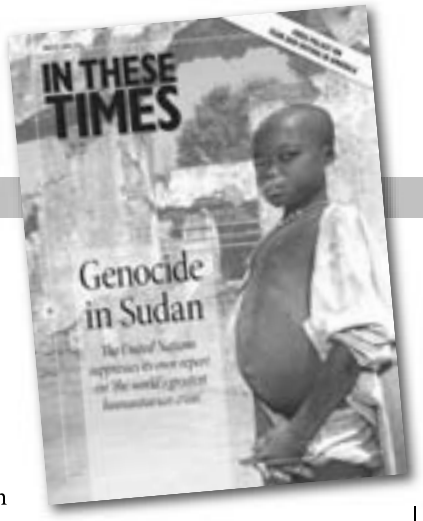
Letters



In The Pink

Imagine my surprise when unsuspectingly perusing the progressive magazine section of my favorite San Francisco indy bookstore, I came across *In These Times* and found my chanting, pink-beehive-and-rhinestone-sunglasses-wearing self on the cover of your May 10 issue. That was me leading chants at the Schwarzenegger inauguration, dressed in a stained Goodwill-gotten pink ball gown and sash to give the day the respect it was due.

Seeing as how the issue was pink and the national organizer was on the cover, I expected some story or blurb about CodePink: Women for Peace. Alas, nary a word. You missed a great opportunity to include/highlight/mention CodePink in your activism issue, as we are currently one of the most visible, in-the-news, fun, direct-action peace groups out there. Check us out at: www.codepinkalert.org.

Ah well, at least I'm finally the glamorous Cover Girl that Mom always hoped I'd be.

Carol Norris
National Organizer
CodePink: Women for Peace
San Francisco

Kudos to Muwakkil, McKinney

Good for Salim Muwakkil ("McKinney Rises Again," May 31)! Many authors tread carefully, if at all, when the topic approaches criticism of Israel or writing about those who do. I was heartened to read that neither he nor Cynthia McKinney has lost the nerve to challenge White House and AIPAC (American Israel Public Affairs Committee) power.

Too many times, the ABP (Anything But Palestine) rule applies in newspapers, magazines, and yes, even in peace groups. To my knowledge, the only presidential aspirant who supports suspending U.S. military aid to Israel is David Cobb (Greens). Otherwise, silence abounds. Hello, Ralph?

Averting our eyes from the connection between the occupation of Iraq and the occupation of Palestine will not bring justice nor produce a lasting peace. Only a continued focus —illuminated by Muwakkil and McKinney—can provide the key to dissolving the harmful power structures in the Middle East.

Henry Herskovitz
Ann Arbor, Mich.

History Hijacked?

Contrary to Joel Bleifuss' "First Stone" article ("The Constitution Hijacked," May 31), the U.S. Supreme Court, in the 1886 case *Santa Clara County v. Southern Pacific Railroad*, did not define corporations as "persons." No such statement appears in the Court's ruling or in the written majority opinion or concurring opinions.

The statement on which this belief is based was made by the court reporter covering the case. He included it in the introductory notes to the case that he wrote and supplied to the private-sector publishing company that documented the Court's cases. His action, on the face of it, seems inexplicable. The chief justice had already advised both counsels that the constitutional question of corporate personhood had not been discussed during the Court's deliberations, because the justices had easily reached their decision on the basis of technical aspects of the county's tax assessment procedure, which was the subject of the litigation from the outset.

Some time later the reporter wrote to the chief justice asking whether he (the reporter) had erred. The chief justice responded, saying again that the Court had not discussed that issue.

The misrepresentation that has taken place may have gained further impetus from the chief justice's remark to the counsels that the justices did believe in corporate personhood. That issue had been raised by Southern Pacific's counsel. But since this statement does not appear in the ruling or the opinions, it has no legal or constitutional status. In fact, the chief justice emphasized that the issue was not part of the case and he did not want it discussed.

For more extensive and detailed information see Thom Hartmann's book *Unequal Protection* published in 2002 by Rodale and distributed by St. Martin's Press.

Richard Deutsch
Sarasota, Fla.

www.inthesetimes.com

DISCUSSION

As I read this article, I'm broadcasting an episode of "Becker" in my station's control room. This job pays 75 cents less an hour than what I was making at age 21.

Others in my same field have given up and are now working as prison guards.

Imagine my seeing this article and being able to relate—the jobs just aren't there. My friend and 20-year veteran of the Air Force also is working as a prison guard. You'd think someone with so much time and supposedly doing such a service for "freedom" would be able to find a better job.

Join the debate at the forum for "George's Kids."

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On Second Thought...

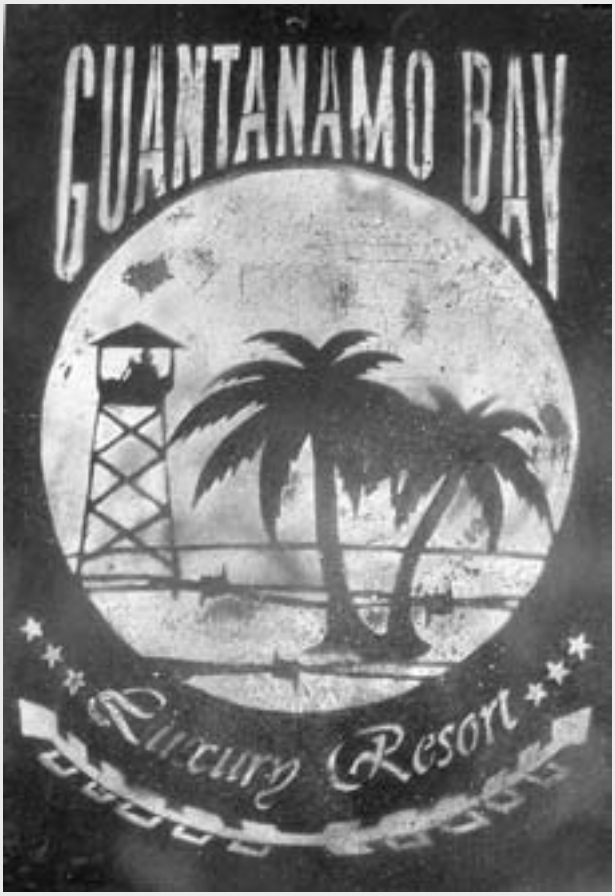
Ian Williams condemns Chalmers Johnson for referring to the "elected" Sandinista government, as—according to Williams—"they lost the only [election] they held" ("The Sorrows of Dogma," May 31). Williams seems to have remembered 1990 but lost 1984 down the memory hole. That year about three-quarters of the electorate turned out, with 67 percent voting for the Sandinistas.

Perhaps Williams believes the 1984 election was fraudulent—despite the 400 independent foreign observers who found otherwise—but even if so, that's no basis for declaring it nonexistent.

Hank Bromley
Buffalo, N.Y.

IAN WILLIAMS RESPONDS

I was wrong! Several readers who otherwise applauded the review wrote to correct me on this point. The runup to the election left much to be desired—and the results were indeed challenged—but a number of people who were there at the time have persuaded me that I should really withdraw that statement. The Sandinistas, as their subsequent careers show, were not without sin, but they did hold an election and win it—and of course, in geopolitical terms, they were indeed much more sinned against than sinners.



Paper Politics: A Show of Socially Engaged Printmaking

On display through June 30 in the offices of *In These Times*, this exhibit showcases print-based art that engages with the larger world via themes of social justice and global equity. The show is curated by Josh McPhee (www.justseeds.org) and the Street Art Workers collective.

For more information, e-mail tracy@inthesetimes.com.

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Frontline

8 Iowa bans thimerosal in vaccines.
10 California knows how to harrass activists.
11 In Person: Jane Roberts wants 34 million friends.

Agents in Arizona wait for transportation for two undocumented immigrants.

NORMA JEAN GARGASZ / GETTY IMAGES

Roundups Ratcheted

Undocumented immigrants arrested en masse in new Homeland Security program. *By R.M. Arrieta*

Federal agents are fanning out across the nation apprehending undocumented immigrants with a green light from the Bush administration.

Eight months ago Operation Endgame was placed on the fast track under the auspices of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE, the newly formed investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security (see "Detention Blues," p. 20) and one of three new bureaus of the former Immigration and Naturalization Service. With a bigger budget and more agents, the mandate is to catch some of the estimated 400,000 undocumented immigrants who have final removal orders and deport them.

"Right now we have more than 20,000 people in ICE custody nationwide," says ICE spokeswoman Virginia Kice.

Since March, civil rights groups nationwide have reported a marked increase in the questioning, detention and deportation of undocumented immigrants.

During a week in April, nearly 170 people were arrested on the East Coast following three flights from Los Angeles to Newark Liberty and JFK International airports.

In March, federal authorities picked up almost two dozen undocumented workers at a construction site in Dade City, Florida. Also in March, a weeklong crackdown in New England picked up 60 undocumented immigrants.

In Houston, Texas, rumors of mass immigration raids created such panic in Latino neighborhoods that "they stopped sending their kids to school, stopped attending church, stopped going to work, there was a dramatic shift in the traffic," says Arnaldo Garcia, of the National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights in Oakland, California.

According to civil rights organizations, agents have been employing a new tactic that targets one person

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