



## I FOUGHT; WE LOST

*My father, Michael, was politically active at a young age and fought for an anti war cause on the campaign bus for George McGovern*

Noah B.

I woke up that morning with a headache and a mild sense of depression. I felt naïve. All that I had fought for that summer was lost. McGovern lost the election and the war went on and on. Nixon went on and on. But I was stuck to this loss. I was stuck to the morning after the election. I was stuck to thinking about my ignorant attitude during the campaign. It wasn't so much the effects of the election that troubled me; it was that I didn't foresee it. "God, what the hell was I thinking?" I thought to myself, "I should have known what was going to happen". But I was living in the moment that summer; my ambitions and hopes got the best of me.

In early June I got on the McGovern campaign bus. It was a plush bus to say the least with a bathroom in the back. I had never seen this. There were also cute girls on the bus which I didn't mind. But more than anything, I was excited to be on my way and to help fight for the anti war campaign. My memory of the bus ride itself to Omaha, Nebraska is cloudy, for age has taken away some memories, including Omaha itself. I remember little: we went door to door as advocates for the McGovern Campaign, talking about McGovern's strengths and that he fought to end the war. No one's response was to me was memorable, but I was always a bit frightened of the neighborhoods we walked through. We had never ventured into a white suburban neighborhood. I didn't think much of it. During these days in Omaha I had not even thought of the Nixon campaign or anything involving him. In fact, I had not thought of the opposition all summer. I thought that McGovern would win; I mean how could people want the war to go on much longer than it already had?

Our next stop was Buffalo, New York. Again, we stopped only in the poorest neighborhoods with the most racial diversity. Buffalo seemed highly industrial and looked run down in many ways. We saw factories exhaling tar colored smoke without stopping to take a breath. Rocks had pelted the windows of these factories

and street art had migrated onto their walls. A partner and I stopped at a small white house with gates on the windows and paint chipping off of the door. I contemplated the words I would say to whoever lay behind that door. I knocked a tune. The door creaked open and a short, old, black woman stood before me.

Before she could ask our names I said, "Hello, my name is Michael and we are advocates for the McGovern campaign."

Her eyes widened, "He is against the war, isn't he?"

I replied, "Yes ma'am, he is very much opposed to the war in Vietnam."

"Well then I am going to vote for him because there are too many people from this neighborhood being drafted and sent away to Vietnam and they are all coming home in boxes and you guys are doing a good thing and I am going to go out and vote for McGovern" she asserted. Satisfaction in this secured, minor, victory only gave me more reason to think that the McGovern campaign would win. I felt stronger than ever. I felt strong in my beliefs, but I was naïve.

Right before the election, after my campaign tour had ended, I looked at what was going on around me and realized how naïve I actually was. I really did not have a sense for how long the odds were that McGovern would win. I was too engaged in my activities. I was really immersed in something that I felt strongly about, something that I shared with friends and people around me.

He lost. Massachusetts was the only state that voted for McGovern in electoral votes. But more importantly to me at the time, I lost. I lost my pride the night of the election. I lost my left fist that stuck up in the air against the war. I was then eligible for the draft. My number was 182. Although I was not close to being drafted, it scared the hell out of me, so I escaped my thoughts and went to bed. I woke up that morning with a headache and a mild sense of depression, but I also grew up. I fought for my cause, and that much counted for something, but I fought for a losing campaign and did not see it. I started to realize reality. I started looking at things from a broader perspective, rather than from my bubble of thought. I was still highly involved politically, but my outlook had changed. I started to look at the harsh realities of politics. I saw that it wasn't about the cause I and many others fought for, it was about running a good campaign. I did not have an epiphany; my beliefs were not forever altered, but this experience rather changed the way I thought. It was my coming of age.

## ERNESTO BUSTILLOS

*A struggle for unity; a struggle for freedom*

Adriana B.

I was born to an extremely poor existence. My mother worked in the fields and restaurant kitchens, and my father was excommunicated by the social contradictions imposed upon us by capitalism and colonialism. So I am not supposed to be here today talking to you and creating unity among colonized people. I was supposed to grow up and become an enemy of the people or a slave with no consciousness or a petty criminal or drug pusher to be put away in a prison or concentration camp in the United States. It is not a matter of wishing success to the victim of aggression, but of sharing his fate; one must accompany him to his death or to victory.

I was one of those people who came in contact with the revolution as a teenager. I came in contact with the ideas of Emiliano Zapata, the revolutionary leader of Mexico, Marcus Garvey, Che Guevara and others. These ideas opened my eyes, raised my consciousness and got me into struggle. Once I joined the struggle, my commitment to revolutionary change was further consolidated by the ideas of V.I. Lenin, Kwame Nkrumah, Patrice Lumumba, Huey Newton, Ho Chi Minh, Carlos Fonseca of the Nicaraguan Revolution and Comandante Fidel Castro. We believe it will be the workers and the poor who will not only make revolution but must lead the revolution. We understand... that there is a worldwide struggle taking place between capitalism and imperialism and the colonized, oppressed peoples. We understand and we uphold that the Mexican Liberation Movement is part of this worldwide struggle of the colonized and neo-colonized people against capitalism and imperialism, which in the main represents itself as white power.

Comrades, Compañeros y Compañeras, for 25 years Union del Barrio and the African People's Socialist Party have enjoyed what we consider to be an incredible and unprecedented fraternal and comradely unity. We don't know that you can find two organizations that have worked so closely and with so much unity and in