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RESISTANCE ESCALATES IN PHILLY

JUST AS BAD

Anarchic destruction briefly exploded in Philly on the evening of Inauguration Day, as 40-50 masked-up people descended on the eastern end of South St, painting and smashing the windows of businesses, jumping on cars, barricading roads and holding banners reading “FTP: Fuck the President” before turning south on 6th St. Police were absent during the demonstration and no arrests were made. No mentions of this highly successful and unusual show of force against capital and the state have been made so far in the mainstream media.

The demonstration, called “No More Presidents,” was organized anonymously [*continued next page*]

GENERALIZABLE STRIKE

In the past few weeks, there have been two calls for general strikes, one on February 17 and one on March 8. These calls seem so far to have mostly produced skepticism and critique from the Left, rather than organization and action. Concerns have included, but are not limited to: the observation that unions do not have the power to back strikes at this time, that mass strikes today cannot possibly have any relationship with what they looked like in the past, that activists are too distant from the working class, and that a general strike would be an escalation with no context, given the relative dearth of worker-based organizing today.

While it is nice to see the Left finally acknowledge the irrelevance of its own strategies, these seem like the wrong reasons to be dismissive of the call for a general strike. While most of us think “workers refusing to work” when we hear about a strike, general strikes in 2017 have morphed into a form of mass action that is no longer the domain of “the worker,” nor take place within the sphere of production. [*continued on page 5*]

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in addition to the economy, of course. Preceded in Philly by the Wing Bowl – a trashy exploration of grotesque gluttony renowned for its harassment of women by the 20,000 sports fans in attendance – its hard to imagine that these are the sort of fans that would be swayed by symbolic gestures that even ESPN commentators largely portrayed as disruptive to game play.

I found the most interesting aspects of the Super Bowl to be at its periphery in the form of large banner drops in the city surrounding the stadium, the actions of non-celebrities; but the most dynamic things are yet to occur and will likely have nothing to do with sport. I say this as an athlete and a former fan. I say this as someone who gapes in awe at the athletic prowess, though critical of the underdevelopment of other aspects of our capacities when we hyper-focus on sports. I say this as someone who advocates for the benefits of physical activity in health, strength, mood, friendship and even intellectual growth. Still we see radicals' engagement with professional sports, whether for nostalgia's sake or to "meet the people where they're at," failing to do anything more than lower the point from which their capacities to think for themselves begin.

Certainly we can learn teamwork and community through these activities, though obviously with some sacrifice, but the professional levels incorporating business into play are of course a fierce bastardization of what it once meant to frolic. My mental response to this is images of luddites smashing looms and witches dancing in the forest. Then I return to the rapturous memory of being caught up in ludic, playful, joyous movements and begin to recognize the formalization of play into sport as confinement concurrent to other methods of entertainment sold back to us that keep us complacent. An allusion, perhaps, to the reasons a sports riot is not nearly as dangerous to the status quo as a riot over a child being shot by the police.

I recall passing a run-down field in Philadelphia, with young children in helmets and full pads running football drills before their vitriolic coach, who was berating and punishing them for their poor performance. There must be some way to compare the now notorious risk of brain damage from the high-impact sport to the mental anguish that further reinforces performative gender roles as their female peers practice cartwheels and cheers on the other side of the field. Some way to speak to the jingoism that translates so well from local team to nation-state, and the metaphors for war carried out on others. There must be some way, but for now I am at a loss. ★

Colin Kopernick made waves well beyond the NFL last year by kneeling during the nation's anthem, in addition to other engagements with Black Lives Matter dialogues. Now, multiple Super Bowl champions (including two that previously raised their fists in solidarity with Kopernick during the anthem) are turning down a trip to the White House with the rest of their team. There was also much fear by those who sought to profit from the game as to what Lady Gaga might do during the Super Bowl halftime show to protest the presidential administration, before she eventually began her act by singing “God Bless America.”

When sport became industry, the beauty that blossomed from the joy of play got torn out by its very roots, according to Eduardo Galeano. But he goes on to say that sport and fatherland are always connected, and politicians and dictators often exploit those links of identity. The sport he refers to is soccer, and since it has some history of anarchist teams and antifascist hooligans attempting to balance out their polar opposites, it is largely in a different category than the younger, relatively militarized sport of American football that seems to be vying for god and country, always.

While there is a notable history of protest in sport – from black power fists atop Mexico City's Olympic podiums to Muhammad Ali throwing his Olympic medal in the Ohio River in opposition to the Vietnam War, to name two of the more famous occurrences that happen to fall in the same decade – these are symbolic gestures that gained great notoriety because of the public status of the persons doing them.

But again, we become obsessed with the potential of protest at the Super Bowl. The gaudiest, most-watched, most American celebration of big-budget advertising gimmicks and celebration of nation that we have. It is the championship game for the millionaire-making National Football League, which only recently ended its status as a non-profit. It generated record highs for wireless data providers, likely furthering their revenue. Commentary on the game helped water down class consciousness (or resentment of an exploitative wealthy class) by celebrating superstar quarterback Tom Brady as a "worker" and selling us on a boot-strapped American dream. Even the potentially protest-oriented advertisements are about the ways to improve the nation,

Time and again I've heard it suggested in a meeting that we should remain peaceful because to act violently makes us just as bad as the banks, politicians, police, or nazis that we find ourselves struggling against. This kind of assertion is not only untrue, it shifts the focus away from all the peaceful behaviors that are actually “just as bad” as the systems we're trying to fight against. Images of white nationalist Richard Spencer getting punched are causing many to ask, “Is it ok to punch a nazi?”. I want to answer with a definitive yes, and also go into why trying to stop anyone from doing it (except maybe when a cop is nearby) is what is really “just as bad.”

When someone says that violent or confrontational actions are the same as oppressive systems, the truth is they don't know what they're talking about, because one is much worse [*continued page 10*]

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WHAT WENT DOWN

JANUARY 20 Protests against the presidential inauguration fill Center City in the afternoon. A black bloc marches on South St attacking businesses and cars, and barricading streets before dispersing without arrests.

JANUARY 26 Police cars vandalized with paint during anti-Trump protests.

FEBRUARY 1 Prisoners riot and take hostages at the Vaughn Correctional Facility in Smyrna, DE to protest conditions and the Trump Administration

FEBRUARY 7 Giant "MAKE AMERICA NOTHING AGAIN" graffiti appears along the Schuylkill River.

FEBRUARY 7 White power internet radio station Micetrap Radio cancelled after their web host was knocked offline by hackers.

FEBRUARY 7 "VOTING FAILED PREP FOR RIOTS" graffiti appears in West Philly. ★

RESISTANCE ESCALATES CONTINUED

and publicized off of facebook. Aside from basic information, the only instructions on the flier that was circulated were: “crew up, mask up, show up.” The apparently informal and secure organization of the march seems to have permitted the relative safety and success of its more militant approach — police did not seem to know in advance that it was happening, and did not show up to its meeting point. Its lack of demands or instruction opened space for a decentralized group of people to express their disgust and desires in more material ways than are permitted by other marches in Philadelphia. Its not being claimed by a formal organization also makes it much harder for police to target and punish anyone for what ended up happening at the demo (attention so far seems to have landed on Philly Antifa, due to the alleged presence of antifascist flags at the march).

There is very little, if any, precedent for demonstrations involving property destruction in Philadelphia over at least the past two decades. The level of damage also exceeded that of most of the reported clandestine attacks that have proliferated in the city over the past few years since the dissolution of Occupy Philly (as far as we know, the last incidence of a business getting its windows

smashed was in August 2013 when a lone person threw a brick through the window of the OCF Realty coffeehouse on 20th and Federal streets. That person was never apprehended).

Over the past few years, multiple attempts have been made to hold autonomous demos that could operate outside the control of formal organizations. These have had varying levels of success, with most not being able to get started due to very low turnout and/or police presence at the meet-up point. Reportbacks published from the anarchist demo in West Philly on May Day of this past year indicated a police-free march, during which a couple of paint bombs were thrown at a closed police substation on Chester St. The most antagonistic demo in recent years was the march in solidarity with Ferguson in August 2014, at which police were mobilized from the beginning and eventually arrested two participants after paint was thrown at an officer’s car.

For the most part, though, there is little context in Philadelphia for what happened on January 20. Aside from the mass demonstrations and infamous police brutality that swept the city during the Republican National Convention in July 2000, confrontational demonstrations of contempt for those in power have basically not been on the map. Assumptions about the superiority of nonviolent protest, community organizing and reformist campaigns dominate the local radical consciousness, even when accompanied by militant rhetoric in public, to the explicit exclusion of other modes of action and organizing. But the seeds of antagonistic struggle, sown over the past few years with the gradual rise of more secretive and autonomous styles of attack and action, are now coming to fruition under the Trump administration, as more conflictual and disruptive approaches are gaining public acceptance. As one reportback about the #J20 protest noted, “This shit is officially still possible in Philly,” and we should expect to see more of it. ★

PHILLY J20 REPORTBACK

via itsgoingdown.org

It’s not because Trump won. It’s not because Hillary lost. Its because fuck all this. Its because the world is burning and the only way to ignore it is to side with the death culture— turning life into commodities. Trump is merely today’s incarnation of “democracy;” the logical extensions of capitalism, imperialism white supremacy, patriarchy, and all the systems that undergird “democracy” under any president. Because democracy is synonymous with capture. Because its all supposed to happen like this. In four or eight more years a new figurehead of the same system to march around blocks about. Because shits not working, folks.

As if we think broken windows and spray paint will change any of it. Of course it won’t. No window will ever be enough. No march, no rally, no bloc, no president. can we take seriously anything nowadays? Are we seriously still debating violence vs. non-violence. Property vs. life. Its farcical. The “system”, “protest”... Laughable, and yet dire, with real consequences for land, animals, people. Because actually, we’re dying. Because amidst all the rhetoric of hope, the closest glimpse we see sometimes is in people willing to throw down for each other- for some vision, fractured as it may be, that we can fight back, that we can be fearless, that we can strike, be ungovernable, remind ourselves, if no one else, that some part of our minds and bodies hasn’t yet been domesticated by our masters. It could be 100,000 people evicting the halls of D.C. – and would be a resurrection from suffocation, but instead, 100 here, 50 there... we are a death gasp. Signs of life in a dying body.

Signs of life in philly. 40 rebels affiliated only by our actions; no group, no platform. 20 minutes in the streets of one of philly’s most cop-friendly areas at 7pm on a busy friday night thoroughfare. Our rage left dripping from walls, shattered across sidewalks, and left upon cars, gentry property, peddlers of bourgeois excess, banks, atms, symbols of the capital that survives off the life of everyone. More life breathed into our bloc by the vast support of onlookers, who joined in; “fists up, fight back”, “kill your local fascist” (of which south philly is a haven), “a-anti-anticapitalista” etc. Shit got got. If your shit got hit, remember its not about you. Its bigger than you because, fuck all of this, right? Because, Everything.

As we disbanded safely before the lurking eyes of police, a

shout, “its been real great, see you all next time!” And everyone faded back into the precarious turbulence.

In Solidarity with D.C. Rebels and Blockaders
In Solidarity with Indigenous Freedom Fighters
In Solidarity with everyone stepping it up in 2017 ★

BRISTOL: FAR-RIGHT NATIONALISTS GATHERING RAIDED AND SHUTDOWN BY ANTIFA BLACK BLOC ‘DRESSED LIKE SPECIAL FORCES’ WITH GUNS (UK) *via 325.nostate.net*

On Saturday 7th January at around 3pm a far-right nationalist meeting was taking place in Almondsbury Sports and Social Centre, attended by white supremacists and neo-nazis. The event called by fascist group ‘Bristol Forum’ was attempting to bring together racists and bigots in a safe space for their views. This meeting was raided by a black bloc of anti-fascists who allegedly fired air guns, smashed windows, threw chairs and used fire extinguishers to attack the fascist scum inside the building. Desperate and terrified nationalist bigots were apparently in fear for their lives, with just 3 of them claimed to be suffering injuries, as the fascists barricaded themselves inside the building like the cowardly scum they are. Fascist-nationalist Adrian Romilly from Portsmouth who attended the meeting with another fascist friend gave an interview with the local right-wing paper Bristol Post, likening the antifa black bloc to a “special forces unit”, giving great publicity to the “impression they’d done this sort of thing before and their silence, dress and general ‘professionalism’ added to the sense of menace”. Describing how the attack started he was quoted as saying “... there was a sound like a rifle shot and the first window glass splintered, shards of glass scattering over the place where the speaker had been sitting moments before”, “This was followed by a series of sharp cracks as a succession of windows were broken by a fire extinguisher and by chairs brought up from a lower floor.”

It seems the successful raid was only made public in early February as a police faithful citizens appeal for information swung into place due to the investigation resulting in so far no arrests and presumably almost zero information as to the identities of the Antifa “special forces unit”, despite CCTV recordings being studied.

In Bristol last year in March fascists attacked an anti-racist mainstream event attended by 100 people and members of the Labour Party, Green Party and the local Mosque. The 10 or so fascists were beaten up and ejected from the area.

The struggle against fascism will always need to be autonomous, extraparlimentary and street-based. Hatred, racism and bigotry has to be confronted physically, and absolutely no quarter given for fascist and neo-nazi groups to spread. Hunt and attack. ★

than the other. Oppression plays out in all of our lives every day, it shapes how we relate to each other and ourselves, and in a thousand tiny ways keeps us down. Every now and again an oppressive situation will become more intense and visible, like a police shooting that makes the news, an exceptionally large layoff, or another round of bullying gone too far. These aren't abnormalities coming from nowhere, they aren't isolated incidents, as so many have said before; these kinds of things are possible because they come out of a sea of smaller, less spectacular moments that take place all the time: a respect for the law and police, the hiring and firing of workers based on profit, the isolation that accompanies queerness, or blackness, or one of many other social impositions. This is the violence of oppression, a daily violence that remains mostly invisible, that is mostly silent, and is seen as totally normal. Occasionally the violence spills out a little farther than people are used to and it gets noticed, but most of the time it's business as usual.

The people who say they are against "violence" because it makes us just as bad as them are not actually against violence, they are only against a specific kind of violence - the violence that goes after oppression. There is a violence that helps the systems of control, and there is the violence that acts against those same systems. Liberal critics of violence against oppressive systems only call out those on whose side they are supposedly on. A criticism of violence that doesn't include the violence of the state, capital, and imposed identity is incomplete at best, and very often counter-revolutionary (of course these critics are not interested in revolution anyway, unless revolution means voting for their favorite candidate).

The argument that there is no place for violence in political discourse misses the mark in the same way. This argument again focuses on those who attack the system in order to get free, and glosses over the system that makes those kinds of attacks necessary in the first place. If the police didn't function as a gang that kills us, imprisons us, and disrupts our lives, would any of us feel like throwing rocks at them? If the banks didn't drive us to debt, and the bosses didn't rip off our labor, would we still want to

smash up the windows downtown? If the politicians and leaders didn't make our lives miserable, didn't drop bombs on strangers in our name, would we want to interrupt the city whenever they came to visit?

At the end of the day, liberal criticism cannot stop a determined person from punching a nazi, but liberal policing can land someone behind bars, or worse. When people try to physically frustrate efforts to fight against oppression, they put someone who is already brave enough to risk health and freedom at even more risk. This kind of behavior — unmasking or photographing someone, grabbing them, standing between them and their target, telling the police — is exactly what the oppressors want, an unofficial team of people who will protect them and stop anyone from taking action that might materially affect anything. By trying to be "the bigger person," liberals end up doing exactly what the police would want them to. By trying to "keep the peace," liberals end up ignoring all violence except the kind that can free us. And the consequences can be dire; people on the far-right are doxxing whoever they can identify, police are arresting as many people as they can, often with trumped up charges. If you believe you are doing the movement a favor when you get in the way of, or try to expose, someone taking a direct action you don't agree with, you aren't. You are putting them at greater risk, and you are playing right into the hands of the system that oppresses us all.

When it comes to punching nazis, blocking highways, smashing windows, or who knows, giving Trump the boot and taking the whole system down - if you don't want to take part, that's fine, but I ask that you not be that guy. Don't be the person who doesn't know the difference between a fascist and a rebel, the person who ignores all the harm that takes place on the daily while crying over broken windows, the person who helped the alt-right doxx another comrade or the police imprison another friend. Because when you're doing those things, it's not the vandals and nazi-punchers, but you, who is "just as bad". ★

ON THE WOMEN'S MARCH

"I'm here to fight back!" Elizabeth Warren told the crowd at the Women's March in Chicago on January 21. "We are in marches to say we are fighting back. That's who we are."

What is fighting? What does it mean to fight sexism, in particular? What would it take to end sexism and the brutal history of violence against femininity in its many forms? On January 21, approximately 1 million people participated in the Women's March in Washington, D.C., and an additional 2 million people attended Women's Marches across the world. The march's national principles of unity are hardly radical — many of its proposals, like improving safety-net programs and protecting constitutional rights, already appeared in some form in the Democratic National Convention's platform this past summer. The march's organizers have also explicitly stated that they are not against Trump, but rather for equality. Nevertheless, the march has been hailed as the resistance movement of the future and has served as thousands of peoples' entry point into political action.

The march's goals initially produced controversy and critiques due to its cissexist branding — with a focus on "pussy power" — and because the initial organizers were all white women. The initial organizing made it clear that the march was centered on the interests of middle-class white cis women rather than collective liberation. Many of the fuckups of the original organizers were corrected and smoothed over by women of color, who ended up taking on leadership and organization of the event and changing the messaging to incorporate race, immigration, and Islamophobia, amongst other issues. The popular insistence on equating womanhood with certain biological features persisted, however, and the sea of pink knit "pussyhats" that the march produced appeared as a space that privileged only white cis women's experiences of indignity and inequality under patriarchy, despite the attendance and ostensible inclusion of trans and gender non-conforming people.

The march in Washington, DC manifested in a massive turnout with almost no police presence. In keeping with its official mandate, the march was nonviolent in the strictest possible sense of the term. In Chicago, the march portion of the day was actually canceled because the amount of people present was deemed "unsafe."

Though the sheer numbers of people could not help but interrupt the flow of business as usual in the capitol, the march was held on a weekend day after the inauguration, in a way that could not possibly disrupt Trump's ascendancy to power. Indeed, the march was accommodated as much as possible by government officials, who in some cities went so far as to convert public buses into shuttles for people attending the march. The march was not only organized in collaboration with the police, and officially discouraged "negative interactions with the police;" it also hired a private security firm to infiltrate its own march with undercover agents.

The march describes itself in its mission statement as a "positive force that confronts the forces of injustice" — what exactly are these forces of injustice, if not the police as the most brutal upholders of the status quo? And what exactly does this confrontation look like, if the march refuses to even say it's against Trump? The march's mandate of nonviolence divorces itself from activities that involve fighting, and its insistence on staying positive and not being "against" anything leaves it without anyone or anything to fight anyway.

The goal of the march, and the women's movement associated with it, is not freedom. The march explicitly sets itself against tactics and strategies that would move towards freedom. The goal of the march is reform, but the strategy and tactics attached to the march are ineffective for producing reform. A similar strategy was used in the anti-Iraq war efforts in 2003, during which millions of people all over the world marched in protest of the war. The war went through with no alterations made to the original plan.

So what is the point of the march? The march is an opportunity to register one's dissent by being one more dot on a map — to literally be counted, to register as present. It's an action that bids for recognition and inclusion, but it's not the kind of action that brings about this recognition or inclusion through the process of the action itself (as, for example, occupying the White House or other institutions that mete out inclusion would do). It didn't equip non-men with the practical skills we will increasingly need in the future to defend ourselves under Trump's regime, or give us a sense of what fighting and taking down this regime might actually look like.

Entering into politics, according to some people, is when people who do not count make a claim to be counted. This

makes sense according to the logic of democracy, which is a system of political decision-making that is all about being counted (literally, in terms of votes). It's quantitative. Even in its most ideal form — when everyone is allowed to vote and everyone's vote counts equally with no mediation by representatives, which is obviously not how it works in modern American representative democracy nor how it has ever worked, even in the celebrated democracies of ancient Greece — it can't take qualitative aspects of people into account, like the nuances of subjective experience or the views and desires of anyone who voted in the minority.

While it is unclear whether the march's organizers deliberately planned the march as an attempt to recuperate widespread anti-Trump energy back into allegiance to the democratic system and participation in electoral politics, then, the very form of the march itself is already a recuperation of this energy. It takes an enormous range of desires and energies and complicities against the current state of things and counts them as dots on a map. It tries to ensure that those desires don't go anywhere antagonistic, anywhere that would actually threaten to change this society, by providing an easy and unimaginative thing to do that is highly supported by national media and public opinion. It doesn't support or acknowledge the existence of any other tactics against sexism and fascism, which contributes to the marginalization and criminalization of struggles that actually threaten to change this society.

That the march's energy might get recuperated back into electoralism has seemed like a risk from the beginning, especially since some of the main organizers of the march have close ties to the Obama administration and/or the Clinton presidential campaign. Although the march wasn't explicitly organized in support of Hillary Clinton, its cissexism was itself suspiciously reminiscent of the outrageous version of identity politics that Clinton's presidential campaign rode on, by which somehow being a cis woman was supposed to automatically legitimate Clinton as someone with all women's best interests at heart who you are coerced into voting for, otherwise you hate women. Some of the march's organizers explicitly attempted to channel the D.C. march's energy back into electoral participation, for example passing around information afterwards in metro stations for 2018 electoral campaigns.

It seems, then, that recuperation in various forms is what the march will be most successful in

accomplishing. People want the momentum to continue and for there to be concrete actions that come out of this march, but the march's organizers have not endorsed or suggested modes of action outside the realm of what's currently available to the liberal imagination, and so most people will just go home to call their congresspeople. I want concrete action to emerge from the march too, but I would like it to be for other women and non-men to attack the police and the property of those who control and immiserate us, or support those who are already doing so; to learn how to fight fascists and perpetrators, if they have the ability to do so; to embody new forms of life that escape our patriarchal socialization and move towards ruining gender as we know it altogether, whatever that may look like in our everyday lives.

The nationwide organizing of these marches certainly produced conversations about race and racism in movement organizing, which many people doubtless took important lessons from. But they're conversations that seem to remain oriented around the purpose of actions like the Women's March, which at best are pleas for recognition and at worst efforts to rechannel people's rage back into electoral politics. The Women's March's organizers used their platform to suggest reforms, i.e. improvements to the patriarchal, white supremacist, settler colonial project that is America, instead of acknowledging that really this whole project needs to be destroyed.

Two days later, Trump, surrounded by 7 other men, signed back into law the Reagan-era global gag rule that bans U.S. funding for any international health care organization that performs or mentions abortions.

For those who attended or otherwise supported the Women's March: How much are you willing to do to fight patriarchy and misogyny, or to support those who do? I mean really fight — damaging and disrupting and destroying its perpetrators and its institutions and infrastructure, not just showing up and standing there. How much will it take for you to notice that it's the American nation-state itself that maintains the systemic misogyny that you don't like, and has since its inception, though it's morphed into new techniques of management and control? That it's the infrastructure and institutions of the state itself that must be destroyed, if you really want to end the daily microaggressions and systematic inequalities and deadly violence of this society's age-old hatred of femininity? If you're not willing to do that sort of thing, then don't call what you're doing fighting, and don't try to stop those who are. ★

CONFLICT IS PROGRESS RESISTANCE IS WITCHCRAFT SHOW UP FOR THE END OF CAPITALISM YOUR ANGER IS RIGHT

AGAINST THE COUPLE FORM

(Excerpt) by CLÉMENTINE X. CLEMENTINE

One must not dissociate the desire for a sexual relationship with a man from patriarchy’s stacked deck. Who are these boyfriends? What does a woman think having one will get her? In short, everything. The couple stands in for desire itself, after enshrined, funneled, and reduced to a single object by patriarchy. Rather than sprouting yearnings for negation or overcoming, young girls plan their weddings while still in kindergarten. Why does a woman sell out for some wank? She gives herself over to the couple in the hope of mitigating her alienation and increasing her sense of "security," in the same way that a citizen gives herself over to a repressive state that she trusts to keep her secure. While perhaps not visible at the outset, the couple will further alienate and isolate her. She will have to answer to her husband in addition to her boss, entering into a relation of hyper-exploitation. Comrade Valerie Solanas heeds the atomizing function of the couple: "Our society is not a community, but merely a collection of isolated family units. Desperately insecure, fearing his woman will leave him if she is exposed to other men or anything remotely resembling life, the male seeks to isolate her from other men and from what little civilization there is, so he moves her out to the suburbs, a collection of self-absorbed couples and their kids." How much can a woman forgive? How much does she let slide? How long does she tolerate things being amiss, rotten, fucked up? She avoids breaking up at great costs because disobeying the logic of the couple will stymie her access to the precise mechanisms that supposedly save her from this contemptuous existence. The semblance of care and a promise of future solidarity convince her to stay in unsatisfying, pathetic circumstances. ★

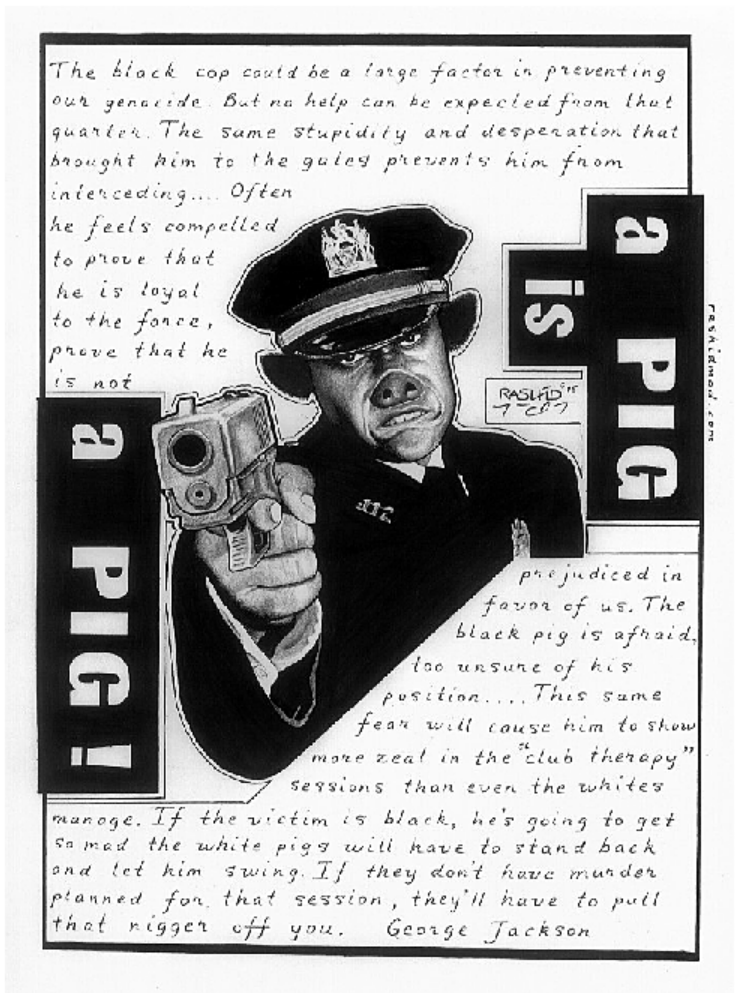
To assault loneliness
whip up seas and tear seeds away
from becalmed plants
drive words out of overfed brains
they're too well-off
they're like eggs their paralysis is social

To march myself out through the window
aim straight into your heart
fill it with opium sugar and blindness
fill it with violent cries
as when love is recognized
as when the poetry of habit is compromised
as when the world is extravagant

I'm thinking of the global implications
I'm thinking of the dialectics of liberation
I'm thinking of the supreme disorder of the vision

I cannot see that you are not me

- Inger Christensen, it, 1969



GENERALIZABLE STRIKE CONTINUED

It's true that it would be structurally impossible for a general strike this month to be driven by workers putting down their tools en masse and picketing their workplaces. Very few people in the U.S. have jobs like that anymore — the percentage of U.S. workers who are union members is close to the single digits, and most people don't have any job security, don't have jobs at all, and/or have been relegated to working within the informal economy. In these cases, refusing to work will either just get you fired or be completely irrelevant to your life.

But that doesn't mean that mass action is impossible. Actually, it's clear that mass action has been on the rise in the U.S. for years now, unless you're living in a Leftist bubble in which the only possible legitimate form of action is when a union tells you that it's ok to strike. These more recent activities — rioting and looting, spontaneous highway blockades, and most recently, airport shutdowns — are not necessarily recognizable as political or effective to those who still imagine liberation as being told what to do by the leadership of a formal organization. Formal organization and leadership, try as they have, cannot contain the fury of those who are increasingly immiserated by the status quo.

Like the strikes of the past, these actions significantly disrupt the economy, but they happen in the sphere of circulation (blocking the flow of commodities and people) instead of production (the factory and other workplaces). Since so few people even have a sustainable identity as a "worker," let alone the desire to affirm that identity as a route to freedom, workers are also not necessarily acting politically as workers — for example, it's more likely now that people will disrupt the gas industry by blockading gas stations, instead of gas station workers refusing to pump gas. But this does not mean that the people taking action are not in the working class. They're just acting in the streets instead of at work.

This gets around the problem of people automatically getting fired for not going to work, although it produces different risks for those involved. Blockades have become so prevalent that at least five states are currently attempting to pass laws that target related tactics — making blocking highways a felony (Iowa), holding protesters financially liable for police response costs (Minnesota), labeling protests economic terrorism (Washington), allowing police to remove protesters by any means necessary (Indiana), providing exceptions to drivers who injure/kill people blocking traffic (North Dakota).

While there has also been much concern about how and to

what extent exactly the general strike on February 17 is being organized, then, there is clearly precedent and desire for such actions right now. In the wake of significant mass protests like the women's marches and airport shutdowns, it makes sense to escalate further and aim for a more generalized disruption. It's unrealistic to hope that millions of people will skip work that day, but the call for a general strike offers potential for a wide variety of loosely coordinated disruptive actions, whether it's another protest that clogs up traffic or a series of clandestine actions that disable the infrastructure that the city and country need to survive.

The Leftist organizers will say that this is not how strikes happen: it is not as simple as circulating a call and expecting spontaneous action. According to them, all strikes, even wildcat strikes, need them to do what organizers do, namely organize. Although the Leftist organizer can repeat the word "organize" to the point it loses meaning, occasionally they will provide a clearer picture of the content of their activity, which emphasizes meetings and conversations on the shop room floor. While these activities can be effective, many organizers describe their work in fetishistic terms alienated from other struggles and taking place solely in the workplace. As a result, the work of organizing appears as a mere extension of the work day rather than an action against it.

This is not quite fair. Sometimes the Leftist strategist is careful to situate their work within a broader struggle. Unfortunately, these strategists all too often distinguish their struggles from "bad" struggles that they characterize as "adventurist" or one of its synonyms. They argue that actions that don't fit their strategy are counterproductive, even when these actions are largely successful. When we hear words like "adventurism" tossed around, we catch undertones of these strategists' laziness as they await the proper conditions, their fear as they face the police line, and their commitment to hierarchy.

Let it not be said, however, that we never consider strategy. We agree that it is not always the right time for every action. Take for example, punching a Nazi. We must ask ourselves: do we know how to make a proper fist? Do we have a clean shot? Are we surrounded by police? In other words, we must consider whether we have the opportunity. If the general strike does anything, it provides opportunities. Likewise, the call for the strike emerges from current possibilities, such as an increasing weariness with work. The upcoming general strikes will not be revolutionary — the strikes will not end capitalism — but they will be an extension of direct struggle building on the opportunities afforded by the current conditions. Yet it is in direct struggle, not in think-pieces or meetings, that new conditions emerge. ★

THE COMING REPRESSION

Homeland Security waited outside the Wooden Shoe bookstore, a known anarchist collective on South Street in Philadelphia. Undercover cars and bike cops everywhere. Attendees of the antifascist event about to commence were followed out of the store to a neighborhood coffee shop and made afraid to return. Yet the event itself went off without a hitch – extremely successfully, in fact, with the major problem being too many people showing up and some having to be turned away. But why the sudden police interest?

We know that officers from the PPD Civil Affairs division showed up to the Shoe the day before the event, asking for it to be canceled and insinuating the position of Antifa to be exactly the opposite of their attitude (that is, fascist), a reversal rarely seen outside of the reactionary banter of Alt-right scum attempting to garner themselves a platform under the guise of free speech. The police also asserted the appearance of Anti-Fascist symbols tied to the defacement of 3 police cars at a GOP Retreat protest. Again there was police presence outside of an Antifa-organized event at LAVA Space in West Philly a week later, but as of yet no direct interference.

The #disruptj20 hash tag had drawn reaction from the alt-right in social media platforms, as they tried to co-opt it for their own purposes and trolled those radicals utilizing it against the soon-to-be-president. One temporary comment (as it was deleted shortly after being posted) told the Shoe that it had been reported to the FBI by the poster for their allegedly terroristic activity. Laughable in the moment, perhaps, as some of us have seen later-released federal reports that contained commentary on events previously hosted at the Wooden Shoe around such activities as Mountain Top Removal resistance.

We can't expect not to be on the radar of the police and other elements of government, especially if we intend to act on our beliefs. Therein, of course, lies a tension that many have failed to recognize, though deliberations are beginning to tend toward an honest engagement – at least in the form of violent confrontation with fascists and the rest of the Alt-

Right. From the punches landed on the head of Richard Spencer, to a front-page New York Times article on the Berkley revolts against Milo that acknowledges that we intend to stop the rise of the Alt-Right (with violence if necessary), to President Trump himself referring to “professional anarchists” reinforcing his and his supporters’ agendas, we can acknowledge that we’re having an impact on the discourse and even the physical attempts of these authoritarians to organize.

Accomplishments to be celebrated, perhaps, but they should also be seen as an impetus to prepare for the consequences of our success. We are obviously enemies of the state and of oppressors of all stripes. In the increasingly polarized political climate, this may manifest interpersonally, but the rise of this particular brand of governance is also empowering apparatuses of the state to act in kind. Antifa may seem a less obvious target in this sense, as they primarily manifest in opposition to the most repressive brands of governance (currently being invoked by the new administration), but even the New York Times has drawn the connection between antifascist and anarchist interventions. Whether our media is effectively relaying our position or the broader public is doing their research (or both), we are being recognized for what we are.

Additionally, actors against oppression shouldn't rely on concepts such as the right to free speech allowed by the state. Rights are only named as such after they have been taken away by oppressors and offered back to us with imposing conditions. As express enemies of these oppressors, we should expect targeted repression, which in turn should inspire us to take the offensive rather than wait around to cry foul when it occurs. For if we are not actively struggling to be free, we are simply accepting the yoke and whip that drive most people through their existence.

As such, may we prepare not only to attack, but also to support and care for one another, and to take precautions against being snatched up or implicated in crimes any more easily than the state already allows. The PHL Autonomous Anti-Repression Fund is a positive example that is already preparing to keep our affinities out of jail. Additionally, practicing security culture in our everyday lives, regardless of our engagement with

illegality, helps protect ourselves and those around us. As we’ve seen from a series of Grand Jury proceedings that have cast a wide net over a milieu, often resulting in imprisonment for non-actors, we must also recognize that there is no need to speculate about who did what after an action.

Finding new places to meet, store supplies, or escape to should regularly be on our minds, in addition to how we speak to each other, where we speak, and the technologies surrounding us. Planning does reduce risk of capture, but spontaneity also compliments action, and practice on smaller scales in anticipation of larger actions and opportunities precede both well.

With a presidential administration that is so open and honest about its ties to white supremacy, among many other bigoted manifestations, we find not only that we are openly articulating our opposition to them, but also that the government and its supporters are speaking openly about us in the same way. The Fraternal Order of Police serve the violent manifestation of any administration's governance, nevermind an administration that they openly endorsed in the recent election. Nevermind a local police force that recently reinstated a Nazi-affiliated cop to its ranks.

If we really feared the bans, walls, deportations, environmental devastation, assaults, and further repercussions from the state, we would shut down every bit of infrastructure that empowers them and/or controls us, by any means necessary. Isn't that what it would mean to become ungovernable?★

A fund is being organized to support people from the Philadelphia region who were mass arrested and charged with felony riot during demonstrations in Washington DC on the day of Trump's inauguration. This will not only support the arrested, but each donation is also an act of solidarity for those directly under threat from the police simply for their political affiliation and public expression of resistance.

Find Out More at:
<https://www.everribbon.com/ribbon/view/62860>

"That the PPD thinks its acceptable to try to get anti-fascist public speaking event cancelled should be of concern to everybody in this city. For their officers to think they can enter a bookstore and suggest, imply or request that a speaking event should be cancelled is reprehensible.

What should be equally concerning is the ‘divide and conquer’ technique at play. We saw this tactic at play at Occupy Philadelphia in 2011 when the Civil Affairs warned Occupiers new to political movements to ‘watch out of the anarchists and black hate groups like Uhuru’. We saw it at play back in 2000 when civil affairs warned anti-stadium organizers in Chinatown that they had to watch out for the anarchists without knowing that the organizers trusted those same West Philly anarchists and that they were involved in providing security and marshaling for their march the next day. We’ve seen Civil Affairs deploy this tactic time and time again. The PPD has a history of trying to wedge movements and to cultivate suspicion among organizers and groups who may not know each other well or who they suspect may have some initial distrust toward each other.

We can resist by dragging this tactic into the light and letting other people know about it especially those new to organizing. When we let people know in advance that the PPD might spread misinformation about other groups it prepares them psychologically to resist this tactic and to dialogue with each other when the PPD attempts to play the divide and conquer game. It should go without saying that you should exercise your right to remain silent and refuse to answer the cops questions about others in the movements. However, If the cops approach you to speak about an organizer or organization you should absolutely contact that organizer or organization right away to talk about what happened and let them know the cops were asking about them and/or making claims about them. Exercise your right to dialogue with others in the movements and build with them."

- from "BUNDLE UP WITH SOLIDARITY AND RESIST THE CHILL" by the UP AGAINST THE LAW COLLECTIVE