



**ANATHEMA**  
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*FREE ANARCHIST PERIODICAL*

## WHAT WENT DOWN

August 21 - Banners are hung in FDR park in solidarity with forest defenders in Atlanta. "Nearly 200 acres of wetlands and meadows, which serve as habitat for endangered migrating monarch butterflies and many other species of wildlife, are threatened by the city's plans to bury the earth in astroturf for more sports fields and other capitalist ventures."

August 24 - A stand of trees in FDR meadows are marked with Parks and Rec signage warning they are spiked.

Late August - At least 7 pieces of construction equipment are vandalized or sabotaged in the FDR meadows.

August 26-28 - The Philly Anarchy Fair takes place, featuring games, workshops, food, tablers, and a science fair.

Late August - Four pieces of heavy machinery are sabotaged at the Cobbs Creek Golf Course in solidarity with the sabotage actions in FDR park. "We wanted to contribute to the recent wave of attacks against ecological destruction, gentrification, and colonization across the country, and encourage people to help defend green spaces wherever they live."

September 9 - Graffiti is written on signs in Fairmount Park against colonization and development in solidarity with FDR and Atlanta forest defenders. "We want to live wild lives beyond the control of any authority and for that we need wild spaces."

September 11 - Philly ABC's annual fundraiser, Running Down The Walls, raises \$11,607 for political prisoners and Malcolm X Grassroots Movement. The event, a 5K run/walk/roll, featured speakers, tablers, and food.

September 21 - University of Pennsylvania students begin camping on their campus to protest against the eviction of the UC Townhomes, Penn not paying pilots, and Penn's investment in fossil fuels.

September 24 - A Wawa in Northeast Philly is looted and ransacked by about one hundred teenagers. Wawa announced later it is closing two Philadelphia stores because of "continued safety and security challenges."

September 24 - A group of thieves break into a Montgomery County gun store, Founding Fathers Outfitters, and make off with stolen guns.

October 2 - A sideshow takes place in Old City, cars and a crowd block off the intersection of 4th Street and Market Street to launch fireworks, do burnouts, and do donuts.

October 7 - A 59-year-old man allegedly jumped out of a car and began shooting at police officers in North Philly before being shot and arrested by police.

October 10 - A statue of a colonizer is vandalized along the Wissahickon Trail. "Fighting colonization is a way to nurture a less hierarchical relation with the land and those that live on it."

October 11 - Graffiti in solidarity with Jennifer "Ganda" Laude and "our siblings in the Philippines" is claimed by "trans and queer anarchists in so-called southern New Jersey." ★



### FORWARD

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### SUBMISSIONS

We accept submissions of material by, for and relevant to anarchists, from the so-called Philadelphia region and beyond. We are most interested in works that say what only anarchists can say, making our project unique from the Left and even other anarchist projects. No more than 2,000 words please. ★

## ALABAMA PRISON STRIKE

On September 26, prisoners shut down prison operations across the entire state of Alabama. The state, which typically tries to cover up any instances of prisoner resistance except in the most extreme circumstances, was forced to admit that work had stopped at every single facility in Alabama. As of this writing, the strike has entered its third week.

Longterm organizer and Alabama prisoner Swift Justice commented: “It’s an unprecedented event that has happened here in Alabama — at no time do I recall in the history of the United States of America, especially Alabama, where every major institution, and every single individual inside that institution, refused to go to their institutional jobs.”

Isolation is a major goal of the prison system. This strike was only possible because many people managed to overcome the very significant state prohibitions on communication. Communicating with outside organizers is already difficult due to monitoring and time constraints, while prisoners in different buildings or facilities are not supposed to communicate at all. Outside organizers helped orchestrate the strike by sending messages between inside organizers.

The strike’s demands, which outside supporters delivered to the capitol on the first day, mostly concern parole, good time, and wrongful conviction. These demands are a matter of life and death for people who are locked up, and we hope they get these demands met. Regardless of the strike’s outcome, though, the networks of communication and coordination that it has established have potential for future actions far beyond the stated goals of this one.

The process of organizing a mass action like this one has additional benefits: it encourages prisoners to work together against the police, forces discussion about prisons and what they actually do, and demonstrates the power of collective action. These are all ways of moving towards the destruction of the prison system and the world that needs it, whether or not that is an explicit goal of that particular action’s organizers. As insurrectionalist prisoners involved in the hunger strike last year at SCI Phoenix in PA wrote, “The end agenda will not be accomplished by a hunger strike, but a hunger strike can aid in the agenda” (see “Hunger Strikes: Reformist or Abolitionist?” in *Anathema*, August 2021).

Strikes, especially in prisons, require unity — or at least the semblance of it — among everyone involved, something that makes them different from most other types of organizing and action on the outside. Organizing a strike like this means being capable of influencing a massive number of other prisoners, including many people one would not usually associate with, and of ensuring everyone’s participation. This requires social skills, sacrifice, fearlessness, and commitment to a greater cause. Regardless of the end results of a strike, experimenting with this tactic cultivates these skills in some and exposes those who are unwilling.

The outside labor movement (with the exception of the publication *Labor Notes*) has been notably unsupportive of the Alabama strike, even though it challenges some of the most exploitative working conditions imaginable. This is not surprising, since most union organizing breeds single-issue selfishness by having workers fight to better their own conditions rather than furthering a greater political cause (of course, radical unions usually strive to overcome this tendency). Solidarity actions by unions with other workers’ struggles are also literally illegal in the United States. This is just another reason that many insurrectionaries tend not to be drawn to this type of struggle, along with the fact that we’d rather abandon all work than gain more control over it.

While work stoppages in prison involve some of the same reformist pitfalls, they are also distinct for several reasons. To state the obvious, prisons are not just a workplace, but also a warehouse for the state to put people who would otherwise not be producing value for the capitalist economy, one that specifically targets black and brown people. It’s a place to discard and isolate individuals whom the state fears or doesn’t know what to do with, one that conveniently also forces them back into economic productivity at the lowest possible cost. It’s a continuation of the white supremacist tradition of forced labor, which capitalists have tended towards since capitalism began.

In this case, the work stoppage is not actually about getting better working conditions, but primarily demanding reforms that involve getting out of prison and leaving the work situation itself. Collectively stopping work exposes how much prisons depend on the continued participation of the prisoners they oppress, and it drastically reduces the prisons’ functionality.

The organizing of the 2016 and 2018 prisoner work strikes across the country, initiated in part by Alabama prisoners including the Free Alabama Movement, set some of the groundwork for this current strike. Around 20,000 prisoners across approximately 29 prisons took part in the 2016 strike. Blackbird Publishing in Durham recently compiled accounts of that first strike into a zine called “No Regrets: Accounts and Reflections from the 2016 National Prison Strike.”

The state has retaliated by “bird-feeding” the prisoners, serving them partial and nutritionally inadequate meals in order to starve out the strikers. The work strike thus quickly became a hunger strike as well, and much more difficult to maintain.

The prisons also immediately turned to strike-breaking tactics that pit prisoners against each other. Commentator Jared Ware, discussing the dangerous and potentially violent situation this puts prisoners in, speculated in the early phases of the strike that “there is a danger that the state could try to set up a situation where things go bad and then they try to swoop in and take things by force” (“Unauthorized Disclosure,” October 2). Prisoner Swift Justice, in a recent *Kiteline* radio podcast, also reported that the prisons are getting people in work release to make up for the labor shortages.

Hours after posting video online showing a strikebreaker expressing solidarity with the strike and refusing to work, Kinetic Justice, an Alabama prisoner who helped organize the 2016 and 2018 strikes, was assaulted by the riot team, put in segregation, and given five write-ups. The administration also took away his tablet and turned his pin off so he would have no ability to communicate with the outside world.

Further retaliation against additional perceived organizers is certain to follow the strike. It's a good idea to start thinking about how those prisoners could be supported. Fundraising, letter-writing, postering, and spreading awareness of the strike and its aftermath are all important contributions.

As of this writing, organizers announced that some individuals had returned to work but that the strike was ongoing at five of the fourteen major correctional facilities in the state, and supporters recently rallied at the state capitol on October 14th. Updates can be found via the organization Both Sides of the Wall ([bothsidesofthewall.com](http://bothsidesofthewall.com)). We wish the strike success and congratulate the organizers on showing it's possible to strike such a blow against the U.S. prison system. ★

## INTERVIEWS FROM THE MEADOWS

*Anathema sat down with two people involved in the struggles to defend the meadows at FDR park in South Philly. What follows is an abridged transcript of the interviews that took place. To read the complete interviews visit the Anathema website [anathema.noblogs.org](http://anathema.noblogs.org).*

### **Anathema: Can you tell us a little bit about FDR park, theMeadows,andthedevelopmenttakingplacethere?**

1: Yeah, I don't know about the original history of this park. I know for long term residents of Philly, FDR park is called the Lakes because of the big bodies of water here. I think FDR park was built around these golf courses, and The Meadows was a golf course for a century. It was repeatedly flooded and decommissioned as a golf course in 2018. Although even when it was a golf course, you hear stories about people who have used this land to make a connection to nature. People have stories about foraging all kinds of stuff from South Philly communities. It's kind of one of the last wild spaces in the South Philly area.

The development that's taking place here, it's titled "The Master Plan for FDR Park." It is an ongoing city plan to raise the elevation of certain areas of the park and add 12 new sports fields. The plan is also connected to development plans with the Philadelphia Airport, which wants to expand and is destroying 40 acres of wetland. By law, it has to restore a comparable amount of wetland. So funds for the redevelopment of this park are funds from the airport to offset the wetland destruction there. They're also going to "improve" 35 acres of wetlands here at FDR Park.



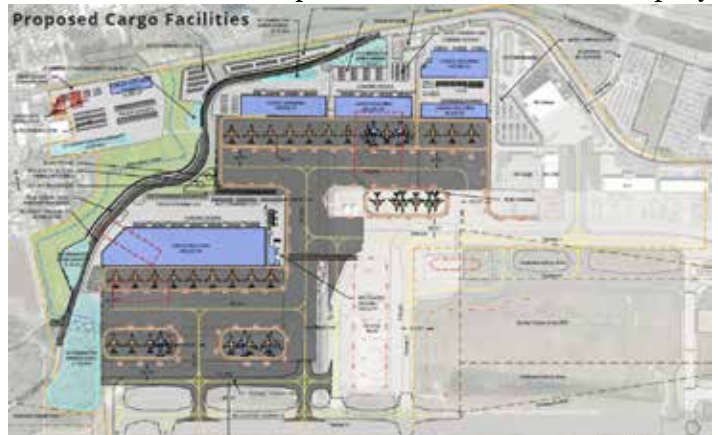
### **Anathema: What have the struggles against the development looked like so far? What's happening?**

2: So far, the things that have been happening that I've been witness to, have been bulldozing. So just clearing the area of natural trees and wildlife. Fencing it off from the general public who were once able to freely roam around it. The struggle has been trying to find the exact dates of when bulldozing will happen, and also people have done campaigns like phone zaps, and making banners and posters. There have been some events held around the Meadows such as foraging, tree-mappings to try and identify trees and other species within the Meadows to have a perspective on if there are some species that might be endangered.

Basically trying to find ways to halt the destruction. When that didn't happen, the struggle has looked like more events in the park, more walkabouts, filming. Trying to spread as much awareness as possible. There has been some apparent sabotage of equipment, so you could also say some insurrectionary developments in there as well.

1: There wasn't a big offensive push. I think that equipment got staged in late August, and there was push back. People... serviced the machines that arrived \*laughs.\* I think there were a lot of people doing different things, discussing whether construction people had permits, or thinking of ways to put pressure on the construction company. People trying to put pressure on city officials in ways that had no real effect whatsoever.

At first, when the destruction happened in late August, there wasn't a clear construction zone. Lots of people were just out and about amongst the destruction, kind of putting themselves at risk in hopes that the construction company



would get some kind of retribution for endangering people. That didn't have much effect. They put up more solid fencing pretty immediately. In the first week of destruction, people were messing with equipment, people may or may not have spiked some trees. That stopped the destruction for a week. The place was swarming with cops and the unusable machinery got replaced.

They did the destruction pretty quickly after that. I feel like they were destroying dozens of acres a day. After a few weeks in which there wasn't much real material resistance, they had cleared like 70 acres. From what I hear, all they have funding for is this first phase of destruction. As far as I know, now that the first 70 acres are destroyed, there's gonna be a pause.

**Anathema: How have the city, the cops, the neighbors responded to the struggle for the Meadows?**

1: The city doubled down on its greenwashing media blasts. The Inquirer and other news outlets are like "The protesters are out of control!" or "Why the city needs the development at FDR Park." They're just pushing a narrative that they're trying to make the space better, of course. Gentrification. They're trying to make the park welcoming to sports people.

A response from neighbors...I've definitely seen people who are used to using the land express heartbreak and dismay that they can't access the space, that it's being destroyed.

2: For the most part, the Friends of FDR Park have been going around telling people that they were going to make the Meadows into a different type of area, but that they were going to leave a certain amount for people to still use. Trying to talk about it being more nature. Ultimately it's being discovered that that's a lie and not what they were really going to do. The community really enjoys this area, so they have responded like "that's really fucked up." But there are still people who believe their master plan, if you will. Because of that, they are under a false assumption that the Meadows will be made into something different and better, so they're all for the project.

The police response was very minimal at the beginning. As tactics escalated, they responded with a lot more surveillance. It went from a little surveillance, to 24 hour surveillance, to bringing in the FBI. They've also brought in the counter-terrorist chain. They're really trying to snuff out any real sense of eco-justice of an insurrectionary nature.

**Anathema: A lot of the land in FDR has already been cleared. Has this changed how people are struggling and what are some of the next steps in light of this clear cutting, leveling, and bringing in dirt?**

1: I think that once the destruction started and it was kind of clear that we were slow on having both an offensive and a defensive strategy. Once we weren't able to hold ground anymore, a lot of people were like "Oh fuck, we lost." I guess it's real to feel disheartened. People have distanced

themselves from this struggle.

There's still around 100 acres of land that hasn't been touched, that they plan to develop. There's still a lot worth defending here. Trying to get ahead of what the developer's plans are makes sense as a strategy. There could be a long lull until they get enough money to move forward. And continuing to make the project financially unviable for them will always benefit us in trying to stop them.



2: People have definitely had to go and do things a little more under the radar or while knowing there are multiple FBI and security personnel that are constantly watching and trying to analyze where they're going. There have been rumors of cameras being placed in the park every so often. That's been a general concern which has deterred a lot of people from coming back into the park. A lot of equipment is now under heavy surveillance or is just off of the grid, so any type of sabotaging efforts have pretty much come to a standstill.

In light of the clear-cutting, the next steps have really just looked like more events in the park, trying to get awareness out there, collaborating with other projects such as the UC Townhomes struggle. Also trying to appeal to the city to stop future leveling efforts.

**Anathema: What would you say to anyone who wants to take part in defending the Meadows?**

2: Environmental defense of any kind is important. All ecosystems are important. All matters of wildlife are relatively equal to all of us, we're not more than any animal that is out there. Ecological defense is very much needed. Any effort you want to give is very much appreciated. I understand people have different comfort levels and ideas, but if you were looking to start somewhere, definitely come out and take a walk around the area. Talk to the local people. Go on instagram. Come get involved, come through to an event.

1: I would say there's a lot of ways to do that. There are a lot of people invested in this project for whatever reason—annoying them and making their lives difficult is great. I think a lot of people would probably enjoy that. There's still a lot of open space here to have parties, bring people out. I think A&P construction and the other subcontractors who stand to gain from this project...it definitely makes sense to

try to make their lives more difficult.

If you're looking for offensive or defensive entry points, there are many.

**Anathema: Do you think there's anything people outside of Philadelphia can do to contribute to this struggle?**

1: I feel like having solidarity, especially in land defense struggles but I'm thinking in particular urban land defense struggles – like the Atlanta forest, or stopping big development projects. Continuing to boost each others' struggles and bringing attention to them is bugging the people who stand to gain from them. Those people, those companies exist in different cities. It feels really good, fun, and exciting to be learning from each others' strategies and boosting each other in those efforts.



**Anathema: Is there anywhere people can follow these struggles and keep themselves informed about what's going on around the Meadows?**

1: Yeah, I think the news source I trust the most at the moment about it is the Save the Meadows. They have a website [savethemeadows.com](http://savethemeadows.com). The instagram account is @savethemeadows.

2: @savethemeadows

**Anathema: What would you say are some strengths and weaknesses of the struggle to defend the Meadows?**

1: Some strengths are that our opponents in this struggle—the city, parks and rec, the developers, the cops—are really stupid. The people involved in defending the Meadows are more creative and smarter.

There is a difference in resources, obviously. The city has machinery that can facilitate destruction really fast. The city's monopoly on violence and destruction is an obstacle to work around. But I feel like there are a lot of artists, smart and brave people involved in the struggle.

A disadvantage is that this plan created by the city precedes a lot of our knowledge. They had a big head start.

2: The struggles for the Meadows really seem to be coming internally in the form of communication, even though there is an instagram and a website. For instance, there was communication of how much is being cleared, but not about how much all at one time. There was speculation of whether there were 100 acres left or less. I would say the struggle of communication is real.

There have definitely been internal struggles. Not everybody is on board with all the tactics that have been used or talked about through this entire movement. There are definitely people trying to control narratives, peace policing, and denouncement of tactics by certain organizers. A struggle is people not getting along or communicating.

**Anathema: What are some of the biggest tensions involved in people defending the Meadows?**

2: The biggest tension thus far is between organizers and people who are more of a free association, so to speak. People peace policing, people trying to fit a certain narrative or only wanting certain tactics. This has been really frustrating for a lot of people. Organizers have definitely talked a lot of shit on each other. The solidarity is not really there.

And also organizers trying to throw shade, really belittling the work because it wasn't approved by them. Really trying to go after this narrative of "the movement is 95% white and half of these people are not from the community, so their opinions don't matter. The ways they choose to enter into the struggle don't matter." It's a real fucking shame because it's going to show there's not solidarity amongst everybody, and I think it's going to turn a lot of people off, if it hasn't already.

1: Politically, a lot of people involved are still invested in a centralized decision making around what happens here, whether that's collaborating with the city or having a centralized organization. Of course you don't have to participate in that, but a lot of organizers are still thinking in terms of how they can get other people to do things instead of doing the things that they want to do, or encouraging people to do the things they want to do. Maybe that's an issue with how we imagine projects getting done, or how we imagine working together for a shared goal. There is a desire amongst some of the organizers to continue a top down model, and it's a lot of work to continually challenge that. ★



For the full interviews check out our site at: [anathema.noblogs.org](http://anathema.noblogs.org)

# THE SOCIAL & SURVIVAL

## QUESTIONS ON BECOMING A THREAT

Anarchist milieus happen in cycles. There's energetic periods in which there's an influx of energy and activity, then there's slower seasons, where not much is happening. Active periods make changes in your brain. Doing risky shit, being in open conflict, fearing the retribution of the state rewires your brain in a different way, the stress and feeling of being on edge changes you. All of a sudden, the daily reproduction of life is even more soul-crushing and depressing than it was previously. Slower seasons surface underlying conflicts previously masked by activity, and these interpersonal problems, as well as the stagnation, can lead people to drop or be forced out. The subculture consumes itself cyclically as well.

Since 2020, a new anarchist subculture has popped up, with mutual aid becoming a mainstream idea, abolitionism being a hot opinion, and people taking fashion inspiration from the athletic gear fits of Hong Kong rebels, rather than whatever black attire they picked up in the free pile. Anarchy as the primary basis for subculture is an interesting more recent development (in this author's estimation). Anarchism has typically been tied to DIY punk subculture in a way, at least in the US, in a sort of inextricable way. Anarchists for the most part were punks, but not all punks were anarchists.

This is a shift for the geezers amongst us. In the absence of shared musical tastes that motivated the diy projects and spaces of yesteryear, what do these projects look like in the new anarchist scene? These spaces don't have to necessarily be architectural, they can be places like parks or other places that people gather. The project of space maintenance can build a sense of community, as well as providing a fixed location of encounter.

Fixed locations of encounter are important for anarchists. They provide a space for anarchists to consistently interact with each other (and sometimes members of the broader public) that helps people both develop their anarchism and make anarchism more broadly tangible to the people around them. This can create a stronger inter-sense of community as well as counter mainstream demonizing narratives of anarchism. It cannot be neglected that architectural social spaces typically take on an initial role in gentrification of the neighborhoods where they pop up, usually being in historically black neighborhoods where property is more affordable because of the antiblack racist framework the US is built on. What kind of role are the social spaces maintained in the anarchist subculture playing? Are they spaces that people spend time in? Are they spaces of encounter, and if so what kinds of encounter?

In the absence of interacting in and working on a physically tangible project, such as a collectively maintained space, what do people have to culturally bond them? There have been things like the Anarchy Fair in Philly, partially inspired

by the Skillshares that preceded it for the two prior years. Other events like 5K's, barbecues, bonfires, book fairs, discussions, dance parties, reading groups, movie screenings, etc. have formed the social scene of anarchism in the US. Do these social formations foment viable conditions for collective anarchist struggle? Are they meant for just socializing and having a nice time (this author is not that much of a curmudgeon, socializing can be fun, sometimes)? Is anarchism a necessary element of affinity for these events? Are these events impacting other anarchist activity? Are these the goals of these events? The listed events are diverse, and the answers are variable for each of them. Some are fundraisers (material support), some are purely social, some a mix of practical and social.

The usage of anarchism as an identity category for social alignment, and thus social capital accumulation, is one that should be seriously criticized. An unchecked game of social capital accumulation can play out in power dynamics that implicitly or explicitly dictate social norms that, in this author's opinion, any anarchist worth their salt (peter) would be critical of. This accumulation of power is more rare when an entire milieu is participating in perpetuating their respective projectualities. Multiplicity disperses the power that small numbers of individuals could exploit, even if that power and or social capital is accumulated unintentionally. Multiplicity is also an element of security culture, if there's a lot going on, it's harder to pin things down on individuals. Anarchist milieus tend to be clearing houses for those of us who reject a society that rejects us. If the milieu is recreating those same social hierarchies, just in a different flavor, do these anarchist-identified social alignments move towards anarchy? If not, then these social formations are just exemplars of micropoliticking and reproduction of society with different adjectives.

Moreover, scenes fragment along lines of conflict just like any other social relation, which can create distrust and security concerns. Direct communication and mediation are ways to mitigate this (our brains have a cool way of filling in voids of understanding called anxiety), if people know where they stand with people, then there is less uncertainty for one to contend with. But it further begs the question of is the anarchist subculture even worth maintaining if it does not create the conditions in which we can communicate with each other in a way that demonstrates intentions and facilitates trust? Are these interactions based on a vague shared analysis worthwhile? How can we as an anarchist subculture move towards being capable of struggling together?

Anarchy can be described as the struggle to determine the conditions of one's own life. This is a hard struggle that is a little easier with some help. Formation of trust and bonds with people whom you struggle with is an important, but hard feat to accomplish. One such way of building up this familiarity and trust is through engaging in preparedness with people. Preparedness for what? Collective survival. The idea of the changes in the brain that high-intensity situations create was introduced in the first paragraph of this piece. A

way to feed that in a skillfully constructive way is combat training. This could be martial arts training, training with firearms, or drilling emergency medical skills.

Not only do these skills feed that high intensity craving, they are also practical in that the state and fascists are actively trying to kill us. Formations such as these breed trust and familiarity with those who you engage in them with, you can learn each other's strength and what you need to improve upon, and those with more skills and knowledge can pass those on to people who want to learn. The continual practice of knowledge passing is likely more culturally integral than one-off social events. This is not to glorify physical conflict as the most important project. Many other practical group projects can be taken on, things like hacking and computer security, plant identification, hunting & fishing (with associated post-processing), canning & jarring, building mesh networks, building fire, etc. Taking group camping trips to places without a lot of amenities is a great way to develop your skills with a group of people. So is sneaking around in the night. These are just suggestions, there's a bunch of different practical ways that anarchists as a subculture can be capably skilled and pass that knowledge along to others.

Aside from preparedness with other anarchists there remains the question of how does an anarchist subculture struggle alongside other groups of people who are also struggling against the racist settler-colonial system of the US, namely black and indigenous rebels outside anarchist subculture, who quite often struggle more regularly and spectacularly against these systems than an anarchist subculture that tends to be more white. The zine *Towards Insurrection* is a suggested read in beginning to address these questions, alongside the recommended readings at the end of it. Instead of focusing on what anarchists have done well, especially in the context of the 2020 insurrections, it takes an appropriately and constructively critical look at the anarchist movement in the context of riots and movements in general. Within the first few sentences the author states that 2020 "highlighted some of our deficiencies," which is a necessary intramillieu criticism to sit with. The zine further highlights anarchist attempts to participate in the 2020 uprising in West Philly following Walter Wallace Jr.'s murder by police. It addresses some of the anarchist, and particularly white anarchist, missteps/ham-fisted participation in the riots around 52nd street. For brevity, it touches on a subcultural clinging to black bloc dress in contexts where it does not make sense and how subculturally acceptable behaviors do not translate as demonstrations of solidarity towards people who there may be affinity and opportunity to struggle alongside with against common enemies. In the final section, A Broader Strategy, it presents several points of moving forward. This piece will highlight 3, namely Multi-racial struggles and white "race-traitors", Collective Survival, and Land.

The zine correctly situates the necessity of a betrayal of whiteness and eurocentrism in an anarchist struggle on this continent. Anarchism can be understood as a struggle against white supremacy, settler colonialism, the state,

civilization, and society...but it is still coming to these conclusions through a tradition of eurocentric western thought for the most part, this is an element of anarchism and self-identification as an anarchist that should be interrogated. Participation in good faith in struggles against white supremacy and settler-colonialism require white people to make strides in becoming race-traitors, this also includes the excising of whiteness and eurocentrism out of subculture, or the outright destruction of said subculture. What this could look like is demonstrating that anarchist subcultures broadly are willing and capable to fight against the white supremacist settler-colonial projects in serious, tangibly visible ways, alongside black and indigenous people outside of said subcultures engaged in that struggle. None of this is easy, the lineage of the project of the US has intentionally made that so, however, these are necessary factors that an anarchist subculture, and specifically predominately white anarchist subcultures should consider and make attempts at addressing.

On Collective Survival and Land, parallels can be drawn in the concern of a subculture based on sociality rather than practicality in struggle. The author notes the text *A Wager on the Future*, which quotes a Mapuche comrade on community resistance, tying a community of self-sufficiency to ability to struggle. As fragile flesh machines run on electrochemical gradients and nutrients, we require a few things to maintain our ability to struggle against our enemies, at the end of the day, these struggles remain those for a self-determinacy of our life conditions. A failing of anarchists in general is creating the necessary conditions in our subcultures that maintain our needs, so that we can continue to struggle and prepare in the ways we're best at. What this could look like is collective housing, collective meals, libraries of equipment, consistent sharing of knowledge and training, etc. These things make the simple struggles of maintaining our physical forms easier, and thus maintaining capacity to struggle easier.

Another major source of burnout is a lack of genuine community of care for one another. What's the point of struggling with others against leviathans if we can't collectively maintain the conditions for the survival of our individual bodies. This all ties into the concept of land (and space). Autonomous space is necessary for the project of self-sufficiency. Wrenching land from the grasp of the US and being capable and willing to defend that land against the colonial empire in the aims of returning the land to Indigenous stewardship should be a major concern of settlers attempting to participate in a decolonial struggle. *Towards Insurrection* quotes Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz in saying "Indigenous peoples offer possibilities for life after empire."

This piece attempts to look at anarchist subculture as it currently exists and ask the question of its necessity. Is anarchist subculture addressing the conditions of its arisal? Does subculture put anarchists in a better position to struggle alongside each other? Alongside others? Are the bonds of trust necessary of participating in intense struggle



together being formed? Are people confident in the capabilities of the people around them? Does the subculture address desires of genuine community for those of us who society is explicitly in opposition to? Does the subculture situate itself in an appropriate way to encourage self-sufficiency and collective survival? As of now, this author does not believe that is broadly the case. ★

## WHEN ONE DOOR CLOSES... BREAK IT IN

### THOUGHTS ON THE CRIMINALIZATION OF ABORTION

Readers of this publication can probably all agree that any person who wants to have an abortion should be able to do so without compromising their health unnecessarily. Arguing that the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* is a not entirely negative development might be what some consider more of a 'hot take.' A mix of anger and indifference seems logical enough – angry but not surprised at the state of things; indifferent towards law as a legitimate determinant of what we can actually do & accomplish. The amount of riled disregard coming from not-particularly-radical people towards democrats & politicians is worth a nod; as is what seems like a widespread focus on supporting direct services & tangible resources over political players. However, here in so-called Pennsylvania a lot of that energy has since been channeled back towards the polls as we approach November.

Opinions on all this aside – because our opinions are, after all, ultimately inconsequential in the circus that is legislation, electoral politics & law – the reality of rapidly dwindling access to legal abortion presents us with an interesting scenario; a scenario with options that, were they to become popularly practiced & supported, could be fertile soil for critical analysis of the legitimacy/ethicacy of law & government. At the very least, the validity of taking things into one's own hands – especially in spite of the law – is bound to be increasingly considered and supported. We will likely continue to hear expressions of irreverence towards laws/law-makers coming from people who otherwise might not consider engaging in criminal activity, nor supporting it as a political/liberatory act.

In 2019, Robin Marty wrote an essay controversially titled *I Am an Abortion Rights Activist. I Hope the Supreme Court Overturns Roe v. Wade*, which was a Viscera reading group selection this past June (*Politico Magazine*). While loads more invested in electoral politics than the anarchist-minded individual, Robin brings into question the value of being granted rights/access to something by the federal government and points to the unreliable nature of government decisions regarding our rights and autonomy. "*If history is any indication, it will only be a matter of time before opponents try to chip away at [our legal rights regarding abortion] again.*" Basically, even if *Roe v. Wade* does not come before the Supreme Court "now," (remember this was in 2019), our rights are always at risk of deteriorating.

Robin also acknowledges that the catalyst for struggle (here

meaning people seeking what they want in opposition to a government denying them of it) is usually the absence (or redacting) of rights. "*So why am I so happy the United States' strongest abortion protection is hanging in the balance? Because if Roe v. Wade's fate really comes before the Supreme Court, then for the first time in decades, the abortion rights movement will understand that the threat it is facing is not theoretical, and supporters will stop fighting like it is...and liberal complacency on the issue of abortion could end for good*" (2019). Personally experiencing oppression (or obstacles to access) is often what leads people to revolt/disobey/take things into their own hands/organize etc..

According to Robin, a significant barrier to abortion access for all is inequity itself. The reason "many" have trouble accessing it is partly because "some" can access it without trouble – and are therefore non-players in the fight for more widespread and equal access. "*Until now, encroaching restrictions on abortion have tended to affect more marginalized communities while bypassing those of privilege, but full-scale state abortion bans will put everyone on a much more level playing field.*" Additionally, "*If Roe is overturned in the US...disengaged abortion rights supporters might finally see the slow, steady erosion of abortion rights as symptomatic of a broader and over-expanding suppression of reproductive rights, and they might finally understand why it is necessary to start addressing barriers to access due to race, class and geography*" (2019).

Whether or not liberals become more engaged in "fighting" for reproductive rights isn't particularly interesting considering that "fighting for rights" usually entails little more than leaving messages & emails for robots, and scrawling slogans on poster-board to be carried around in police-dictated circuits in broad daylight. What is interesting, however, is the fact that all across political lines (save pro-life conservatives) there are going to be people who will become pregnant, want to terminate their pregnancy and, in some states, be confronted with the necessity of covertly committing a crime. Even more interesting is that being denied this right is extremely time sensitive (ideally 16 weeks or less); so time sensitive that waiting for a chance to vote or march 'about it' is not going to seem like a rational response to even the most direct-action-adverse individuals.

Having a child is an unquestionably life altering decision. Being forbidden or unable to access abortion services has certainly culminated in childbirth for some, perhaps especially those in religious contexts. However, for others, being pregnant for (+/-) 9 months, followed by having a small human depend on you for (+/-) 18 years are stakes that are simply too high to not evaluate all the options – even options considered medically or legally risky. It is a scenario that will lead an increasing number of individuals to choose a course of action which involves both disobeying (/assisting others in disobeying) oppressive laws/restrictions, as well as learning how to clandestinely do things for themselves/those they care about.

Two years after publishing her 2019 article, Robin Marty was interviewed by *Slate* magazine on “How to Survive a Post-Roe America” (2021). In this interview, Robin discusses disregarding the accelerating laws/restrictions & taking abortion-services into our own hands. She supports and sees these as increasingly inevitable courses of action. *Slate* magazine is far from being a radical publication and Robin does not identify as an anarchist. None the less, she’s outspoken about working outside the law. “*We’re kind of screwed judicially and federally. And I don’t know how to get around it other than to just tell people that we may have to break some laws and do some of that stuff.*” Even better, “*I firmly believe that when we get into this age, there is going to be a point in which every person is going to have to decide what risks they are willing to take legally in order to make sure that all people have access to bodily autonomy*” (2021).

For some, losing bodily autonomy may just be the straw that breaks the camels back. People who may otherwise be obedient, voting, authority-reverent, law-abiding civilians might be pushed into the company of the rebellious by a threat so visceral as losing ownership of their own organs. Currently even those who can not become pregnant are undoubtedly confronting the ‘buzz’ around these issues and the laments of those more personally affected by them. Threats to bodily autonomy have become ‘loud.’

This is what we saw happen before, during & after the riots in 2020 – an issue becoming so widely and publicly present that those who otherwise would not dream of committing (or even cheering on) acts of property destruction, arson, looting, and the like, stood side by side (either physically, remotely or principally) with people who have little to no regard for the government on any given day and some of who wish to see it’s demise in totality. Being denied the right to one’s own life by law enforcement for no reason other than the color of your skin and being denied the right to bodily autonomy have brought and are bringing people closer to anarchist, anti-government, anti-police & anti-American ideas, causes and comradery. These dark yet not unordinary circumstances demonstrate what a fabrication freedom, prosperity and equality are in so-called Amerika.

The benefit of decreased legal access to abortion is that it paints a clearer picture for more people of the ‘real’ Amerika anarchists & marginalized-individuals are ever-urging others to see and confront. State violences and lack of access are always a reality for certain individuals. A government-implemented loss of access will bring those realities into focus for more people. Robin, who, again, is featured in ‘mainstream-ish’ publications, says as much: “*And we know that for a large amount of the population, abortion is already inaccessible. And because of that, there is no legal abortion. We know that esp. in the South and in the Midwest, that people can’t get into clinics. We know that they can’t pay for abortions. We know that people are purchasing pills online, even though that is legal jeopardy. This is what people are doing already. And so my argument was that if no one could access it, then it would really finally galvanize people to understand that this is something that*

*affects everybody. And if we’ve learned nothing else over the last few years, it’s that nobody gets interested in activating change unless they are directly impacted by things*” (2021).

For hundreds of years people who are able (and were often forced) to conceive have been finding ways to self-terminate pregnancy. In a majority of circumstances, this was the only option (see *The Radical History of Cotton Root* in the zine *Blood Moon*). While methods have morphed over the years, self-managed abortion has never ceased to be a practiced option. Right now we are looking towards a future where, for more and more people, self-managed abortion may be the only option. Despite legal abortion remaining a reality in so-called Pennsylvania for the time being, if you’re anything like me, you’re familiar with the impulse to mentally place yourself in the most limited and difficult scenario that seems plausible enough and insist that “if this were my reality, I must still know how to ‘fill in the blank,’” the blank here being terminate a pregnancy. Even the threat of losing certain types of access or knowing that others are losing that access is going to be enough for some people to act now. For those of us heavily invested in autonomy, the recent events may have been an opportunity to consider “why haven’t I done this already?” Being prepared before a crisis arises gives us a tactical advantage. Cost will always be a barrier, but most social circles can scrounge up \$100\* if they really need to. Many hands makes for lighter work. (\**aprox cost of abortion medication via Aidaccess.org*)

The government redacting abortion rights has it’s benefits because it puts us in a situation where we are more likely to secure our own resources, knowledge and care. Doing so will benefit us & increase our autonomy regardless of what State we’re in. The government permitting us something is ultimately futile, because they can just as easily redact that permission. Facing the latter reality (not having permission) is both useful and beneficial. How much better off are we when whether or not something is legal is of little concern to us? This inquiry is not meant to minimize anyone’s plight. Those of us thinking “hold on, maybe this isn’t such a bad thing,” (for the reasons mentioned here) are not the ones making the laws. We are not the ones preventing anyone from accessing clinics or getting Mifepristone/ Misoprostol\* locally.

(\**Medication abortion. Mifepristone causes shedding of the uterus lining (lining is what creates a stable environment for fetus to develop). Misoprostol causes contractions – in conjunction these result in abortion (>90% effective). Shelf life aprox 2 years.*)

Ideally it’s going to become more likely that someone you know has Mifepristone & Misoprostol stashed in their medicine cabinet – and knows how to get more of it. “When it comes to medication abortion, I want it to be at a point someday where people think of it like they do emergency contraception, that it’s something that every person has in their medicine cabinet...And so that if there is an emergency, somebody can say, hi, I really need that medicine and you have it there for them. And then you can begin the process, however many weeks it might take to get it again. That is

something I'd love to see happen in this world" (Robin Marty, How to Survive a Post-Roe America, *Slate Magazine* [podcast transcript], May, 2021).

While unlikely referring to underground anarchist networks, Robin urges people to support, join, or be the people taking control of their own resources and access. "We have to build our own networks because nobody is going to give us the funding to do it. We have to do that ourselves from the ground-up...what I feel about politics is exactly what I feel about all forms of activism. When you are trying to decide what you're going to do, do not give money to national groups. Always give money, resources, your time etc to the most local organization on the ground that you can find, it will go so much further, it cuts out [the] overhead." (2021). While of a much different nature than the large scale uptick in property destruction(/the support thereof) that we saw in 2020, the possibility of autonomous networks (for the purpose of providing illegal abortion resources) becoming entities that increasingly exist & extend beyond of our often small, niche circles is, I think, considerably exciting. ★

## THE CONSCIOUS SOLDIER-BROTHER

The story of Puerto Rican community in the US reflects an intense and persistent struggle for justice and equality; seeking to end employment, housing, racial discrimination; our right and access to quality education, health care, Puerto Rican study programs and cultural institutions; voting and language rights, fair representation in the media and every other social and political arena. Puerto Ricans have had to fight for everything.

Puerto Rico remains a US colony, poorer than the state of Mississippi. The relentless and ever expanding exploitation of social and natural resources have created an imminent threat, affecting every human being on the planet. Centuries of domination of the earth, and its people in a quest for profit, has brought us to this point. We face a food, water, and energy crisis, all symptoms of the same sickness; a global system based on greed for monetary gain. The US took Puerto Rico as a prize resulting from the Spanish-American War in 1898.

Puerto Ricans live in some of the world's poorest slums. We are the most unemployed people, filling the largest number of dead end jobs. Our communities lack quality health care and schooling. As a people, we suffer racism, institutional indifference, and marginalization. All Puerto Ricans want I self-determination, liberation on the island and inside the US. We want self-determination for all Latinos and Third-World Country People.

In the battle of our struggle, it is not the critic who counts, not the man who points out how the strong stumbles or where the soldier-brother who did the deed could have done better. The credit belongs to the soldier-brother who is actually in the arena; whose face is marred by dirt, sweat and blood. The who strives valiantly and fearlessly.

– Kmgunz, a prisoner at SCI Huntington ★

**ALFREDO OUT FROM 41 BIS**  
**CLOSE 41 BIS, FREEDOM FOR EVERYONE**

We are facing an attempt by the state to annihilate our comrade Alfredo Cospito, burying him in the infamous 4I bis prison regime to take revenge for his actions and prevent him from continuing to spread his ideas outside. Therefore, we, anarchists, think it is imperative to launch, starting now, a widespread mobilisation to relocate him. We think it is necessary to deploy a range of practices, each according to its own tensions, in order to force the state to remove revolutionary comrade Alfredo Cospito from 4I bis.


We are aware of the partial nature of this struggle, but the repressive stranglehold is such that we believe it is necessary to oppose it with all our strength, because we see it as an attempt by the state to undermine, for everyone, the possibilities of fighting against this system.

We are convinced that we must defend the comrade's choices and the practices for which he was sentenced, practices that have always belonged to anarchism.

4I bis is a torture regime, set up to silence, isolate and force collaboration with the institutions: it must be torn down along with all prisons.

While the state tries to annihilate us, we remain aware that the best defence is always the attack.

**DEATH TO THE STATE**  
**LONG LIVE ANARCHY**



## COSPITO ON HUNGER STRIKE

Today, October 20, 2022, at the Sassari surveillance court, during a hearing concerning the seizure of correspondence, anarchist comrade Alfredo Cospito declared the start of a hunger strike against the 41 bis prison regime to which he was transferred on May 5. The comrade, who made a statement, was not present in the courtroom but connected by video conference from Bancali prison.

Look for updates at [actforfree.nostate.net](http://actforfree.nostate.net) ★



Artwork by imprisoned anarchist Mónica Caballero of Chile.

## SERVICE

Leftists – like Christians, like the military, and like retail and restaurant industries – are big on *service*. Serving the people, the community, revolution, or other abstract and poorly defined concepts are popular on the left, but also entertain the same power dynamics implicit in religions, states, and wage labor. Approached this way, radicalism is imbued with a servility that will only invert the hierarchies that we are trying to abolish.

At its etymological roots, “serve” shares its origin with servility. Since its beginnings in the 12th Century, this word has been defined by obedience, allegiance, servants, slavery, governance, conformity, ministers, shepherds, guardians, and other concepts clearly reliant on (and in support of) the existence of authority. Only in the 14th Century did a softer, slightly broader use of “serve” creep into common language that referred to doing right and being beneficial to a subject, without losing any of the previous denotations. Later iterations vary the grammatical uses slightly, but largely carry on the same sentiments of being “servient” (in the 17th Century). By the 19th Century, the concept of having *served prison time* became commonly used – “found guilty, convicted; ordered to be punished or transported; beaten.”

We are not beholden to the past, but the entirety of this society we endure is affected by it. Attempts to “reclaim” a word that is most often used in the context of law and order (and food service) does not seem worth it. This word is not leveled at a particular populace or culture in the course of their oppression, nor is there enough sameness in its use to distinctly flip it. Those more understandable efforts to reclaim words used against a marginalized population toward an empowering aim are more successful, largely for having that concerted populace working toward such ends, though it can also reduce efforts to organizing around the categorical identity used to justify abuse rather than organizing around a shared desire to eradicate that abuse.

Neither is success a worthwhile metric, nor do I want to focus on semantics, but instead on how I revolt against forces of domination. Ultimately, those advocating service tend to be less interested in revolt and more interested in organizing charity – this is how even radical attempts at mutual aid so often get mistaken for Christian organizations, because they are practically indistinguishable to those they are trying to help. If solidarity is not charity, as so-called mutual aid groups purport, it must at least be tied to resistance to common enemies and institutions. Too often these efforts are not solidarity, though, due to lack of commonality or mutuality, and are better defined as service.

We don't typically find ourselves side by side in a fight with those benefiting from such service. That's not to say that there's anything wrong with doing something nice, or that it's not worth doing for its own sake. Other potential results could even mean making connections that might

enhance our capacity or ability to revolt ourselves – but I will not quantify my relationships so cold-heartedly, and I will not get tied up within this charitable politic.

Daily survival under capitalism requires certain levels of compromise that can make any amount of sharing seem subversive, but we are all too aware of the non-profits that provide the same (and often better) services without even the theoretical oppositions to the totality of institutions that make up this society. We can point to dangerous acts that are immune to the scourge of cooptation that follows the left like a bad cold, the same way we can also attest to the intimate benefits of personal care shared among companions outside of organizations that mirror the institutional left.

Finally, the militancy implied in “serving the revolution” is also conceptualized in obedience and obligation. Anyone can pursue militant actions with as many or as few people as are willing or desired without falling into the foxhole-pitfalls of soldiering. The point being that these entities radical leftists seek to serve are so often stand-ins for the new authority dictating the type of action that is necessary or desirable. *Don't forsake the revolution; follow the people; respect the community.*

What and who even are these things? New gods and collectivized authorities. Subservience in place of subversion. And most consistently a heaping serving of “wait.” Waiting that breeds more waiting. Waiting that freezes you when opportunities present themselves – if only you had the muscle memory from having gone through these motions before.

The difficulty in the pursuit of liberation is that we all want a different variety of things without any easy way to achieve them. Being creative, playful and caring are attributes that will further our pursuits through these hopeless streets, especially when accompanied by a thoughtful and practiced ferocity. ★

