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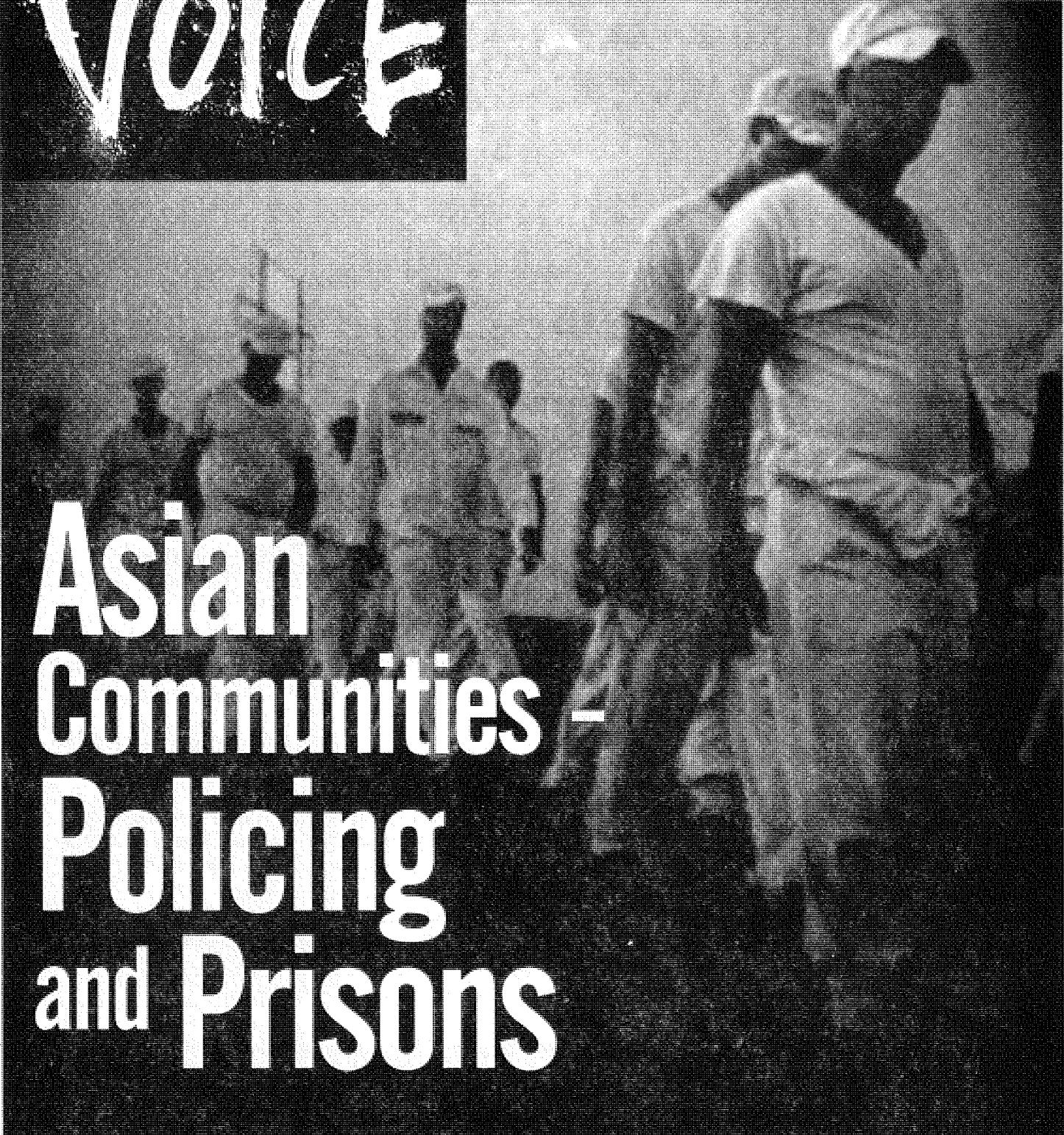
ORGANIZING ASIAN COMMUNITIES

VOICE

Volume 10 • Number 3 • Fall 1999

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**Asian
Communities —
Policing
and Prisons**

Editor's Note:

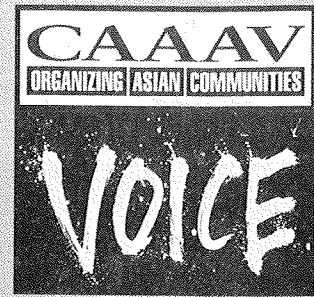
After a brief hiatus, the *CAAAY Voice* is back. We hope that you find this packed issue worth the wait.

In this issue, and in particular in the cover story, we examine the often neglected, yet important, issue of Asian communities and the Prison Industrial Complex. While police brutality may not be news to readers of the *Voice*, the direct relationship between that state violence and the Immigration and Naturalization Service, transnational prison corporations, and public legislation is illuminated here. There has been increased resistance inside INS detention centers in Elizabeth, New Jersey and Jamaica, Queens against the oppressive conditions. Most recently, inmates at the Wackenhut Center in Queens held a hunger strike, for which CAAAV helped organize support. Drawing on CAAAV's work both with INS detainees and Asian communities in New York City, as well as coalition work with Black and Latino groups working on similar issues, this article highlights the need for organizing and activism on multiple fronts.

Meanwhile, CAAAV's organizing programs have been busy. Women Workers Project has been organizing clinics for Asian immigrant domestic workers. The Racial Justice Committee has been continuing its work with Chinatown vendors and developing its Fujianese youth program. The Youth Leadership Project has succeeded in restoring a Khmer translator position at a Bronx health clinic and has launched a campaign to address the inequalities in public education for the Southeast Asian community. In addition, CAAAV has been organizing with or supporting a number of issues which are highlighted in the *Voice*, including the Safe Schools campaign to get cops out of New York City public schools and the campaigns for justice for Amadou Diallo, murdered by the NYC police, and unjustly convicted David Wong.

We welcome any comments or feedback from our readers.

In solidarity,
Editorial Collective



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Founded in 1986, CAAAV organizes New York City Asian immigrant and working class communities to fight for systemic change.



Photo Courtesy: Amnesty International

Asian Communities - Policing and Prisons

In November of 1998, "Chris," a young Cambodian man from the North Bronx, is released from an Oregon county jail after completing a six-month sentence for a non-violent crime. Yet, before even stepping outside and drawing his first breath of freedom, he is remanded directly to an officer of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). Chris, the son of a refugee family, has been scheduled for deportation. Like many people from his neighborhood, he left New York City to seek work and escape harassment by a police force which actively seeks to incarcerate young people of color. But Oregon offered little opportunity for work or hope for a different future.

Chris, a permanent U.S. resident, faces deportation solely because he is an immigrant who committed a crime. Unlike other U.S. legal jurisdictions, under federal INS laws immigrants like Chris do not have the right to legal counsel or due process. The stakes are high -- Cambodian foreign policy restricts the reentry of deportees. Therefore, if the judge rules in favor of deportation, Chris will be detained by the INS for an

indefinite period -- until there is a change in Cambodian policy. For those on the inside, there is a name given to immigrants who are detained indefinitely: "lifers."

Li is an 18-year-old Chinese man who spends 23 hours a day confined in a room at a "non-criminal" INS Detention Center in Elizabeth, New Jersey. He has been detained since September of 1998, after arriving on U.S. shores without proper papers. Like many other detainees, Li is given only one hour of recreation per day in a room with a small skylight. He is frequently placed in solitary confinement for reasons that he does not understand because the corrections officers do not provide translation. Although Li has not been informed of having any medical illness, a nurse forces him to take five large white pills twice a week and periodically draws blood. He pays \$25 for six-minute conversations with his mother in China and works in the kitchen for \$1 per day to pay for the calls. Li's case for political asylum has been abandoned by two different lawyers, so that there is no foreseeable end to his detention.

The Scene of the Crime

In each of these cases we have to wonder: What crimes were committed to deserve such severe punishment? The cruel and unreasonable prison sentences meted out to both Chris and Li are based solely on their legally-defined status as immigrants -- be it documented or undocumented. In addition, their status as poor immigrants from Third World countries means they lack the resources to combat their unjust conditions. In essence, the immigrant poor in the U.S. can expect no better treatment than the most dangerous and recalcitrant criminals.

Under a wave of reactionary legislation which combines "tough-on-crime" ideology with anti-immigrant nationalism, the civil and human rights of Third World immigrants are being eroded. As illustrated by Chris' case, the punishment for permanent residents, unlike U.S. citizens, no longer ends when they have served their criminal sentence. Instead these immigrants face double jeopardy -- deportation or indefinite incarceration by the INS.

This process of disempowerment and criminalization is not entirely new to Asian American history. Predecessors to today's anti-immigrant initiatives can be found in the Chinese Exclusion movement of the

late 19th century, when the everyday activities of immigrants - from wearing one's hair in a queue, to carrying a laundry pole, to living in overcrowded Chinatown tenements - were deemed criminal. Policed and harassed through ticketing, arrests, detention, and deportation, Asian immigrants were nonetheless tolerated as a superexploited and flexible labor pool for the expansion of American capitalism.

In late 20th-century U.S. immigrants of color are still viewed as a threat to the "American" racial composition and workforce. In response, the nation's reactionary forces have returned to the scene of the crime, finding new ways of criminalizing and incarcerating the immigrant poor. However, these anti-immigrant measures are not an isolated phenomenon, but parallel a larger reactionary movement in the United States - the development of the Prison Industrial Complex.

The Prison Industrial Complex

Like the "Military Industrial Complex" of a generation ago, the Prison Industrial Complex describes the latest attempt by the state and corporations to make "big business" out of the war against the poor and people of color in the U.S.

As industrial jobs have increasingly vanished from our cities over the past thirty years, a growing sector of Black and Latino working-class people have absorbed the impact of joblessness and urban decay. The government's response to rising poverty has not been job creation, accountability from the private sector, or even an expansion of the welfare state, but increased policing and imprisonment. The solution, according to Angela Davis, has been to "disappear" a generation of poor people of color. An average of 160 people are imprisoned each day, primarily young people from Black and Latino communities. Women are the fastest growing sector - increasing from 5,600 to 75,000 since 1970.

The Prison Industrial Complex is a web of private corporations who profit from state initiatives which incarcerate the "unemployable" sectors of American society. Domestic businesses benefit from large state and federal contracts to build and operate prisons. Inside, prisoners have become the new superexploited workforce, laboring for multinational corpora-

tions, such as AT&T, Chevron and TWA, often for less than 25 cents an hour. With no health benefits, no vacations, no absenteeism, no overtime pay, and no means of filing a grievance or voicing complaints, prisoners are a bargain for corporations. In many regions' economies, prisons have become one of the few growth industries.

Making the Connections

While the primary targets of the Prison Industrial Complex are Black and Latina communities, Asian immigrants have not been spared from the big business of detention, as the incarceration of Chris, Li and many others reveal.

Furthermore, the highly exploitable labor pool created inside prisons serves some of the same global economic interests as the "informal" immigrant labor market. Immigrant enclaves in our cities function as virtual "Third Worlds" - where workers are driven to labor in sweatshops for large corporations or in the low-wage service economy. Keeping this immigrant labor force malleable requires its own set of abusive tactics: police raids of Asian immigrant economies; the use of police, legislation, and regulation to forcibly remove immigrant enterprises from particular areas of the city; police collusion with the ethnic power structure in an effort to suppress working-class agitation. Those working-class immigrants who resist face brutality, criminalization and incarceration.

CAA AV has witnessed how the police are used to clear public spaces to serve the interests of corporations and Chinatown's business elites. As the City moves to privatize public spaces and restructure the vending industry into a leasing system, we have seen 12 vendors displaced from Canal Street and 21 vendors evicted from the largest open-air market in Chinatown in the past year. Currently, street vendors await the City's decision on street closings, which threatens to displace 90% of street vendors in Chinatown. In response to these attacks, Chinatown's vendors and their community supporters mobilized a series of militant protests, squatted the market to win a court order for stay of eviction, joined city-wide demonstrations of street vendors against the street closings, and mobilized hundreds of people to testify at public hearings.

The police, in turn, retaliated by step-



Photo Courtesy: Amnesty International

"The rapid globalization of capitalism not only disregards the boundaries of nation-states, it also transcends the cultural and political boundaries which separate the inner-city poor from the prisoner, the welfare recipient from the sweatshop worker, and the public institution from the private corporation."

ping-up their surveillance and escalating their harassment tactics, including excessive ticketing, confiscation of goods, and physical abuse.

In newer immigrant communities, which lack the economic life of Chinatown, brutal policing takes a different form. In the Bronx, home to the largest number of Southeast Asian refugees in New York City, Vietnamese and Cambodian youth have become targets of police harassment. Like their Black and Latino peers, these Southeast Asian youth are viewed as part of a growing, unemployable "underclass." During random neighborhood drug sweeps, the police round up any youth who happens to be in the designated hot spot. The police handcuff and illegally search the captured youth, who has not even been charged with a crime. Even if the police find no evidence of a crime, they continue to detain, interrogate, and often brutalize the youth for several hours in an attempt to gain "leads" for other arrests. In addition, the police frequently take photographs of the youth, even though they have not been arrested, and add the snapshots to "Asian mug books." Although the youth technically has no criminal record, his or her face is now unofficially logged in the criminal justice system. Subsequently, these youth can be selected from these illegal mug books as suspects for crimes involving Asian perpetrators.

A New Movement

These examples reveal the ways in which the struggle against the Prison Industrial Complex begins in the streets of our communities. The rapid globalization of capitalism not only disregards

the boundaries of nation-states, it also transcends the cultural and political boundaries which separate the inner-city poor from the prisoner, the welfare recipient from the sweatshop worker, and the public institution from the private corporation. This fluidity has led to new and improved modes of policing, controlling, and isolating people along lines of class, gender, and race.

If we are to adequately respond to these new forms of repression, we must begin to think beyond the normal spheres of "issue-specific organizing." We must come to understand how the struggle of the new immigrant laborer is simultaneously the struggle of the prisoner; how the welfare recipient has a stake in the liberation of the working-poor immigrant; and how exclusive targeting of either state institutions or the private sector is no longer adequate. Our vision for radical change must make these connections in direct action tactics, grassroots organizing, and in the institutions we create.

For example, working-class Asian and Latino community groups that once focused exclusively on either community-building or labor are now coming together to demand justice for their brothers and sisters detained in INS prisons in New York City. Black and Latina women of Los Angeles are fighting to keep their children safe from a criminal justice system which profits from the incarceration of youth. These efforts which span the inner-city street, the immigrant workplace, and the prison cells of America point to the future of our struggles for liberation.

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Parts of this essay are excerpted from Eric Tang's "State Violence, Asian Immigrants, and the Underclass," *States of Confinement* (St. Martin Press, forthcoming, Joy James, Ed.)

Suspension of Rights at INS Detention Center

The Elizabeth Detention Center, like many other centers of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service across the country, is run by a private corporation, Corrections Corporation of America. The detainees, the overwhelming majority of whom are Third World immigrants, are asylum seekers, undocumented workers and others. Most Asian detainees are Chinese, Cambodian, Sri Lankan, and Filipino. The length of detention ranges from two weeks to two years. The only language for which there is some translation available is Spanish. Other detainees who do not speak English cannot communicate with prison guards, lawyers or medical workers. Many detainees have only met their lawyers once, even in asylum cases that have been pending for over six months.

The Center has beds for 300 people - 250 men and 50 women. The beds are arranged into fourteen "dormitories." Detainees spend 22 hours a day in these dormitories, with one hour for "indoor recreation" and one hour for "outdoor recreation." "Outdoor recreation" takes place in a large room with an open-air skylight in the ceiling. The overheated facility has no windows.

Showers and toilets have no doors on the stalls to provide privacy. The commissary sells necessary items to detainees at exorbitant prices.

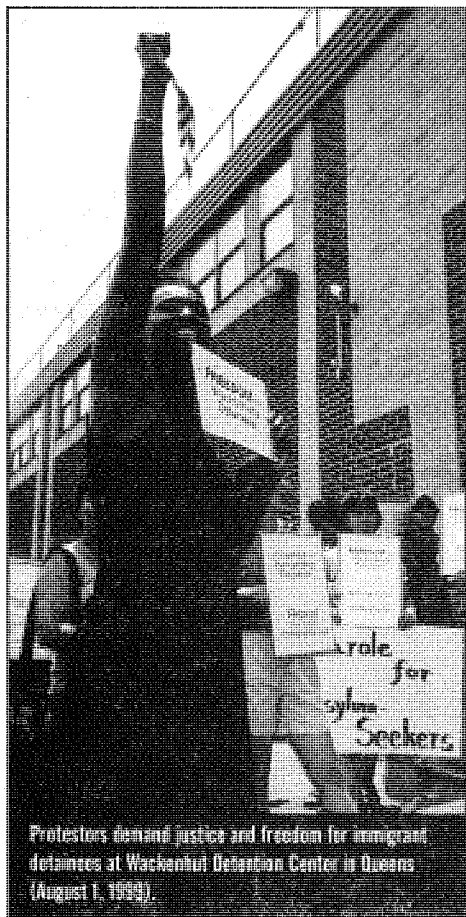
Hunger strikes are a regular occurrence inside the facility. Past demands by protesting detainees have included improvement of the tasteless, unhealthy food, immediate release of all asylum seekers, legal representation for all detainees, and translation.

Information, in part, comes from the Jesuit Refugee Service Volunteer Handbook.

Hunger Strike in INS Detention Center

On July 27, 1999, more than half the inmates at the Wackenhut Immigration Detention Center in Queens began a hunger strike to demand that the INS follow through with its promise to review parole applications of inmates with pending cases for political asylum, and to improve the deplorable prison conditions. Their struggle has drawn significant community support as well as media attention. Community organizations, including CAAAV, Latino Workers Center, National Korean Service & Education Consortium, and Nodutdol for Korean Community Development protested in front of the Detention Center on August 1 to protest the brutal treatment of inmates.

Despite the peaceful nature of the hunger strike, violent tactics and human rights abuses by the INS and Wackenhut have only escalated. In an attempt to break the strike, inmates have been kept in solitary confinement, and threatened with force feeding and immediate deportation. A political refugee from China



Protesters demand justice and freedom for immigrant detainees at Wackenhut Detention Center in Queens (August 1, 1999).

was locked in a windowless solitary confinement cell, with only enough space for a small bed and toilet, and no room to wash or walk. According to the inmate, "I began to eat because I was told by the officers here that if I didn't eat, they would force-feed me with a tube tomorrow. I was afraid of what they would do to me."

As this goes to press, one remaining hunger striker, Emmy Kutesa, a Ugandan detainee, has begun eating two meals a week as a condition for his upcoming court hearing.

1996 Immigration Legislation

In 1996, the Republican Congress, with the full support of President Clinton, passed the Welfare Reform Act and the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA). The new laws left immigrant communities with virtually no safety nets, and gave the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) unprecedented powers to deport and imprison immigrants without due process.

Public Benefits:

- The new law cut off approximately 500,000 immigrants from SSI and one million immigrants from Food Stamps.
- Of the \$54 billion cuts in welfare programs, \$24 billion (45%) came from denying benefits to immigrants, who only use 5% of total welfare costs.
- Anyone who seeks public assistance during the first year in the U.S. will be deported, even for taking publicly funded English classes.

Deportations:

- Undocumented people who enter the U.S. and don't immediately declare fear of persecution in their original country will be deported. Those who do must show their claims are credible to an INS official on the spot, with no right to a translator or lawyer.
- The INS has the power to conduct raids and round up any persons they believe are undocumented, without legal review, and deport them if they have been in the U.S. for less than two years.
- Any legal or undocumented immigrant who is convicted of even a minor crime can be deported with-

out judicial review. If anyone who applies for citizenship has previously been convicted of a crime, s/he will be deported.

- Deportations doubled, to 169,072, in the first year of enforcement of the 1996 immigration law.

Detention:

- Vigilant enforcement of the new law has led to a 70% increase in the number of immigrants detained by the INS.
- Less than 11% of detainees were represented in their immigration proceedings in 1996, according to the Executive Office for Immigration Review of the U.S. Department of Justice.
- According to the Clinton administration, 23,000 "removable aliens" are being held in federal prisons and 54,000 more are state prison inmates.
- The INS anticipates that its average daily population in detention will increase from 5600 in 1993 to approximately 24,000 in 2001.
- The number of detainees held in county jails may increase to 75% of the total population in coming years, according to the INS.

Enforcement:

- IIRIRA provides for deploying 1200 more armed border patrol officers and hiring 900 more INS investigators with broader deportation powers.
- IIRIRA provides \$12 million to build a 14-mile fence around San Diego, and gives the INS broader wiretapping authority.

Community Organizing



This section provides news from CAAAV's three organizing programs:

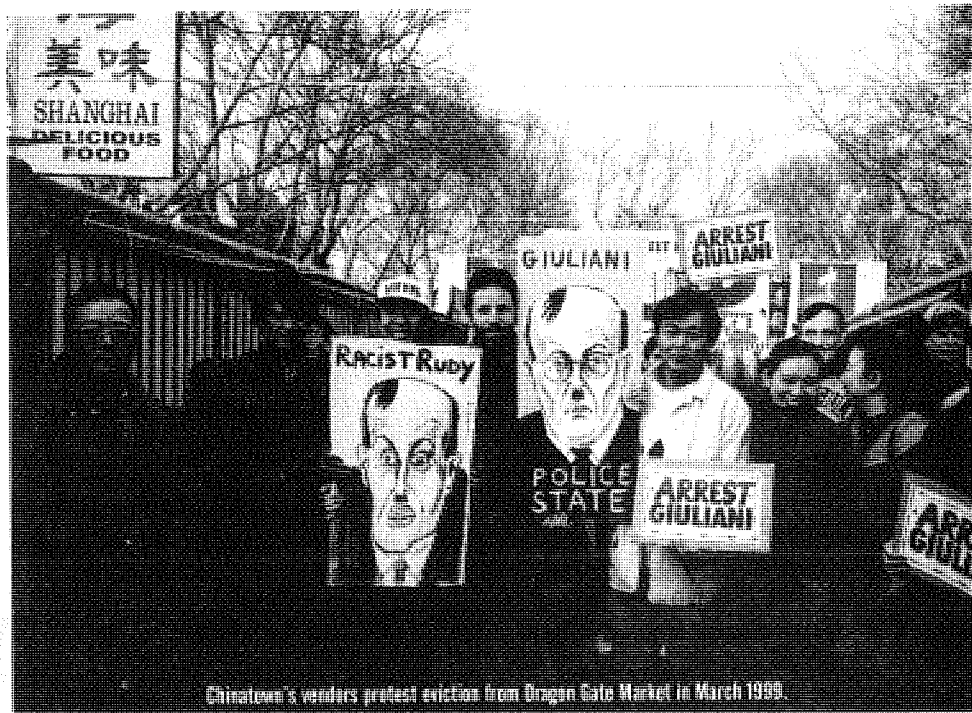
- Women Workers Project (WWP)
- Racial Justice Committee (RJC)
- Youth Leadership Project (YLP)

Outreach to Asian Women Domestic Workers

Through its outreach, Women Workers Project has learned that as the demand for live-in workers increases in New York's regional suburbs, work conditions for immigrant women are becoming even worse. Women work long hours with no overtime pay, particularly in isolated areas that have little access to public transportation. Some of these women are forced to work through the night doing a multitude of different tasks since their jobs lack clearly defined responsibilities. Moreover, most domestic workers face unending work, no job security, and no benefits.

WWP recognizes that domestic work is one of the few work options for Asian immigrant women. In some cases, domestic workers can earn a livable wage, but the majority of domestic workers cannot make a decent wage. Since most domestic workers are undocumented, they are unable to control aspects of their working conditions: everything from getting a social security card to opening a bank account to standing up to an abusive employer.

WWP conducts meetings on issues such as health care for the uninsured, sexual harassment, negotiating with a new employer, the tax system, and undocumented workers' rights. In addition, WWP



Chinatown's vendors protest eviction from Dragon Gate Market in March 1999.

recently launched a "Justice Clinic" which provides peer advocacy around labor, immigration, law enforcement brutality and other issues impacting the lives of workers. The "Justice Clinic" prioritizes building the capacity of workers to become advocates for themselves and others, with an emphasis on collective organizing for long-term change.

Chinatown Vendors Fight City's Attacks

In March 1999, despite two months of courageous resistance by the twenty-one vendors of Dragon Gate Market, the City Parks Department entered the market with bulldozers and razed their vending stalls—a life-time of savings for many of them. The market was created in 1994 as part of a city plan to keep Chinatown's vendors off the streets. Responding to complaints from white residents who feared expansion of Chinatown and opposed the existence of a "Chinese market" bordering their neighborhood, the Parks Department determined the market unprofitable and decided to evict the immigrant vendors.

The destruction of Dragon Gate Market is just one aspect of the war that the Giuliani administration has been waging against vendors in New York City. As the city moves to privatize public spaces, it plans to restructure the vending industry into a leasing system, in which private corporations contracted by New York

City will lease sidewalk spaces to vendors. Giuliani is pressing for further street restrictions for vendors, and his Street Vendor Review Panel will announce a decision on October 1, 1999, on the proposed closing of 400 streets from vendors, including all the main thoroughfares of Chinatown. In the only public hearing on this proposal, Chinatown's vendors joined more than a thousand vendors city-wide to testify in opposition to the street closings. However, the decision-making process of the Panel has been held in private, back-door discussions. To challenge this, the Chinatown Street Vendors Association and the Racial Justice Committee have been meeting and planning to fight the attack.

Survey of Fujianese Community

This summer, with the help of its summer interns, Fen Zhen Nie and Yan Zheng, RJC conducted a survey to learn about the Fujianese community in Chinatown—its struggles and organization. Undocumented Fujianese immigrants make up the fastest growing population in Chinatown. Although many project that they will become the majority residents of Chinatown in a few years, Fujianese immigrants remain marginalized politically, economically, and socially in Chinatown. They work long hours for low wages, with the pressure of having to pay off huge debts for their travel to the United States.

Fujianese youth face the double burden of school plus long hours of work to contribute to their family income. The drop-out rate is high. With the new English Regents requirement for high school graduation and Governor Pataki's slashing of the youth services budget, options will be even fewer. As a result, young people are being tracked as the next generation of super-exploitable labor for Chinatown's sweatshops. Although the Fujianese are the most disenfranchised, community leaders and the myriad of social service agencies in Chinatown have yet to recognize the needs of this sector of the community.

The survey was designed to aid RJC in its development of a fall pilot youth program in the Fujianese community. The program is designed to introduce basic concepts of community organizing to young people, who, as the only bilingual people in the community, often find themselves having to negotiate with city agencies, landlords, and service providers on behalf of their communities.

The Struggle for Equal Access to Health Care

The Youth Leadership Project's year-long campaign to restore access to health care for Southeast Asian patients at a Bronx clinic has resulted in victory. The hospital's administration has agreed to restore one of the Khmer translator positions that was cut in April 1998. Through this campaign, a number of YLP's youth organizers gained the experience of struggling through a long and difficult campaign and navigating a complex range of targets and allies which included the Office for Civil Rights, the 1199 Health and Hospital Worker's Union, and the central administration of Montefiore Hospital—one of the largest private health corporations in the country. The lessons gained from this struggle have given the youth organizers the tools and experience to engage in new areas of organizing.

Campaigns around Public Education

This past year, New York City police officers officially took over school security at public high schools (see page 9). These officers are disproportionately placed in schools which consist of poor

Black, Latino, and Asian students. YLP youth organizers participated in the city-wide coalition efforts to remove cops from school, organizing students throughout the North Bronx during the spring of 1999. The campaign included a mobilization for Racial Justice Day and a press conference which brought together scores of youth from throughout the Bronx. Through these organizing efforts, YLP organizers worked in solidarity with Black and Latino youth groups, particularly Youth Force of the South Bronx. This experience provided YLP with a rare opportunity to carry-out multiracial organizing

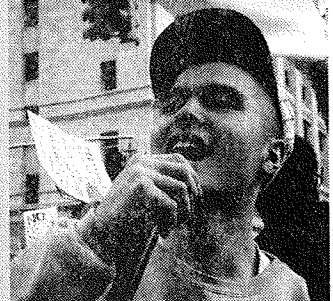
YLP is now taking a closer look at the state of public education for the Southeast Asian community in the Bronx. During

the summer, youth organizers conducted surveys of Southeast Asian parents experiences and concerns with their children's schools. YLP has launched a new campaign which addresses issues such as access for immigrant parents, discriminatory practices which inappropriately place Asian children in English-as-a-Second Language programs, and the neglect of Southeast Asian children in public elementary schools.

In early September, YLP secured a commitment from the district Superintendent to place bilingual Southeast Asian staff at local schools. In the coming year, the youth organizers will monitor the implementation of this agreement.

Organizational News

Ian Shiroma, formerly CAAAV's part-time Resource Development Coordinator, has been invaluable support as the current part-time Administrative Associate. A native New Yorker, Ian is a recent graduate of Columbia University where he organized for ethnic studies. Ian has also had experience writing grants for other non-profit organizations.



Summer Interns

(appearing clockwise)

RJC:

Fen Zhen Nie
Yan Zheng

YLP:

Chhaya Chhoum
Susan Top (also the
Spring 1999 intern)
Sam Tuy

WWP:

Nahar Alam





Struggles For Justice

Task Force on INS Raids

INS operations are becoming more militarized, as agents use high-tech equipment to track down and arrest undocumented immigrants, work in conjunction with local law enforcement, and expand their territorial range. INS operations, including new "Quick Response Teams," now target non-traditional "immigrant states" such as Washington, Tennessee, North Carolina, and Iowa.

The National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (NNIRR), a diverse alliance of labor, civil rights, and immigrant organizations, is fighting to promote a just immigration and refugee policy in the U.S. and to expand the rights of all immigrants regardless of immigration status. In 1997, NNIRR established the National INS Raids Task Force — a coalition of over 70 organizations working to monitor raids and advocate for alternatives to enforcement as the main governmental immigration strategy. In October 1998, Task Force activists in 27 cities sponsored press conferences, rallies, and protests as part of a "National Week of Action Against Immigration Raids." NNIRR's report on the impact of raids on families, workers, and communities received national attention. As a result, the INS announced that its new "interior enforcement strategy" would de-emphasize workplace raids.

Despite this defeat, the INS is looking to use tactics that have an equally destabilizing effect on workplaces and immigrant communities. In Yakima, Washington, the INS ordered apple-packing plants to fire thousands of workers in lieu of conducting raids.

NNIRR continues to work to support local communities to fight for the enforcement of labor law and worker protections for immigrant communities.

The new "Quick Response Teams" and other efforts to enhance collaboration with local law enforcement agencies continue to foster harassment of people of color who may "appear" to be immigrants. In several states, police departments have indicated an interest in applying for "deputization," which would give local police the power to act as INS agents. NNIRR has worked with local communities in Iowa and Utah to fight these initiatives.

For more information about NNIRR, please contact Sasha Khokha at 510-465-1984, or write: 310 8th Street, Suite 307, Oakland, CA 94607, or via email at nnirr@nnirr.org. Visit NNIRR's website at www.nnirr.org.

Critical Resistance: Beyond the Prison Industrial Complex

The University of California, Berkeley hosted a historic two-day conference from September 25-27, 1998 on the prison industry called "Critical Resistance: Beyond the Prison Industrial Complex." Conference organizers focused their efforts on the symbiotic connection between the corporate economy and the punishment industry. Prisons have become an enormous source of corporate profit while simultaneously devouring social resources needed for education, housing, healthcare and welfare. People of color constitute the major-

ity of prisoners in state and federal prisons and in local jails. Youth face increasing repression in juvenile facilities, adult prisons and in schools that often resemble prisons.

For more information, look up the conference website at <http://www.igc.org/justice/critical>.

Safe Schools: Racial and Educational Justice

In September 1998, without a prior public hearing, Mayor Giuliani, Police Commissioner Safir, and Public School Chancellor Rudy Crew transferred jurisdiction of the NYC Public School's Division of School Safety to the NYC Police Department. This decision was made behind closed doors, without the informed consent of the students, parents, teachers, and communities most affected by this resolution. In response, the NYC Coalition Against Police Brutality (Audre Lorde Project, CAAAV, National Congress for Puerto Rican Rights, and Youth Force) initiated the "Safe Schools: Racial and Educational Justice" campaign, currently

To report crimes and abuses by NYPD in schools, call the Cops in Schools Hotline at 718-707-1467. This hotline was created by the Safe Schools Campaign to provide legal referrals and advocacy. The Safe Schools Campaign is an initiative of the Coalition Against Police Brutality, formed in 1997 to build a united movement of communities of color against police brutality in NYC.

being led by YouthForce, Project Reach, Jews for Racial and Economic Justice, Center for Immigrant Families, SLAM of Hunter College, and NYC Policewatch.

More cops does not mean more security for students. School-based and communities initiatives to create conflict-free, safe environments for teaching and learning will be undermined as schools are transformed into de facto detention facilities. This new mayoral initiative simply solidifies earlier attempts to criminalize youth. In Giuliani's first year in office, juvenile arrests jumped from 77,353 to 99,553. Arrests of youth for "disorderly conduct" jumped from 4,516 to 7,579 in 1994. As arrest rates climbed, funding for City youth programs and services were slashed. In 1996, the budget of the Department of Youth Services was cut by \$15 million. Young people of color are steadily being tracked from public schools to prisons.

The NYPD's expanded presence in schools increases the risk that student rights under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act will be violated. Armed cops who patrol streets, parks, and neighborhoods, for example, have the potential to misuse information collected by NYPD safety officers through their daily interactions in schools. The criminalization of youth has become such a high priority that, last year, the NYPD (unsuccessfully) attempted to add high school yearbooks to police mug shot files.

The Campaign's central demands include removing the NYPD from schools and redirecting public monies into public education and youth programs. These objectives can only be met by building an organized base of students, parents, educators and community groups to hold the Board of Education accountable.

Justice for Amadou Diallo

On March 12, Asian Communities United Against Police Brutality, an ad hoc coalition of Asian American community activists came together to demand justice for Amadou Diallo and to raise awareness on police brutality as a serious issue in Asian communities. Organizations like Asians for Mumia/Jericho, Center for Immigrant Families, Gabriela Network, Korea Exposure & Education Program, Rainbow Center, South Asians Against

Police Brutality, along with individuals like Yuri Kochiyama and Annanya Bhattacharjee joined CAAAV to issue a statement expressing their collective outrage against the vicious murder of Amadou Diallo.

The statement demanded the indictment of the four officers who killed Diallo and provided context for the killing: "While the murder of Diallo must certainly be read as part of the long and violent history of police repression against African Americans, it is also the latest and most vicious murder of a Third World immigrant in our city." Referring to the murders of Yong Xin Huang, Kevin Cedeño, Jose Sanchez, and the police torture of Abner Louima, the statement emphasized the underlying economic links among these cases: "Diallo's murder is the drastic consequence of a larger institutional scheme to destroy the lives of Third World immigrants."

While there have been dozens of murders committed by the police against people of color in the past three years alone, only one NYC police officer has been convicted of murder in the last two decades.

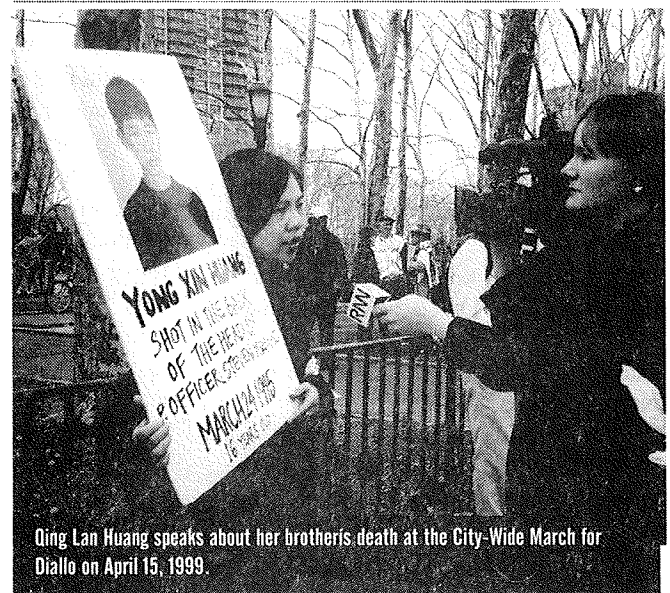
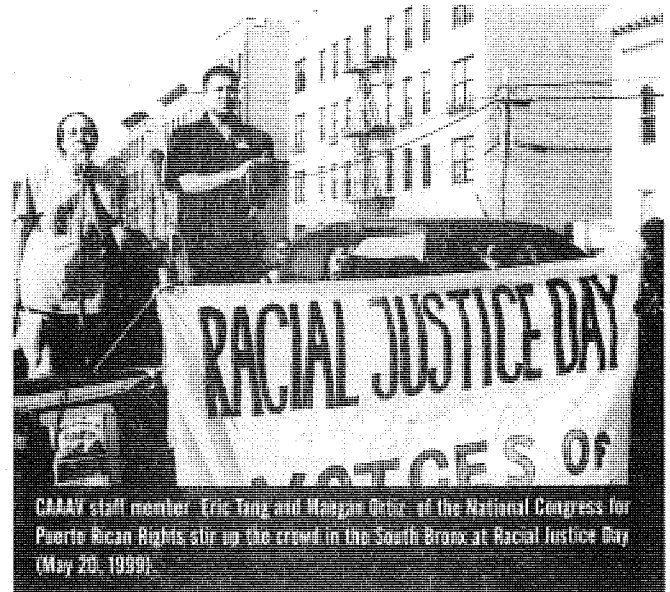
Free David Wong!

On March 5, 1999, over 200 people came out to support David Wong, a Chinese man unjustly convicted of murder 12 years ago. The David Wong Support Committee's second annual benefit dinner was held at Harmony Palace Restaurant in New York City's Chinatown. Despite the lack of evidence, David was charged with murder largely based on the testimony of another prisoner who was offered a plea

bargain. Moreover, David was not granted a fair trial: the court translator could not speak David's dialect and supporting witnesses were not allowed to testify.

The Support Committee has been working for years to raise awareness about David's case and its relationship to the racist practices of the criminal justice system. Despite wide public support, David's case has floundered in the legal system. His case was denied in all three levels of the New York State court system. Currently, David's lawyers at the Center for Constitutional Rights are working on a habeas corpus petition to the federal courts.

For more information, please contact the David Wong Support Committee at PO Box 962, Manhattanville Station, NY, NY 10027; email: dwongsc@ibm.net; phone: (212) 926-7412.



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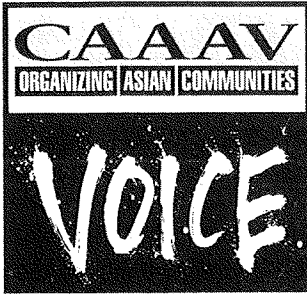
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