

Le Frigo Vert: Electronic Newsletter, March 2008

This once-monthly digest consists of a compendium of Frigo collective news, social justice events, calls to action, healthy recipes, and articles related to Le Frigo Vert's social justice and anti-oppression mandate.

The purpose is to better inform and interact with Frigo Vert members. It is an attempt to better explain changes we make to the organization and to directly link Frigo members with local grassroots struggles.

If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please email: lefrigovert@resist.ca

Messages in this Digest:

1. Le Frigo Vert Updates/Events
2. Food Politics: Environmental Racism and the PIC: New Forms of Environmental Racism
3. Featured Anti-Oppression Issue: Challenging Remedies
4. Recipes: A Complete Gluten-Free Meal
5. Social Justice Calendar

1. Le Frigo Vert Updates/Events

Hello everyone!

Welcome to Le Frigo Vert's March newsletter!

Cue musical interlude, to the tune of 'Love is in the Air'

Spring is in the air
(doo dee doo dee do de do)
Spring is in the air
(doo dee doo dee do de do)

... ok, maybe not quite yet. But the days are getting longer, the birdies are getting noisier, the dog is preparing to shed his or her coat all over the living room. We're entering the slushy state of almost-almost-spring.

At Le Frigo Vert, it's been a veritable beehive of activity all winter long, and it's not stopping now. If you put on your duckboots or thigh-high galoshes and slip 'n slide over here, you'll find lots of wonderful products, people, and events to help you have mad fun amid the March madness.

A sampling of these wonderful things includes:

1) Bread. Fresh bread and bagels. Luscious fresh bread and bagels made with a different kind of flour or spices, every day. Plus incredible new VEGAN PIZZAS! Lunch is looking pretty good-- that is, if you get one before they're all gone. We're not kidding... they're going faster than a 50 cent samosa.

2) Peach soy yogurt, with bits of real peach. Mmmm....

Read on below for more information about Frigo workshops and special events!

But before we continue, there's a PSA announcement:

We'd like to take this opportunity to remind you that once you and Dolly have poured yourselves a cup of ambition, snagged a piece of vegan banana bread and moseyed up to the counter, please have your Frigo membership card ready so that we don't have to charge you the 20% extra we do for non-members.

Also, if you're a Concordia student who hasn't yet gotten an official Frigo membership card, please print off a proof of tuition payment from your MyConcordia portal and bring it in. The card is free, and you'll be helping us keep our membership records up to date!

Thanks!

2. Food Politics

Environmental Racism and the PIC: New Forms of Environmental Racism

In the last 20 years the United States has built more prisons than any country during any period in history. The cost of the US criminal justice system now runs to \$147 billion per year. But the financial costs are only part of the story. There are other costs not so easily seen, costs passed on to those least able to pay them-the poor rural towns in which most prisons are built and the poor urban communities from which most prisoners are sent. Because the costs of the current prison expansion are being passed to the poor, and especially to people of color, we say that prisons are examples of economic injustice and environmental racism.

We hope this pamphlet raises questions for you about how the prison system really works. We encourage you to ask more questions. If we can help answer any questions or help you to educate others, our phones & emails are on the back page.

-- Critical Resistance & California Prison Moratorium Project--

WHAT ARE ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE?

Environmental racism is racial discrimination in environmental policy making, selective enforcement of environmental laws, and the targeting of communities of color for environmentally disastrous land uses, such as toxic waste disposal sites or other polluting industries. Communities of color and poor communities bear an unequal and unfair number of environmentally destructive land uses, land uses that take from the community but don't give back to it.

A 1987 study by the United Church of Christ*, for example, found that of 15 million Latinos living in the U.S., 8 million lived in communities with one or more licensed toxic waste sites. The environmental justice movement seeks to end such environmental and economic injustices by eliminating the siting of environmentally toxic facilities anywhere.

WHERE ARE PRISONS LOCATED TODAY?

Throughout the nation nearly all prisons - just like other more traditional forms of environmental racism - are sited in poor, rural communities on a hollow promise of jobs and economic prosperity. Many of these

communities are also communities of color. In California, for example, the vast majority of new prisons have been sited on thousands of acres of what was farmland in the Central Valley. These communities are targeted for prisons much as similar communities are targeted for other environmentally disastrous industries.

A 1984 report** on the siting of hazardous waste incinerators, for example, concluded that communities that would offer the least resistance to the incinerators were small, rural towns whose residents were poor, majority Catholic with high school educations or less and who worked in jobs like mining, timber or agriculture. California's prison towns fit this profile precisely.

HOW ARE PRISONS SITED?

As is often the case with other environmentally disastrous land uses, communities are shut out of the public review of proposed prison sites. According to the Encyclopedia of American Prisons***, "premature disclosure" makes siting a prison difficult because the public might find out before the deal is set. Not surprisingly, notice of any public hearing is poor, while intimidation by those pushing for the prison is great.

Another barrier to community participation arises because environmental review documents are provided only in English. In Mendota, California for example, the Federal Bureau of Prisons (FBoP) wants to build a five prison complex. The FBoP prepared a 1000-page Environmental Impact Statement in English. According to the Bureau of the Census, 86% of Mendota residents speak "a language other than English" at home. When pressed to translate the 1000-page document into Spanish, the FBoP made the outrageous claim that translation was not possible because the EIS contained "scientific" and "technical" terms. Finally, the FBoP produced an insulting 10-page summary in Spanish.

The environmental justice movement insists that the political process be open and democratic, so that all who might be affected by a project have the information and access to participate in making decisions.

WHAT ARE THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF PRISONS?

Public officials often portray prisons as "clean industries" and promise hundreds of decent jobs to economically desperate towns. In fact, the effects of prisons are almost entirely negative.

They suck up scarce local resources such as water; they require towns to pay for roads, sewers & utilities; they generate tens of thousands of miles of commuting pollution, often in the most polluted parts of the state; they take irreplaceable land out of any productive use, wasting valuable public resources for nothing but holding people in cages.

They give almost nothing back to their host communities. Most prison employees don't come from the host town nor do they move there after being hired; they commute dozens of miles each way. Neither the prison nor its employees spend much money in the town, so local businesses don't benefit.

Despite well known and proven alternatives, prisons take thousands of people out of their communities and families, further impoverishing already hard-hit urban areas. In the communities whose members make up the majority of the prison population, families are destroyed and local businesses lose customers and employees. Prisons are environmental & social disasters for the communities from which prisoners come and for the towns in which prisons are built.

Critical Resistance
1212 Broadway Suite 1400
Oakland, CA 94612

(510) 444-0484
fax: 510-444-2177
crnational@criticalresistance.org
www.criticalresistance.org

California Prison Moratorium Project
PO Box 339
Berkley, CA 94701
(510) 893-4648 ext. 202
califpmp@igc.org

* Toxic Wastes and Race in the United States; United Church of Christ Commission for Racial Justice; 1987. **Political Difficulties Facing Waste-to-Energy Conversion Plant Siting (also known as the Cerrill Report); Cerrill Associates for the California Waste Management Board; 1984 ***Encyclopedia of American Prisons; "Site Selection & Construction" p.447; 1996.

3. Featured Anti-Oppression Issue

Challenging Remedies

- By Tamara Filyavich

Despite the overwhelming presence of the organic food industry and the growing popularity of everything green, the times we live in are still pretty unhealthy. A lot of what is offered on the market is in no way accessible to those without high revenues or is often unconcerned with the social, economic and political impact that these products have on the world.

This applies to health products as much as it does to everything else in the world of consumerism. We see a lot of different trends and sales campaigns for this or that miracle cure, but almost no discussion of health issues and especially no rigorous political analysis of different tactics used to take care of our health. Products such as sleeping aids, laxatives, and antibiotics have their merits. However, they tend to be overused or misused, they pollute the environment when they are discarded back into nature, and they also cause a great deal of health problems while attempting to solve others.

Meanwhile, nature has always offered much of what we need to heal ourselves. As a general rule, people still tend to trust products that most of the time serve mainly the financial interests of a few giants of the pharmaceutical industry. Or they simply don't have access to any alternative. For over the millennia, plants and bodywork have helped to heal humanity not only without many of the horrible side effects that pharmaceuticals exhibit, but also with autonomous action on the part of the so-called patients themselves. This has required staying informed and committed to preventing a lot of what is now incurable for this civilization.

We can ask ourselves how in the last few hundred years did the world of healing become monopolized by what we know now as the institution of modern medicine. How did we ever surrender all the knowledge of our bodies and their needs to the hands of a few institutional experts? The short answer: most knowledge and practices were methodically and violently usurped with the rise of capitalism in western europe and north america and then the tendency was imposed, just as violently, in many other parts of the world.

But let's elaborate a little by looking back. In the 15th century, herbalists and midwives were considered challenging indeed. There is not enough room here to look at the topic of witch-hunts at large; you can read up on it as a few resources begin to be available. But the destruction of women and their traditional practices, amongst which we find medicine, helped to achieve the monopolisation of medicine by governments and other institutions, as well as to consolidate the early stages of nation-state building as we know it. There is also not enough space here to talk about the conquest of the Americas, but the destruction of indigenous peoples and their traditional practices, as well as slavery and the destruction of traditional practices of the enslaved peoples also achieved the same goal. Just a measly hundred years ago medical monopolists were still putting up with what remained of house hold remedies and health care practitioners like midwives, especially in poor, working class and immigrant communities if we look at North America. The reason for this was mainly because most of the knowledge of natural healing had already been lost in the settler society and didn't represent a challenge to the medical profession like it did in 15th century. Hence, they tolerated herbalists and midwives for the time being, especially to take care of those with little buying power. Soon enough these were outlawed as well.

So there we have it. Now what?

Far be it for me to argue against the existence of many techniques in modern medicine and what they can achieve on the individual level for people. Antibiotics, open heart surgeries, clinical abortions, sex change therapies, limb replacements, C-sections and many others can be absolutely essential and life saving services. The point being made is that problems start when ALL preventative and healing initiatives are handed over to the institutions and pharmaceuticals. Herbal medicine and other alternative healing practices are long-term strategies that take devotion, discipline and an insatiable hunger for justice. So in honor of those who devoted their lives and often paid with their lives for staying true to their traditions, let's have a quick look at what we can do for ourselves and our communities today.

* if you have the time and possibility don't shop, grow things; even a few boxes of dirt in your apartment can be a healing garden. Community gardening is another option.

* if you shop, go for what's most effective, necessary, accessible and safe for you. The least something is transformed the better (does not apply to homeopathic products that are quite effective and safe as well)

* don't forget to eat and stay active

* take care of other people, share knowledge and resources.

For more information on herbs and nutrition inquire at Le Frigo Vert and the following addresses:

<http://www.umm.edu/altmed/>

<http://www.herbmed.org>

<http://www.holisticmed.com/www/herbdb.html>

<http://earthnotes.tripod.com/ckbkmenu.htm>

4. Recipes

A Complete Gluten-Free Meal

Lentil Crumble

1/2 cup dry lentils

1 can garbonzo beans (chick peas) (drained)
4 cloves garlic, chopped
1/2 cup sweet onion, chopped
2 eggs
1/2 cup parsley, rough chop
1 tsp cumin
1 tsp coriander
1/2 cup crushed olives (pitted Kalamata are best, but green olives tonight are also delicious)
4 tbsp olive oil

Cook lentils. Drain any residual water and set aside.

In a blender or food processor, mix garbonzo beans, parsley, eggs, cumin, and coriander until smooth.

Combine with lentils.

In a frying pan, heat olive oil and saute onions and garlic until soft and translucent. Pour lentil mixture into frying pan, stir to evenly distribute onions and garlic, then pan fry until brown, stir and brown until crumbly and chunky. Do not allow it to burn.

Toss in crushed olives and mix before serving

Serve on a bed of zucchini salad with a dollop of cucumber yogurt and olives.

Zucchini salad

1 medium zucchini, peeled into thin strips
4 tbsp lemon juice
2 tbsp olive oil
1/4 cup sweet onion, thin sliced
1/4 cup crumbled feta cheese
salt & pepper to taste

In a serving bowl, whisk olive oil and lemon juice together until well blended. Add salt and pepper. Toss in zucchini and onions. Crumble cheese on top.

Cucumber Yogurt

2 cups plain yogurt
1 1/2 cucumbers, seeded and finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1/4 cup fresh mint, chopped

Combine ingredients and set aside to allow flavours to combine. The longer the better. Add a little salt or lemon juice to kick up the flavour.

The whole meal:

On a plate, dish up a helping of the zucchini salad in the center, then top with lentil crumble. Add a large spoon full of cucumber yogurt right on top.

Enjoy!

5. Social Justice Calendar

March Newsletter Events

Friday March 7th, 8PM

PUNK SHOW AGAINST POLICE BRUTALITY

with : Joyfull Bullets, Tempete, Brasse Camarades, CFC + Videos (March 15, and Resistance at CEGEP du Vieux-Montreal)

@ Katakombes (1222 St-Laurent) donation 5-10\$

Saturday March 8th, 12pm (noon)

DEMONSTRATION: Women Take Back the Streets!

Organized by the March 8th Committee of Women of Diverse Origins

**Child-friendly demonstration

**WE ENCOURAGE MEN TO JOIN US IN SOLIDARITY!

@ Coin Queen Mary & Decelles, (métro Côte des Neiges), autobus 165,166

On March 8th, we continue the struggle against deportations and detentions, gender violence, police brutality, criminalization, poverty, precarious status, racial profiling, sexist and racist immigration policies and war.

Cultural performance and food following the march.

Information: comite8mars@gmail.com

Every year in Montreal - like in many other places across the globe, we take to the streets to denounce patriarchy and sexism and to protest against colonialism, imperialism, capitalism, racism, and fundamentalism as systems of domination that victimize us and our sisters globally by enforcing and reinforcing violence against women. On March 8th, we continue the struggle against deportations and detentions, gender violence, police brutality, criminalization, poverty, precarious status, racial profiling, sexist and racist immigration policies and war.

Every year, as we march down the streets of Montreal, we refuse to be infantilized or objectified by the state and its patriarchal institutions. We assert our power to fight for our futures and determine our destinies, as full subjects of our own liberation. We also take to the streets to celebrate and stand in solidarity with the daily struggles of our sisters, here on occupied Indigenous land and throughout the Global South.

This year, we will remember the violence perpetrated by the Montreal police against women and their allies during the 2007 International Women's day demonstration. Last year's police attack on women is testament to the patriarchal violence used by the state to control and criminalize women's fight for true justice and dignity. We refuse to be afraid, and this year again, we will take back the streets!

**** ACCOMMODATE THIS! ****

A series of anti-racist workshops, discussions and events. Part of the national week of action against racism. French/English translation available. Free childcare available.

Monday March 10th, 6PM

Intersections: Anti-Racism and Feminism

@ UQAM, V Pavillion, Room 1430; 209, Ste-Catherine East (Metro: Berri-UQAM)

Speakers: Alia Al-Saji; Gada Mahrouse; No One Is Illegal –Montreal; Nesrine Bessaih; Simone de Beauvoir Institute

Saturday March 15th, 1PM

Gender, Race and Religious Identity

@ Centre des Femmes d'Ici et d'Ailleurs; 8043 St-Hubert (Metro: Jarry)

* Note: this workshop is open to women identifying people only. Racialized and migrant women are encouraged to attend.

Sunday March 16th, 2PM

Fighting State and Interpersonal Gender Violence

@ Parc Extension Community Center; 2nd floor, Room 9; 419 St Roch St. (Metro: Parc)

-- Please RSVP for the workshops at : (514) 398-3323 or email:

noii-montreal@resist.ca, https://mail.resist.ca/src/compose.php?send_to=noii-montreal%40resist.ca

Monday, March 10th, 6:30pm

Opening the Doors to Rights for Live-In Caregivers: A Critical Discussion about Canada's Live In Caregiver Program. J

oin us for a panel discussion, followed by food and drinks.

Hosted by: Radlaw, Human Rights Working Group (Immigration Portfolio) & Women's Caucus (McGill Law Faculty Working Groups). Panellists include: Delia De Veyra: PINAY, The Filipino Women's Organization in Quebec); Cecilia Dioxin: Phillipine Women's Centre; Abigail Bakan: Professor at Queen's University; and Walter Chi-Yan Tom: Montreal Immigration Lawyer

@ Moot Court, Faculty of Law, 3644 Rue Peel

Tuesday March 11th, 7PM

WORKSHOPS ON OUR RIGHTS AND RECOURSES AGAINST POLICE ABUSE

What are our rights, who to contest a ticket, how and why file a complaint in police ethics.

@ 1710 Beaudry (Beaudry metro)

Wednesday March 12th, 7PM

WORKSHOP ON RESISTANCE AGAINST SOCIAL CLEANSING

State of the situation, criminalization of homeless people as a tool of social control, resistance by and for the marginals.

@ 1710 Beaudry (Beaudry metro)

Thursday March 13th, 7PM

WORKSHOP ON COPWATCH

Examples of patrols of surveillance of the cops around the world, positive and negative impacts of copwatch.

@ 1710 Beaudry (Beaudry metro)

Saturday March 15th, 3PM

DEMO FOR THE 12th INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST POLICE BRUTALITY!

Against police killings, impunity, social cleansing, racial profiling, colonialism and political repression!

Read the callout for March 15, 2008 : <http://www.cmaq.net/en/node/29249>

@ Berri Square (Berri metro)

More info: Collective Opposed to Police Brutality (COBP)

cobp@hotmail.com 514-395-9691 <http://cobp-mtl.ath.cx/>

Thursday March 20th

LAUNCH OF THE “ACCOMMODATE THIS! REPORT” AND COMMUNITY FORUM

The “Accommodate this! report “ consists of a collection of testimonies, articles, analysis, letters, discussions, narratives and more, recording the voices of migrant and racialized communities speaking out against racism, sexism and all forms of marginalization. Counter to the Bouchard Taylor report, it goes beyond the flawed and restrictive “debate” on reasonable accommodation to talk about the real issues that affect our communities. The “Accommodate this! report” will be launched during a community forum night in Montreal.

@ lab.synthese, 435 beaubien west, rm 200 (Metro: Parc or Bus 80 Parc)

Dinner, Presentations and Live Performances from local artists.

**Featuring: photos and video clips from the “Accommodate this! report”; testimonies and presentations; performances by Kalmunity Vibe Collective, Île City, spoken word artists 23 (tu-three) and Aliah, and more!