

¡LA VERDAD!



Unión del Barrio

Special Bulletin

January 29, 2010

OVER 10,000 RAZA MARCH AGAINST OPPRESSION AND RACISM

By Pablo Aceves
Unión del Barrio
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On January 16, 2010 over 10,000 people marched through the streets of downtown Phoenix, Arizona. Called the "March for Human Rights", it was organized by "Puente Arizona" a local non-profit group and "The National Day Labor Organizing Network" and was principally directed against racist Sheriff Joe Arpaio with 6 specific demands, which we support in general (for the demands please see, http://org2.democracyinaction.org/o/6190/t/8387/petition.jsp?petition_KEY=599). Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio's and his Nazi policies have been victimizing Raza by holding raids in the barrio and attacking, imprisoning, and criminalizing our gente. Arpaio is someone who has said he would "drive" raza to the border himself. He is a racist pig who has accepted the accolades that the Neo Nazis and KKK have given him, not to mention the minutemen, and has declared open season on Mexicanos and other Raza in Maricopa County Phoenix.

In reality, we have to see Arpaio within his context. The "Arpaios" have existed and terrorized our communities since US Imperialism stole half of México in 1848. And in Arizona, lynching, beatings, and segregation have been the order of the day. Arpaio is a part of this legacy.



Mexican/Raza women militantly protest at Phoenix March.
AP photo 1/16/10

Today, Arpaio is pushing this anti-Mexican legacy and a stand had to be made. The massive march represents our community taking this stand and a cross section of forces came out to protest the blatant racism of Arpaio.

While the turnout for the march was large, we have to say that it had to do with the "message" given, as the "aim" of the event was very broad, non-threatening and liberal in character. Most of the signs and propaganda pointed to a "human rights march" to "stop the hate" vs. a militant struggle for self-determination.



Unión del Barrio delegation at Phoenix march with Mexican Flag. Photo by B. McCobbin 1/16/10

While we recognize that the "human rights" aspect is important and we have to point out Arpaio and others for their Nazi tactics, more importantly, we must understand that the "human rights" contradiction is concentrated in our status as a colonized people who are oppressed on land that is ours. This, in the future, must be brought out to the forefront.

THERE WAS A SPIRIT OF STRUGGLE WITHIN THE RANKS OF THE MARCHERS

It was inspiring to see all the Raza marching through a town like Phoenix, where the gringo rednecks shove their racism down everyone's throat. To see that many progressive Raza, especially youth, standing up to these attacks was uplifting. To hear the chants and the energy in the marcha was something that shows that our gente cannot be stopped even in the worst conditions.

It was a combative ambiente, where the mood during the marcha was Raza, ready to take to the streets and struggle. You could feel the indignation and the desire to run the pigs out of our neighborhoods. As marched through the main barrios of the city and Mexicanos came out of their houses and stores to support us and cheered us on or joined the marcha. There was a great spirit of struggle in the ranks of the marcha, and the participants ranged from those who had never been to

an action to those who had been in struggle for many years.

POLICE ATTACK SOME MARCHERS

A particular incident took place during the march that was highly played up in the media. A group of anarchists, mostly white, were present at the march and they had a different tenor (vocally, more militant) than others. However, this does not, in ANY way, justify the attitude and the attacks by the Phoenix police who, marcha organizers tried to tell us were "our friends"; something the organizers would do whenever the people denounced the police and their role as being the same as the migra. The Phoenix PD attacked the group of anarchists who supposedly "assaulted" the police. What really happened was that the Police on horses, with no justification, plunged into the crowd and then shot pepper spray into the anarchist sector of the crowd, hitting a two year old in the face with pepper spray.

This act of brutality by these pigs and the show of force they made (wielding billy clubs, provoking the crowd, videotaping, etc.) was a clear attempt to intimidate us it showed that the Police in this capitalist-colonial society protects white power and private property, and they are clearly NOT OUR FRIENDS. We must struggle against the idea that they are "ok" when it rears its head.

The march shows that more discussions within the movement and political struggle must continue. In response to oppression and repression, the gente are hungering for leadership and a political alternative. We have to work to define the conditions we face and form audacious strategies to combating them, a situation that the various social movements have yet to articulate or materialize. It should not be seen as being "disunited" when we struggle politically or raise contradictions when we see them. Rather it must be taken as a necessary step in political struggle for improving important actions that moves a movement forward.

NO MEXICAN FLAGS ALLOWED, AND OTHER CONTRADICTIONS

One of the things that must be brought up here is the "no national flags" (which really means no Mexican flags) admonition by the organizers of the march. The reason given was that the march was not about "patriotism", but rather human rights. On the day of

IN THE FUTURE WE WILL SEE MORE REPRESSION AND MORE RESISTANCE



Police, who some organizers called “friends”, in riot gear ready to attack marchers. Phoenix. AP foto 1/16/10

the marcha, the Unión del Barrio delegation was one of the few that carried a Mexican flag, but there were scores of others carrying American flags. The fact is that the right to hold the Mexican flag and express ourselves on our own land is a fundamental human right. It cannot be conceded; which is why Unión del Barrio carried the flag.

We have said this before and will say it again: we can sing the US National anthem (either in English or Spanish), wrap ourselves in the Stars and Stripes, dress up like Uncle Sam and the Statue of Liberty if we want, but as long as we are a brown indigenous people and live on land that was stolen from us, the system and its racist “deputies” will continue to hate us and try to kill, brutalize, incarcerate and humiliate us. The only solution is to organize in our own defense.

In spite of some of the contradictions that we had with the organizers of the march, such as the question of carrying the Mexican flags - which we raised to the organizers during their visit to San Diego- Unión del Barrio attended the marcha because of the importance of confronting fascist pigs like Arpaio and standing up to the attacks on our people.

It is clear to us that the government is not going to be satisfied with anything less than beating us down and

killing and deporting as many of us as possible. The very defense and survival of our people in the face of this aggression demands that all participate in pro-human rights actions.

CREATE A UNITED FRONT BASED ON PRINCIPLES

The Unión was also at the march to give its perspective and analysis of how it sees the struggle and to present its thoughts on what Raza liberation is and how it is achieved. While Unión members were not there as “speakers”, it did bring over 300 copies of La Verdad- our organizational newspaper- which were distributed. La Verdad got positive feedback from Raza of Arizona. Many, or most, were being exposed to liberation politics and to Unión del Barrio for the first time ever.



In true white supremacy fashion, Pig-Sheriff Joe Arpaio continues the legacy of the KKK.

While we believe in a united front against fascism and racism, Unión also understand that unity must not be simply for the sake of unity, and serious dialogue must take place as to the direction those organizations and non-profits are pushing the righteous anger of our people towards. Unity must be based on principle at all times.

A disappointment of the march was that in a lot of ways, there was no political education given

by the organizers that could have led to a deeper understanding and organized the gente beyond the one march action. We need to measure success not only in terms of numbers or quantity, but also of consciousness raising and building a movement for Raza Self-determination. This marcha had the potential to do this, but the line that was given was “we are immigrants”, “sheriff Joe, don’t be mean”, “we are human” – instead of a real call to arms that puts the blame squarely on the US government for spawning Arpaio throughout its history and forming a concrete strategy to fight back. That is what will be needed sooner than later.

IN THE FUTURE WE WILL SEE MORE REPRESSION AND MORE RESISTANCE

In the future will see more repression and more fascist tactics as this decaying capitalist system struggles to keep itself afloat. We also know, however, that there is the potential for struggle with multiple fronts of struggle and the potential for a mass movement that certainly will rise to that challenge. For this reason, we need a revolutionary party that can direct and lead that struggle that is sure to come.

For organizations like Union del Barrio, this means being disciplined and that its cadre make the sacrifices necessary to be prepared and up to the challenge.

¡Unidos Venceremos!



Neo-colonialist “Hispanic” police confronts protestor. Phoenix. AP photo 1/16/10

CONCIENTIZACIÓN • ORGANIZACIÓN • ACCIÓN • LIBERACIÓN

Raza Self-Determination & Mexican Liberation

Unión del Barrio believes that Mexicanas and Mexicanos living both in México and in the “Southwest United States” suffer from political, economic and social insecurity because the United States Government stole our land in 1848.

Since that year our people have been the victims of a system which exploits our labor, keeps a disproportionate number of our people in prisons, stereotypes us through the media, falsifies our history, denies us a relevant/productive education and militarizes the imposed border in order to keep out the very same people from which Aztlán (northern México) was stolen.

We recognize California, Colorado, Arizona, Tejas, Utah, Nuevo México, and Nevada as constituting Mexico Ocupado. It is a geographical and political territory belonging to the Mexicano people. These

lands were taken by armed force by the U.S. government, during the Mexican-U.S. war of 1846-1848.

We believe that Mexicanos in Aztlán-México Ocupado must self-determine our own destiny. The means to this end is the advancement of Mexicano self-determination. Mexicano self-determination is best defined as the power to:

1. Collectively interpret our history
2. Economically control our destiny
3. Advancing our social development by self directing our culture education and language
4. Independently develop the content, character and direction of our political orientation
5. Controlling the political institutions that make the laws that govern us

We recognize that the absolute and unequivocal liberation of Mexicana women is a fundamental component of our struggle for liberation as a people. Fundamental to any liberation organization

and pro-independence conscious movement is the absolute political, social and economic equality between men and women.

JOIN UNIÓN DEL BARRIO!

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