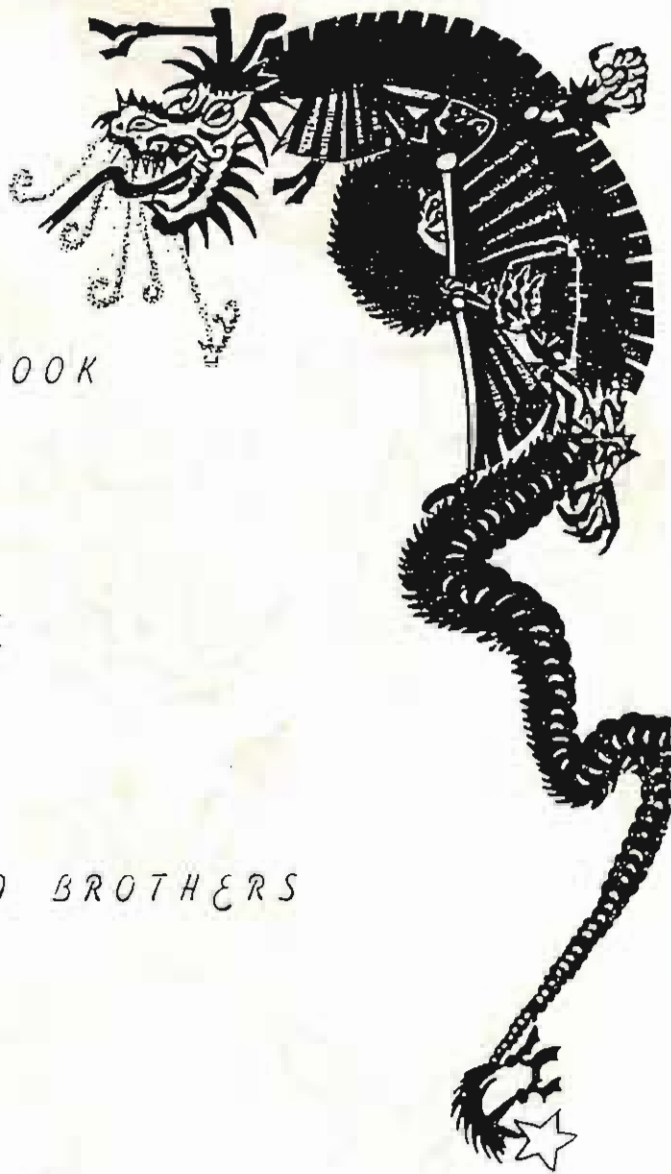




**THE
REAL DRAGON
PRISON PROJECT**

91

92



NEW YEAR'S BOOK

1991-1992

WITH LOVE

TO

OUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS

INSIDE

*"Those who fight injustice are people of true merit.
When the prison doors are opened, the Real Dragon will fly out!"*

The Roots of Peace



AMELA GENTILE

Tim Blunk

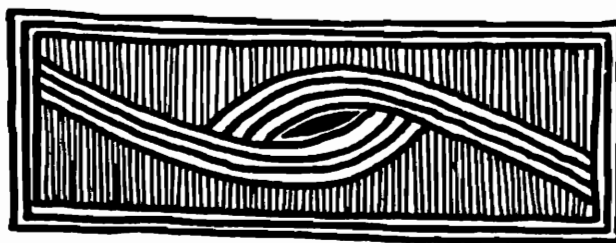
**for comrades who ask, "what is to be
done?" during this particular historical
conjuncture, a (partial) list of practical
things to do**

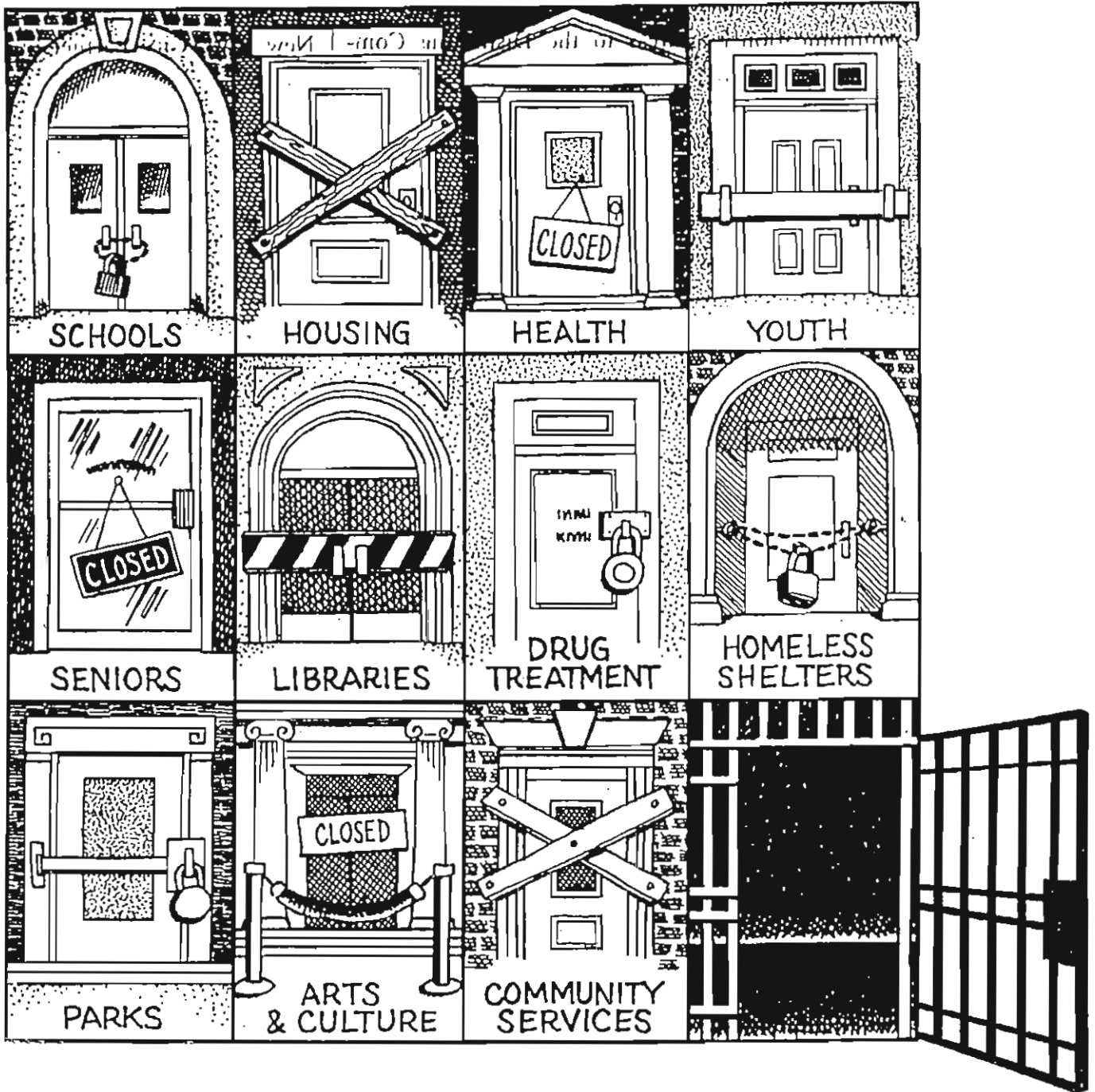
throw a stone
throw another
fire a poem
slash a tire
raise a fist
raise your voice
raise a child
wear a mask
paint a slogan
paint a dream
honor the martyrs
build a barricade
build a network
claim your history
claim the streets
sing a message
shoot a bullet
sow a seed
set a fire
break a window
break a sweat
rent a safehouse
print a leaflet
forge a document
shelter a fugitive
bind a wound
love a friend
hold a lantern
hold your ground
clean your weapon
practice your aim
strike a chord
strike a blow
tell the truth

trick the man
hold a meeting
take a beating
hold your tongue
watch your back
watch the sky
cut a trail
leave no traces
pick a target
launch a rocket
learn from workers
teach a comrade
mark the time
free a p.o.w.
steal the files
steel your heart
hound a landlord
feed the homeless
squat a building
join a cell
learn a kata
memorize the code
cut the bars
vault the fence
clear the perimeter
swim the river
disarm a cop
disable a missile
create a diversion
tell a joke
secure a march
walk the picket
pick a lock
bait a trap

spring an ambush
blow a horn
make a plan
plan a back-up
wreck the tracks
lose a tail
find your hope
raise the stakes
change your name
wipe for prints
test a theory
challenge a dogma
cut the wires
slip the noose
slip the checkpoint
use your fear
tighten the drum
plant a thought
tend the orchard
cherish a tear
commit it to memory
check your ego
study the map
deal with the traitors
silence the snitch
start from scratch
carry your weight
take on some more
fight to love
say it again
cross the line
take us with you
don't look back

6/87 U.S. P. Marlon





Intifada shows no sign of dying after 4 years



The Associated Press

Palestinian youths carry banner as they march through Bethlehem.



Because woman's work is never done and is under paid or unpaid or boring or repetitious and we're the first to get the sack and what we look like is more important than what we do and if we get raped it's our fault and if we get bashed we must have provoked it and if we raise our voices we're nagging bitches and if we enjoy sex we're nymphos and if we don't we're frigid and if we love women it's because we can't get a "real" man and if we ask our doctor too many questions we're neurotic and/or pushy and if we expect community care for our children we're selfish and if we stand up for our rights we're aggressive and "unfeminine" and if we don't we're typical weak females and if we want to get married we're out to trap a man and if we don't we're unnatural and because we still can't get an adequate safe contraceptive but men can walk on the moon and if we can't cope or don't want a pregnancy we're made to feel guilty about abortion and... for lots and lots of other reasons we are part of the women's liberation movement.

WHITE CHRISTMAS

We clink our dainty glasses in the pinnacle of the decaying empire,
toast our jolly bellies, our empty heads.
Good cheer indeed, just so long as we never ask
the why or the where of our good fortune,
our tables groaning with food enough to make us ill.

We scoop up slices of pigmeat into our mouths--
a pig we never knew, born and bred for our consumption
at a reasonable price per pound . . .
Would you like something else now?
A little brains perhaps, or knuckles?

Some snout or some tongue?
Any cut of flesh you like without having to worry your head
about what happened to the rest of the pig.

Now, slice the winter fruits,
flown in fresh from countries where fruit pickers starve.
When enough of them have died,
we will collect their primal artifacts safe in our museums,
dusted and sealed from further touch.
We'll weep over the destruction of their race during TV specials.
We'll send one of their children fifteen dollars a month,
then go off to enroll ourselves in a weight loss program
that really works.

© Kitty Costello

PREPARATIONS OF A WARRIOR

Plunging endless burial grounds
she comes to sing the songs that must be sung
sifts seeds from undersides of lives cut short
tucks corpses in for the long long night, then
sets all rotting worlds aside
leaves them for earthworms who need them
leeches bitterness back into soil where it belongs
blows her candle out

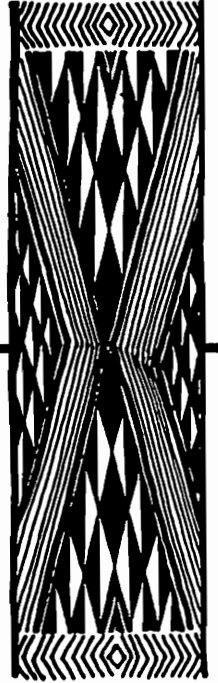
The edges of the earth move closer

* * * * *

At break of day
with one hand raised, the other bound
to sacred entryways of dreams
she caresses the underworld, the stars, ponders
what only all our minds together can hold
This is her prayer

Leaving sentences unfinished, kisses half-done
she unpins her black armband for the last time and
raises the oldest of flags
moves her feet
squarely across battlelines.

© Kitty Costello





Associated Press

During a rare march by Palestine Liberation Organization supporters who favor the peace talks, a Palestinian youth in the West Bank held an olive branch and a pistol, signifying peace and armed struggle.



The Spirit

As I sit in my cold, dark prison cell
I look out the small slit they call a window.
I see through the bars and razor wire
A dark fierce storm growing on the horizon.
It speaks to me of the current time
And the terrible days to come.
I think of the road I've been forced to travel here
And I search for meaning.
I find the long drawn bitter faces of those other victims
With bewildered questioning eyes staring at me.
These eyes penetrate my soul and ask what we are to do.
They look to me, a man of struggle and say
What is the way out of this hellish night
Which has descended upon the world.
The world has changed, good and evil are
No longer clearly distinguishable..
We are in the time of newspeak and doublethink.
War is peace/freedom is slavery/ignorance is strength.
Not words out of an old novel but words in practice
Used by tyrants and hypocrites to achieve a new world order.
They have control of the past and
Therefore control the present and the future.
They ridicule my people saying we live in the past
In an attempt to get us to forget.
If we forget they can change what was
Into what serves their interest today
And change it again to meet their needs tomorrow.
What future have we-the-people if today
We are enslaved by ignorance and self-centered greed.
The people are being programmed in greed and ignorance day in
And day out ; yet there are faint voices crying out
For truth, peace and justice.
They lack control and influence;
They write but do not publish;
They sing but do not record.
Listen and learn so that you will remember
When their voices are silenced.

By: Brian J. Fleming
Prisoner of Conscience
3/1/91



STRIKING STUDENTS ON WALL STREET—ROBERT FOX, IMPACT VISUALS



Sarah Berkman-Zeller

The Visit

The glass, a barrier
keeping me from touching you.
The glass, a shield
prohibiting me from hugging, kissing
feeling in a physical way, but
never mentally.
The glass, a wall that can and will be
broken.
We will touch, we will hug and we
will hold each other.
But just remember until then,
The glass can keep us from touching
but never, never from loving.

written at age 11

LIVING IN WARTIME

MICHAEL CALLEN



This is no time for doubting
to stop and wonder why
This is a time for shouting:
I don't believe the lies!
One way or another
no one will be spared
I call out to my brothers
Doesn't anybody care?
It's like living in wartime
Just like living in wartime
We are living in wartime
It will not go away
More die everyday
This is war! This is war!
Conspiracy of silence
The enemy within
Complacency and arrogance
make us think we cannot win
make us think that the battle has
been won
But the thunder in the distance
says it's only just begun
They try to break our spirits
try to keep us in our place
They do it to the women
and the poor of every race
We face a common enemy:
bigotry and greed
But if we fight together
we can find the strength we need
we can find the strength we need
It's like living in wartime
Just like living in wartime
We are living in wartime

SILENCE = MORT

沈黙 = 死亡

SILENCIO = MUERTE

МОЛЧАНИЕ = СМЕРТЬ

سکوت = موت

SILENCE = DEATH

ACT UP

AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power

International Women's Day

For the People of the Middle East, For Women, Lesbians, People of Color, For Housing, Childcare, Healthcare, For Self-Determination, Our Bodies Our Lives, and Our Future - Join Women Around the World to Build a

WALL OF WOMEN AGAINST THE WAR

Demonstrate - Friday, March 8th

10:00 AM - 1:00 PM - Justin Herman Plaza, S.F.



Women the World Over Will Turn the World Around!

Sponsored by Women Against Imperialism and the International Women's Day Demonstration Committee. For more information call 953-4735.

ENDORSERS (Partial List): Berkeley Clearinghouse on Femicide, GABRIELA Network to Support Women in the Philippines, Charlotte Maxwell Complimentary Clinic, Freedom Now Network to Free Political Prisoners/POWs in the U.S., John Brown Anti-Klan Committee, Lesbians and Bi-women in Action (LABIA), Lesbian and Gay Against Intervention (LAGAI), Red Dragon's Kid Group, World Wide Women's Rights, Lesbians in Solidarity with Palestinian People (LISPP), Laura X Women's History Research Center, Prairie Fire Organizing Committee, Maria Abund Women's Services, Oppose for Women Over 40, National Clearinghouse on Marital and Date Rape, National Committee to Free Puerto Rican POWs, Nicaragua Solidarity Coalition, Open Forum, Unit of Central Lesbian Committee for Women Political Prisoners and POWs, Revolving Lesbians, Free Puerto Rico Committee, San Francisco Women Against Rape (SFWAR), United Communities for Human Rights (UCHR), S.F. Women's Building, Women's Resource Center, UC Berkeley, YMCA of Sonoma County, Leonor Jackson US-EI Sahadot (Intour Women (IMU)), Lesbian Uprising, Women's Clearing Clinic, Act-Up S.F. Women's Caucus.

STOP POLICE VIOLENCE!
RALLY 14th/
Broadway
MARCH Oakland

December 20 ■ 4PM

December 1991. The streets of Oakland are a battleground. No amount of brutality can hide the fact that the cops are scared shitless of the people. At some point people aren't gonna take it anymore. The Black Panther started a revolutionary movement by "stalking the stalkers" (watching the O.P.D.)
 The worse the economic crisis and recession in America gets, the more desperate the government is to keep the people on the bottom in line. The "War on Drugs" and the "War on Crime" are the official excuses, but we know that when the system is up against the wall—we get put up against the wall.
 After 500 years, U.S. imperialism is running out of land to steal, women to rape, and people to force into slavery. We know who the REAL criminals are. It's a showdown and it's young people, people of color, folks with nothing to lose and everything to gain that are gonna make the next move.



BREAK THE SILENCE!

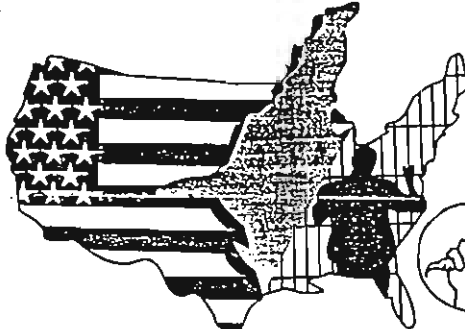
FIGHT BACK! Come and speak out against police brutality on December 20th. Watch them. Bust out the cameras, videotapes and tape recorders. Get names, badge numbers, witnesses and details of incidents of police brutality and harassment. It's not just a few bad apples...it's the whole fuckin' bunch.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO GO TO THE PERSIAN GULF TO FIND PRISONERS OF WAR

The U.S., as part of its attempt to manipulate public support for the war, has focused on human rights violations by Iraq against "allied" P.O.W.'s. Meanwhile

MORE THAN 100 POLITICAL PRISONERS AND P.O.W.'S ARE LOCKED UP IN THE U.S.

On December 10, 1990, an international Tribunal in New York, found the U.S. guilty of serious human rights violations against these political prisoners and P.O.W.'s. Prisoners represent many progressive movements including: Puerto Rican Independence Liberation, Native American, Chicano, North American Anti-Imperialist, Gay and Lesbian, and Irish. They are each serving time for charges associated with their politics and activities. Despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary the U.S. continues to deny existence.



FOOD NOT BOMBS

March for Peace and Justice
Wednesday, February 13, 1991
 5:00 pm - Powell & Market Streets, S.F.
 7:00 pm - Civic Center Plaza, S.F.
 Speak out against the War in the Middle East AND the War at Home

All right party and recruitment to celebrate our unity and resistance to the war.
 Live music. Free food, dress warmly and bring sleeping bags or blankets.

FOOD NOT BOMBS
 3145 Geary Boulevard, #12,
 San Francisco, CA 94118
 (415) 330-5030



Bay Area Activists Indict The U.S. Government In AN EVENING OF TESTIMONY

March 16, 1991

7:00 P.M., S.F. Women's Building
3543 18th Street
\$5 - \$10 sliding scale

Presentation will include testimony of former political prisoners, local prison activists, video excerpts of N.Y. tribunal and cultural performance.

* No one turned away for lack of funds * Wheel Chair Accessible * Please don't wear scented products * Child care provided * For more information call: 881-6515 *
 Sponsored by:

FREEDOM NOW NETWORK TO FREE POLITICAL PRISONERS & POWs IN THE U.S.

Valentine's Day
Thursday, February 14, 1991
 8:30 am - Civic Center Plaza, S.F.
 Risk arrest serving free food as an expression of love to support Keith McHenry and Sarah Meserve who are being charged with an unknown number of counts of contempt of court for having served free food in defiance of the court order against feeding the hungry.

9:30 am - Pack Superior Court Department 9 at City Hall

to support Keith McHenry and Sarah Meserve who are being charged with an unknown number of counts of contempt of court for having served free food in defiance of the court order against feeding the hungry.



SISTER

T H E C O S T O F W A R



BROTHER

T H E C O S T O F W A R

this war

and I was doing dishes when this war
this particular war
this particularly dirty
vomitrous like sand in your throat war

washed over the airwaves
hitting like guesses and geopolitics
not like bombs

yes I said vomitrous
up the esophogus
up the ante

you came in and the dishes were lying there
looking utterly inbetween
you cried and we embraced
silent in our back room
in this suspended moment that was
pregnant with the panic we were waiting to hear.

I left you with my mind racing my bicycle
tires chain rear deraileur gear teeth
and assembling images of what this war would be
for me:

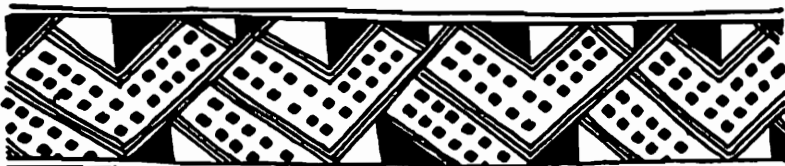
bonfires in the street facepaint loud drums
together
sirens, lights, radios, bullhorns
helicopter chopchopchop over the freeway
being assaulted by a rabid cop.

And I was being alone in this house
learning it
learning to love it
listening with one ear to the sounds outside
and with the other to the radio

and I was without your laughing
and I was here, not knowing what to say
when this war

-the noisy disney version of it
was let loose among us
breaking up some quiet we'd made.

- ELI ROSENBLATT



this modern world

T O M T O M O R R O W

IT'S TIME FOR THE 11:00 NEWS...

GOOD EVENING! IN THE NEWS TONIGHT--100,000 DEMONSTRATORS GATHERED IN THE STREETS OF SAN FRANCISCO TODAY TO PROTEST AGAINST THE WAR IN THE GULF...



100,000 PEOPLE? GOSH, BIFF--THAT'S COMPLETELY AT ODDS WITH THE CURRENT MEDIA PERCEPTION OF A NATION **STRONGLY UNITED** BEHIND THE **PRESIDENT!**



THAT'S **TRUE**, BETTY! THAT'S WHY WE'LL DOWNPLAY THE MAGNITUDE OF THE EVENT BY RUNNING ONLY A FEW BRIEF SECONDS OF FOOTAGE FROM THE DEMONSTRATION...



... FOLLOWED IMMEDIATELY BY COVERAGE OF FIFTEEN **PRO-WAR** DEMONSTRATORS IN WALNUT CREEK--SUBTLY INDICATING THAT THE TWO EVENTS ARE OF **EQUAL IMPORTANCE!**



FINALLY, WE'LL CONCLUDE THE SEGMENT WITH THE LATEST **NETWORK NEWS POLL** SHOWING THAT A SOLID 97% OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE BELIEVE THE ANTI-WAR PROTESTERS ARE **TRAITOROUS DOGS** FOR WHOM **HANGING IS TOO GOOD!**



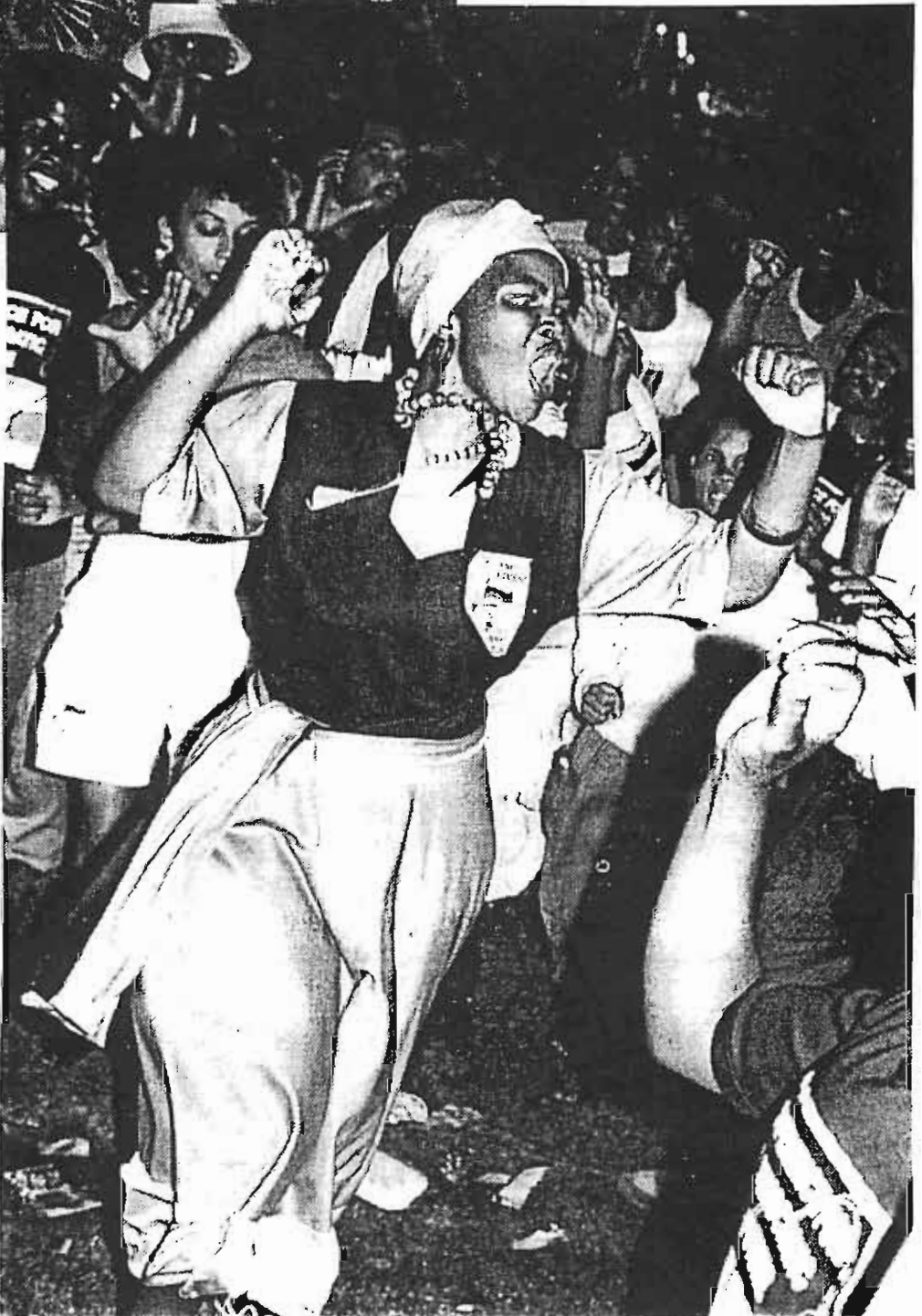
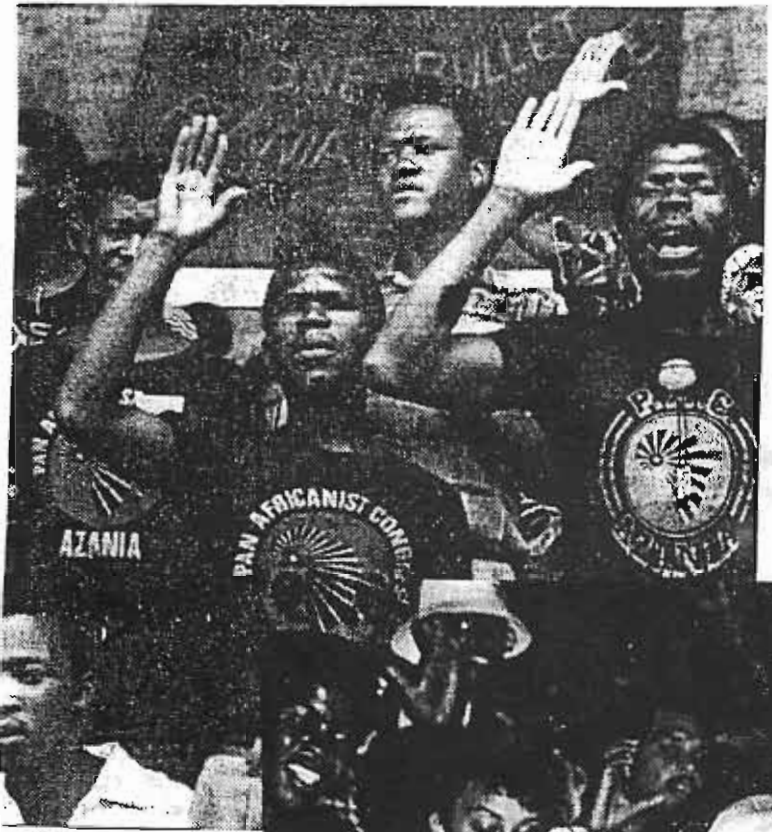
COMING UP NEXT: REALLY COOL FOOTAGE OF JET FIGHTERS AND EXPLOSIONS.

FIRST THESE MESSAGES...



TOM TOMORROW

South Africa begins peace talks



WILLIAM MATLAL

A LITANY FOR SURVIVAL

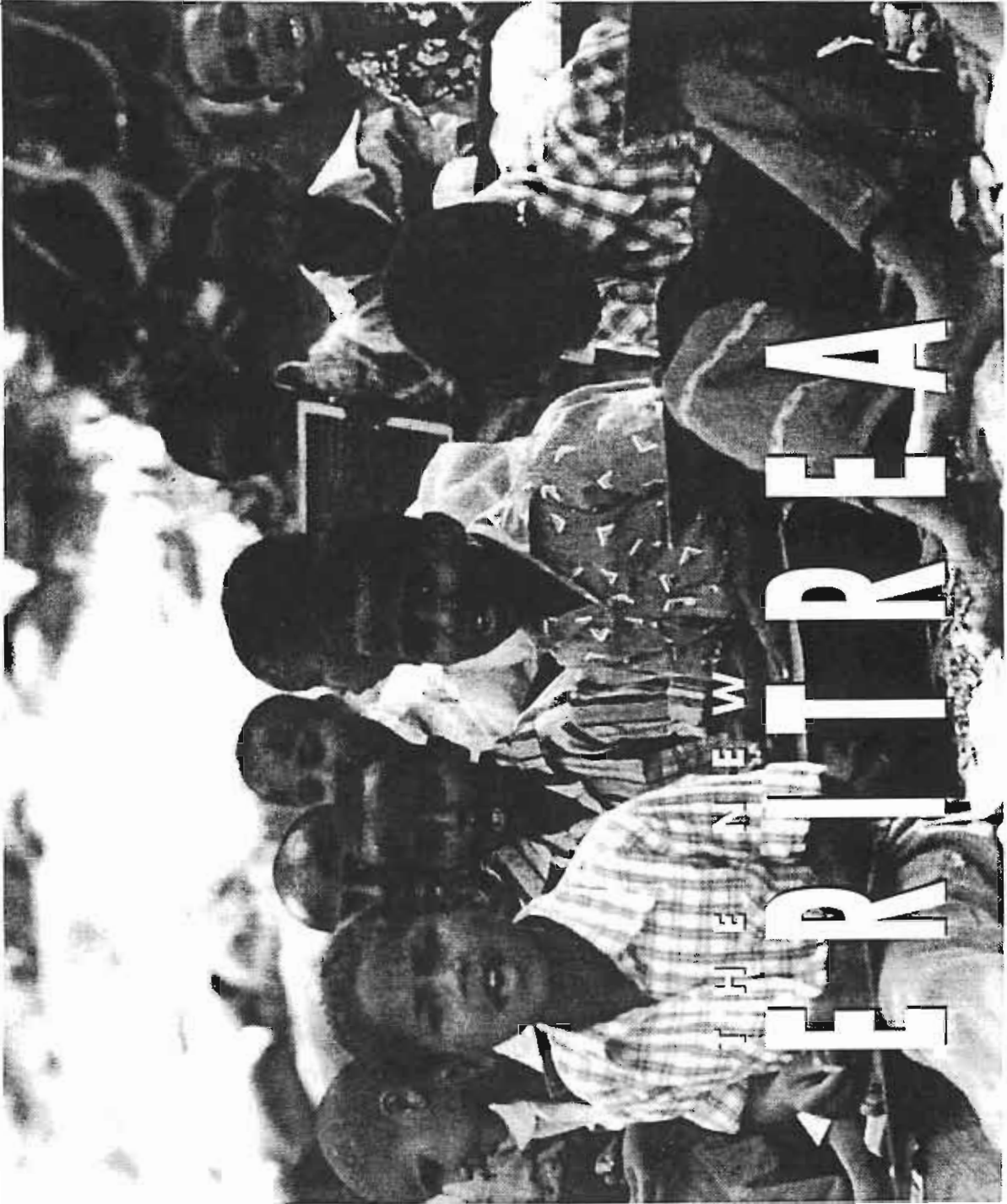
For those of us who live at the shoreline
standing upon the constant edges of decision
crucial and alone
for those of us who cannot indulge
the passing dreams of choice
who love in doorways coming and going
in the hours between dawns
looking inward and outward
at once before and after
seeking a now that can breed
futures
like bread in our children's mouths
so their dreams will not reflect
the death of ours;

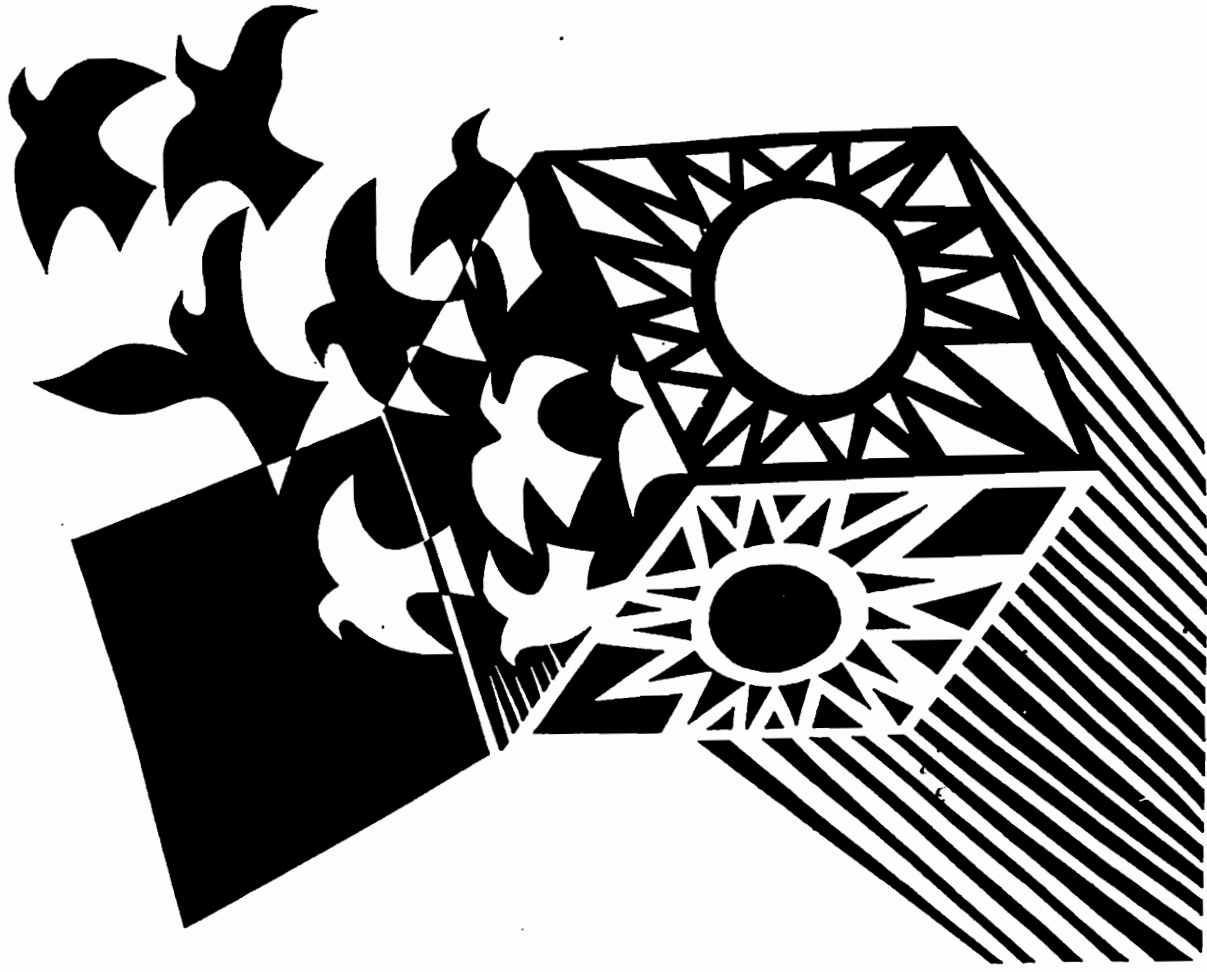
For those of us
who were imprinted with fear
like a faint line in the center of our foreheads
learning to be afraid with our mother's milk
for by this weapon
this illusion of some safety to be found
the heavy-footed hoped to silence us
For all of us
this instant and this triumph
We were never meant to survive.

And when the sun rises we are afraid
it might not remain
when the sun sets we are afraid
it might not rise in the morning
when our stomachs are full we are afraid
of indigestion
when our stomachs are empty we are afraid
we may never eat again
when we are loved we are afraid
love will vanish
when we are alone we are afraid
love will never return
and when we speak we are afraid
our words will not be heard
nor welcomed
but when we are silent
we are still afraid.

So it is better to speak
remembering
we were never meant to survive.

AUDRE LORDE





**“La verdad
y el bien
siguen un
mismo camino.
El que busca
la verdad
encuentra
el bien.”**

Gracias



POR LA PAZ

1 9 9 1
1 9 9 2
EL SALVADOR



above: Members of the FMLN's National Army for Democracy (END) rejoice to news of an agreement on accords leading to a formal cease fire on February 1.

opposite: This poster was one of many that appeared throughout the capital of San Salvador on New Year's Day. A unit of combatants drove down from the north to march with FMLN banners in a huge celebration in front of the National Cathedral. The overwhelming joy associated with this moment remains tempered by the realisation that difficult political struggle lies ahead during the "armed peace."

CUMPLEAÑOS

No es fácil vivir 35 años,
cuando la muerte se pone tan barata
afuera, el oreja que te acecha
busca tus señales: edad, color de piel,
estatura, relaciones familiares.
Adentro, en el frente,
un instante de combate,
una infortunada bomba,
un roquet,
pueden esperarte detrás de los minutos,
a veces, no es fácil
vivir sorteando las tormentas
interiores,
separados de los afectos
armonizando el interés de todos
con los pobres intereses de individuo,
no es fácil venir
amar amando todos las esquinas de los cuartos
todos los atardeceres,
pero a veces sí,
a veces sí cuando sabés que compartís un sol enorme
con todo el universo,
una fuerza irresistible, que derriba fronteras,
que une las voces en un solo himno.
A veces, resulta entonces más que facil.

— Lety, educadora política

BIRTHDAY

It's not easy to live 35 years
when death has become so cheap.
Outside, the informer on your trail
assembles your data: age, color of skin,
height, family relations.
Here at the front
an instant of combat
a hard-luck bomb
a rocket
may await you any minute.
Sometimes it's not easy
to pick your way through inner storms
separated from your affections
harmonizing the interests of all
with petty individual interests
it's not easy to keep on
to love lovingly all corners of all rooms
all the evenings,
but sometimes it is
sometimes when you know you share a huge sun
with all the universe
an irresistible force that demolishes borders
that unites voices in a single hymn,
sometimes it's as easy as can be.

— Lety, political educator



'Our arms are the guarantee of justice.' The FMLN is demanding a role in a new Salvadoran national police force.

When I saw that moon with my very own eyes,
I said, "HULLO!" in my surprise.

When next I looked, I couldn't see

That moon in the branch of my favorite tree.

But as I walked, around and 'round.

The track, again and again I found

That I could see my lovely moon

Faint in the sky all afternoon.

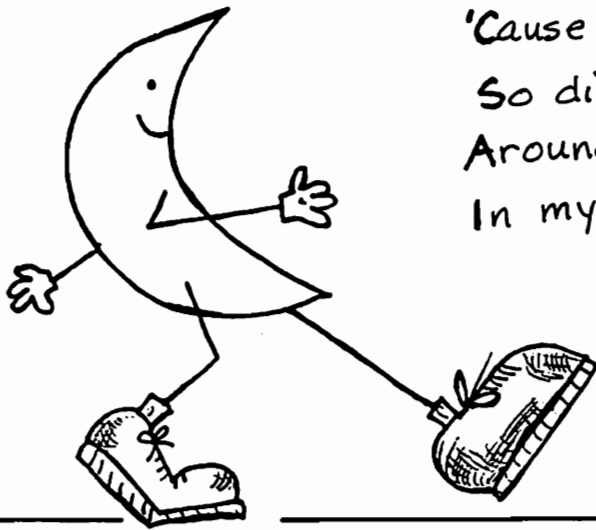


When I looked up, I had to search
Each time, to find the moon's new perch.

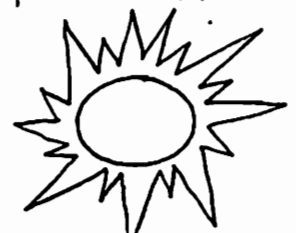
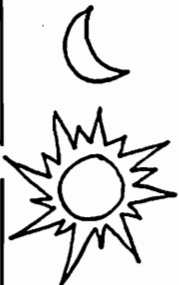
'Cause as I walked from place to place,

So did the moon, moving with grace
Around the sky as I walked the track,

In my face, by my side, and at my back.



So when you think of your friends inside,
Look at the moon, and think with pride
That our spirits are strong, and we're not alone -
We have friends in here, and you at home,
And watching us, morning and night and noon
Is the jaunty old, silly old, beautiful MOON!



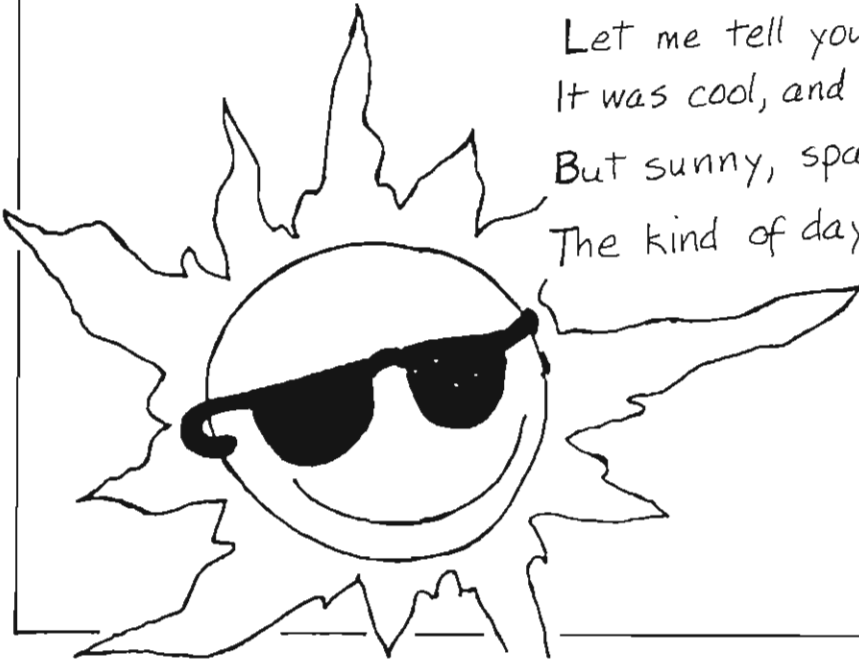
I went for a walk in the afternoon,
And guess who walked with me?

-The Moon!

At first I didn't know it was there,
But it was following everywhere.



Let me tell you about the day -
It was cool, and crisp, and bright - not grey,
But sunny, sparkling, yellow and blue -
The kind of day makes me think of you!



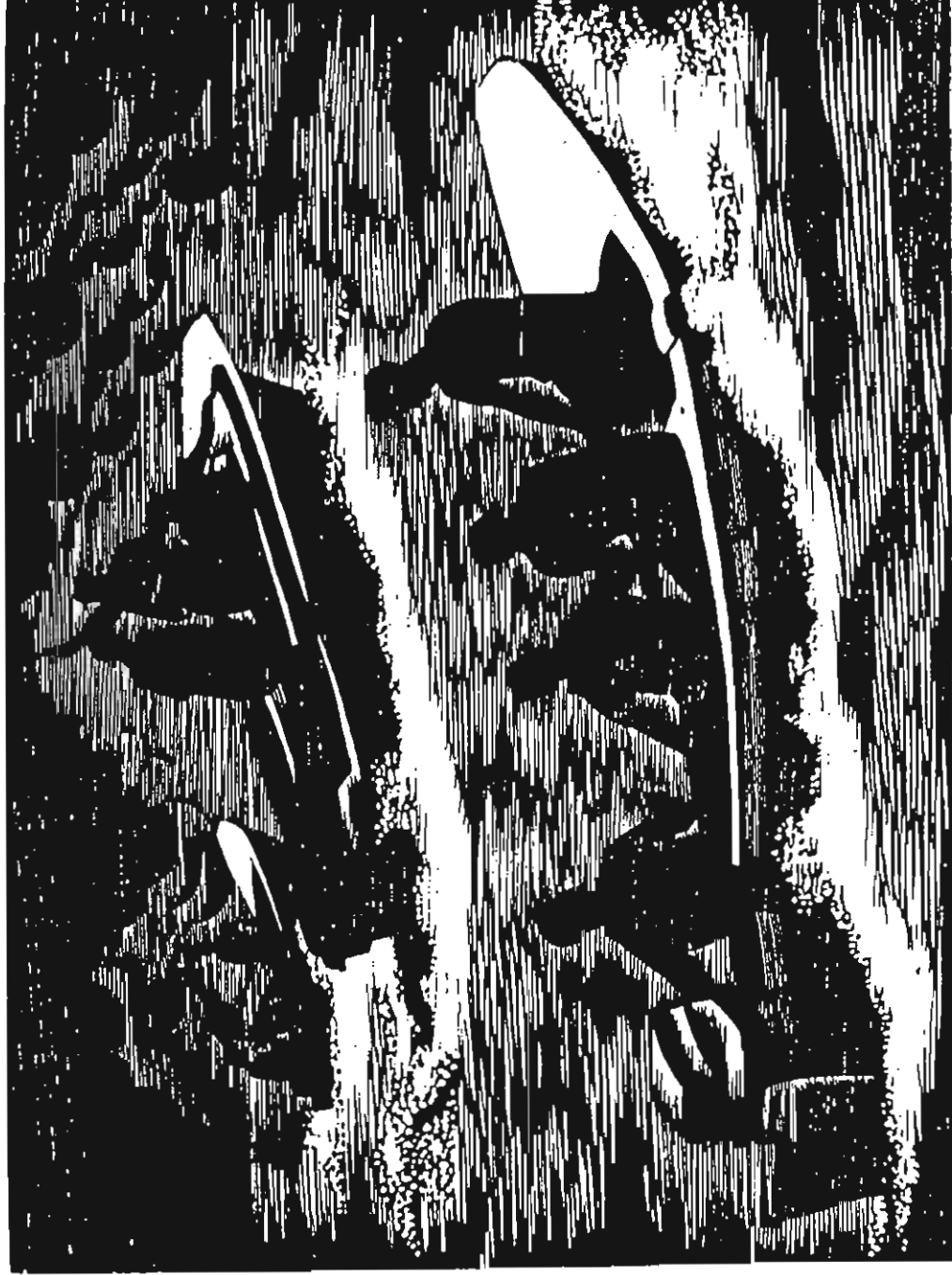
So there I was on the prison track,
Walking around, and walking back.

I looked up at my very most favorite tree
And there, in a branch, looking back at me,
In the midst of that bright, sunny afternoon
Was a slivery, silvery slip of a moon.



**“Si quieres
ser hombre
completo,
pon todas
las fuerzas
de tu alma
en todos
los actos
de tu vida.”**

Pescadores viequenses, xilografía. 1979.



Columbus Day

By Jimmie Durham

*In school I was taught the names
Columbus, Cortez, and Pizarro and
A dozen other filthy murderers.
A bloodline all the way to General Miles,
Daniel Boone and General Eisenhower.*

*No one mentioned the names
Of even a few of the victims.
But don't you remember Chaske, whose spine
Was crushed so quickly by Mr. Pizarro's boot?
What words did he cry into the dust?*

*What was the familiar name
Of that young girl who danced so gracefully
That everyone in the village sang with her —
Before Cortez' sword hacked off her arms
As she protested the burning of her sweet-
heart?*

*That young man's name was Many Deeds,
And he had been a leader of a band of fighters
Called the Redstick Hummingbirds, who slowed
The march of Cortez' army with only a few
Spears and stones which now lay still
In the mountains and remember.*

*Greenrock Woman was the name
Of that old lady who walked right up
And spat in Columbus' face. We
Must remember that, and remember
Laughing Otter the Taino who tried to stop
Columbus and was taken away as a slave.
We never saw him again.*

*In school I learned of heroic discoveries
Made by liars and crooks. The courage
Of millions of sweet and true people
Was not commemorated.*

*Let us then declare a holiday
For ourselves, and make a parade that begins
With Columbus' victims and continues
Even to our grandchildren who will be named
In their honor.*

*Because isn't it true that even the summer
Grass here in this land whispers those names,
And every creek has accepted the responsibility
Of singing those names? And nothing can stop
The wind from howling those names around
The corners of the school.*

*Why else would the birds sing
So much sweeter here than in other lands?*



Credit: Felipe Guaman Poma

YEARS OF U.S.

From the Log of Christopher Columbus

They are so naive and so free with their possessions that no one who has not witnessed them would believe it. When you ask for something they have, they never say no. To the contrary, they offer to share with anyone...

They...brought us parrots and balls of cotton and spears and many other things, which they exchanged for the glass beads and hawks' bells. They willingly traded everything they owned... They were well-built, with good bodies and handsome features... They do not bear arms, and do not know them, for I showed them a sword, they took it by the edge and cut themselves out of ignorance. They have no iron. Their spears are made of cane... They would make fine servants... With fifty men we could subjugate them all and make them do whatever we want.

These entries refer to Columbus' first impressions of the Arawaks, the Indigenous Peoples of the Bahamas who greeted him upon his landing on October 12, 1492. Three years later Columbus returned to take 500 Arawaks to Spain as slaves. Nearly half died on the voyage, and most of the rest soon perished in captivity.

The Spaniards made slaves of those Arawaks who were allowed to remain in their homeland, forcing them to become servants, plantation workers or to search for gold. Of the 50,000 Arawaks counted by the Spanish soon after their arrival, only 500 were left in 1550. By 1650, no Arawaks remained alive on their island homeland.

NO TO 500

COLONIALISM!



For Anna Mae Pictou Aquash, Whose Spirit Is Present
Here and in the Dappled Stars (for we remember the story
and must tell it again so we may all live)

Beneath a sky blurred with mist and wind,
I am amazed as I watch the violet
heads of crocuses erupt from the stiff earth
after dying for a season,
as I have watched my own dark head
appear each morning after entering
the next world
to come back to this one,
amazed.
It is the way in the natural world to understand the place
the ghost dancers named
after the heart-breaking destruction.
Anna Mae,
everything and nothing changes.

You are the shimmering young woman
who found her voice,
when you were warned to be silent, or have your body cut away
from you like an elegant weed.
You are the one whose spirit is present in the dappled stars.
(They prance and lope like colored horses who stay with us
through the streets of these steely cities. And I have seen them
nuzzling the frozen bodies of tattered drunks
on the corner.)

This morning when the last star is dimming
and the buses grind toward
the middle of the city, I know it is ten years since they buried you .

by Joy Harjo

In February 1976, an unidentified body of a young woman was found on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. The official autopsy attributed death to exposure. The FBI agent present at the autopsy ordered her hands severed and sent to Washington for fingerprinting. John Trudell rightly called this mutilation an act of war. Her unnamed body was buried. When Anna Mae Aquash, a young Micmac woman who was an active American Indian Movement member, was discovered missing by her friends and relatives, a second autopsy was demanded. It was then discovered she had been killed by a bullet fired at close range to the back of her head. Her killer or killers have yet to be identified.





LOVE -

Love is contraband in Hell,
cause love is an acid
that eats away bars.

But you, me, and tomorrow
hold hands and make vows
that struggle will multiply.

The hacksaw has two blades.
The shotgun has two barrels.
We are pregnant with freedom.
We are a conspiracy.

Assata Shakur

FREE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS & POWS!



Laura Whitehorn

Untitled, 1989

crayon & ink on paper, 9" x 9"

ON LIVING

I

Living is no laughing matter:

you must live with great seriousness
like a squirrel, for example—

I mean without looking for something beyond and above living,
I mean living must be your whole occupation.

Living is no laughing matter:

you must take it seriously,
so much so and to such a degree
that, for example, your hands tied behind your back,
your back to the wall,

or else in a laboratory
in your white coat and safety glasses,
you can die for people—
even for people whose faces you've never seen,
even though you know living
is the most real, the most beautiful thing.

I mean, you must take living so seriously
that even at seventy, for example, you'll plant olive trees—
and not for your children, either,
but because although you fear death you don't believe it,
because living, I mean, weighs heavier.

II

Let's say we're seriously ill, need surgery—
which is to say we might not get up
from the white table.

Even though it's impossible not to feel sad
about going a little too soon,
we'll still laugh at the jokes being told,
we'll look out the window to see if it's raining,
or still wait anxiously
for the latest newscast...

Let's say we're at the front—
for something worth fighting for, say.
There, in the first offensive, on that very day,
we might fall on our face, dead.

We'll know this with a curious anger,
but we'll still worry ourselves to death
about the outcome of the war, which could last years.

Let's say we're in prison
and close to fifty,
and we have eighteen more years, say,
before the iron doors will open.

We'll still live with the outside,
with its people and animals, struggle and wind—
I mean with the outside beyond the walls.
I mean, however and wherever we are,
we must live as if we will never die.

III

This earth will grow cold,
a star among stars
and one of the smallest,
a gilded mote on blue velvet—
I mean *this*, our great earth.

This earth will grow cold one day,
not like a block of ice
or a dead cloud even
but like an empty walnut it will roll along
in pitch-black space...

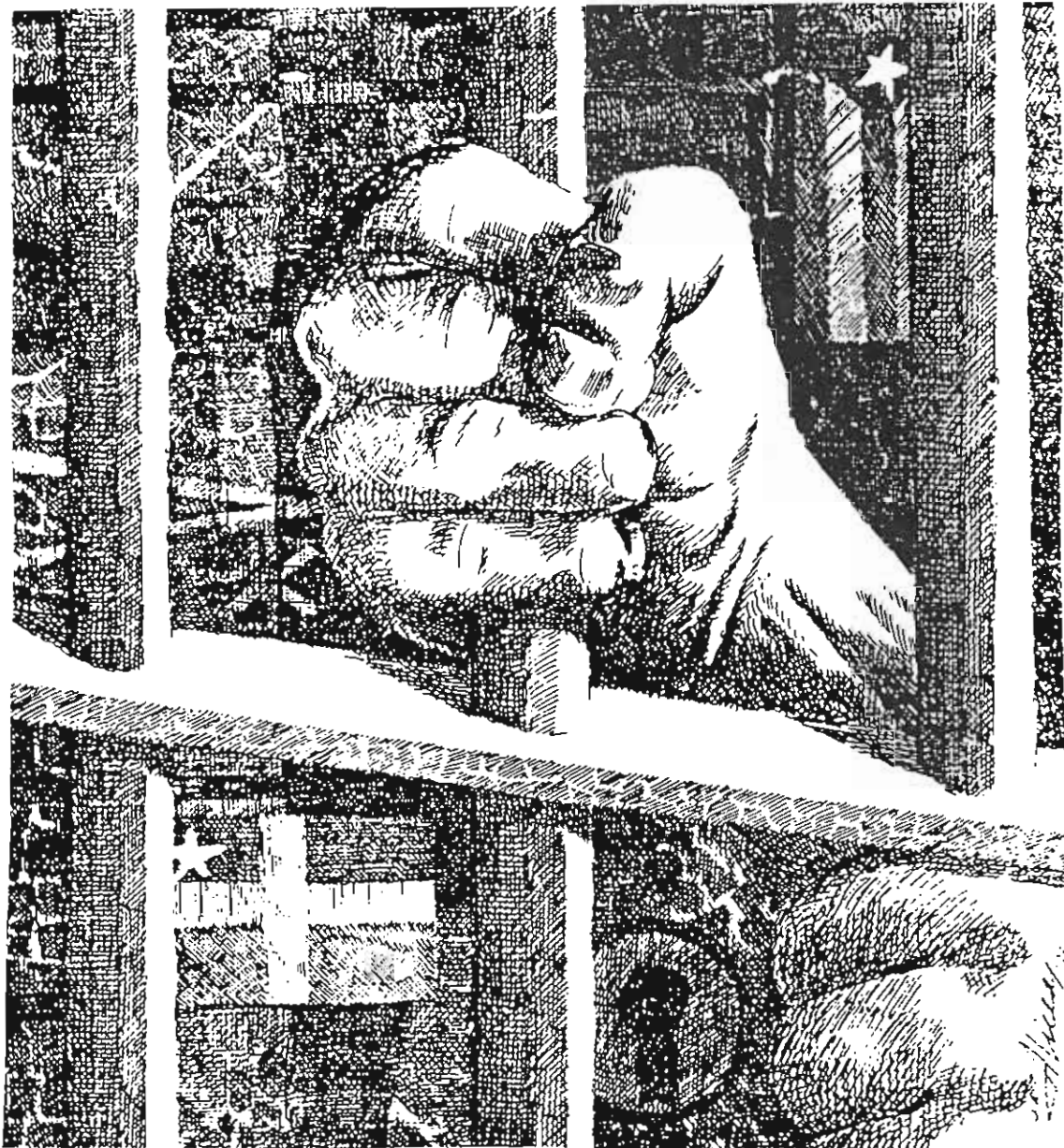
You must grieve for this right now
—you have to feel this sorrow now—
for the world must be loved this much
if you're going to say "I lived"...

February 1948

BY NAZIM HIKMET, A TURKISH REVOLUTIONARY
AND POET, WHO SPENT MOST OF HIS LIFE IN
PRISON AND IN EXILE. THIS POEM WAS WRITTEN
IN PRISON.

*"It's this way:
being captured is beside the point,
the point is not to surrender."*

— NAZIM HIKMET



THE HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEM IN THE WORLD TODAY IS RIGHT HERE IN THE U.S.A.

500 years ago Columbus invaded the Americas, enslaving and destroying the indigenous peoples and their cultures, and soon after, Africans were brought in chains to labor as slaves.

The prison system in the U.S. was first built to contain the ever-present resistance to colonialism and racism. We believe that today the prisons serve the same purpose: to contain populations of poor people and peoples of color and to stop the movements for human rights and liberation.

Today the United States has the highest incarceration rate of any country in the world: for every 100,000 U.S. residents, 426 are in prison. Since the early 1970's the prison population has more than quadrupled, recently soaring past the one million mark, making this the largest prison population in the world. Yet the current federal-prison-system plan is to double the capacity of U.S. prisons by 1995 and to further increase mandatory sentences.

Native Americans, African Americans, Latinos and other people of color are dramatically overrepresented in the U.S. prisons. The imprisonment rate for African Americans is the highest in the world, almost 4 times as high as South Africa's. A Black man in America has a one in four chance of going to prison in his lifetime, and 40% of death row inmates are Black though only 12% of the general U.S. population is Black. Native Americans, who now comprise only 1% of the country's population, have the highest imprisonment rate of any ethnic group. Two out of every 7 Native men will go to prison in his lifetime. For example, in the state of Montana, where 4% of the state's population is Native American, 30% of the prison population is Native American. For many individuals, the desperation of living in poverty leads them to the acts that land them in prison.

Activists from the Native American, African American, Chicano/Mexicano and Puerto Rican liberation movements, as well as peace and anti-racist activists, have long worked to end these ongoing injustices. Organizations who try to expose and change the inequities of U.S. society are viewed as dangerous by the government. Today more than 100 political prisoners and prisoners of war from these various movements are held in U.S. prisons. The government claims there are no political prisoners in the U.S., rather that all of these individuals are criminals and terrorists.



If you want more information on U.S. prisons or political prisoners or want to help us raise hell, please call: Real Dragon Project/Prairie Fire at 415/861-6515. Or write: P.O. Box 3294, Berkeley, CA 94703