

The CONTINENTAL NEWS



ISSUE 12

APRIL 9, 1976

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Two More Branches of Walk Begin

300 RALLY TO HONOR MARTIN LUTHER KING

New Orleans, April 4.

A rally honoring Martin Luther King, Jr., on the eighth anniversary of his assassination and demanding "jobs, equality, and peace" was held at Shakespeare Park, in a Black section of New Orleans.

The rally was preceded by a press conference at the International Longshoreman's Union Hall and a symbolic 5-block walk to the Park. Media coverage was terrific as all three New Orleans TV stations covered the rally. The long list of community speakers was interspersed with gospel and civil rights songs, such as "We Shall Overcome."

Featured speakers included Anne Braden of the Southern Organizing Committee, Jim Peck of the War Resisters League, and Rev. Bernard Lee, Executive Vice-President of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Rev. Lee was the highlight of the 3-hour program giving a moving and powerful "sermon" chastizing doubters and people who engage in petty infighting, and encouraging people to come out of their apathy and join in with the Walk. Ralph Abernathy and Representative John Conyers, slated as featured speakers, failed to show.

Rev. Hiroshi Sera of the Japan Council Against A & H Bombs (Gensuikyo) was introduced and will walk the entire Southern route to Washington, D.C. He and another member of Gensuikyo had just spent 2 months on the Walk from Ukiah to Arizona. Rev. Curtis Harvey of SCLC and Gloria Firmin of SOC and Dr. Joe Logsdon of SOC coordinated the organizing of the New Orleans events.

After the rally, Rev. Lee, Anne Braden, National Walk Organizer Ed Hedemann, Rep. Avery Alexander, a Black state legislator from New Orleans, and others participated in the weekly SCLC radio program "Dreaming the Dreamer's Dream" carried on the "soul" station WYLD. Listeners were told about

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DEMONSTRATION AT NUCLEAR WEAPONS PLANT

Boulder, April 5

The Colorado branch of the Continental Walk began with a 10 a.m. demonstration at the Rocky Flats Nuclear Weapons Facility near here. Rocky Flats manufactures plutonium triggers for hydrogen bombs.

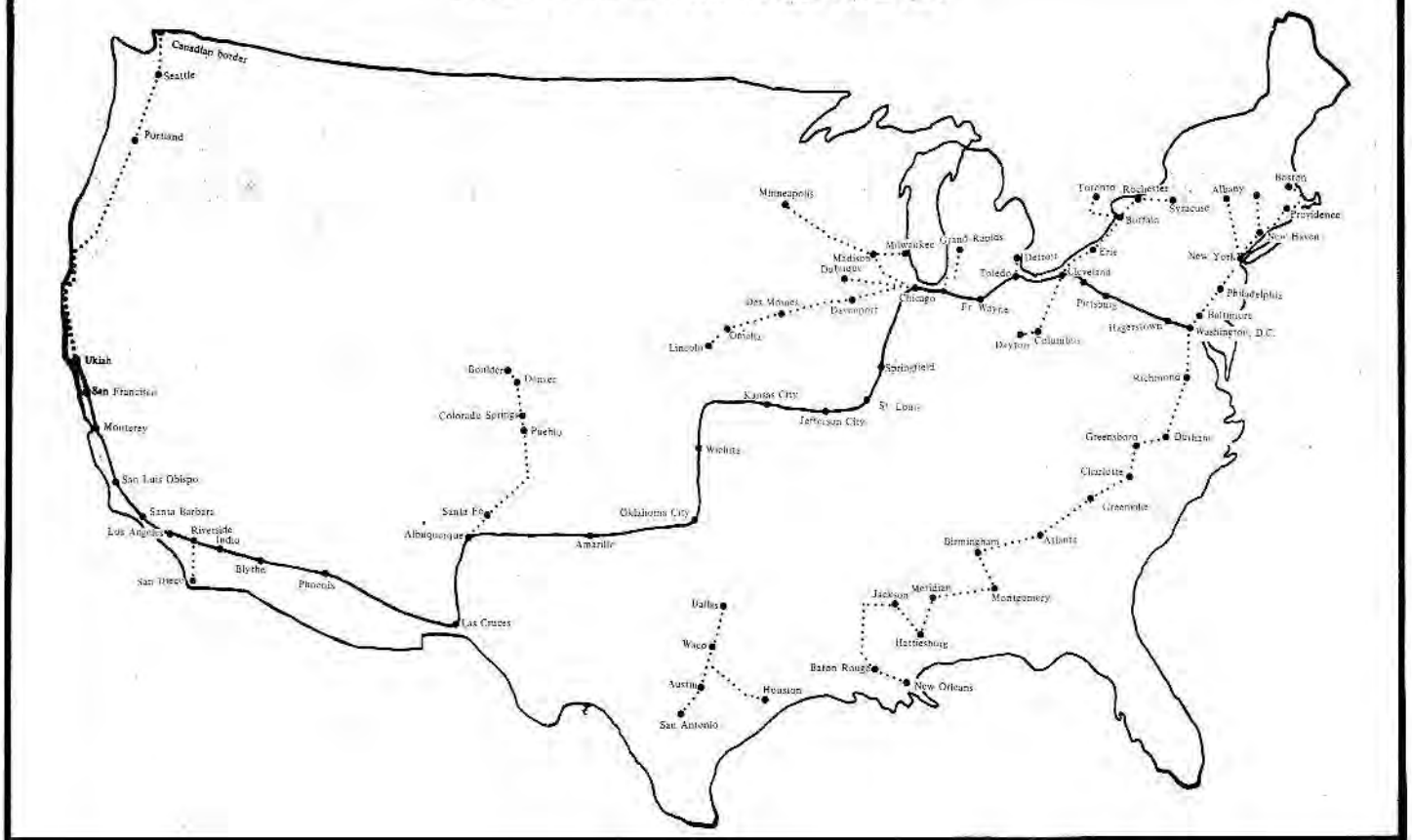
About 75 people and a lot of media were present when hundreds of balloons were released each carrying a tag which read "This balloon was released from the Rocky Flats on April 5, 1976. If you found this balloon, you live down wind from the nuclear weapons plant at Rocky Flats where radioactive plutonium is manufactured into atom bomb parts. Plutonium has accidentally been released into our atmosphere several times in the 20 year history of the plant. To help us gather data on the radiation pollution in our area, please send this tag back to us c/o Rocky Flats Action Group. . ."

The tag requests a name, address, date found, and where found. The reverse side mentions the Colorado Nuclear Safeguard Initiative to be on the November ballot, suggests dropping a line to the Governor and U.S. Representative, and encourages joining the Continental Walk.

Media coverage of the Rocky Flats actions was great: all four TV stations covered it, one as the lead story. Two of the radio stations not only gave reports but want weekly updates of the progress and results of the balloon action. The radio reporters mentioned that a number of items on the Walk have come across the AP wires for some time.

The Walk which went through Denver on April 7, and is averaging 10 miles a day with a core of 10 walkers, has been having public meetings every night. The response has been terrific. One indicator of the response has been the food which has been donated: 20 loaves of bread, 40 pounds of bananas, 50 pounds of honey and 300 dozen eggs!

THE CONTINENTAL WALK ROUTES



THE CONTINENTAL WALK TIMETABLE

Timetable for the main route of the Walk:

Ukiah	January 23
San Francisco	January 31
Santa Cruz	February 8
Monterey	February 11
San Luis Obispo	February 21
Santa Barbara	February 29
Los Angeles	March 7
Riverside	March 13
Indio	March 19
Blythe	March 30
Phoenix	April 7
Las Cruces	April 25
Albuquerque	May 8
Amarillo	May 30
Oklahoma City	June 16
Wichita	June 27
Kansas City	July 18
Jefferson City	July 28
St. Louis	August 7
Springfield	August 13
Chicago	August 27
South Bend	September 2
Ft. Wayne	September 6
Toledo	September 12
Cleveland	September 21
Youngstown	September 25
Pittsburg	October 1
Washington, D.C.	October 16

Starting dates for some of the branch routes:

New Orleans	April 5
Boulder	April 5
Houston	April 10
San Antonio	April 11
Boston	August 6

(Branch route organizers are requested to send timetable information as soon as possible.)

COUNTY ORGANIZING

Rev. James Orange, SCLC organizer, has set up Mississippi by a county to county organizing style. Each of the 7 counties in Mississippi through which the Walk will pass is responsible for not only setting up food and housing for the walkers, but they are responsible for contributing at least 10 walkers, and getting the Walk to the next county.

Each county has a coordinator for that county as well as coordinators for: food, ID badges, leaflets, transportation, medical, entertainment, finance, clean-up and tents and housing.

VOLUNTEERS

The National Walk Office needs volunteers. Any who can help are encouraged to call 212-677-5455.

GREETINGS FROM BIKINI DAY MEETING

The delegates at the 3 day Bikini Day National Meeting send their "warmest greetings to the Continental Walk for Disarmament and Social Justice as well as to all the people who support the Walk."

From February 28 through March 1, 2300 delegates met in Tokyo, Shizuoka, and Yaizu, Japan to reaffirm and work for the elimination of all nuclear weapons.

The meeting, organized by Gensuikyo, called the Walk "a tremendous encouragement for the movement against atomic and hydrogen bombs here in Japan." They hope "that the Walk will create a great upsurge of movements all over your country, to convulse and destroy the U.S. nuclear strategic system." They wish us "to continue walking in high spirits and in good health through the long and difficult journey to Washington, D.C. in October."



photo by Alison Metcalf

Contingent of Buddhists on Walk in Indio, March 21.

SOUTHWEST OHIO ORGANIZING

Organizers in the Southwest Ohio area are proceeding with the idea of an "Alternative Exhibit" to the Air Force Museum. A group went through the Museum making mental notes as to places where supplemental materials would be appropriate.

An exhibit will be prepared in a professional manner and presented to the Museum, perhaps on August-6, with appropriate media coverage. Among the objectives of the exhibit will be to present a human view of what weapons do to people, to show the universality of suffering, contrast all this with the creativity or growth in nature, the cost of wars and weaponry, etc.

Another project being worked on is the Discover Dayton Map Alternative. This map would focus on institutions (e.g. workhouses, schools, etc.) that are oppressive and show those that work towards helping



photo by Alison Metcalf

Walking through Santa Cruz, February 7.

people (e.g. UFW, NOW, Welfare Rights, NAACP, etc.).

Each community in the region is responsible for one activity a month until the Walk begins.

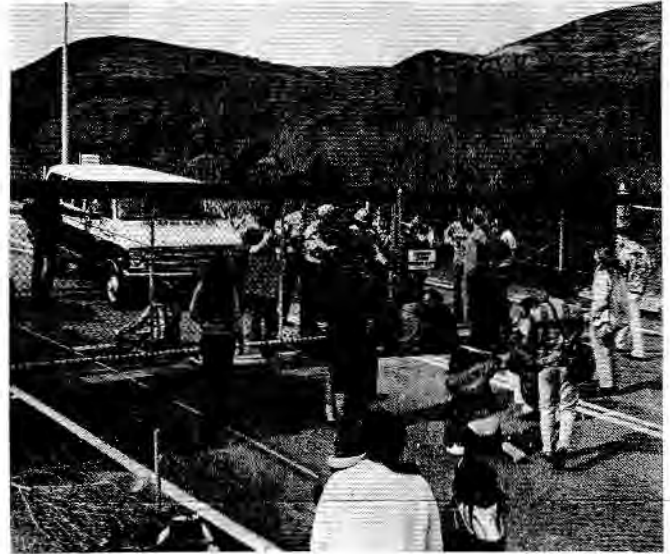


photo by Alison Metcalf

Arrests at Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant, February 22.

SAN ANTONIO ORGANIZING

San Antonio organizers will begin Walk activities on April 12 with a candlelight Walk in the city. On April 13 there will be a car caravan to Austin (80 miles) in order to join in with activities there on the 14 and 15. Education forums will be held at weekly intervals after that.

One of the education forums may be the American Issues Forum (mentioned in News No. 11) which is funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities. This forum to be titled "Swords and Plowshares" will include a Town Hall meeting, a slide lecture, a drama presentation, a film and panel discussion. San Antonio, a major military city, has just suffered a lay off of 15,000 personnel from one of its Air Force bases, so should be receptive to a discussion of conversion.

Those interested in more information should contact George Worthington (512-824-0026) or Jane Tuck (512-826-6068).



photo by Alison Metcalf

Los Angeles rally, March 7.

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the Walk, issues involved, and encouraged to join the Walk beginning at Dillard University April 5.

At 10 am the next morning Rev. Bernard Lee and Dr. Samuel Cook, President of Dillard University, briefly addressed the people and media before the Walk began. About 60 set out walking the first day heading towards Baton Rouge.

After the first day's walking, organizers sat down to map out a day to day schedule through the Deep South. People from Mississippi will join the Louisiana part of the Walk to bolster forces until the Walk reaches the better organized state of Mississippi. Jim Peck will remain with the Walk for the first week.

Next morning at 11:45, the walkers set off from Kenner (where the Walk stopped the first day) with a total of 12. Among the walkers were Bernard Lee, Rev. Harvey, Fred Taylor (SCLC director of chapters), Leon Wells (a blind, longtime activist from Mississippi), Rev. Sera, and Jim Peck.

The walkers proceeded only a mile when confronted by the Kenner police, who halted the Walk and threatened to arrest everyone if it continued along the highway. While Bernard Lee negotiated, the walkers sang "Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Round." The Kenner police didn't. After a checking-out by phone, they let the Walk go on.

The lap ended with a moving scene — on the lawn of the home of Gary Tyler (in St. Rose), Black frameup victim on death row in Angola prison and seeking a new trial. The walkers and Gary's mother stood in a circle singing "We Shall Overcome." Then, unexpectedly, a Black state trooper, who had been escorting the Walk since the incident with the Kenner police, gave a little talk in which he asserted that he is on our side, that he, himself, had participated in freedom marches. He received enthusiastic applause. We learned later that he was the first Black to obtain employment as a state trooper in Louisiana.

On the third day, St. Rose to LaPlace, the walkers were reduced to 7. But the walkers made up for the small participation by singing freedom songs most of the way. Upon reaching LaPlace, a spontaneous rally was held in the Black community. At first, complete apathy seemed to prevail. But, thanks to the enthusiasm of Fred Taylor and the freedom singing, the spirits rose and more people gathered, seemingly from nowhere. Rep. Avery Alexander joined in the speaking.

The rest of the week was devoted to workshops and mobilizing. The Walk resumed April 12 in Baton Rouge. For the next month, the walkers will be crossing Mississippi. They plan to reach the Alabama border around May 15.

NOTE TO READERS

For those who do not receive this *News* regularly and would like to, please drop us a line asking to be put on our *News* list. Donations to help with costs of mailing are needed and would be greatly appreciated.

Walkers Reach Phoenix

Phoenix, April 7

Since leaving Ukiah on January 23, the Walk has covered 1000 miles in 11 weeks time. Unlike California where there are many places to provide hospitality, the walkers are camping alot. (The walkers request that organizers try to find places along the road where they can camp without having to pay or be hassled, if there is no place to house them.) The number of long distance walkers has held steady at about 25.

On March 30 the Arizonans for Peace set up a speaking engagement with Daniel Ellsberg. This prelude to the Continental Walk was held on the Arizona State University campus in Tempe and drew about 500 people.

On Wednesday, April 7, the walkers entered Phoenix; walking to the State Capitol. There they planned activities which included the presentation of a letter, by the monks, from the Mayor of Hiroshima.

April 10, the walkers continue east toward New Mexico; and the White Sands Research facility.

On learning that Ronald Reagan will be in Phoenix at the same time as the Walk, walkers decided to hold a silent and nonviolent vigil outside the Phoenix Civic Plaza during Reagan's speech. The Walkers, whose message is that too much money has been spent in trillions of dollars of useless and dangerous weapons while social needs are ignored in the United States and abroad, invited people in Phoenix to join them.



photo by Alison Metcalf
Heading east outside of LA, March 9.

NEW ADDITIONS TO THE CALL

New signers to the Call include singer Pete Seeger and California Representative Don Edwards.

The Southern Organizing Committee based in Louisville, Kentucky, has joined as a cosponsoring organization. SOC, a two-year old organization, focuses on poor Whites and poor Blacks working together for economic freedom.