

COPWATCH

REPORT

COPWATCH Berkeley, California

Winter 2006 510 548-0425



Inside:

... **PRC Finds Fault
in Detainee's Death**

... **Anatomy of a Cover-up**

... **Boyd Case Moves
Forward**

... **Taser Controversy
Heats Up**

... **"Sunday Café"-Open
Mic Draws All Ages**

Please make a donation to support
the publication of this report.

NEW ORLEANS A Police State Encampment

By Gerald Smith

New Orleans: After the Flood

The ravaging of New Orleans in the wake of Hurricane Katrina has deeply shocked the country and the world. By now everyone knows that 100,000 people, overwhelmingly black and poor, were left to die in the New Orleans death trap. Consider the levees that authorities knew couldn't handle a big storm but weren't repaired because the money went to the war on Iraq; the patients trapped in public hospitals without supplies while those in private hospitals were taken out by helicopter; the "evacuation" that provided no transportation for those without cars and money. The evidence is irrefutable that race and class determined who escaped and who didn't, who lived and who perished.

Today the Big Easy is a police-state encampment, occupied by an estimated 14,000 heavily armed government officers and their machine guns, patrolled by military trucks, up-armored Humvees, Black Hawks and Chinooks. The poor and working people of New Orleans, black and white, but mainly black, have been dispersed across a half-dozen states. In their shelters, they are wondering whether the government means this diaspora to be temporary, or will it attempt to bar them from ever returning to New Orleans? Some may be starting to feel like the Palestinians displaced by the Israeli Zionists in 1948 who are still sitting in their "temporary" refugee camps today. When the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) tried to stuff them onto cruise ships in the New Orleans harbor, flood survivors refused to go aboard. After being locked down in the New Orleans Superdome and then the Houston Astrodome, their experience told

them these would quickly become prison ships. So instead, FEMA is building huge trailer parks where tens of thousands are to be housed, "temporarily" of course.

Fema: The Occupation Comes Home

Since the hurricane, every day has brought new revelations about how the government systematically prevented doctors, nurses, firefighters and anyone else from reaching those marooned in the flooded city. We know of "first responders" who were ordered not to respond and Air Force pilots who heroically rescued survivors and were reprimanded for doing so. Now the bourgeois media are beginning to admit

**By now everyone knows
that 100,000 people,
overwhelmingly black and
poor, were left to die in the
New Orleans death trap.**

that the stories they broadcast and printed about "thugs" raping and murdering people and rampaging "anarchy" in New Orleans were wildly exaggerated. A racist frenzy was whipped up, but why? Because the principal objective of the government at all levels of local, state but especially federal government was not to rescue the victims but to militarily occupy the devastated city and put the population under martial law.

The units sent into New Orleans were not search-and-rescue units, but National Guard Military Police, the Army's 82nd Airborne and 1st Cavalry divisions and the 1st and 2nd Marine Expeditionary Forces,