

MYREKSQ i 3 a 414W 1
Friends of the Pathfinder Mural
191 7th Avenue
New York, NY 10011
April 4, 1991
Mr. Tabago Mafoli
African National Congress
801 Second Avenue
New York, NY 10017

Dear Mr. Mafoli,
I spoke to you on the phone today, inviting you or another ANC leader, to speak at a meeting on Saturday, April 20, in defense of the Pathfinder Mural and freedom of artistic and political expression.

As we talked about, the mural was vandalized for the second time a few weeks ago. Red paint was splashed onto the large portrait of Fidel Castro. The paint landed on the edge of his beard and spilled onto the portraits of other Cuban and Latin American leaders, including Jose Marti.

The April 20 meeting will begin at 7:30 P.M. The location has not yet been determined other than somewhere in New York City.

I've enclosed information about the mural that focuses on the previous attack as well as an example of the kind of statement others have sent. The response to the vandalism has been very good. Mayor Dinkin and the New York Council on the Arts sent a strong statement.

We are urging folks to show their concern by sending statements to the mayor's office (phone: 212-566-5090; fax: 212-791-9628). Please send any copies to our office at the address above.

Hoping to hear from you soon about the meeting on the 20th. You can call at our office (212) 727-8421 or me personally (718) 397-1112. A speakers platform of those in struggle which does not include the ANC is always lacking.

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In Struggle,

WM

Barbara Mutnick

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News MANHATTAN . BOROUGH PRESIDENT

POR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Contact: Albert Scardino

December 21, 1989

212/669-8141

DAVID N. bmxms '

STATEMENT ON THE DESECRATI N or THE "PATHFINDER" MURAL

The act of vandalism against thy "Pathfinder" mural depicting prominent figures in the strugglu for social justice merely domonstrates the unbalanced mentality, pointless venom and cowardice of the anonymous perpetrators.

The mural, which l- a result of the dedicated efforts.of artists from more than twonty countries, was two years in the making. Its dosocraton points to a lack of respect for the divorlity of opinion .and creative expression that characterizes what it means to be Amarlcan.

I urge law enforcement officials to do everything possible to apprehend the reaponuiblo person or persons and I call on New Yorkers of good will to join in rojecting acts of racial hostility, especially in this holiday season. I will try to aulllt ln the restoration of this important work.

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MUNICIPAL BUILDING. I CENTRE 81".. NINETEENTH FLOOR, NEW YORK. NY. 10007

Amsterdam News ,

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43, ;70:

- Pomp and pageantry mark

By CHARLES BAILLOU

Special to AmNews

List Sunday the Pathfinder

Mural was unveiled as I gather-

ing Incompanied I recording of

"God Bless Africa." the anthem

of the Anti-Apartheid freedom

fighters of South Africa

"This is the first non-abstract

political mural (mural in this

city in recent memory)." human

rights attorney William

Kunstler. told over 200 shiver-

ing personage gathered at Charles

and West streets off the End

Pathfinder mural unveiling

on River mid afternoon Sun-

day.

And former New York City

Mayor John Lindsay welcomed

this new artistic addition to the

city he led for eight years.

"Freedom of artistic and cul-

tural expression is a hallmark of

a genuinely open, democratic

society." he said in a letter to

the mural producers.

"The artists who have

Painted the Pathfinder Mural."

the former mayor added. "have

creatively put this freedom into

practice, enhancing the diver-

sity of public art available to all

New Yorkers. it "

The Mural, which spans the

South wall of the six story Path-

finder Press building on West

and Charles Streets, has over

150 radical and progressive

leaders and activists, past and

present, from throughout the

world.

Artists from 20 countries par-

ticipated in the \$125,000 pro-

ject. Spokespersons noted.

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GONE BUT 'M FORGOTTEN - Mural of Buhop am

foreground) and Mileolm X are prominent limite- on the Pathfinder

finds Mural in Greenwich Village. (Charles Bailloou Photo)

Among contributors are the

"It declares for all the world

New York State Council on the Arts to see our commitment to the

Arts/Cultural Council Founda-

tion, the Huburg Cultural

Council the Cultural Affairs

Department of New York City;

and private donors provided

funds and materials, the project

spokespersons said.

Malcolm McAllister, the

mural site director, who painted

a group portrait of V.I. Lenin.

Leon Trotsky and other

founders of the Communist In-

ternational, told the Amster-

dam News recently that artists

from countries of the chosen

subjects were taught to paint.
their compatriots. i

For example. South African
artist Dumile Feni painted a
portrait of Nelson Mandela.
And Carole Byard. an African-
American artist and teacher at
New York's Parsons School of
Design. painted a portrait of
Malcolm X.

In a mural dedication mu-
sic. Dennis Brutu. the exiled
South African poet and teacher.
put his view of the importance
of the mural this way: "In a
period of World War II activity
when many more were being
drawn into active involvement
in the political struggle" the un-
veiling of the Pathfinder Mural
is a landmark event.
world where there is peace and
justice for all We tribute our
heroes. men and women who
have gone before and we pledge
our determination to continue
the struggle. in spite of tem-
porary setbacks. until victory is
won.' _

CAROLE BYARD

THE STAR-LEDGER, Monday. November 20, 1989

Marx, Lenin, Castro stare out from NY. mural

NEW YORK (AP) A six-story-high mural lea-

luring Karl Marx, Vladimir Lenin, Fidel Castro, Malcolm X and other revolutionary leaders was dedicated yesterday in lower Manhattan.

Several hundred people sang along with talk singer Pete Seeger as several pennants which partially hid it were dropped to unveil the mural that covers the entire south wall at the Pathtinder building at no West St.

Known as "The Pathtinder Mural," its central image is at a press churning out publications with their authors depicted on sheets of paper that thicken into hooks.

Some of the portraits that appear include those of the leader of the Cuban revolution Ernesto Che Guevara, Russian revolutionist Leon Trotsky and German socialist leader and writer Frederick Engels.

"It's a tremendous victory," said Steve Clark, director of Pathfinder, which publishes revolutionary hooks and pamphlets. "There's no greater symbol

of freedom than Fidel Castro and Che Guevara."

The 10-foot-high and 85-foot-wide mural involved the collaboration of artists from 20 countries over the last two years at a cost of \$125,000.

Clark said residents of the neighborhood did not oppose the project, but criticism came from others, including Patrick Buchanan, a columnist and former aide to President Reagan.

The New York City Tribune called it "a veritable Mount Rushmore to communism." It also questioned why the New York State Council on the Arts contributed \$500 "while the Communist world is disintegrating."

John Morgan, deputy director of the Cultural Council Foundation, which distributes the council's funds in New York City, said a committee of eight people was split in its decision.

"I think they felt the artistic merits of the project warranted funding," he said. The remaining money was raised through contributions.

The State Department had denied visas to two foreign artists invited by mural organizers. One of those artists produced sketches which were then copied by other artists onto the mural.

But the mural did not draw enough attention in two years for local elected officials to take notice.

Councilwoman Ruth W. Messinger, the newly elected Manhattan borough president, said, "It is not something I know anything about so I can't comment on it."

Councilwoman Carol Greitzer, whose district includes Greenwich Village, said: "It's one building shows this kind of thing, I don't see it as a really hot issue. Who cares who's on it. It's not the kind of painting I would buy to hang up in my house."

NY

NEWSDAY, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23. 1989

Photo by Stephen Castagneto

A mural depicting revolutionary and civil rights leaders was vandalized this week.

Vandals Deface Mural

In Greenwich Village

In an act decried by Mayor-elect David Dinkins, vandals have defaced a Greenwich Village mural that depicts revolutionary and civil rights leaders from around the world.

Vandals splashed white paint over large sections of the 6-story, 85-foot-wide mural on a wall of the Pathfinder Press building at West and Charles Streets. The attack occurred between 9 p.m. Wednesday and 7 a.m. Thursday, said Meryl Lynn Farber, New York coordinator of the artists group that painted the mural.

Dinkins said in a statement yesterday that the vandalism "points to a lack of respect for the diversity of opinion and creative expression." He promised to support artists and activists in the restoration of the mural.

The mural, which conservative columnist Patrick Buchanan has called "Communists Mount Rushmore," was dedicated Nov. 19. It includes portraits of authors published by Pathfinder, including the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., communist leaders Karl Marx, V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky, and Latin American revolutionaries Che Guevara, -M.i.tch, Gelman

THE NEW YORK TIMES METROPOLITAN SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1989

Paint Is Flung on Mural; I
f B'Ottles Bear Swastika

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. V By DONATELLA 1.0ch

l ' The Pathfinder Mural, a 70-foot-high covers the south wall' of the building at Greenwich Village wall painting ln- 410 West Street, has elicited opposition gamma liartraklts otDMarh); Lnegmi Ftigel from the community.

'stro,eev.r.a,uer

:ang J r. and others, was splattered 'Attack'on Free Expression .

with paint on Wednesday night. Sam Manuel, the mural project di-

. e Six bottles of white oil-based paint la- rector, said, "This attack on the mural

! beled with swastikas and the "SS" in- is a serious attack on the freedom of

8W3 were hurled against the mural expression and is part of the attack on

/otHhe building occupied by the path. the right of the freedom of expression

'F/ under Press, which publishes writln 5 013mm"

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of work class and . David N. Dinkins, the Ma or-elect.

era and ?fvocates. CW rights th deplored the desecration of e mural

Some of the portraits damaged were and said the action showed a lack of re-

those of Dr. King and the antislavery spect tor the "diversity of opinion and

9 advocates Harriet 'mbman and So- creative expression that characterizes

joumer Truth. what it means to be American."

The He added that it "merely demon-

t mural, which 1385th wide and strates the unbalanced mentality,

pointless venom and cowardice of the

anonymous perpetrators." Mr. Dinkins

promised to assist in restoring the

work.

William M. Kunstler, a civil rights

lawyer who has been involved in the

mural project from the beginning, said,

"This is every bit as serious as the

burning of the cross and the desecra-

tion of a synagogue, especially at a

time when we are highlighting g asnost

around the world,"

Pathfinder Press said it had received

a telephoned bomb threat after editori- '

als in The Daily News and The New

York Post criticized the mural.

24-HourGuard Patrols . . , v ' , v W

The work was completed in Novem- The New York Times/Fred R.Conrud

her and features portraits of those

whose writings are ublished b Path- The Pathfinder Morel at West and Charles Streets in G

reenwich Vil-

finder Press. An intgmational tbeam of 138C W35 splattered With paint 0" Wednesday mght.

80 artists from more than 20 countries

painted the mural.

The project at one point was .issued a posting of handbills advertising an tion and the p

ainting of the mural.

bulldmg Vloation notlce mvolvmg scaf- open house for one of the artists. Path- The polic

e have made no arrests.

mm Y rm folding. Pm the city eventually granted tinder officials have said the State De-

Project officials said they would have

. W 0 m" ,a permit. In Deeember'1987, the De- partment denied visas for two foreign their

own 24-hour patrol guard the

A secun of the mural that was partment of Sanitation Issued 35 cita- iartists. The State

Department has mural. Mr. Manuel said restoration

' hit with a bottle of paint. tions totaling \$3,500 for unauthorized 'denied any connecti

on between its ac- would begin immediately.

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PATHFINDER

H'll-R-A- I.

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2: -191 Seventh Avenue. New York. NY 10011 W- Telephcne: (212) 727-8421

"Via

w York was vandalized for a second time.on March 17.

3 attack, along with the vandalism in December, 1989,

a serious blow against freedom of expression,

mocratic and political rights.

? am outraged that the Pathfinder Mural in

A two year international effort by more than 80

artists from 20 countries produced this mural which

features portraits of working class and revolutionary

Leaders The portrait of Fidel Castro, the prime

:arget of the recent attack, was'painted by Aldo Sole:

Avila, a noted Cuban artist.

? wish to add my name with other supporters of

democ:atic rights and artistic expression in

condemning these acts. We demand that New York

authorities fully investigate this c:ime, apprehend

:hose responsible, and prosecute them to the full

ex:ent of the law.