

ANATHEMA

Volume II Issue VI

Free

June 2016

WHY CLARKVILLE?

"I just wish they knew what we were all about," Brendan Hartranft, co-owner of Clarkville in West Philadephia, was quoted as saying mournfully in a West Philly Local article the day after the bar was covered in paint and graffiti in late May. Indeed, as locals wrote in comments and discussions online, Clarkville is just a slightly too expensive spot with mediocre pizza. Yes, it's a product of gentrification, as its displacement of former neighborhood favorite Best House indicates, but gentrification has been happening in that area for years. Why should Clarkville in particular be targeted?

One answer is that Clarkville's aesthetic and prices are clearly intended to attract and serve a particular class of gentrifiers. Its sign is in a style reminiscent of Fishtown or Williamsburg and of the takeover of those areas by chic hipster establishments whose existences depend on the destruction of others', specifically of poor black and brown populations. Its location across the street from the contested future condo [continued on page 4]

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE AUTONOMOUS MAY DAY DEMO

On May 1, 2016, a number of masked people marched down Chester Ave in West Philadelphia to Clark Park in a May Day march in solidarity with prisoners, putting up stickers and handing out flyers to passersby, and at one point apparently throwing paint bombs at the police substation on the way.

In the lead-up to the event, a number of questions were raised about the efficacy and ethics of this tactic. What's the point of a march that's just 20 or 30 people in disguise? Won't attacks like these bring on even more repression for black and brown people? Why this neighborhood and not downtown where the power is? Why didn't the march work with the organizations that already exist to mobilize around these issues? This article will present a short analysis of some of these aspects of the demo.

The amount and composition of people necessary in order to have a successful march are completely dependent on the march's goals. A group of 15 people can [continued on page 5]

OUR OWN TIMELINES

"It is through acting and learning to act, not propaganda, that we will open the path to insurrection, although propaganda has a role in clarifying how to act. Waiting only teaches waiting; in acting one learns to act."

March 15th, June 11th, May Day, New Years Eve, Black December, and so many more opportunities exist for us take action for ourselves and for comrades who share our struggle without having to wait for some rich asshole or brash cop to make the news. Acting on our own initiative in moments of relative social peace is a way to sharpen our teeth and strengthen our bonds. It allows us to build momentum and fight off complacency when things would otherwise seem dull and boring. There have been a few such actions that take place here and so many more that could.

There are many calls put out nationally and internationally to concentrate struggle against a specific aspect of domination or act in solidarity with certain rebels. These calls are an opportunity to act on our own terms as anarchists, one way of acting outside the often exhausting sense of urgency that comes with responding to every crisis, or conversely a way to act even when it feels like "nothing is happening here." When we step outside of responding to a particular egregious act here or there we clarify our positions as against institutions and power altogether and prevent the cooption of liberals who want to water down our fight, portray it as against the "brutality" of the police or the "corruption" of capitalism instead of against domination altogether. Solidarity actions for struggles that feel distant are a way to send love and strength to rebels who face the repression of the state while disrupting the attempts to isolate them.

Showing solidarity and responding to calls is also a way for us to ensure we deepen the affinities we have locally. Any action we take is an opportunity to learn more about ourselves and how we can better act. We learn how different people's knowledges and skills come together to create moments of revolt and we can reconfigure to improve or do differently. Taking action while the social peace remains intact allow us to initiate ourselves, to teach ourselves how to resist and how to stop waiting. [cont. next page]

[*WHY CLARKVILLE? continued*] development project, 4224 Baltimore, paves the way for a future wave of gentrifiers to feel at home. Still, though, Clarkville is a small, locally-owned business and far from the only one in the area that caters to that clientele. Shouldn't we be focusing on our real enemies, the developers?

But Clarkville is not just a locally owned business that happens to be across the street from a future condo development. It is a project of U3 Ventures, the real estate development firm that is also partnered with the 4224 Baltimore condo project, that aims to secure the area as a bastion of development and, inevitably, displacement. U3 Ventures' website explains: "U3 Ventures' project at 4301 Baltimore will signal a change in the retail market on this stretch of Baltimore Avenue. The project will increase the activation of this key corner, bringing life to the street during both day and evening hours and providing tremendous benefit to the neighborhood. Success at 43rd and Baltimore will leverage further retail redevelopment in the surrounding vicinity, hopefully inducing more, currently dormant retail space back into the supply."

What U3 Ventures is describing is not literally the activation of a dormant street corner, since this corner was never not lively to begin with. What U3 is referring to is the corner's dormancy relative to the capitalist market. U3's project is to generate value by bringing previously valueless/less valuable land into the marketplace. Development necessarily proceeds through this type of accumulation, which is only possible because the existent area and the people who live in it — in this case, majority black poor people — have relatively little value in the eyes of the socioeconomic system. In West Philly, this enables the violent expropriation of houses and businesses from those who previously inhabited them, through evictions, rent hikes, neighborly calls to the cops, criminalization of homelessness and of so-called disreputable acts.

The silent partners behind Clarkville, Omar Blaik and Tom Lussenhop, are the primary engineers of the past two decades of rampant development and dispossession in West Philadelphia. From 1997 to 2006 (when he went on to found U3 Ventures), Blaik led the University of Pennsylvania's massive \$2 billion construction and development effort, a project so vast and violent to the area around it that it required the construction of a whole new private security force, University City District (UCD), to guard the expanding university and its students from the surrounding area.

This expansion by U Penn is part of an ongoing project of colonization, but not because the neighborhoods it is taking over were intact before gentrification, as many anti-gentrification activists have implied. The original colonization of the Lenape [4]

territories that we now call Philadelphia has never technically ended — colonization's erasure in the public consciousness, accompanied by the continued accumulation of wealth into the capitalist economy, are just its current manifestations.

To say, as some commentators have suggested, that the problem is that Clarkville and businesses like it don't quite fit into the area, or that Clarkville doesn't do enough for the community it's in, drastically reduces the complex histories of domination that made Clarkville's existence possible. Clarkville is just the latest and most obvious territory grab in a longterm, calculated plan to develop land that comes at the expense of others. Real estate development is one of the most obvious strategies of a white supremacist, capitalist socioeconomic system to expand under the guise of neighborhood revitalization. Regardless of its owners' particular intentions and feelings, Clarkville is part of an ongoing colonial project that allows the economy to maintain itself, accruing capital for some and ensuring the misery of others.

How, then, to proceed against gentrification and the racist and capitalist system that it maintains? We have to stay critical about the ways in which the strategies and tactics considered legitimate are ones created by and in the service of those whose interests are antagonistic to ours. Tactics like community meetings with developers are planned in order to recuperate resistance to projects — they offer a way for people's voices to be heard, but their input will never actually stop a project from happening. Policy changes to create affordable housing or stop real estate speculation cannot possibly end the exploitative economic system itself.

Meanwhile, vandalism against the forces of gentrification has been a visible strategy in Phily for a while (with targets recently including UCD warehouses, condos, OCF Realty, and the Bar(n) as well as Clarkville). Vandalism has its own obvious limits, but it points to the possibility of more direct struggle against gentrification that doesn't waste energy trying to work with people who will never be on our side. What would it look like for more autonomous and direct activities against gentrification to expand and intensify? How can different approaches, including more aboveground organizing, support one another in their efforts against gentrification? By focusing on questions like these, we can move towards a more intensive and effective struggle against dispossession and domination. ★

HOTLINE OPENS AS MORE RAIDS ON IMMIGRANT FAMILIES EXPECTED

Unfortunately, "direct action to prevent arrests is not on the agenda," but unless people step up this is what we have; "The NSM 24-hour hotline to report a raid in progress is 267-333-9530" ★

ACTIONS SINCE OUR LAST ISSUE

Dec: Anti-police poster celebrating Black December are put up around South Philly.

Jan 22: International Day of Action in Solidarity with Trans Prisoners. A letter writing and know your rights event is followed by a noise demonstration outside the federal prison.

Feb 6: In Reading, PA an anti-fascist and pro-immigration counter-protest confronted and drowned out an anti-immigration rally. The anti-fascists insulted and blocked sight of the rally which promptly dispersed when its permit expired after a few hours.

Feb 6: Despite Roosh V cancelling his international meetup of pro-rape men's rights activists demonstrations took place everywhere against rape culture. Philly's demonstration included smashing a pinata featuring Roosh V's face and people speaking out against gendered violence.

Feb 23: Eddie Africa denied parole again by the PA Parole Board. Feb 27: Posters in solidarity with the ZAD in France go up in Center City. LAZ parking lots are specifically targeted because of their financial connection to the airport project.

Mar 3: Four University City District buildings have their locks glued, a camera removed and are tagged with slogans against police and gentrification.

Mar 12: A police traffic stop in Chester, PA led to a shoot out between police and two people in a car. A police officer was shot as well as both people in the car, one of whom died. A crowd formed at the scene of the shooting and some fought with police.

Mar 22: Anti-prison posters are put up in South Philly in solidarity with the prisoners in Holman prison in Alabama.

Mar 30: Crypto-fascist neofolk bands on tour have their van attacked. Its tires were slashed, windows were broken, and its windshield and sides were painted.

May Day (May 1): A march in solidarity with prisoners puts up stickers and tags, and paints a police substation in West Philly.

May 2: Two school police officers were beaten and knocked to the ground after trying to break up a fight in Northeast Philly.

May 26: Clarkville is tagged with an anti-gentrification slogan as well as having paint thrown on its surveillance cameras, windows, and signage. ★

[ON OUR OWN TIMELINE continued...]

When times seem slow and uneventful we let ourselves stagnate, but imagination and revolt are like muscles: the less we use them the weaker they become. We can push back the boredom of less eventful times and point toward insurrection. Solidarity actions and struggling on our own timelines is a way we can create momentum and tension when there isn't much. Regardless of whether our own actions land us in a moment of widespread revolt immediately we will still have broken through the social peace and lived anarchy even if only briefly.

A few examples of action taken responding to calls for solidarity or focused action shine through locally. Every year Lief Erikson Day keeps local fascists from being able to organize a visible street presence. Last year the racists were too intimidated to even show up until nightfall after all their opposition had left, only to be greeted by anti-fascist graffiti. Every year this event draws in new people and creates a space for conflictual direct action. In the cold of the recent blizzard, different efforts came together to answer the call for a day of solidarity with trans prisoners. A letter writing event and know your rights training in the day time was followed by a loud, rowdy noise demonstration outside of the federal prison in Center City. These two examples point to not needing to wait for some wrong to upset us into action, although we shouldn't foreclose on that avenue either. Hopefully this year will be even more interesting.

Fighting on our own timeline allows us to improve our practice, maintain a conflictual presence and make our positions clear. In the face of isolation, stagnation, and boredom we can respond by answering to the calls for attack and solidarity. ★

STAND WITH THE UNION BOSSES, OR SABOTAGE?

via Anarchadelphia

I'm curious why I don't see more outright solidarity from the self-proclaimed "reds" in the city with local striking workers. I've seen them attending every possible kind of demonstration, but never supporting strikes (like some west coast anarchists have done in recent years in the ports), taking actions against scab sites and employers (like some of the union members with some sort of teeth), or reaching out to the frustrated at more reformist rallies (the way the insurrecto-oriented have been doing against prisons and the police, locally).

I don't find any promise in the possibility of the (ever-dwindling) working class uniting and rising up to overthrow anyone, let alone even pursuing a non-hierarchal society—and even if I did, I don't believe unions would be the medium to achieve this. But, red anarchists purport to believe just that, suggesting it would be in their interest to participate in such a way. Yet, they seem more likely to be organizing with college kids and liberals at a \$15 & a union rally — or so it seems to me.

This crosses my mind with the passing of May Day, as I remember picketing workers infiltrating a car show and trashing it at the convention center, as I watch the CWA striking against verizon again, and further reports of sabotage unsanctioned by said union against Verizon's fiber optic infrastructure circulate. Whether the CWA does not, in fact, condone the sabotage or is trying to keep its hands clean begins to illustrate its limitations, and the complete absence of radical unions like the IWW from anything substantial since the first red scare illustrates theirs. The last local news of note we've had from the IWW, in fact, includes an absolute failure around organizing a South Street Workers' Strike (was that in the '90's?), to scandals resulting in the booting of certain "esteemed" local anarchists over financial discrepancies, to an article in support of striking Santander Bank employees in Spain. This is hardly the stuff of a restless, growing, anticapitalist mass. [continued on the next page]

[*AUTONOMOUS MAY DAY continued*] walk through the streets holding a banner and wheatpasting posters along the way, or they can launch a brief attack on a particular target and then quickly disperse. A group of 50 people who are mostly from the neighborhood that the march is happening in might have more success inviting people who they know along the way to join the march and pick up more momentum that way. A group of 100 people can temporarily hold off police with fireworks or rocks while other attacks happen. A group of 200 people can block and hold an intersection downtown while hosting a lengthy public rally.

There's no reason that a march needs to be that large, though. In fact, at least in the current context of Philadelphia, expanding the number of people can mean diluting the intensity of the march — people will have less prior connection and trust between each other, there will probably be more people there who will try to police various tactics, and having cops or infiltration at the march will be more likely. We only tend to assume that a demo has to be hundreds of people because that is the model of nonviolent protest in Philly and elsewhere that has become mainstreamed and legitimate, and the reason it is legitimate is because it is the lowest level threat to the status quo. Whether your goal is to get noticed or to do material damage, it's important to stay experimenting with the form a demo takes and not become stagnant in received ideas about what we should be doing.

There are many significant reasons to step outside the general protest culture in Philly at this moment and strengthen informal networks for action and coordination outside of the organizations that currently exist. For one thing, the extreme number of police at demos downtown over the past year not only greatly limits what kind of activities are possible, but also makes it more risky for many people to attend in the first place. The downtown location, usually revolving around government buildings, means way more surveillance and security. Most protest organizers and participants don't seem to have peoples' safety and security in mind, as they raise suspicions against people wearing masks and denounce attempts at more rowdy actions before the police do.

In contrast, the apparent organization of the May Day demo through word of mouth, instead of the internet, allowed the march to happen without any police presence at all. Everyone wore similar outfits, with as much of their bodies and faces covered as possible, so that no one at the demo could be identified and targeted on the basis of their race or gender. Along with the choice of location and the more antagonistic attitude of the march itself, these choices led to what seemed, based on debriefs afterwards, to be an empowering and secure experience.

And while large, organized demos have their place if your priority

is to build a mass movement and raise public awareness, the proliferation of more confrontational and destructive actions and attacks is absolutely necessary in order to dismantle the socioeconomic order. The state is not going to wither away if it's confronted solely by people growing more of their own food or holding more public meetings for their organizations, though these are also important strategies. The spreading of all these strategies — self-determination, visible organizing, anonymous attacks and mass actions — is vital to fighting the state. There's no reason that existent organizations should feel threatened by activities outside their purview that also struggle against similar issues. In fact, much of the potential success of struggles against power lies in their ability to be unpredictable and uncontrollable.

Autonomous actions like this demo are planned in order to prioritize its participants' security and safety while empowering people to launch their own small attacks against a miserable world. Obviously this type of action is not enough, but it would be inaccurate to say that there's no point or strategy involved. Some of those strategies might be empowerment and revenge for the marginalized, building skills and courage for more intense attacks in the future, fighting isolation by encountering people with similar desires, and building radical networks and relationships amongst those looking beyond the compromised political options currently on offer.

There are also questions remaining that deserve serious consideration. What can we do about the popular association of black bloc aesthetics with white manarchists, while still prioritizing peoples' anonymity and safety? How can encounters like this demo more intentionally support people who may feel excluded or that they are not invited, whether that climate results from racial dynamics, a sentiment of not being "cool enough," or something else? We invite participants and critics of the demo tactic to consider these questions and to keep attacking in the ways they can. ★

[UNION BOSSES V SABOTAGE continued]

The Prison General Strike this September, as called for by some Texan prisoner wobblies, could bring about the first functional endeavor of the IWW in almost a century, however, and I'm excited to see it happen. Maybe this is the long overdue tactical transition the reds have been searching for in response to the recuperation of workers as increasingly comfortable consumers?

I would love to be proven wrong in such a way. I don't agree with many red anarchist goals or tactics, but please make a go of it and prove me wrong; show me why these things are a good idea. Don't tell me, I cut my anarchist teeth on Berkman and Goldman and abandoned a union that proved useless to my needs, but try to make these things happen if that's what you actually believe in.

And sometimes I wonder what it would look like for such ideas to come to fruition. For red anarchists acting in kind with striking workers against fiber optics developing a temporary, tangible, action-oriented affinity with green anarchists, for instance. What other avenues might we find intersections on? ★



CAMOVER MONTREAL

In **CAMOVER**, you play a group of humans confronted with an invasion of cameras in a gentrified neighborhood. The struggle against the cameras is important, but your own survival is essential! To win you must form teams with friends in your neighborhoods and destroy as many cameras as possible. The game takes place throughout the summer. At the end, the neighborhood with the most points wins the game.

**Let the vandalism begin!
Let's make our summer nights
magical and vibrant!**



BRAZILIAN BRANCH OF SANTANDER BANK FIREBOMBED IN RESPONSE TO CALL FOR SOLIDARITY

via Insurrection News

"On the night of March 9, we placed an incendiary device at the Santander bank branch on Ramiro Barcelos street. Our incentive to conspire and then carry out the attack was solidarity and complicity with anarchists behind bars who endure days and days of incarceration but still hold their heads high, proud of their ideas and convictions...

"There are many reasons and motives to attack Santander Bank. For example, besides being representatives of the Spanish state (who have kidnapped our companeros), in this territory they were the administrators of Augustus Pinochet's money following the military dictatorship in Chile. In the end, these facts are only details that enhance our anger... Any banking institution that tries to hide their genocidal intentions with 'cultural projects' or other pseudo-humanist terms are representatives of a system that only inspires our disgust." ★

Terms of Engagement

1. Preparation

Speak with your friends and gather a small affinity group. Walk around your area and identify the potential targets. During the scouting, take care to note the following aspects for each target: where to mask up without being seen, where to position the lookouts, and where the exit route will be.

Gather the following items:



mask, gloves & unidentifiable clothing



extinguisher / hammer / rope / spraypaint / rocks

2. Sabotage

The night has arrived. Choose the right tool and be on your way. Position the lookouts, mask up at the predetermined spots and check that no one sees you. Carry out the act of sabotage and then take the exit route as quickly as possible.

3. Let people know

Count up your points: one for each camera. Write a short text recounting the actions and send it to milcounter-info.org. You can also attach an image or video to the text. If you manage to leave with any of the destroyed cameras, get creative: pose with them, dance with them, turn them into puppets or an art installation.

Why play?

- To develop skills that can be used in many situations: using certain tools, planning actions, becoming unidentifiable, escaping from the police, communicating during these types of moments.
- Developing and nourishing complicity and affinity between friends through action.
- Transform our relationships to our neighborhoods: develop an intimate knowledge of the streets, the buildings, the alleys, etc.
- Make the neighborhood safer: for people whose daily activities are criminalized (drug dealers, sex workers, etc.), for graffiti writers, and for those who wish to struggle against systems of domination.

For camera mapping in Montreal:
montreal.sous-surveillance.net

To post communiques of your actions:
mtlcounter-info.org

Using rope

- Attach a small object, such as a piece of wood, to a rope.
- Throw the rope over the camera arm.
- Grab the two ends of the rope and pull!

How to fill an extinguisher with paint

- The right extinguishers are silver and have a nut and a valve. They can be found in apartment buildings and restaurants.
- Empty the extinguisher by squeezing the trigger, and remove the top by unscrewing the nut. Pour in a mix of latex paint and water, with a 1:1 ratio.
- Replace the top and pressurize the extinguisher with a bike pump or a pressurizer, to 100 PSI.
- Use gloves while touching the extinguisher to avoid leaving fingerprints on it. It's a good idea to wear a raincoat to keep the spray off your clothes.

CALL OUT: MONTH FOR THE EARTH AND AGAINST CAPITAL, JUNE 5 - JULY 5

Via Contra-Info

Translated by Scott Campbell

"The struggle occurs in a given territory, with very specific characteristics, with very specific enemies and their particularities, to know all these elements is our responsibility."

It is time to deepen the struggle against the state, against capital, and against the forms they use to continue to perfect their means of dominion over us. Different materials for spreading information and reflection have been developed in recent times. Blogs, magazines, newspapers and countless other materials have been produced by compañeros with different contours but with the same intention: to contribute to the social war from an anti-authoritarian and offensive perspective.

In the same vein, four years ago the "Month for the Earth and Against Capital" began with the idea of promoting various struggles that were taking place locally, regionally and globally against the infrastructure of capital. Getting ahead of the advance of the state and capital involves thinking about what its path is and why, and also involves acting to simultaneously hold up both matters for reflection. The type of knowledge needed by those truly trying to transform reality arises from the struggles themselves and not from information conceived of by and for the imposed order. The domination we suffer is not organized or created in chaos but responds according to a certain logic. That does not mean that the processes and results of domination are entirely transparent but it does mean that it is possible to better prepare and confront their plans.

To strengthen the different struggles, to learn from different experiences and to contribute reflections become, then, a necessity and a real possibility for these times. Today our territories are passing through transformational models with cruel outcomes for freedom and survival. To go on the offensive ceases to be just a dream when transformative choice begins to direct our desires. That was and is the Month for the Earth, another contribution, a specific one, on the path of social revolution. The dynamic has been that of knowing the enemy: its strengths, its weaknesses, how it functions, how it functions in us, etc...

As well, the reflections, writings and other actions of the Month for the Earth have sought to make visible the importance of certain types of struggle, struggles within the same mold that attack the development and supports of capital. The majority of the dead in this social unrest, in the different struggles today against capital, belong to the struggles in defense of territory, struggles against the advance of extractive infrastructure and its world. In these kinds of struggles our stance has always been clear on one point: to revive, to strengthen and to learn from certain forms of existing relationships (such as the many values of community and solidarity) is useful, but our responsibility should be to do away with the very roots of the system of domination and all that supports it. Capitalism continues its restructuring, continues reproducing the values that sustain it, but it encounters resistance. Our responsibility is for that resistance to become the momentum which allows for a move to the offensive, to go forward, that will let us be protagonists of real transformations to new forms of living as the enemies and adversaries of domination and power.

The very development of capitalism, its restructuring, shows us how the powers in the world are leading us to new states of dominion where war is a constant that without interruption threatens large parts of the population. While some live an internal, "soft," low-intensity war between militarization and impossible norms, others suffer old-fashioned bombings and lootings, though both worlds have more in common than we usually allow. The edges of each are ever more uncertain, people sprayed with pesticides, displaced by disasters cynically called "natural", the policing of life, the urbanization of poverty, and the dependence on energy and technology mix with militarized neighborhoods, those displaced by fighting or bombing.

Depending on the place we were born, capital reserved a use for us, but we have other options. We can accept the dividing up of the world, their new chains called "crisis" and their predetermined fates, or we can accept that the will knows nothing of fate. The Month for the Earth and Against Capital is not so important. It doesn't have meaning as a "singular effort," it belongs to the thousands of synergistic efforts, its work has already been done, reproduced and perhaps surpassed. If it ends, its efforts have already served their purpose. However, again and again a new need arises and we must redouble our strength, must redouble the reflection, information and above all, must redouble the action based around the world we radically want to transform. ★