



Free Food First Step Toward Freedom

by *Darby Hickey, Boston IMC*

Hear the word 'protestor' and images of people peeling turnips and washing dishes don't spring to mind. Yet this is precisely the kind of 'direct action' that some folks in Quebec City undertook. For those who might doubt the significance of this activity: over 3,000 people were fed each day, according to Greg of the Winnipeg Free Kitchen.

Without the efforts of the Winnipeg Free Kitchen, and People's Potato from Montreal, the thousands of protestors gathered in Quebec would have been hard-pressed to keep well-fed during the protests. At Îlot Fleuri, where Winnipeg Free Kitchen served, the meals were the center of a whole area of festivities, all part of the Carnival Against Capitalism. "There's good energy here," said Jess, while chopping carrots. She and two friends went to Quebec with the specific mission of serving the cause in this manner. For them, it was a way to contribute in a safe and enjoyable environment, as well as be in solidarity with the other protestors. That's a feeling shared by many of the people in the core group of the Free Kitchen, who had been planning for a month and a half in advance of the trip. Impressive as the commitment of the core group was, their efforts wouldn't have been enough without the donations of demonstrators and citizens of Quebec, who gave everything from free water to food to money to time.

Aside from people not washing their own dishes,

annoying as that was, the two main problems were getting water, and the infiltration of teargas into the area, despite its distance from the main areas of confrontation.

There are other, more abstract, difficulties that the Kitchen faced. One such was criticism, such as the dismissal of the efforts of those providing the meals as "not really doing anything." This kind of delegitimization bothered those involved. Simply supplying food to thousands of protestors is a massive task, and on top of that the Free Kitchen had supplies of vinegar and water for protestors affected by teargas and even sent teams into the field to help folks.

But the deeper impli-

cations of considering the altercations with the police as 'more important' than cooking were apparent to many who volunteered in the kitchen. As Jess says, "typical gender roles have been reproduced one hundred percent here." While Jess and others working with her were generally aware of these issues, Chris, one of a few male volunteers, said "I didn't think about that." Several different volunteers and some members of the core group agreed that most of the volunteers who helped out in the kitchen were women -- about ninety percent, according to Karen. Most involved also agreed that when men did volunteer, they did one-time jobs, like washing a pot or carrying

Bombspotting III: more than 1500 activist on NATO Base in Belgium

by *Mara, Belgium IMC*

On April 16, more than 1500 people were on the Nato base in Kleine Brogel in Belgium. 800 people actually climbed over the fences - all were arrested.

The activists want to oppose against the nuclear arms who are still in Europe. In Kleine Brogel, there are ten B61 missiles. The Belgian state does not formally confirm the presence of these weapons and don't dare to, because it's against an international law of Den Hague (since '96). Since then, there have been several civil inspections on several military bases.

Since the presence of these bombs are illegal, by these inspections the activists want to show that it is their duty to reveal all this.

This day, there was a huge presence. Some 1500 people from all over Belgium (but also from Finland and France) were present. (Last year, there were 100 people.)

800 people dared to climb over the fences of this severely protected military base.

Although it was a very peaceful action, some people were beaten up. Seven people were isolated from the rest of the group.

Argentinean Judiciary Penalizes Protestors

A summarized translation of an article from Argentina IMC by Darby Hickey

Yesterday a court in Mar de Plata condemned Emilio Ali to five and a half years in prison for assault and aggravated assault. Emilio is an unemployed youth who celebrated his 25th birthday in a maximum-security prison, where he's been incarcerated for the past ten months. The crime for which he's being sentenced consists of participating in a protest during a national work stoppage last May fifth, demanding that the supermarket Tia give bags of food to the unemployed and allow its workers to participate in the strike.

The Argentinean judiciary, which has the dubious merit of having left thousands of genocidal killers free and of protecting politicians accused of everything from corruption to arms smuggling, acted with particular rapidity and rage against this young troublemaker.

In a country consumed in a profound economic and political crisis, where announcements of fiscal adjustments alternate with national strikes and a plethora of worker conflicts, such as those in Zanon, Firestone, and Recali y Agropa, a sentence of this type can be used as a legal

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from first page:

precedent to condemn present and future social protests.

According to Victor de Genaro, leader of the CTA (an organization which Emilio was a part of) the sentence "is truly a shame; there is absolutely no basis on which to sentence Ali. In this country,

the criminals are free and those comrades who struggle go to jail. It's clearly a message to the people that they should stay in their homes." Members of the coordinating committee for

Ali,s liberty declared that the tribunal had already made a decision, and that the testimonies of the employees at Tia were relegated to „inconveniences% in the path of the final decision. The Ce.Pro.D.H., for their part, said in a press release that they considered the sentence "a clear infringement on the liberty of democratic protest and a direct attack on organizations of workers, whether employed or unemployed."

Tensions Increase in Bolivia

This article is a summary and translation of articles on the Argentina IMC website

Over the past month the temperatures in the Bolivian jungle have risen, as has the level of conflict between the people and the government. Over 7,000 soldiers and police have been deployed in the various zones where unions, peasants and indigenous groups have been on strike and blockaded the main roadways of the country.

According to the latest polls 86% of Bolivians don't approve of Hugo Banzer,s (head of the government) actions, while 40% think the government reactions should cease immediately. As of Friday April 27th, not only were the roads in about eight different districts paralyzed due to the transportation strike and blockades set up by the protestors, but the Confederation of Health Workers, as well as workers in various other sectors of the economy, had gone on strike. In their efforts to re-open the roads, government forces have used teargas and other techniques, the results of which have included the gassing of a school full of children.

On May first a continget of teachers from cities and the countryside, as well as

delegations of workers in the manufacturing, mining, construction and other sectors, will participate in a march which will begin in Oruro, to pay homage to the martyrs of Massacre of Chicago. This comes after groups of peasants and coca growers marched for fourteen days to the capital, to demand changes in government policies. According to peasant organizations, blockades of the highways are set to last 90 days after May first. These steps are being taken in order to force the government to revise article 55 of law 21060, to increase salaries by fifty percent, return private companies to the state, and create jobs, among other things.

At least two protestors have been killed and an unknown number detained since the confrontations began.

IMC in Free Speech Battle Following FBI/ Secret Service Visit

On Saturday, April 21, as tens of thousands demonstrated against the FTAA in the streets of Quebec City, the IMC in Seattle was served with a sealed court order by two FBI agents and an agent of the US Secret Service. The terms of the sealed order prevented IMC volunteers from publicizing its terms. This morning, the gag order was lifted, enabling the IMC to finally break its silence about these events, which Lee Tien of the Electronic Frontier Foundation characterized as "a threat to free speech, free association, and privacy."

from first page:

water, while women took on ongoing tasks which would last for hours. These observations show that even within the Kitchen different tasks were gender-laden It's not even as simple as 'women in the kitchen, men in the field,' nor is it a matter of counting bodies. For those involved in discussions like these, the important thing is to bring such issues out into the open and strive to alter gender roles in activism as a whole.

As Pancho said, while slicing beets, "we're all eating here, we should all pitch in." And even doing the kitchen work was not without its risks, despite Devon's statement that, "we

knew we wanted to contribute to the effort, but in a way that would keep us clear of any risk of arrest." On Sunday April 22nd, while packing up the kitchen, four of the members of the Winnipeg Free Kitchen were arrested, and police destroyed the remaining food. All difficulties aside, the Winnipeg Free Kitchen performed an excellent service, as important to the protestors as any breach in the wall, even if they didn't get much acclaim. But all involved seemed in consensus that accolades are nothing compared to knowing that you have just satisfied the hunger of those struggling against oppression.

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