

## **Report/ Impressions from Miami.**

Several of us wearing UFPJ hats were been down here in Miami for the past week checking out the area and looking for spaces for convergence, IMC, FNB, Legal, medical as well as housing and action.

We met with folks from the following groups: Citizens Trade Campaign, Jobs with Justice, Miami Workers Center, PowerU, AFL-CIO, Rev. Lucy of the UU Church and interfaith group, "Mammals for Justice," the media working group staff of the Southern Floridian coalition as well as an adhoc group of local activist and advance out-of-towners.

## **What's Happening...**

"The FTAA Ministerial Meeting will be held at the Hotel Inter-Continental, with 500 participants expected, while the VIII American Business Forum, to be held the same week, will draw an estimated 1,000 participants a couple of blocks away, at the Hyatt Regency. Meanwhile, the Americas Trade & Sustainable Development Forum, with 250 people expected, will be held in between, at the Dupont Hotel, and at the Clarion Hotel, at 100 SE Fourth St."

### **I. Players:**

**Southern Floridians for Fair Trade Group** – unclear who all the groups are. Has a spokes council process made up of organizations/sectors/ working groups. Not quite clear. There is an outreach group and a media group (with 2 staff now). The media groups is working on a more offensive media plan. Miami has not real progressive political base, so mobilizing participation and support has been very difficult.

**National Coalition** – led mainly by the AFL-CIO is comprised of dozens of national groups.- Their main focus has been the People's Gala, the Mass March, and the Educational Forums. Many of these players have local reps working in the SFFTG, which seems to have created some challenges. Jobs with Justice has been working locally as well to mobilize union members.

**RootCause** – is an emerging alliance between three key people of color organizations. Miami Worker Center, PowerU and the Coalition of Imokalee Workers. Their overall goal is to organize communities of color into the global justice fight. They are planning a Community Impact Report, a 34 Mile March that will make some actions stops on the final day and a Unity Ceremony on the 19<sup>th</sup>.  
[www.rootcause.org](http://www.rootcause.org). Other creative activity is being explored

### **Florida Grassroots Direct Action folks**

- The Lake Worth folks have a fabulous puppet space to prepare for the Free Carnival Area

of the Americas.

- The Gainesville group is planning an action camp from Nov. 5-8 and a consulta on the 9th
- In Miami, there is some increasing organizing against the ordinance, looks like several other cities along the 34- mile march route are now trying to pass ordinances
- There is already some great community garden work underway
- Mammals for Justice and the FTAA Welcoming Committee have secured a march permit for Friday, 10 am assembly at the Miami Arena and then a route that loops around on Biscayne back to the Arena. The permit covers the arena until 7 pm. And the Biscayne part of the permit must be completed by 4:00 pm
- More folks from out of town are arriving and starting to coordinate as an adhoc group to support the local work underway to insure that the infrastructure and other advance organizing is moving along

## Actions Stuff

**Geography** [http://www.vidaamericana.com/miami\\_guide/maps.html](http://www.vidaamericana.com/miami_guide/maps.html)

Here is transportation info: [http://www.co.miami-dade.fl.us/transit/ride\\_guide/downtown.htm](http://www.co.miami-dade.fl.us/transit/ride_guide/downtown.htm)

**Highways:** Downtown Miami has two main areas that are divided by the Miami River. The northern part of downtown is bordered by two big overpass highways. To the north around 12<sup>th</sup> Street is I395. To the east it becomes one of the main bridges out to Miami Beach. To the West it becomes I836 and is the main road to the Airport. Around north 30<sup>th</sup> St. is the other main East/West Highway. To the east it is I195 which is a huge bridge out to Miami Beach and to the West it becomes 112 and it the other main highway to the airport. Interstate I 95 runs North/South essentially along 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. NW/SW in Downtown.

**Quadrants:** To the North the actual center of the city, is defined by Flagler Street and Miami Ave. This is important to know, since this is where the quadrants begin – NE, NW, SE and SW. There are Avenues that run North/South and the Streets run East/West. So there is a 1<sup>st</sup> Street and 1<sup>st</sup> Ave NE and a 1<sup>st</sup> Street and 1<sup>st</sup> Ave NW and so on.

**Bridges:** There are three bridges that connect the north to the south that are east of Highway 95. 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. SW, Miami Ave. and 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. SE. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave SE becomes becomes Brickell Ave on the Southpart of the city which is the Financial District.

**Financial District:** Crossing the bridge brings you to about SE 5<sup>th</sup> St. From there until about SE 15<sup>th</sup> St. you find one tall fancy building after another, all of them labeled after a Bank. Union Bank, Wachnova Bank and so on. If you go one block off of Bricknell to the east you hit highrise residential buildings and to the west is random stuff. So Bricknell is the main financial drag.

**Downtown;** The northern part is older. Largely immigrant and small businesses. It feels small and somewhat rundown. It completely closes down at night except along Biscayne Blvd which is dotted with older hotels, a fancy tourist market – Bayside Marketplace between NE 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Streets. The Amphi-theater where the Peoples' Gala and where the Nov. 20<sup>th</sup> Rally will be held is at Biscayne between NE 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Streets.

The **Intercontinental** sits at the end of Biscayne around 1<sup>st</sup> Street SE. The park is to the north and the water is to the west and south of it. So from the Intercontinental – if you

walk out of the entrance to Biscayne and turn left you will be around SE 1<sup>st</sup> Street, then Flagler then NE 1<sup>st</sup> St and the NE 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and then the entrance to the Bayfront Ampitheater. Biscayne is a big open four lane road with a parking area down the middle that divides the north and southbound lanes.

The expectation is that the fence will run from the water east across the park out to Flagler then turn south down the middle to SE 1<sup>st</sup> St. from here we have heard it may just continue straight down or turn east again to who knows where. We do know that they said everything south of Flagler will be closed to people without identification/credentials.

The **Hyatt Regency** is at SE 4<sup>th</sup> St. and SE 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. which becomes the bridge into the Financial District.

To the West around 1<sup>st</sup> Ave NW between Flagler and 3<sup>rd</sup> St, NW is the **Government Center** Area. There is the Court House, the County Building, a big Cultural Center and around 4<sup>th</sup> St. is the main Police Headquarters. There are several parks around this area that could be used for gathering sites.

Also to the West around NW 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave starting around 10<sup>th</sup> St. is the historic community of **Overtown**. This is a predominately poor, black area and there are concerns about protests rolling over into this community and drawing police.

Throughout downtown there are empty lots and other grassy areas.

## Action issues/Options

- Florida folk have consistently called for autonomous, decentralized actions because of concern for the police strategy and concern about
- People outside Miami are leaning toward mass actions.
- Root Cause is mobilizing immigrants and people of color to add their voices to the movement and want to insure that their folks are not put and any risk that they did not choose....

## II. Infrastructure

**Miami is expensive** and the mobilization needs money. Please start raising money now to support your group and to contribute to the overall grassroots effort. We are drafting a funding appeal that can go out over list serves and that will be done in a few days. United for Peace and Justice has agreed to collect money to support the grassroots effort.

[www.unitedforpeace.org/ftaadonate](http://www.unitedforpeace.org/ftaadonate)

**Housing is hard to find.** There are people working on it, but do not assume that there will be an abundance of open homes when you arrive. If you know people in Miami, encourage them to help open doors.

**Food** – We understand that Seeds for Peace is bring a mobile kitchen and that Food Not Bombs will also be coming. We are looking for a convergence space that will enable them to

work.

Legal and Medical are all underway

Media is also moving along, developing a good plan to counter the mis-information

We are on the verge of securing a convergence space.