

Battle for Broad

Educational Supplement



For use with the film, *Battle for Broad*, produced by Skylight Pictures and the Media College of the University of the Poor

www.universityofthepoor.org

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Introduction:

The Republican National Committee chose to host the 2000 Republican National Convention in Philadelphia in July. Over 15,000 journalists were expected to be in town to cover the Convention and the Protests. The Kensington Welfare Rights Union (KWRU), a multi-racial organization of poor and homeless families based in North Philadelphia and the Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign (PPEHRC), a national network of over 50 grassroots anti-poverty organization decided to organize the March for Economic Human Rights on July 31st, the opening day of the Republican Convention. They planned to march down Broad Street through the heart of Philadelphia, to demand an end to poverty and homelessness in accordance with international human rights standards.

The march was an exciting highlight of the Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign's efforts to build a movement to end poverty in this country. Other activities have included hosting schools and educational conferences, documenting human rights violations, organizing door-to-door, and other protests and marches.

Battle for Broad is a documentary that captures the drama of the preparation for the march and the march itself, illustrating the strategy and tactics used by both the City of Philadelphia and the march organizers. This guide is meant to supplement the film with background readings, questions and activities to provide a richer educational experience. This guide can be used for community organizations, classrooms, union meetings, or any other group. It was developed by the University of the Poor, the educational arm of the Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign. For additional information and educational materials on related topics, contact the University of the Poor at info@universityofthepoor.org, or visit our website at www.universityofthepoor.org.

Cast of Characters

Cheri Honkala *Executive Director, Kensington Welfare Rights Union* A formerly homeless mother, Cheri helped found KWRU in 1991. She has been a national leader in organizing other poor and homeless people for over 15 years. She is the national spokesperson for the Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign. Cheri and her son were cut off welfare after the passing of the 1996 welfare reform bill.

Willie Baptist *Education Director, Kensington Welfare Rights Union* Willie Baptist is a formerly homeless father of two who has been active in developing other poor and homeless leaders and building a movement to end poverty for many years. Willie is respected across the country as an experienced teacher who has guided many groups and leaders in fighting to end poverty.

John Street *Mayor, City of Philadelphia* Street was narrowly elected mayor in the fall of '99 in the most expensive mayoral race in history. Only 42% of registered voters actually voted, and only 17% of registered voters in Kensington voted. Street, a Democrat, has come out strongly against city unions and groups like KWRU.

John Timoney *Police Commissioner, City of Philadelphia* Timoney was trained in New York City under Mayor Giuliani's controversial police department. Recruited by former Mayor Ed Rendell, Timoney is known for developing a sophisticated network of intelligence and control.

Kensington One of Philadelphia's neighborhoods, Kensington was once a national center for manufacturing and other industry. Over the past thirty years, that industry has totally abandoned the neighborhood, making Kensington the poorest area in the state of Pennsylvania. The two main sources of income left are welfare and drugs. Kensington is also multi-racial; approximately 1/3 white, 1/3 African-American and 1/3 Latino.

Kensington Welfare Rights Union (KWRU) Based in Kensington, but with members statewide, KWRU is a multi-racial organization of poor and homeless families. KWRU fights both to meet its members' immediate needs, and to put an end to poverty for everyone. Over time this has included housing over 500 families, working in the legislature and courts at local, state, national and international levels, and coordinating action and education with other poor communities across the country and world.

Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign (PPEHRC) The Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign is a national network of over 50 grassroots anti-poverty organizations, from public housing residents in Chicago to farmworkers in Florida, working together to raise the issue of poverty as a human rights violation. Together they have organized marches, including protests of both the Republican and Democratic Conventions, human rights schools, legal action against the United States for human rights violations, and many other activities. Mary Robinson, UN High Commissioner on Human Rights, has called the PPEHRC one of the most significant human rights efforts going on in the world today.

Discussion Questions:

- What was the purpose of the March for Economic Human Rights? Were the goals of the marchers accomplished? What were the goals of the police and the business community of Philadelphia? Were their goals accomplished?
- There is a buzz out there about Seattle and this “new protest movement.” What was different about the March for Economic Human Rights than other marches and protests that took place in Seattle, DC, Philly or LA?
- What does the film say about the leadership of poor people?
- Do you see yourself in this film? Who are some of the people shown in the film? Who participated in the March for Economic Human Rights? Why did people risk arrest to march?

Activities:

1. Sources from within the Philadelphia Police Department reported that the Kensington Welfare Rights Union and the Police Department ‘played a game of chess’ in the period leading up to the March for Economic Human Rights. Each tried to out-maneuver the other to achieve their goals. Break into small groups to talk about different aspects of the drama leading up to the March for Economic Human Rights. Each group may pick one of these issues that were components of the that drama:

- DHS and the Children
- The March Permit
- The Tent City: Bushville
- Signs, Art and Getting the Message Out
- Police infiltration

2. Make a list/chart that includes: 1) the stereotypes you have heard about poor people and 2) the traditional programs administered to address problems of poverty. Compare these personal characteristics and traditional anti-poverty programs with the characteristics of the March organizers and societal solutions to poverty put forward in the film. Be sure to discuss how the people featured in the video fit or do not fit into these stereotypes of poor people and how the solutions called for by the march organizers differ or are the same as traditional anti-poverty solutions.

3. Building a social movement means winning the hearts and minds of the American people over to a world without poverty. Using the Economic Human Rights Series (included at the end of this packet) and the lessons taken from the film, discuss what it takes to build a movement. Why do we need to build a movement to end poverty and not just institute a new program or policy? Who needs to lead that movement? What are the roles of other people in building a social movement?

Willie Baptist On The March For Economic Human Rights

The following interview was excerpted for the National Organizer's Alliance magazine, The Ark

15,000 news reporters from around the world along with delegates from around the country were gathering in Philadelphia for the Republican National Convention opening on July 31st, 2000. Of course the business community with the assistance of city officials, the police and the media saw this as a big opportunity to promote the "business climate" of Greater Philadelphia. To do this they mounted a multi-faceted and very sophisticated preparation.

We saw the Republican National Convention as one of a few major opportunities to get out our message that poor and homeless families need to have a voice and to be united and organized as the base of a broad movement to end poverty. We planned to do this by carrying out comprehensive operations leading to the Poor People's March for Economic Human Rights on the opening day of the Republican National Convention. The local police forces, who know us—the Kensington Welfare Rights Union—well, were very concerned about our role in this event. They denied us a permit to march down Broad St. towards the First Union Center where the Convention would be held. The two other major protest march events — the UNITY 2000 and the healthcare marches — got a permit. Actually the local police and officials played into our hands politically by denying us a permit. Because of our reputation and history the denial created drama and drama brings public attention.

More drama was added when they put out the threat of deploying the Department of Human Services (DHS) against the mothers and their children who would be participating in the March on July 31st. Because DHS is notorious in taking poor children away from their parents, it is more of a terror to poor mothers than the police. This was a blatant attempt to limit the size of the March. Refusing to be intimidated, we countered with press conferences including reputable community leaders and social workers.

They then move to shut down the facilities where we were painting our signs. Our ally of lawyers moved into action and along with our protest the facilities were reopened and our signs and equipment given back.

Then there was the public spectacle of the gang police beating of Thomas Jones that made international news. This added to a very bad image problem for the police and the city. This made the situation extremely urgent for the police and they came to our office the next day basically begging us not to make them beat us in the head. We insisted we were going to march with or without a permit. The drama continued to build and attention was beginning to be focused on us.

They were hard pressed to stop us. However, the initiative and momentum were on our side. Our appearances on talk shows and the many interviews (CNN, 20/20, McNeil/Lehrer, etc.) were confirmations of the success of this political positioning. Ultimately, they had to concede to us. Estimates from media correspondents had the March attendance at as high as 10,000

to 15,000. We made a pledge of non-violence that added respectability and tied the hands of the police. More than 700 media representatives were present. We established a line of march with poor children — over 100 kids — leading off. Then the brothers and sisters from the disabled community followed in wheelchairs and behind them those from the deaf community and then the rest of the delegations from the Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign, representatives from the labor unions, and many other allies and supporters.

The police knew that everybody was watching. As we marched down Broad Street, people joined the march. When we were marching down Broad Street during the time of working hours and we had workers who came out of work to greet us and join in our chants. There was a contingent of seniors who came out and actually joined our march. An 85-year-old lady was quoted as saying that although they were middle class they know what it means to hurt and they wanted to show their support.

The police had no choice but to back down. This was a tactical and political victory for the March. The police commissioner, the Mayor and the local media then changed their tactic and rhetoric. They said that this proves that the police forces in the "city of brotherly love" are about free speech if you are non-violent. And that "they let us" go through with our march and then turn around and used that rhetoric in a divisive way against the following days of protest.

It was clear that the lessons the major political forces in the city drew from Seattle and DC were not only in police tactics but also in political tactics. The area was crawling with undercover police and the local media obliged them by portraying the police as the victims. They wanted to reverse the bad image that Philly police have around the country and world. Some of the brothers and sisters arrested in the other demonstrations were hit with huge bail charges and felony charges that weren't dropped. We have a well-known history of leading homeless takeovers of empty houses and vacant lots. We have had many battles involving trumped up charges made by the police. We've been in those jails and know what it's like. We're not fools. We understand that the outcome of the trials will have direct impact on our continuing organizing of the poor in the city.

Unlike Seattle and DC, we were able to bring poor and working folks from the local area into the organizing process. With 15,000 reporters coming in from all over the world, we took people on "Reality Tours" to see the closed down factories, the drug infestation, and the dilapidated conditions. We set up Bushville, which was a tent city of homeless and other organizers, in what is called "the badlands" in North Philly. Bushville served as our base of operations. We had over 300 residents there and we had theater, music, songs, and workshops. We conducted daily tours showing people the spots where we've been organizing. We had upwards of 200 people on a tour at a time from around the world and the US.

Education and leadership development is at the heart of our organizing. Although we were able to achieve tactical success in getting the police and the city to give up Broad Street, this was not the most strategic thing accomplished. Throughout the months of preparations for the March we were able to identify over 30 new leaders from within and around the ranks of the poor who had distinguished themselves. Consolidating these leaders and

through them expand the membership of the movement is the most appropriate follow-through to a major breakthrough. The multi-faceted operation introduced politics to many who had never been exposed to it before. Most importantly, the events leading up to and including the March exposed them to the independent politics of the Labor Party to which the KWRU is affiliated.

To have successfully accomplished all of our main objectives we had to combine an effective message with an effective method. We are up against sophisticated forces, and the fact is that never in history has a dumb force defeated a smart one. We cannot substitute morality for strategy. We may be right, but you can be dead right. We must strive to implement our morality with sophisticated thinking in terms of strategy and tactics. Otherwise our protests are reduced to spasms of well-meaning self-expressions and we become pawns to bigger players. The police played some of the protesters here like a violin. There are many lessons to be learned.

We've been having meetings with some of the other protesters. A lot of the younger kids tied to the anarchist movement and a lot of the left wing democrats involved with the UNITY 2000 stuff showed a lot of respect for us. They contributed greatly to the success of the March for Economic Human Rights.

Quotes from March Organizers

Cheri Honkala, Director of the KWRU

The political maneuverings involved in the events leading up to and during the March for Economic Human Rights pitted us against the sophisticated wits of the most powerful economic and political forces in the region—especially the Greater Philadelphia First Corporation (GPF). GPF consists of 33 major corporations including First Union Bank, Philadelphia Newspapers, and the University of Pennsylvania Hospital, etc. We had to deal directly with the main instruments of Greater Philadelphia First: the Mayor's Office, the Police, and the Media. They coordinated their political moves very effectively. Not maintaining a strategic view of the big picture would have made us pawns of the plans of the bigger players. We sought to meet our overall objectives by moving to make our message heard. They met us with countermoves. We then made moves and anticipated their next moves. The tit for tat maneuvers necessitated that we elevate our thinking from that of simply a checkers player to that of a chess player. We did this and accomplished all of our objectives.

Galen Tyler, Co-Chair, Organizing Committee of the KWRU

The politics of the situation today dictate that poverty will not be ended unless the bulk of the American people make up their minds to end it. The unity and leadership of the impoverished section of the American people is a decisive factor in making and shaping this consciousness. This unity and leadership defeats the stereotypes that close minds, divide us, and keep us unorganized. It proves that the poor have not failed society but that society, with the assistance of the government, has failed us.

Therefore, all of our considerations of tactics—whether they are nonviolent civil disobedience, marches, housing takeovers, food distributions, individual problem-solving, or whatever—are made from the point of view of the “big picture.” The “big picture” tell us that tactics are only useful when they help us answer the big question: “How do we win the

university of the poor
hearts and minds of the American people?”.

So our approach to the March for Economic Human Rights was not from the narrow point of view of simply protesting for self-expression, or for the nonviolent exercise of “freedom of speech” as ends in themselves. Our history speaks for itself. We were prepared to go to jail, if necessary. Before the March no small number of us had committed to get arrested, if necessary. However, our objective was not just about getting arrested. It was about getting our message out that poverty and human misery should not exist in the land of plenty!

Liz Ortiz Co-Chair, Organizing Committee of the KWRU

I served as the Mayor of the tent city called Bushville. To carry out my task I had to view Bushville as part of a larger whole, part of a bigger picture. The bigger picture was that Bushville was to serve not just as a place where people can stay. It was a “base of operations” to house and help the marchers to become messengers. It was set up to ensure that the poor were not disappeared or hidden before the Republican National Convention and 15,000 news reporters from around the world. It was an important opportunity to have our message heard. We would have been stupid not to take advantage of it.

As Mayor I had to always keep this picture in mind. I was constantly busy at Bushville. I had to help ensure the safety of the residents, their children and belongings; registration; medical care; breakfast, lunch, and dinner; enforce our no drugs and alcohol policy; oversee music entertainment and Human Rights Theatre skits; workshops; security meetings; morning general meetings and prayer services. In addition I had to help make sure that all the activities inside Bushville were coordinated with all the four days of activities outside of Bushville leading up to our March for Economic Human Rights.

These four days of activities included the ongoing Reality Tours, the Unity 2000 March, the Healthcare March, the launching of the University of the Poor, the forum on the Labor Party and Economic Human Rights, media and filmmaking activities, sign-making, legal strategy meetings, and the necessary secret operations. Every one of these activities had to be seen not as separate pieces but as pieces of a big puzzle.

For example, Bushville was located in the heart of North Philly, the so-called “Badlands”, the poorest section of Philadelphia. To have a little picture of Bushville as only a place to house and feed people we would have ran out of all our small means and ran away from our big mission which is to build fighters in the fight to end poverty forever.



Southeast Regional Office
Pennsylvania Council of Children, Youth, and Family
Services (PCCYFS)

To: Executive Directors
From: Letty D. Thall
Re: Bed Count
Date: July 18, 2000

Maxine Tucker just called asking for our assistance. The City is planning for the potential need for approximately 1000 children (under 18 years) who may need temporary care.

The City is concerned that the arrests of protesters during the Republican National Convention (7/28/2000 to 8/5/2000) will necessitate the need to place the protesters' children in temporary care until their parents are released.

Therefore, DHS wants us to estimate the number of vacant beds our member agencies may have available.

Deputy Commissioner Tucker is meeting with Judge Panepinto to work out the legal issues around DHS assuming temporary custody of the children. In order to prepare for the potential need of a great number of beds for a short period of time, it is critical that DHS have a sense of available resources.

It would be greatly appreciated if you could complete the attached survey and fax it to PCCYFS by noon on July 20, 2000. PCCYFS' fax numbers are 215-748-4699 and 215-748-4716.

Your responses will be shared with DHS. If your agency could be used, DHS will contact you. If you have any questions about this process, please do not hesitate to call me at 215-748-4688.

Thank you for your help.

Statements on DHS and March for Economic Human Rights

Religious Response

The Philadelphia City Government, specifically the Department of Human Services, has borrowed one of the most brutal and heartless pages from the "Handbook of Terror." In the style of the most repressive and cruel governments of the world, they are making arrangements to take the children of those who protest against the injustice of poverty. Seeking to silence the voice of the poor by intimidation, the Mayor and city officials are defiling the most holy of holies, the bond between a parent and a child.

This terrorism cannot be allowed. The voice of justice cries out in protest. The poor cannot be made to disappear through such acts of violence and brutality. All people of faith and conscience must respond and reject this latest effort to silence the call for basic human rights; food, housing, clothing, health care.

The communities of faith proclaim that God is watching what is taking place in Philadelphia. And God's Justice for the oppressed will not be denied.

Marcus C. Pomeroy, *Pastor, Central Baptist Church, Wayne, PA*

Statements on DHS and March for Economic Human Rights

Social Worker Response

My name is Mary Bricker-Jenkins. I have been a social worker since 1964, am a professor at Temple University School of Social Administration, and serve as the board liaison with KWRU for the Social Welfare Action Alliance, a national organization of social workers that works as allies with KWRU. Significantly in this context I have conducted federally funded research on child abuse and neglect and have published in this area.

The Department of Human Services officials have said that they will “stand by” to be available in case of emergency. Let us be clear that there will be no emergency that is not precipitated by the city. KWRU families take care of their children, often against great odds, and are particularly responsible in their marches demonstrations, and civil disobedience actions.

For this reason and because KWRU is leading the fight against the foremost cause of child abuse and neglect – poverty – this march has been endorsed by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), Philadelphia Division and the state chapter. As we speak, motions to endorse are moving forward at the national level and at the International Federation of Social Workers now meeting in Canada. Cheri Honkala was named public citizen of the year by NASW – PA Chapter precisely because she is a responsible leader in a movement to end poverty – a goal that is integral to the social work mission.

Surveillance and intimidation of poor people is not a social work mission. Being used by city officials as political police is not a social work mission. To ask us to engage in these is unethical and abominable, particularly when DHS workers are overwhelmed with bona fide reports of abuse and neglect and when they are struggling against the odds to find resources to help keep families together in this city.

Front line social workers know that KWRU parents are responsible, and many social workers have turned to the organization for help in doing their jobs. We know what kind of political and economic pressures they are under, and we are asking them to resist and refuse – to involve the Code of Ethics of the NASW and refuse to participate in acts of intimidation and harassment of the people they are charged to help.

Social workers are coming to this march from all over this country. We will monitor the actions of the city and support our colleagues who, as conscientious objectors, stand with the families of KWRU. We will not allow ourselves to be the soft cops of this post-welfare state; we are determined to fulfill our mission, and that means being committed allies of KWRU. We will march with the children and their parents to protect the children by demanding an end to poverty in this country.

Mary Bricker-Jenkins, *Professor, Temple School of Social Administration*

Kensington Welfare Rights Union

Affiliate of the National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees, AFSCME, AFL-CIO
P0 Box 50678 Philadelphia, PA 19132 USA
(215) 203-1945 FAX (215) 203-1950
www.kwru.org- kwru@libertynet.org

July 24, 2000

For Immediate Release

Contact: Cheri Honkala, (215) 203-1945
James Pfluecke, (215) 768-3117

**DHS' plans to place 1000 children of Republican Convention protesters
in foster care strikes fear in the hearts of parents;
KWRU calls on City to pull in reigns on child abuse agency.**

Background

KWRU is an organization of poor and homeless families. It is coordinating the July 31, 2000 March for Economic Human Rights, a national event which will call attention to the fact that poor people have been made to disappear from the political debates, the media, and discussions about the so-called economic boom. In order to accommodate marchers coming in from throughout the country, KWRU will erect a Tent City, "Bushville," where marchers will stay during the weekend preceding the March. The City of Philadelphia's denial of KWRU's permit applications for events surrounding the Republican convention place participants at risk of arrest at both the Tent City and the March.

DHS' Plan

KWRU has recently discovered that the Department of Human Services (DHS) is planning to place children of arrested protesters into foster care. DHS is the agency charged with investigating allegations of child abuse, and of assuming custody over children at risk of abuse or neglect. KWRU learned from sources inside DHS that the agency is preparing to place approximately 1000 children of arrested protesters in temporary foster care. KWRU has not been informed of any specifics regarding DHS' involvement; however, the fact that DHS is securing 1000 placement locations indicates that the agency has been asked to play a primary role when protesters are arrested with children in their presence.

KWRU had previously informed the City's Police Department that many children will be joining their parents in the July 31 March for Economic Human Rights. It recently (July 19) held a press conference welcoming the participation of children and youth in the March. The City's decision to enlist the involvement of DHS, an agency widely dreaded by parents in Philadelphia, appears to be the newest strategy in a growing string of tactics aimed at intimidating poor families from exercising their democratic and human rights to peacefully express their political opinions during events surrounding the Republican convention.

DHS involvement is both unwelcome and unjustified. The law requires that DHS only take temporary custody of children in cases involving serious child abuse or neglect. The law defines neglect as long-term or repeated lack of supervision which places a child's life in danger. It is absurd to suggest that

parents are abusing or neglecting their children when they peacefully assemble to call attention to human rights and other issues — even if they get arrested for doing so without an official City permit. Given all the talk about DHS being overburdened and unable to deal appropriately with cases involving real abuse and neglect to children, one would think that the agency had better ways to spend its time and resources than to go after the children of peaceful protesters.

KWRU's Demands

Here are our demands to the City and to DHS:

- If parents are arrested with children in their presence during protests surrounding the Republican convention, police should give parents the opportunity to designate a family member, friend, or organization who will care for the child during the short period until the parents are released from police custody. Parents have a right to make this decision and neither the police nor DHS have any right to call the decision into question.
- If the parent designates a caretaker who is not present at the scene of the arrest, parents should be provided an opportunity to call the caretaker, and the children should remain in the custody of the police, not DHS, while the caretaker is provided with a reasonable amount of time in which to pick up the children.
- Some parents, particularly those who had no intention of being arrested, may not be prepared to designate a caretaker. We can understand that the City may believe it has a responsibility to ensure that the child is properly cared for during the parent's brief period in police custody. To deal with these cases, the City should make arrangements with facilities which provide extended, overnight child care. Such facilities exist in Philadelphia. Parents who are unable to designate a caretaker should be provided with the option of agreeing to have their children placed in an extended child care facility, rather than in the temporary custody of DHS.
- In the event that there is no other alternative but to place the child in the custody of DHS, the agency's involvement should be limited simply to temporarily placing the child with a foster agency until the parents are released from police custody. Since the parent's arrest is not a sign of abuse or neglect, DHS should not undertake any broader investigations into the family's circumstances. DHS must not create a record which appears in the child abuse registry. Having a child abuse record is humiliating, and also severely limits a parents' future employment opportunities. It would be outrageous for an arrest for protesting to result in a permanent child abuse record.
- **The mayor, or someone on behalf of the city, should make a public statement that parents' First Amendment Rights will not be infringed in Philadelphia by involvement of the Department of Human Services. The statement should include the city's assurance that they will appoint an independent agency to work with children in the event of arrests.**

State Police Infiltrated Protest Groups, Documents Show Search-Warrant Affidavits Reveal an Undercover Operation Aimed at Activists in Philadelphia for the GOP Convention.

*By Linda K. Harris, Craig R. McCoy and Thomas Ginsberg, Inquirer Staff Writers
The Philadelphia Inquirer
September 7, 2000*

State police undercover agents posing as demonstrators infiltrated activist groups planning the protests at the Republican National Convention, search-warrant documents made public yesterday showed.

The undercover operation was detailed in legal documents filed Aug. 1 by Philadelphia police seeking search warrants for a raid that day on a so-called "puppet warehouse" at 4100 Haverford Ave. in West Philadelphia. The documents were under a court seal until yesterday.

About 75 people were arrested in the raid at the warehouse.

The infiltration was immediately condemned yesterday by the state chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union and the city public defender's office.

"It's worse than sleazeball," said Stefan Presser, the ACLU's legal director. "This is an outrage."

Presser and other critics said dissenters needed the right to rally and to organize without fear that police were spying on them. They said they feared that police undercover officers could cross the line from intelligence-gatherers to provocateurs.

"The legality and propriety of this potentially unconstitutional police conduct will certainly be an issue at the time of trial in all of these cases," said Bradley Bridge, a senior lawyer with the defender's office.

During the convention, Police Commissioner John F. Timoney repeatedly denied that police had engaged in infiltration.

"We had not infiltrated any group," he said the day after police raided the warehouse that had become one of several gathering spots for demonstrators during the convention.

A spokeswoman for the commissioner said yesterday that he would have no comment. Lt. Susan Slawson, commander of the police public-affairs unit, said the commissioner could not talk because "it's in litigation," a reference to a civil suit filed by demonstrators challenging their arrests during the protests.

The use of state police as the undercover operatives took place as the city itself was restricted from using its own officers for such infiltration under a long-standing mayoral directive. The directive says the police may not infiltrate protest groups without the permission of the mayor, the managing director, and the police commissioner.

Battle for Broad Educational Supplement

Mayor Street and City Solicitor Kenneth Trujillo declined comment yesterday.

In seeking search warrants, police cited the work of the undercover operatives and detailed the intelligence gathered as the convention approached. The information is sketched out in affidavits of probable cause seeking warrants to search the warehouse, a U-Haul van, another van, and a pickup that police deemed suspicious.

"This investigation is utilizing several Pennsylvania state troopers in an undercover capacity that have infiltrated several of the activist groups planning to commit numerous illegal direct actions," said one affidavit, signed by Detective William Egenlauf of the Philadelphia Police Department.

It says the state police undercover operatives arrived at the warehouse on July 27, four days before the convention began.

Once there, the agents assisted "in the construction of props to be used during protests," the affidavit says.

It says agents observed demonstrators building street barriers and "lock boxes," devices used by protesters to lock arms together when blocking streets. The papers say they overheard discussions that indicated protesters planned on "using the puppets . . . as blockades."

The operatives also reported that "persons indicated they would be throwing pies, bottles and cardboard boxes filled with water at the police," the affidavits stated.

Timoney held a news conference after the convention to display items seized during the raid, including two massive slingshots and chains wrapped in kerosene-soaked rags. Such devices were not used during the protests. Police also displayed seized "lock boxes."

Protesters have claimed the facility was nothing more than an art studio to fashion the puppets, floats and other props that were a hallmark of the demonstrations.

Demonstrators also said their protests would be nonviolent, with illegal actions limited to the blockading of streets. Their lawyers have complained that numerous people were arrested in the warehouse without any proof they had any connection to illegal items.

A key subject of controversy has been the raid on the warehouse.

The request for the search warrants for the warehouse and lengthy affidavits detailing police intelligence-gathering was made yesterday, a month after Municipal Court President Judge Louis J. Presenza approved the searches.

At the request of the District Attorney's Office, the warrants were sealed - barred from public inspection - for a month as soon as they were issued. The legal request for the warrants maintained that premature "disclosure of this affidavit could endanger the lives" of the undercover operatives.

The affidavits cite sweeping police intelligence-gathering before the convention. This included monitoring of unspecified "electronic messages" sent among demonstrators, an apparent reference to police scrutiny of Web sites and electronic mailing lists.

The police documents identified what investigators viewed as the key protest groups and their goals. Funds for one group "allegedly originate with Communist and leftist parties and from sympathetic trade unions" or from "the former Soviet-allied World Federation of Trade Unions," according to the affidavits.

The affidavits go on to identify a handful of leaders of the various groups. Among those cited by name are John Sellers and Kate Sorensen, who were later arrested during demonstrations in Center City. The two were held in jail for days in lieu of \$1 million bail - a sum critics said was extraordinary. In recent interviews after their release from jail, people who were inside the warehouse said that they had suspected early on that four undercover officers were working among them. Four men - known as Tim, Harry, George and Ryan - showed up together at 41st and Haverford about a week before the convention, introducing themselves as union carpenters from Wilkes-Barre who built stages, several demonstrators said.

They were big, burly men who were older than most of the people working in the warehouse. They did not seem particularly political or well-informed, according to demonstrators. All four, however, were considered hard workers.

Soliman Lawrence, 20, of Tallahassee, Fla., worked closely with the four on a massive satirical float built for a protest march.

"They gained our trust," Lawrence said. "The fact that we didn't know them very well wasn't a big deal.

"I remember thinking to myself, 'Why does everyone who looks like that have to be a cop?'" Lawrence said. "I didn't like that I thought like that."

City Closes Activists' Studio

Though L&I Found Violations, the Mayor's Office Intervened

Thomas Ginsberg, Inquirer Staff Writer
The Philadelphia Inquirer
July 22, 2000

In a dramatic confrontation between the city and GOP convention protesters, building inspectors yesterday shut down a Center City art studio where activists have been building floats and puppets as demonstration props.

However, within hours of the shutdown for alleged safety-code violations, aides to Mayor Street arranged for the site to reopen.

The shutdown and reopening starkly displayed the escalating tensions in the city over protests planned around the four-day convention, which starts July 31. It also laid bare what appeared to be conflicting impulses of city authorities and police, who have promised to respect free speech and prevent any disruption of the GOP gathering.

"We are trying to dispel the notion that the city doesn't want the protesters," said the mayor's spokeswoman, Barbara Grant, in explaining why the studio was ordered reopened.

"Sure, this would've left that image. . . . We're rolling out the red carpet to them, as well as to the Republicans. This is the cradle of liberty. We are not trying to shut them down."

Activists and their attorney complained bitterly after the site was closed, and they displayed only wry appreciation when city officials intervened on their behalf.

"It should never have happened," said Matthew Hart, director of the art studio, Spiral Q. "People were totally terrified and disrupted, not knowing if we were going to be arrested, not knowing anything, and I'm sure it's not over."

The studio, on two floors of a shabby-looking five-story building at 1307 Sansom St., was ordered shut down about 4 p.m. after a four-hour inspection by the Department of Licenses and Inspections. It was reopened three hours later.

L&I Deputy Commissioner Dominic Verdi, leading a four-man inspection team, one L&I photographer, and one uniformed police officer, arrived at the studio about noon. He said inspectors were alerted by what he called "an anonymous complaint" following a report of falling debris from a nearby building.

Inspectors looked around the area and eventually turned their attention to the Spiral Q studio, Verdi said.

The debris, according to a police report, was dropped by two unidentified white men and cracked the windshield of a police cruiser that was driving by.

The L&I inspection discovered an open propane burner, electrical extension cords stretched between floors, and a nonworking fire-alarm system, Verdi said. He acknowledged that city records showed the building passed its most recent inspection and had no outstanding code violations as of December.

But Verdi said the report did not mean there were no new violations or that inspectors could not return at any time.

"If this building catches fire, we're going to lose a half a block," Verdi said.

Asked if there was any connection between the inspection and the planned protests, Verdi said: "Absolutely not. . . . This has no bearing on what they're doing in there."

Within an hour of the inspectors' arrival, activists began hurriedly removing puppets and props, including dozens of cardboard Uncle Sam cutouts, posters, banners, and several 5-foot-tall cardboard top hats painted in red-white-and-blue stripes.

Hart frantically copied computer files onto piles of disks, threw them into his canvas knapsack and ushered about a dozen activists out of the building, saying he did not want any people or materials inside the building if authorities raided it.

The six-year-old studio, founded by Hart, provides space, consulting and other services for activist groups that want to illustrate their rallies with banners, puppets or other artwork. Mounds of planks, fabric, poles and cardboard are scattered around the studio.

Hart conceded that propane and electrical cords were being used in the studio, but he said activists had bought three new fire alarms and four extinguishers precisely in anticipation of such an inspection.

"This is totally preposterous," Hart said of the inspection. "We are making cardboard look beautiful for a democratic walk down Broad Street."

Activists accused the city of trying to stop protests at the convention. Several activist groups, including members of the Kensington Welfare Rights Union, have been using the site to build and store protest props.

"They are trying to link us with all the hype around these so-called violent anarchists," said Cheri Honkala, director of the welfare rights union. "We're trying to end poverty and homelessness in this country. We don't have time for these games."

Several activists compared the inspection to a mass preemptive arrest of activists in Washington, D.C., last April, the night before they were to mount protests against the International Monetary Fund and World Bank.

"This is a preemptive strike to shut down and prevent us from making our message heard," said Jodi Netzer, a member of the Philadelphia Direct Action Group.

Stefan Presser, legal director for the Pennsylvania American Civil Liberties Union, said he was pleased the studio was reopened, but suggested the inspection had been planned to harass activists.

Demonstrators, Denied Permission, March Anyway and Even Gain a Police Escort

*By Francis X. Clines
The New York Times
August 1, 2000*

PHILADELPHIA, July 31 -- Slowly and strategically, a thick blue line of city police officers retreated from downtown toward the Republican National Convention today, yielding before an illegal protest parade rather than facing a potentially violent street confrontation with the world watching.

"We're not going to stop them," the deputy police chief, Sylvester Johnson, decided on Broad Street as a parade of welfare protesters, denied a permit to march, stepped off from City Hall nevertheless and headed south toward the convention.

The protesters were no less strategic than the police as they made sure that their parade began with a phalanx of toddlers and infants backed up by paraplegics in wheelchairs.

"I'll be marching with them," Chief Johnson added, emphasizing that flexibility had to be the watchword for this tense convention week.

Indeed the chief did march the full three miles through the hot sun. He converted his large stationary force of officers, who stood at first as a line in the sand that attracted a mass of news media, into a mobile escort. They cleared traffic before the parading demonstrators, who happily won their point and chanted: "Whose streets? Our streets!"

The marchers, in turn, cooperated by finally veering off into a park near the convention site rather than confronting the large backup force of police officers, equipped with hundreds of sets of plastic handcuffs tucked in their gunbelts, firmly ringing the arena behind barricades.

Earlier in the day, eight arrests had been made at a much smaller demonstration outside City Hall as protesters denounced the Army's School of the Americas and blocked traffic by lying down in the street. The school, at Fort Benning, Ga., has long been the subject of complaints that it trains Latin American soldiers in combat methods often used in human rights abuses to protect dictatorships. The demonstrators, opting for nonviolent civil disobedience, were accommodated by the police, who made fast arrests.

The larger welfare protest, which eventually attracted several thousand marchers, drew initial warnings of arrest but apparently proved too sizable and peaceful for police confrontation.

"We feel this is a big victory in giving a voice to the words and power of poor people," said Jonathan M. Blazer, a lawyer for the Kensington Welfare Rights Union, a North Philadelphia civic group that sponsored the march and prevailed in taking over Broad Street, despite being denied a permit.

No arrests were made during the march and no injuries were reported. But traffic was disrupted on one of the main routes to the convention arena as the opening gavel was summoning the Republican delegates.

"I don't care about the traffic," declared Femi Johnson, a cab driver trapped by the protesters. "This march is letting the people express themselves. I'm from Nigeria and one day I wish to go back and deliver a lesson in democracy like this."

For all the uniformed police and gold stars in evidence along the march, the pivotal police figures were plainclothes officers from the civil affairs unit who negotiated with demonstration leaders and even supplied them with cold drinks from police buckets as the day unfolded.

Capt. William V. Fisher, the unit commander, stayed at the head of the march, a sweat-soaked study in navigating around confrontation. He conferred repeatedly with protest negotiators, then with Police Chief John Timoney, who would suddenly pedal to the scene at strategic turnings with members of the police bike squad.

With the convention site sealed off and the Republican agenda a rosy model of nondissent, the marchers, bolstered by assorted other protesters, sought to instigate the only untoward event of the day for the 15,000 visiting news workers. Once the chance of confrontation passed, the event turned into an unsensational three-hour trudge but for a flurry of alarm at a passing coincidence: Newt Gingrich was sighted down a side street.

A thicket of television camera crews instantly sprang off in pursuit, as if the former House speaker were one of the promised "anarchists" who have been threatening to haunt the convention proceedings.

"Newt came out of that Dunkin' Donuts, I think," one foreign journalist announced as reporters hurried after this white-haired specter of Republican victories past.

"No, it was a White Castle!" a stickler corrected breathlessly.

Mr. Gingrich, on his way to a neighborhood photo op, turned and looked bewildered at receiving the largest amount of media scrutiny since Republicans purged him from leadership.

Before yielding to the marchers, Chief Johnson received contrary advice from an aide who could be heard telling him, "If we don't move, they don't move." But the police moved first, backward. As the march proceeded, a large, ever-changing electronic message sign at a construction site at Spruce and Broad came forth almost eerily with what seemed apt advice for the passing scene: "Using force to stop force is absurd." And: "To disagree presupposes moral integrity."

Thousands Risk Arrest in Poverty Protest

By David Montgomery and Debbie Goldberg

Washington Post Staff Writers

Tuesday, August 1, 2000; Page A16

[Reprinted in the International Herald Tribune, Paris, August 2, 2000]

PHILADELPHIA, July 31 — Faced with thousands of marchers willing to risk arrest—including others with children in strollers and a squad of people in wheelchairs—police here stood aside and allowed an illegal parade down the city's main thoroughfare to carry an anti-poverty message almost to the doors of the Republican National Convention.

Several dozen poor and homeless people in the vanguard held aloft pizza boxes painted to look like American flags and bearing messages such as "35 Million Americans Live in Poverty." They were followed by the teeming array of protesters drawn to this town to push a rainbow of causes. Today, the diverse streams of outrage all flowed together in the March for Economic Human Rights.

Hundreds of the marchers spent the last few nights in a hastily erected tent city in North Philadelphia they call Bushville, an allusion to the Hoovervilles established during the Great Depression in bitter mockery of President Herbert Hoover.

There is no Depression today. But amid the economic boom, marchers like Yolanda Johnson-Young, 32, homeless with three children while holding down a \$6-an-hour job, say they are being forgotten. "We're here to march so poor people's voices are heard," she said.

The noon march shut down the southbound lanes of Broad Street between the ornate city hall topped with a statue of William Penn and the First Union Center, where the GOP is convening nearly four miles away. Crosstown traffic was disrupted in South Philadelphia, and the subway station serving the convention hall was closed for about 20 minutes.

For months city officials had denied a protest permit to the Kensington Welfare Rights Union, the march sponsor, claiming disruption during the convention would be intolerable. Organizers said they expected to be arrested. But as the first marchers stepped into the middle of Broad, officers on horses hung back, and officers on foot cleared traffic and escorted the parade.

"Things went really pretty good," said police Commissioner John F. Timoney. "Our No. 1 priority is no violence and no serious property destruction. . . . Today we can live with people walking in the street." Referring to the decision to let the demonstrators take over a section of Broad Street, he added, "Someone asked me if we lost face. I don't care about that."

In a separate demonstration earlier in the day, nine people were charged with obstructing a highway or obstructing justice. The demonstrators, protesting the Pentagon's School of the Americas, enacted a skit in a major intersection next to city hall. In another anti-poverty

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demonstration tonight, 1,000 religious leaders, including the Washington Interfaith Network, protested conditions in North Philadelphia. Two other demonstrators were arrested later for trespassing, police said.

But even then, the police seemed to avoid starting an arrest count that would inevitably be compared to the nearly 1,300 arrested in the District in April during the World Bank protests. Many of the same protest groups are in town for the GOP convention, and they plan to attend the Democratic gathering in Los Angeles in two weeks.

"I'm begging you," said Officer Joe Sposato, vainly seeking a solution that did not involve arrest, as the nine demonstrators remained silently laying or sitting in the street.

The protests will continue Tuesday, when demonstrators who are planning street blockades and other civil disobedience say they plan to "take the streets of Center City."

But today's march was peaceful, if loud.

Led by a woman with a pretty voice and booming sound system, the marchers sang a spiritual with words for the occasion: "Went down to the GOP and took back what they stole from me. . . . And now they're under my feet, under my feet."

Tanya Karakashian, 24, of Amherst, Mass., said she spent a steamy wet Sunday night sleeping with her 7-year-old daughter, Noalanii, in Bushville. Karakashian, a college student who works for a social justice group, said she had expected things would be peaceful, despite the confrontations between police and demonstrators in Washington three months ago and in Seattle last year.

"I felt there was a small risk, but worth it," she said. "I want to show my daughter this is what you do to make your voice heard in America."

Many were marching because they say the prosperity touted by both political parties is leaving many behind and reinforcing a two-tier economic system.

Lorraine Daliessio, 51, said she was earning almost \$15 an hour at the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard until she lost her job in 1994, shortly before the shipyard was closed. Now she said she earns about half that while working two jobs cleaning offices, and she lost her suburban New Jersey house this year when she could no longer afford to pay her mortgage.

"I hope we impress somebody [that] there are poor people in America today," Daliessio said.

Cheri Honkala, formerly the homeless director of the Kensington Welfare Rights Union, a group which provides emergency services to the poor and homeless and is based in the North Philadelphia neighborhood of Kensington, carried an abridged copy of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, calling for guaranteed food, shelter, education, employment and health care. Many countries have ratified the declaration, but the United States has

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not. Honkala said she wanted to present it to the Republican delegates.

But the marchers never got that close. Arriving in front of a police barricade several blocks from the convention hall, they veered into the park where the city has authorized protesters to gather.

From hundreds of yards away, behind a fence, it was hard to see the convention center, but they jeered in the general direction of a hospitality tent and declared the day a victory.

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Next Steps:

How people can get involved: A list of suggestions for interested individuals and groups

1. Check out the KWRU website at www.kwru.org and sign up for email updates.
2. Check out the University of the Poor Website at www.universityofthepoor.org
3. Contact the University of the Poor representative for the school, department or community based organization that interests you (find in on the website). (This includes the Media College, the School of Theology, the School for Students, the School for Social Workers, the School of Art and Culture, the Labor School, the Department of Statistics and Research, the Economic Human Rights Documentation Department, the Internet Empowerment Department, and the Education Exchange Project or over 50 Poor People's Organizations associated with the PPEHRC)
4. Schedule a showing of Battle for Broad at your school, agency, congregation, organization, or house meeting. You can invite March organizers to speak at the gathering or lead the discussion afterward.
5. Hold a fundraiser for a Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign group.
6. Volunteer your time with a Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign group or the University of the Poor.
7. Connect community-based organizations in your area with the growing movement to end poverty. Have them get in touch with the PPEHRC.
8. Send materials, information, articles, papers, or education models for building a movement to end poverty to the University of the Poor.

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