are white and we are not Poverty is knowing we are
going to have to sell our bodies, our strength, our minds, our will, and
possibly sell out those of others, to survive Poverty



-Spartacus Books burning, the view from East Van

DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY?

Consider submitting for the next issue of *Community Insurrection*. We are currently taking submissions, in any language, of the following for the fall issue:

- articles and essays
- poetry and short fiction
- comics and graphic art

The deadline is October 1st. Submissions can be sent electronically to acf-van@resist.ca or by mail to our address listed at the beginning of this issue.



Untitled 2005

by alexis wellwood

“We were taught artless art. ‘Form is only the pedestal. Deformity is the statue,’ one of the instructors said that first day. ‘The trick is to smash the pedestal completely and yet leave something of the statue. Deformity is beauty, always remember that. Form, which is pattern, is always ugly...”

-R.A.Lafferty, “Ishmael in the Barrents”, from *4 Futures*

oh i see, *señor*...

a world filled with balding eagles dressed as men in dirty underwear
with TV dinners on their lap and tattoos on their liver-spotted arms,

predators wearing deerskin cloth to confuse their prey,

that the sixties in usamerica insisted *it* would end one day, that a
revolution was underway, and then the sinister among them took the
world and shook the hope of peace out of it,



Our Blood, Skin and Bones

Everyday we are picking up
Our weapons our words

by Ms. A.K.A.

Everyday the army of the discontented swells

Everyday the death and suffering of our humanity
Breaks-takes another heart
Yet we wounded rise to fight for another day

Cause there's gotta be space in this world for dignity, for hope, for
freedom from violence
Space to stop the flow of wealth that is being bled from our blood, skin
and bones

Cause there's gotta be space in this world for polar bears, craw-dads
and fish
Pandas, sea urchins and ferns

Cause some of us will only be choked and silenced by money for so long
Before we fight to breathe, spitting out the poison of something we
have been killing each other over

Cause some of us will spit in the face of a man who demands our
submission

Cause some of us are willing to die fighting a system that demands the
sacrifice of our souls, our seas our skies
Rather than stand by as all that we dream of, know as sacred, and love
is destroyed, slowly put to death in the name of maintaining someone
else's privilege, power, military...car.

Some of us dare to live big, speak big, fight big fights in the hope that

One day we all can
Each be deities
Treated with respect, worshiped for our existence, for thinking divine
thoughts, for loving divinely, for creating sacredness in each step, for
recognizing we live in a divine world.

a woman who said she wouldn't stand for *it*, and in a coffee-stained
tragedy was found dead two days after the inauguration of a new
generation's pop idol,

a game intended for cheaters: employing a faded old man to point at
an honest player and cry "cheater!",

it's possible to see the girls with their haircuts,

the people and their depression or a new pair of pants, more and
more unwanted futons for sale, soandso is breaking up with soandso
didyouknow, another pregnancy test, TGIM,

this concert or that dj, a review, this book or that compact disc, i see i
should check out this new art/lifestyle magazine,

it still in with the coke ads, the movie advertising, her argument for x
despite the unhappier drug experiences, *one last wave of nostalgia*,

a debate about comma placement, a color scheme, hacky sack over shy
glances, feudalism and mood icons, the big minds carrying out/on the
death-isms,

the traffic signals change and *it* can drive-thru order a take-out rape or
murder, excommunication trading places with a hamburger,

realizing that *it* comes with *its* eyes glittering like a freight train
out of a dark tunnel, hands twitching mice fumbling in pockets for
compliments,

and we'll make our guitars play a sad, sad song, and when some of us
have had enough of the sing-a-longs and the meditations on entropy we
will lasso our courage like a diesel train to our backs and take off, a
dynamic and moveable feast, for a new place,

and others will stay, believing that *it* is bendable, that the oak tree of
its spine is barely a sapling,

weeping in toilet stalls from embarrassment, drinking vodka at the bus
stop.

alexis wellwood has been involved in a number of publishing projects,
both print and online, and is currently working on a collection
of poetry and short prose. She is based in Vancouver but will be
relocating to Montreal in the fall.

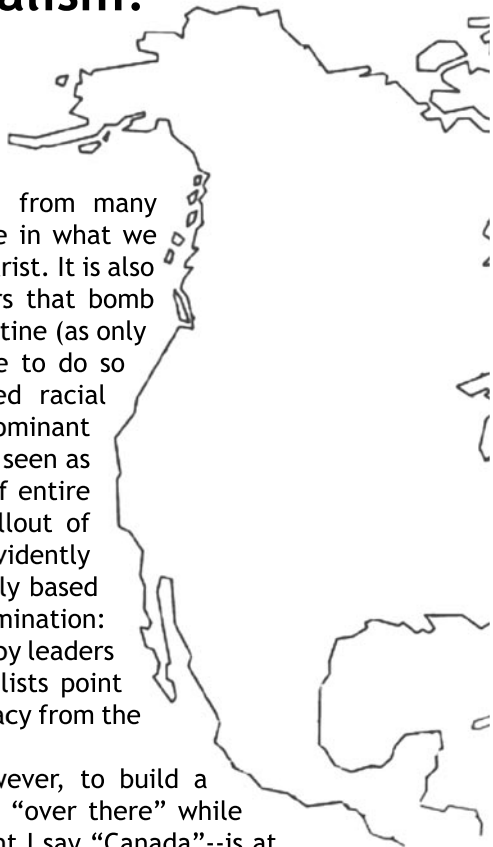
What's Anti-Imperialism?

by Macdonald Stainsby

Anti-imperialist work is seen from many vantage points by anti-capitalists here in what we call Canada: it is, of course, anti-militarist. It is also seen as anti-racist: The same powers that bomb and maim populations in Iraq and Palestine (as only two contemporary examples) are able to do so because of the pervasive internalized racial superiority of the primarily white dominant culture in North American society. It is seen as pro-environmental, as the poisoning of entire societies and waterways from the fallout of military conquest is, in a phrase, self-evidently destructive. It is also seen as inherently based on notions of democracy and self-determination: Even in the case of countries governed by leaders such as Saddam Hussein, anti-imperialists point to the impossibility of building democracy from the point of a gun.

For all of these reasons, however, to build a movement that fights for these rights "over there" while not doing the same in Canada--or might I say "Canada"--is at the best, a massive oversight. There are many reasons why indigenous sovereignty continues to be not only overlooked, but consciously excluded from a movement which claims to be working towards building a world worthy of human beings.

The reason behind this is not hard to fathom; most people want a revolution for their own personal reasons, and a world that is fit for humanity is only a part of it. People tend to pick and choose the non-obviously "class" issues they solidarize with based on the political power they wield. The fact that the native genocide has reduced their collective percentage of Canada's population to slightly less than 5 percent [including Inuit and Métis], even with the highest birthrate in the country, perhaps makes it easy for people to decide (consciously or not) to ignore them. That is, the probably-not-even-aware-of-it opportunist left-- the same left that supports gay marriage, black reparations in the United States, proper compensation for victims of Japanese internment camps and transgendered rights--this very left, aside from platitudes about feeling bad, often ignores the struggles of Indians et al.



Si padeces de asma
si te exaspera un sueño
-ya sea en Buenos Aires
o en Atlanta-
que te impulsa de Montgomery
hasta Memphis
o a cruzar a pie la cordillera,
ten cuidado:
te volverás obeso
y sonámbulo
y poeta.

Si naces en el ghetto
o la favela
y tu escuela es la cloaca
o es la esquina,
hay que comer primero,
luego pagar la renta
y con el tiempo que te sobra
sentarte en el andén
y ver pasar los coches.



Pero un día te llega la noticia,
corre la voz,
te la da tu vecino
porque tú no sabes leer
o no tienes un cinco
para comprar el diario
o el televisor se te ha jodido.
De cualquier modo
te llega la noticia:
lo han matado,
sí,
te lo han matado.

The American Way of Death

(éste se lo dedico a mi hijo Eric)

by Claribel Alegría

Claribel Alegría is an acclaimed poet and author from Nicaragua. Although residing in the US at the time, she worked closely with the FSLN in the late 1970's. She returned home in 1985 and currently lives in Managua.

Si arañas día y noche la montaña
y acechas detrás de los arbustos
(la mochila-fracaso va creciendo,
abre grietas la sed en la garganta
y la fiebre del cambio
te devora)
si eliges la guerrilla,
ten cuidado,
te matan.

Si combates tu caos
con la paz,
la no violencia,
el amor fraternal,
las largas marchas sin fusiles
con mujeres y niños
recibiendo escupidas en la cara,
ten cuidado,
te matan.

Si tu piel es morena
y vas descalzo
y te roen por dentro las lombrices,
el hambre,
la malaria:
lentamente te matan.

Si eres negro de Harlem
y te ofrecen canchas de fútbol,
con el suelo de asfalto
un televisor en la cocina
y hojas de marihuana:
poco a poco te matan.



Those on the left, for example, who see the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge as a cause that needs to be organized around will do so on the basis of saving foxes, caribou and polar bears, tend to forget the Gwich'in people who will be virtually wiped out, culturally if not physically, on both sides of the Alaska-Yukon border, should drilling begin in what the Gwich'in have called "the sacred place where life begins" for thousands of years.

One of the main reasons for this reluctance to take up issues of indigenous self-determination in "Canada" is fear. So many times I've begun to engage a discussion with someone about these issues and the point comes back: "What do you want to do? Send everyone back to [...]" "Put us (a strange "us" that gets inserted into the discussion) under the government of a minority of such small numbers?" These are not real questions when posed in this hostile manner; rather they are put forward as an excuse not to think about answers to these very same questions. Perhaps a better example is this one: "So what do we do about it?"

This question, perhaps the most important single question for people living in a settler state, engaging in politics around refugee rights (and thank goodness for this) needs to be asked in a way that shows good faith. People instead ask the question to end the investigation into any possible answer, rather than to begin a genuine attempt to resolve a still ongoing colonization, decimation and land theft process, on both sides of the 49th parallel of Turtle Island.

Yet, the answer is really right in front of our faces, at least for those of us who have proudly identified with a global movement against some aspects of imperialism, in particular around the so-called anti-globalization movement. People confuse self-determination for nations with the need to construct nation-states. But really, self-determination of all in the face of capital is what we have slowly groped our collective movement consciousness towards. What will this look like here? I wouldn't dare hazard an exact blue print. But perhaps a map in the right direction can be drawn.

When the needs of capital are to strip mine the earth, but the needs of a nation are to have the earth (the land, the air, the animals, the water--everything that sustains life) remain intact, we must defy capital. Our new society, built on the ashes of the old but hopefully not the ashes of the planet itself, needs also to be constructed, as many say already, with respect to different forms of economies in our midst. If a nation does not wish to have concepts of private property, indoor schooling, road construction and the like "benefit" them, then simply so be it.

Other things that can be done must now also be done. Every society in the world under colonization has its sell-outs, opportunists and Quislings. Unfortunately, but predictably, in Canada, these people have been constructed into the Assembly of "First Nations"-the AFN. Today, the AFN is busy trying to start a process where every single Rez in Canada would have its land privatized, and Indians would buy out other Indians, preying on the poor, and further exacerbating social dysfunction and alienating entire populations from their own traditions of collective ownership. This must be stopped. This, too, is defense of the rights of self-determination.

No, history cannot be undone, but the struggle of indigenous populations on Turtle Island is not about history, it is about today's land theft.

No, history cannot be undone, but the struggle of indigenous populations on Turtle Island is not about history, it is about today's land theft. More importantly, where possible to do so, the nations that still, to any extent, live "with the land" in any way have a respect for the earth and a desire to see it survive that comes from understanding the place in this world for the environment. The concepts of not owning but being owned by the land are seen by so many as a throw back to a "pre-feudal" society, but in reality, if we are to get out of the global vice of capitalism, it will only be possible if we learn to respect the earth from which we all came. And to do that means seeing it as the number one giver of life. We need to see that in the future, and that form of consciousness is as great an advance as humanity can make.

For those reasons and a lot more, I continue to oppose the war and remain an anti-imperialist. The war not that started on 9-11, but the one that started with the invasion of the Vikings in the north and Columbus in the South, and continues with every stolen grave, every desecrated forest and with every bit of nation land thieves make off with.

It was on her first album in the 1960s that Buffy Sainte-Marie wrote:

Oh it's all in the past you can say
but it's still going on here today
The governments now want the Navaho land
that of the Inuit and the Cheyenne
It's here and it's now you must help us dear man
Now that the buffalo's gone.

Because I want peace
And not war
Because I don't want to see
Hungry children
Squalid women
Men whose tongues
Are silenced
I have to keep on fighting.
Because there are
clandestine
Cemeteries
And Squadrons of Death
Drug-crazed killers
Who torture
Who maim
Who assassinate
I want to keep on fighting.
Because on the peak
Of Guazapa
My brothers peer out
From their bunkers
At three battalions
Trained in Carolina
And Georgia
I have to keep on fighting.
Because from Huey
Helicopters
Expert pilots
Wipe out villages
With napalm
Poison the rivers
And burn the crops
That feed the people
I want to keep on fighting.
Because there are liberated
Territories
Where people
Learn how to read
And the sick are cured
And the fruits of the soil
Belong to all
I have to keep on fighting.
Because I want peace
And not war.

by Claribel Alegria

Exiled in Europe with the status of a political refugee since 1986, former head of the Communist Party of the Philippines turned peace negotiator and consultant for the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (both organizations engaged in a civil war against the government of the Philippines), Jose Maria Sison, initiated the ILPS by building on his own political network. In 2004, he was elected as ILPS Chairperson. The Philippines, United States, Netherlands, European Union and Canada listed him as a terrorist in 2002. Therefore, the ILPS participates in the campaign to have him de-listed. The ILPS recognizes the US “war on terror” as a war on peoples’ liberation struggles in the context of the global crisis of capital. In this climate, activists often face travel restraints and even imprisonment. The ILPS’ first Chairperson, Memik Horuz, was imprisoned immediately after his return to Turkey in 2001.

Two representatives from Canada were elected to the ICC. There are about 15 Canadian organizations participating in the ILPS. Interested mass organizations should refer to the website [www.ilps2001.com] and apply to the ICC. The only requirement is that they agree with the charter. Political parties, religious groups and government organizations are excluded.

Barb Waldern is the alternate Canadian Representative on the International Coordinating Committee of the ILPS. She lives in Vancouver.



This fall the ILPS will be hosting a series of public forums on the following topics.

- Sept 15: War, Militarization and Plunder
- Oct 20: Just and Lasting Peace (no justice, no peace)
- Nov 17: Case Studies of National Liberation Struggles
- Dec 15: Economic Aggression and Human Rights

You can learn more about the ILPS or get more info about the above forums by contacting Ning or Barb through the Kalayaan Centre at 604 215 1103. Keep an eye out for the forthcoming website.

What's so stark to me is that most protest songs from the '60s are somehow dated. In contrast, there is absolutely no way to tell when she wrote this, seeing as it is no less true today. And that's because Indians have remained on their own, even while others have become “but of course” to social justice. Social justice is not merely about equality, it's about self-determination. And that scares too many people, who are afraid that what was done to the Indians is what they would do to “us”.

The buffalo are indeed gone, but the porcupine caribou herds are not. The people of the caribou--the Gwitch'in--rely on them for over 75% of their diet and lie strategically along the route of the caribou's migration. The Mackenzie Valley has many different nations of Dene Indians living throughout it as well, along with Inuvialuit (Inuit) at the basin where the big river meets the Arctic Ocean. All told, the populations of the Mackenzie Valley are over 85% indigenous peoples. Oil and gas threaten to destroy the Mackenzie Valley now, too--as a giant pipeline (the largest industrial project in Canada's history) that has been resisted valiantly for over thirty years is being crammed down the throats of the nations of the north, with not unforeseen and socially catastrophic consequences. Will we watch the war for oil in Iraq and organize to stop it, while ignoring another ecocidal, genocidal war for oil and gas being carried out in our names, right here in Canada? Or will we help stop this war on the earth and self-determination, learn the lessons of history-- and perhaps, truly show what an anti-colonial movement is really all about? I do ask those questions in good faith, for the yet uncharted pages of history are how we will find the answers.

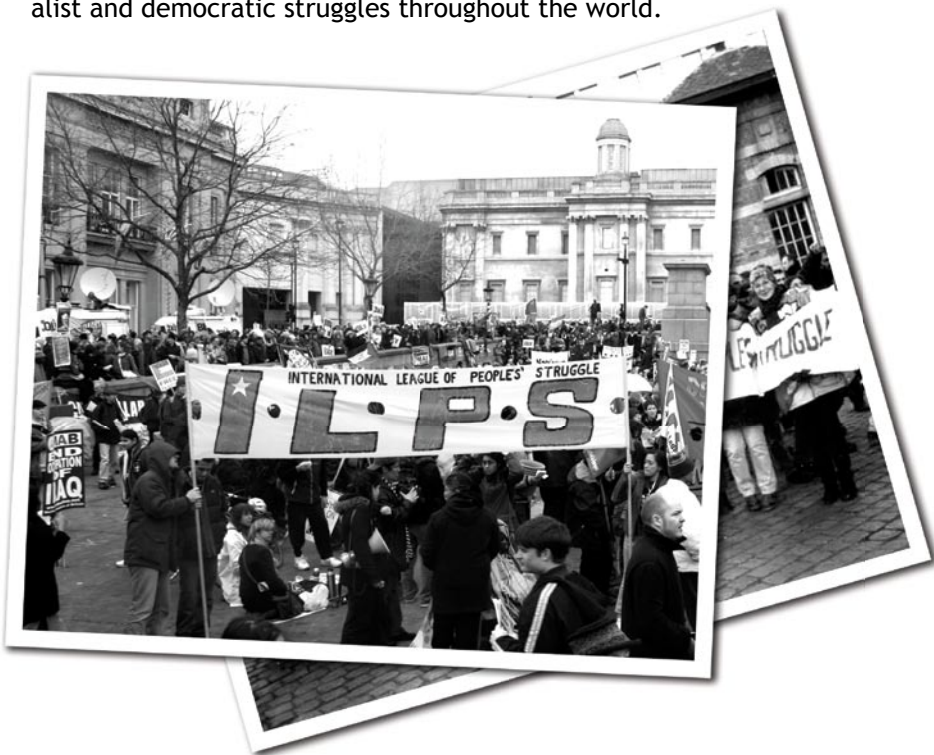
*Macdonald Stainsby is a student and activist living in Montreal. He is currently hitchhiking across the continent visiting an array of Indigenous nations currently facing external threats as part of his project **Surviving Canada**. You can learn more about the project and read his updates at <http://independentmedia.ca/survivingcanada>*

A look at the:

International League of Peoples' Struggle

by Barbara Waldern

Formed in 2001, the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS) answers the urgent need of the broad masses for the creation of an international rallying force in the struggle for national independence, democracy and social liberation. It is defence against the intensifying exploitation and oppression unleashed by "free market" globalization and the new world disorder under the hegemony of US imperialism. It strives to realize the unity, cooperation and coordination of anti-imperialist and democratic struggles throughout the world.



ILPS is a democratic formation. Its participating organizations enjoy equal footing. Coming together for the Founding International Assembly, 339 delegates from over 218 mass organizations of 40 countries hammered out their common understanding of imperialism and their collective declaration to struggle for change. They also identified their leading collective concerns, passing resolutions to address them all. These concerns range from socio-economic development and social equality of the people to the cause of just peace, from indigenous peoples' and national minorities' rights and liberation to struggles against all xenophobia, discrimination and intolerance, and workers', women's, children's and elderly peoples' rights and liberation. The concerns include agrarian reform, human rights in all fields, and health care, art and culture, science and technology, education and research, shelter and refuge for the people.

In 2004, the Second International Assembly brought 240 delegates from 175 participating and observing organizations from 32 countries together to refine the democratic process, develop further the declaration, review the concerns, and establish ongoing study commissions on some concerns. (About 35 delegates were denied visas and could not attend.) Two special resolutions were passed, supporting the Iraqi and Palestinian peoples' struggles for self-determination and opposing the occupations of their lands. At such a large international assembly, everyone networks according to her/his own areas of concern while the assembly forges its collective global perspective, basis of unity, and programme of action. Representatives to the International Coordinating Committee (ICC) are elected on the last day of the assembly, with each country being allowed a certain number of seats according to the number of participating organizations based in that country. The new ICC then meets to decide its Coordinating Group and Secretariat who will carry out the decisions of the assembly and run the organization daily. The ICC issued its three-year plan of political education, organization and mass mobilization in January, 2005.

Local members of the ILPS:

South Asian Network for Secularism and Democracy, Bus Riders Union, Grassroots Women, the Group of Friends and Relatives of Political Prisoners in Mexico, Kalayaan Centre, Philippine Women Centre, BC Committee for Human Rights in the Philippines, Filipino Nurses Support Group, SIKLAB, Filipino-Canadian Youth Alliance.