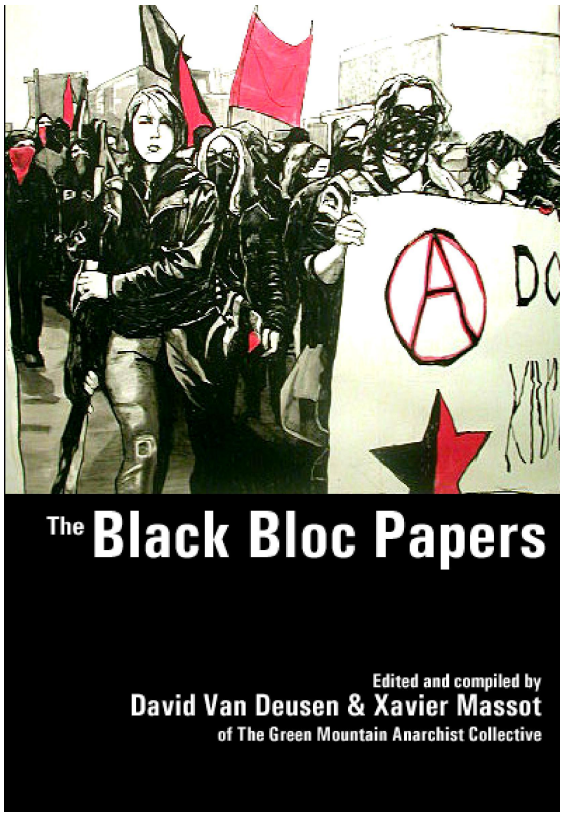
The Black Bloc Papers

An Anthology of Primary Texts From The North American Anarchist Black Bloc 1988-2005 The Battle of Seattle Through The Anti-War Movement

The Green Mountain Anarchist Collective, Xavier Massot, David Van Deusen



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The Black Block Papers is dedicated to the revolutionary memory of Carlo Giuliani, who lost his life battling the forces of capital in the streets of Genoa, Italy, in 2001.

His memory lives in our hearts and our fists.

Author's Note to The Second Edition of The Black Bloc Papers

Since X and myself put together the first edition of this book back in the spring of 2001 much has come to pass. Not least of which were the tragic attacks on the four commercial airliners and the Twin Towers on 9-11. Since then, the anti-globalization movement has made way for a larger, but less comprehensive anti-war movement. While there is much room for optimism in the continuing class struggle, there is also plenty to be concerned about. The scrapping of much of the U.S. Bill of Rights, the neo-con attacks on New Deal programs (including social security), and the ever-escalating war in Iraq are the first things that come to mind. As I put the final touches on this second edition, the U.S. military has suffered over 20,000 casualties in Iraq (including 4,400+ dead), the threat of a draft is looming, as is talk of further imperialist invasions. On the other hand, people across the globe are rising up to meet these challenges. Let us not forget March of 2003 which witnessed the largest anti-war demonstrations in the history or the world.

With that being said, it should be noted that while this volume covers many Black Bloc actions over the last twenty years, it does not cover all of them. Many more recent actions are omitted from this volume for the simple reason that there are not sufficient written accounts, calls to action, and reports about them. The most significant of these little known actions were the anti-WTO demonstrations in Cancun, Mexico in 2003. A Black Bloc at those protests provided militant perimeter security for a contingent of South Korean workers who successfully brought down a large portion of the police fence separating protesters from the capitalists. These actions were, of course, hugely successful and were a factor in the WTO talks utterly breaking down. In addition to Cancun, there have been dozens of other Black Bloc actions, occurring in places like Texas, Louisiana, Arizona, Indiana, Columbus, Ohio, Alberta Canada, and Washington, D.C. that are also not discussed in this book for the same reasons. The reader will notice that a number of large and historically significant protests are conspicuously missing from this collection. Four examples include the 100,000 strong 2004 May Day march in Montreal (which was the largest May 1st action in Quebec's history), the half million strong Republican National Convention (RNC) demonstrations in New York City in 2004 (which were by far the largest ever against a domestic political convention), the Million Worker March in D.C., as well as a number of anti-war demonstrations, which numbered at least 100,000. These protests were omitted because of the simple

fact that while they included large anarchist contingents, these contingents were not what we can consider "Black Blocs."

When the first edition of this book was published in 2002, it was pointed out that the book fails to map out an integrated strategy for social revolution. Here I would like to point out that this is not the purpose of this work. While the Green Mountain Anarchist Collective and myself are deeply involved with rank and file union organizing and building direct democracy in our communities, this is not the place to go into our ideas on comprehensive social change. If readers are interested in what the Green Mountain Anarchist Collective thinks about such larger issues, we suggest you find and read our pamphlet "Neither Washington Nor Stowe." This book, on the other hand, seeks to impart a better understanding of the Black Bloc, the tactics it employs, and the actions which it has been part of. Those who are seeking social change theories, long term programs of action, and an overarching cultural-historical analysis would do better picking up Marx, Bakunin, or Debord. Our sight here is exclusively fixed upon those brave black clad women and men who dare to challenge the authority of the police baton with fire in their heart and a fist in the air.

Solidarity,
David Van Deusen, founding member of the
Green Mountain Anarchist Collective,
May 1, 2006, Vermont

The Vision of Anarchy We Fight For is One of Direct Participatory Democracy, Equality, and Dignity

Government = Slavery
Anarchy = Freedom

Green Mountain Anarchist Collective

Note: The views expressed in both the following introduction, the essay entitled 'The Emerging of the Black Bloc and the Movement Towards Anarchism', the brief commentaries which begin each chapter of this book and the afterward are not intended to be the definitive position of the Black Bloc or of the revolutionary Anarchist left generally. It definitively represents the position of the Green Mountain Anarchist Collective solely. In addition, each document included in this work expresses the views of the individual or collective by which it is signed and/or of those by whom it was composed. While many of these positions are generally shared within the Anarchist community, it must be understood that this (our) community, like any other healthy example, is diverse in opinion and temperament. Our only unchanging commonalities lie in our contention that society should and will be controlled by direct and participatory democratic means by all individuals towards mutually beneficial, equitable, dignified and organically creative ends.

— **The Green Mountain Anarchist Collective**

About The Authors

David Van Deusen

resides in a log cabin in northern Vermont and is a founding member of the Green Mountain Anarchist Collective. In addition he is a rank and file member of the National Writers Union (UAW Local 1981) as well as the Teamsters. He is currently a District Vice President in the Vermont AFL-CIO, and is News Editor of Catamount Tavern News. He is a former member of Anti-Racist Action and the Northeast Federation of Anarcho-Communists. He has marched in numerous Black Blocs, the first being in Chicago in 1996.

Xavier Massot

is originally from Brittany, France. For more then ten years he has resided, off and on, in New England, U.S.A., and Paris, France. In recent years he has labored as a bartender in a working class tavern, as a school teacher, in a warehouse, as an archaeologist, and has occasionally gotten paid for playing rock and roll with the Putnigs. He is currently the obituary writer for Catamount Tavern News where he also serves as shop delegate for the Lithorgaphers Local 1L-Teamsters. Xavier cofounded the Green Mountain Anarchist Collective in December of 2000. Xavier marched in his first Black Bloc in 1999, at the Millions for Mumia demonstration.

Forward

By Xavier Massot

The volume which you are holding is a compilation of communiques from people who stood with and were participants in Black Blocs (be they specifically referred to as "Anti-Capitalist Blocs," "Red Blocs," etc.). Each piece contains a different tone, and one hears, in these tones, differences in age, sex, and political maturity. The importance of these texts lies in exhibiting the range of types participating within the Black Bloc. The chapters, except for the first and the last, are dedicated to different protests throughout North America over the years. Reading about the Black Bloc by looking at what participants have had to say is the only way to gain a legitimate insight into this aspect of the movement, short of actively being there. The Black Bloc is an event, a force which congeals and dissipates according to the consensus of those involved. It is important to keep this revolutionary elasticity in mind when approaching this subject. The multiplicity of the people making up the Bloc cannot be understated, even when coupled with their ostensibly singular purpose as a rebel apparatus. It's not an elite club, it's an invitation to all and any who wish to participate in the destruction of an unfair and unnecessary world system.

Each chapter in this book (besides the first, second and last) begins with a general overview. The overviews are essentially reflections, summaries, condensations, and/or exclamations pertaining to the specific protest dealt with in the chapter. We deem these important as structural companions to the communiques, since not all of the protests may be familiar to the reader and require basic background information. Overall the summaries vary in tone and concern depending on the protest and the writer. Since there are two writers and numerious protests dealt with it should not be surprising to find differences throughout the book. As with the communiques, the overview section of each chapter should be seen as a primary text from within the Black Bloc. David and I are Black Bloc, and have participated actively in numerous aspects of various protests, the specifics of which cannot be discussed here for obvious security reasons. One will also notice a number of interviews throught the chapters. Unless noted otherwize, these were conducted by David.

As participants of Black Bloc actions, it seems of great importance that texts such as these get cataloged and redistributed. We cannot let capitalism write us out of our immeadiate past.

In addition, we strongly believe that this anthology had to be compiled from within the Bloc. Any external attempt to put together such a work would have necessarily

resulted in a certain separateness, not to mention inaccuracy and misperception, and hence would have been suspect at best.

Lastly, the Green Mountain Anarchist Collective, as well as others we are in contact with, believe that the anarchist possibilities for a better humanity inherent in chaotic situations such as these street protests should be read and written about as often as possible. In themselves they represent instances of freedom and signals of the possibility of basic change.

We will see some of you on the front lines. That is inevitable. Read the rest, and fare thee well.

Introduction
Bad Attitudes and Dirty Money by Xavier Massot of The Green Mountain Anarchist Collective**

It is a strange pill to swallow, the notion that some of your peers, people you don't know, represent your interests. It is an old tradition, it has given most of us the title of civilians, and it has made others our rulers. Although each life, upon a short and close look, obviously contains its own unfathomable trajectory it has been the way of the modern world to pigeon-hole and harness the energy of each life towards historically questionable ends. This practice, abusing the young in order to eternalize the old, has led us to a point in history in which lives are spent for the sake of the machine's continuing momentum. Inane, insane, or otherwise, we all go through the hopper from our birth to our determined, predictable, and sometimes socially necessary, death.

This text is an attempt to communicate the reality of a world in which your standard, modern day politician is a buffoon. We all came into this world kicking and screaming. The supposed facilitators of our homes, towns, and countries have no more insight than anybody else. There are people of great capability who outshine others through their efforts and convictions, but these good people will rarely strive to rule. They are usually too intelligent or humble to seek the cult of power and personality that is the reward and goal of modern politics.

Perhaps, rather than buying into this brokered sacrifice of our brothers and sisters in a quibble over the choicest scraps from the table, the old tradition of survival is one to be revered.

My aim is not to lay blame on those before us, but rather to attack the misuse and propagandisation of instincts which have allowed our clawless and furless breed to survive. Dan Quayle, for example, telling us about family values. Families happen, they are not state property, and the overzealous concern of officials towards the expansion of humanity does nothing but undermine any real attempts at human progress.

This book is aimed at humanity's current trajectory, and in doing so must address the arc of that trajectory, including its root in the past. I personally have no desire to re-write history, and I respect my elders for their time, endurance, and sacrifices This being true, it is still time for a shift in human affairs, a statement made not to belittle

those who came before but rather to bring awareness to those whose turn it is to carry human life forward. Technology has brought much to our lives which is admirable, but at this stage it is weakening people rather than helping them. How many people these days can fix the very appliances which give them status?

The inventions of this century are praised as the inventors are forgotten. Right now, the praise goes to human-vultures who circle around the people really producing and inventing things, looking for facsimile prospects to snatch up and feed to overgrown babies. It is a cannibalistic search for a fading profit that yields the pettiest of fruits.

Here in the U.S.A. We've got most of the shit. We might be spiritually bereft, but we do manage to keep our bellies full and for a great many of us that is enough. Love it or leave it, or even better, hide in it and try to live through it. Those are the options that many of us feel as our only possibilities. The political sphere is painted as our only multi-social option, but the political life is a drab and merciless trap. It's a lot of talking, haranguing, backstabbing, and ass kissing. I believe this to be true and that most sane people do right to stay out of it. The problem with this is that political life remains attractive then only to the power hungry mongoloids. The result is a world run by self-serving fools.

There are a great many people on this planet these days and they're not all that good at being on it. We are not the nicest bunch and I'm personally not sure that anything will ever make us so. I can't pretend to know why this is, but I think about it from time to time and the daily news does not alleviate my concerns. I'm fairly adapted to most of the bullshit that gets tossed around, but, being one among many and being a reasonable person, I am forced take certain stances against the killing bastards that sit on executive boards and those who make a living upholding this rotten system.

So yes, shit is fucked up, and the bastards are facilitating more shit. However, the question of who is fucking whom, long the topic from Abbie Hoffman to Sixty Minutes, is not as interesting nowadays as maybe it once was. In a word, we're all getting fucked. Even though we still get to be young, the world is just getting older. This being recognized, we still must face the fact that we have to continue to survive on this aging planet. And in that, we must make survival meaningful, or at least interesting. In this regards the status quo must be judged as a failure and revolution, one way or another, must be understood as the embodiment of hope. So yes, shit is fucked up, and the bastards are facilitating more shit. However, the question of who is fucking whom, long the topic from Abbie Hoffman to Sixty Minutes, is not as interesting nowadays as maybe it once was. In a word, we're all getting fucked. Even though we still get to be young, the world is just getting older. This being recognized, we still must face the fact that we have to continue to survive on this aging planet. And in that, we must make survival meaningful, or at least interesting. In this regards the status quo must be judged as a failure and revolution, one way or another, must be understood as the embodiment of hope.

Still, with practical caution, if baby heads are to be crushed by our stampede, I guess we better be serious about the dangers of revolution. Legitimacy and integrity

are important things after all and although political people through the ages have turned both towards and away from them to get to power, it is certainly rare that they have actually made use of them in their daily diet of action. Most of us, one way or another, want to live good and happy lives without raping the earth or our neighbors. Most want a life both civic and personal. We want our good dreams to become reality, and our nightmares to be overcome.

So I'm having a cup of tea—it's pretty good and the reason why I'm including it into this sloppy introduction is because it's concrete; it's smarter than my literary aims and better than the whiskey I started this rumination with. Well not better, but for the moment calmer. Any which way, it is real, and in that capacity it is better then pure imagination. It is in just such a manner that we must continue to strive for a real, and better world. In this, revolution becomes our tea, and agitation becomes our tea pot-just now beginning to boil. But, before I get ahead of myself and make a habit of ridiculous metaphors, there are some more things that must be said.

My colleague is doing the dirty but necessary job of writing a chapter which will satisfy the socio-political aims of this book, which means I don't really have to. I have faith that his word is as good if not better than mine, and I get frustrated trying to explain anything in that historical voice, so I won't try to beat him to the punch on that one. After all, we should all know better than we do; there's plenty of manuals out there. Besides, most of the supposedly new thoughts are remedial and/or derivative anyway, just rehashing, repetitions, of no use to anyone.

The question starts to become, in the face of all this human noise, a question of territory, space, area, sphere of influence, property, taxation, and paradigms of life and its purpose. In many ways this closing-in of the options, this modern demarcation from oneself to the rest is healthy if not inevitable. It is the pressure which allows you to exist. Life demands some sort of test from its recipients.

There have been, and are, many people on this earth. The hardships have changed many times, but new lives keep on happening, blank slates who catch up and join in the line. This cannot be helped. Arguably, we live in better times than most of those before us, but there is and maybe always will be a malaise, an itch, a problem. Perfection is rare.

The fight of today may be the backwards cause of tomorrow. How? I'm not sure, but I do know that there have been many struggles. There has been no time without a struggle. Is struggle a problem? No. Struggle is as unavoidable as fertilization. Does that mean we should struggle because it is unavoidable? Are we, humans, aspiring to make struggle another final victory against God? Mussolini wanted punctual trains, Hitler wanted a master race, Uncle Sam wants You for the U.S. Army, Sick people want a cure, Everyone wants something.

Is it gonna stop? Whose gonna stop it? Well...

The truth is no one's gonna stop it, no one can. It's not that it's malicious, it's just not there simply for your sake even though you're a part of it anyway.

This tangent pertains to a book like this because the book is about struggle, it's about a timely choice, about what one should do and what side one should be on. It is a call to arms in most respects and at the same time it does not wish to mislead. The call to arms is against the ways of the world, which are unsatisfactory, and is aimed both at those who created the show and at those who may keep it going. These latter are problematic in that they are a part of yourself. You and I cannot destroy each other and ourselves, even in part, to change ourselves and the world we make. You know people who do wrong by your beliefs but you understand their language, their reasons and, then, the fight really becomes a dirty one.

I mentioned blank slates a little while ago in describing new life. It is the tarnished blank slates which we are that need to be cleaned out. A choice must be made as to what side to be on for the betterment of life. One can choose oneself as the ultimate piece of prime property or one can make arrangements to both survive and enrich the larger environment.

The struggle is not to blame, we are creatures that age and die, but the struggle can not become a fakery of itself. Pain will always exist, but should not be robbed of its dignity. I question the dignity of this era. I see little encouragement for true ability. I don't question its existence but I don't believe that the positive is encouraged. In fact, I believe that it is being undermined almost totally. Where are the good qualities? I don't mean that I don't see them or know about them when they are here or elsewhere, I simply mean that they are usually missing in a way I see as suspect. The efforts of mankind to create a beautiful world seem, to me, suspect. If we can fly people to the moon why can't we feed the hungry?

There are problems which need solving: pollution, warfare, rape, disease, AIDS, racism, property, taxes, countries, the past, cancer, obesity, drug abuse, drug legalization, famine, housing, electricity, and so on. A bunch of shit needs to be re-done, re-thought, re-applied until humanity gets it through its abused and abusive hide that it does not have to destroy itself through lies and chickenshit proclivities.

Bottom line, this call for a better world is redundant. I don't like it at all. It has an unrealistic side to it. And here, I don't believe in it because it implies a desire to take away accidents. I like accidents. Don't get me wrong, some accidents are better than others, but we've got to take some chances don't we? Aren't we just a bunch of crazed animals who have pushed sentience too far?

It's a horrible mindfuck to the soul of humanity, the advertisements, the lies, and these wingnuts at the top of the shitheap: politicians, religious leaders, and fat-assed money makers telling you how to do it, why you should, when you should and why they know better. The truth of it is that life is not as much of a complication, at least not functionally, as these power freaks make it seem, and they're not that important. What is important is the enforcement of their bullshit system by hapless fools who agree with them and feed off their scraps.

In the past when we humans did not have the powers over nature that we have now it made more sense that we fought amongst each other. Life was tough then, it still is

now, however the pressures are different. It's not like the hungry can't be fed, it's just that we can't stop starving them.

That last line is probably as close to the truth as I'm going to get, and that's really the crux of the problem we are dealing with, the sickness which makes revolution necessary. 'Pain must be inflicted on the weak because they are not the strong. The wrong must be punished because they are not the right.' The problem with all of this is that the wrong, the right, the weak, the strong, the fed and the starved have become artificial. When I say artificial, I don't mean to say that these things are no longer real, I am saying that they are unnecessary, and solvable. They are only insoluble from the standpoint of the corrupt, bureaucratic, greed-based and inane political bodies which the human mass concedes to.

The physical grievances and the physical bodies which stand in the way of alleviating them are two sides of the same coin. That coin can remain un-flipped, unresolved forever in a vacuum for as long as humanity keeps up its little intrigues and its little worries and its petty hatreds and its petty fears and blah, blah, blah...

So what am I saying? That I want world peace, that all the orphans should find good parents, that all the sick should heal, that all the hungry should be fed, and that all the bad things should disappear forever? Sure, but any hard-bodied beauty pageant gal could tell you the same. In fact, a lot of people have probably told you the same, and I'm sure they all meant it and I know it hasn't happened and so do you. So are we all wasting our time, good-natured people that we are?

Well, often times I think so but I can't know what most people are doing. In fact I don't want to know what most people are doing. A friend of mine is fond of saying that "there is no justification without representation." I agree with him, which is what has led me to get involved in this book about the Black Bloc—these protesters who face off with riot cops in cities to express their desire for an end to the lies and the greed which make all the world peace seekers so sad. Yes, they are correct. I believe that they are right, these brave men and women who aren't afraid to get beaten and tossed in jail to make a point.

A lot of people object to Black Bloc on both sides of the protest fence and in the homes where news is heard, watched, and read. I understand a lot of the grievances and I disagree with all of them. I'm not saying that the Bloc will end the world's problems. I don't know if anything will end the world's problems. I am, however, certain that physically confronting authorities which physically uphold a rotten system and reminding the rest of the populace that such things can be done is healthy.

I don't think it does any harm—it's a pure act. I don't care if the tactics are not always sound, or if you consider violence in all its forms immature and evil, or if you think that they give anarchists a bad name, or if some of them are middle or upper class, or if there aren't enough minorities, women, and gays taking part, or anything else really. Bottom line is that they are here and there trying harder than most of the douche-bags that complain about them.

The landscape of the world will alter, is already changing, that's what it does-some times are better than others and some worse, and nothing will change that. Stick to the good, try to take away the rotten, and have a few laugh while you're at it Fuck, let's start having more musicians, artists, brewers, cooks, jugglers, bull fighters, dancers, old storytellers, mystics, comedians, boxers, all that good shit.

Okay, it does sound idealistic to demand a society that does not gorge itself on the failures of its absurd program. However, I see the possibility of it all the time. People can help each other, especially in the U.S. where the amount of wasted food and property, if re-directed, could make kings and queens out of its homeless population. Are some of us regulating the suffering of others for the sake of a tradition which even they don't want to understand? Yes, that's what's happening!

Getting away from the instinctive fear of not having enough is the next real bridge to cross for humanity. Our ancestors had to find ways to survive. The world today knows how to live, yet refuses to do so in an equitable matter. A work ethic is a great thing, that is undeniable, but to work for the sake of working is nothing but a slow cop-out suicide...

So yes, it's time to re-learn what is important and throw away the superfluous bullcrap in the process. Anarchism may not be Plato's idea of perfection, joy, function, or any of it, but then again we've tried it according to shithead elitist philosophers for long enough and all they have ultimately given us is nihilism mixed with a $12 Butterball turkey and bad Friday night T.V. I say lets re-do it according to OUR inclinations and in the process come up with a reality which is categorically anti-boredom and genuinely interesting, directly democratic and equitable. Lets work it so that death again becomes genuine; either inflicted upon oneself, or dictated by real nature. Lets eliminate the role of society as murderer and rapist. If were going to fuck up, lets do it ourselves with out unnecessary abstractions guiding and excusing our treachery.

Chapter I
The Emergence of The Black Bloc and The Movement Towards Anarchism

by David Van Deusen of the Green Mountain Anarchist Collective

"Get Busy Living, Or Get Busy Dying!"

—The Kings of Nuthin, Boston, Massachusetts

Since the Battle of Seattle, the North American Left, and specifically the smaller yet growing revolutionary Anarchist movement, has been invigorated at least as much as it has become a common reality in the consciousness of the public. This has not occurred in a vacuum. Nor has this happened due to a simple, quantifiable reason. The reasons are as much diverse and subjective as they are objective and empirically observable.

One facet of this movement (specifically of the revolutionary anarchist movement) is encapsulated and advanced by the militant actions of a group commonly referred to as the Black Bloc. This informal grouping has acted as a necessary radical action wing of the larger social protest movement. Where Liberal inclinations have threatened to stifle large demonstrations under a blanket of acceptability, predictability and boredom, this contingent—numbering anywhere from less than 100 to over 1000 in a typical Bloc—has forced a creative unleashing of popular insurrectionary sentiment.

The following essay is primarily concerned with the Black Bloc. However, in order to more accurately discuss this faction, it will be necessary to paint a picture of the larger contemporary framework within and against which it operates. Towards this end this work will be divided into three sections. The first will deal directly with the Black Bloc; its historical roots, as well as the tactics it commonly employs. The second section will discuss the social, political, psychological and economic macrocosm in which the present movement is situated. The final section will discuss the smaller social context in which the revolutionary anarchist movement as well as the Black Bloc directly exists.

It is the intention of this essay to provide a historical, theoretical and practical base from which a more grounded understanding of the Black Bloc, as well as the

revolutionary Anarchist movement generally, can emerge. Such a grounding can and will only lead to a more mature discussion and development of Anarchist praxis and revolutionary progress. It is with this in mind that I here turn towards section one.

Section I. The Emergence of The Black Bloc: History, Tactics and General Constituency

> "I wear the black for the poor and beaten down... [And] for the prisoner who has long since served his time."

—*Johnny Cash*

The Black Bloc can trace its historical roots all the way back to when- and wherever people comprising an oppressed class or group militantly rose up against their oppressors. Elements of the particular tactics of the Bloc were previously utilized by the Weather faction of Students for a Democratic Society (the SDS) in North America during the "Days of Rage" in 1969.[1] Specifically, the Bloc's tactical aesthetic and more refined methods of State confrontation first began to concretely emerge in the 1980s Autonome movement in Germany. There, the seriousness of the anti-nuclear movement as well as the demands of the continuing Anarchist/anti-fascist movement required that

[1] During that action, approximately 600 committed Communist youth converged upon the city of Chicago in order to protest the trial of the Chicago 8, as well as the continuing war in Vietnam. Their method of confrontation was that of direct physical conflict with the forces of the State (in this case the police). They organized themselves into small affinity groups, and showed up equipped with clubs, helmets, bricks and other means of low tech hand to hand combat. Once assembled they actively attacked the forming police lines and fought the cops with ferocity. Although the first day was the most effective (in terms of enemy injuries and material destruction of Capitalist private property), a total of three more days of limited conflict ensued. While this action clearly represents a link between the present Bloc and past militant tactics, it differs in many regards. First of all, the Weather contingent organized themselves by strictly hierarchical means. They employed a chain of command that was not congruent with directly democratic processes. Second, their action occurred without the benefit of being part of a larger, more tactically diverse, protest action. In this the police where able to focus their superior resources solely upon them. Third, following the action, the Weather leadership did not believe such forms of protest could be maintained with out resulting in a negative blood bath (during the first night of fighting 10 weather members received wounds from shotguns, and another by pistol).

To paraphrase Weather Central Coordinating Committee member Jeff Jones, 'We felt that we achieved a level of militancy which we could not surpass using above ground tactics. Furthermore, the lack of public mobilization following the assassination of Black Panther, Fred Hampton, convicted us that our political role would only be sustainable and effective if we operated as a sort of guerrilla force, underground, behind enemy lines.' (info gathered by a private interview I conducted with him during the winter of 1997)

Hence the organization soon decided to move its operation underground as an urban guerrilla organization. For these reasons, the Days Of Rage must be understood as no more then a primitive prototype of contemporary Black Bloc actions, and no more.

For a decent first hand account of this action see Albert (ed.), *The Sixties Papers*. Shin'ya ono: You Don't Need A Weatherman, Pages 254-263, Praeger, New York, 1984.

mass protests be brought to a higher level of militancy and unanimity. Hence, radical collectives—often from within the anarcho-punk scene and typically of working class composition—began to urge their members and social militants generally to assemble at demonstrations donning uniform black clothes (with masks), and to march as a single protest contingent (among many others). With their identities effectively hidden in temporary uniformity, they were able to more successfully push protest actions in more militant directions while protecting themselves from being singled out for direct State oppression or later legal charges or both. This process matured to the point where the emerging Black Bloc began to develop better self-defense and militant tactics. It must be understood that this formation was not the birth of a formal, or rather continuous organization. It simply acted as a temporary cohesive grouping with the immediate goal of creating a temporally contingent street fighting force, which in practice would dissolve with the conclusion of the action at hand. This is not to say that the sole focus of these included persons and/or collectives revolved around such action. On the contrary, those making up the Bloc commonly were rooted in the social and political organizations and projects which the specifics of their local community demanded. They had their roots.[2] In addition, the militance and subsequent actions of the Black Bloc must also be understood as the embodiment of a certain means of struggle amongst many others, a means which are both legitimate and effective.[3]

As a Black Bloc, this grouping was an alliance of independent persons and/or affinity groups. Collectively, the Bloc acted by directly democratic means whenever possible, and by internal affinity group consensus when situations demanded. Other than that, the grouping conscientiously lacked any formal structure or authoritarian hierarchy.

Typically, the Bloc took positions at the front, rear, or perimeters of the protest march in order to provide a strong defensive presence at normally vulnerable points. In this way, the police were prevented from disrupting the movement of the demonstration without first having to subdue a highly militant, dedicated and prepared section of the protest. In order to strengthen its capacity to achieve these tactical objectives, the Bloc began to carry metal pipes, wooden clubs, and don protective padding and helmets. In addition, other tactical developments included the use of large continuous banners, poles or ropes lining the perimeters of this regiment. The purpose of these tools was to make it more difficult for the police to single out individuals for arrest. The cops would have to pass through a collectively held barrier, while simultaneously contending with blows from clubs in order to carry out arrests.

[2] Such activity at the local level is 100% necessary in the on-going movement towards social revolution. In such, the relative lime light placed on Black Blocs must be subjectively diluted with this necessary fact.

[3] Here it is necessary to understand that at this stage of the struggle, the tactics employed by the Bloc are most effective when performed in conjunction with others. This includes non-violent lock downs, street theater, 'legal' marches, etc.. In addition, it also must be clarified that such action, when used in conjunction with more militant tactics, are effective and legitimate. Lastly, it should be noted that many anarchists are involved in these actions as well.

More than acting as shock troops, or defensive units within the larger protest contingent, the Bloc began to take on an offensive role regarding the conscious destruction of capitalist private property. Here, affinity groups within the Bloc would facilitate the smashing of windows, spray painting of revolutionary messages and trashing of police and/or military vehicles. Of course, all such activity was clearly directed against capitalist targets. Despite the inaccurate assertions of the corporate media, arbitrary vandalism never was, nor is, the goal or practice of the Black Bloc.

Another function of the Black Bloc is to push the protest at hand towards a more militant and socially comprehensive direction. Largely this was achieved by the Bloc positioning itself at the forefront of the demonstration and subsequently forcing an escalation between the State forces and the protesters. Simply by resisting arrest, refusing to remain on sanctioned parade routes, challenging police barricades and by actively directing its anger at corporate targets, the Bloc ensured that such an escalation would ensue.

The purpose of such escalation in part lies in the belief that such conflict necessarily results in the unmasking of the brutal nature of the State. The subsequent brutality of the opposing police/military force is revealed. The idea is that by showing the larger population the violent means by which the status quo is maintained, a significant number of people will become further radicalized by this physical and visual demonstration of the nature of the State. Escalation also has a desired effect of forcing an action to transcend its often Liberal underpinnings and become an actual example of contextually conditioned revolt. Direct action expands past the confines of simple symbolism and then delves into the very real territory of subjective and objective revolutionary insurrection. The demonstration here begins to assume its own identity free of the social spectacle of the commodified-consumer culture, and begins to move in a more fluid, self-defining manner. The role of the demonstration as a social pressure valve, both impotent and non-revolutionary, begins to be inverted into an actual expression of social unrest. In this regards, spontaneity, via militance and violence, becomes an actual expression of the mass action. Hence, the action becomes a free means by which natural human identity is demonstrated through its basic rejection of subjugation, authority, capitalism and status quo.

This element of social clash is necessary by way that it allows the oppressed and alienated person a real experience by which one's pent up and sheep-like identity and boredom is shattered in a situation of revolt. Here the person begins to feel the future reality that the streets and the city, as a basic creation of the worker, truly do belong to them. Here, possibilities of full revolt and victory are crystallized through the adrenalin of conflict. In short, this conflict is good in that it allows one's mind to understand real physical struggle, while also allowing one to feel, if only slightly, the possibility of collective self management without the confused abstraction of police and government. The city, in the vicinity of conflict, truly becomes the people's to be won, lost, held or discarded.

To paraphrase Jean Paul Sartre, "The reason the worker does not revolt is because [s]he does not imagine what a liberated society would actually be like." And further from the anarchist Mikhail Bakunin, "Let us remember, no great step forward in history has ever come to fruition with out first being baptized in blood."

Therefore, regardless of the particular success of the action at hand, the activity of those within the Black Bloc must be encouraged and understood as both necessary and positive in relation to the subjective requirements necessary in the continual advancement of the revolutionary anarchist struggle.[4]

The practice of such Blocs are as socially/psychologically healthy as they are real. In this capacity, persons claiming to be of the Left, or even anarchists, which argue against the need for a Black Bloc, or that the Bloc is socially and/or tactically ineffectual, must be understood as persons who either do not understand the subjective dynamic of revolt, or ones who are so weighed down in indecision and tacit acceptance of the status quo that they must be considered ignorant at best, or the enemy at worst. These folk would substitute another generation of ideological debate, meetings and boredom for real action.[5] Despite their professed goals, they become the harbingers of defeat and alienation through their inability to understand risk, action, movement and experiential freedom. Thus, the revolutionary would do well to discredit their words through action and, as we are not blood-thirsty Neanderthals, the continuing development of legitimate Anarchist theory.

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[4] This is not to say that we should not be concerned with achieving certain objective goals regarding the action at hand. We should seek optimal effectiveness by refining our tactical abilities and subjective dedication. However, even when certain objectives are not met, we can often claim 'victory' in that this form of direct action translates into subjective advances. A good example of this is the A16 action wear we failed to shut down the Capitalist meetings, but made psychological advances by virtue of our demonstrated abilities in struggle against the forces of the State. In short, each action involving the revolutionary Anarchist movement carries with it a plethora of potential victories and defeats beyond the single major stated objective at hand. Fore, as revolutionaries against boredom and alienation, our means and ends become intermingled in one continues organic demonstration of direct democratic process and struggle.

This section is not to imply that every Black Bloc must be violent or destructive by definition. In fact, there are times when the Bloc consciously decides not to conduct itself in this manner unless circumstances demand. At these times, the Bloc section is present simply to show movement solidarity within a certain social situation. However, even with out the actual practice of such means, the Bloc still acts as the representation of a certain threat, possibility and idea. The Bloc, through its person to person composition, is freedom and the unfettered human spirit embodied in a situational social form.

[5] This is not to say that debate, organizational meetings and other like activities are not necessary. In the contrary, they are. However, they are not desirable or required when they begin to become an end in themselves. This is a tendency which is often played out in 'Leftists' organizations by virtue of its Liberal constituencies desiring of a means to feel better about their dominated lives and tacitly oppressive lifestyles with out actually putting their position as a well fed consumer (i.e. their relative social stability) in jeopardy by advocating or taking part in direct revolutionary action. It should be remembered that it is always such Left hesitation and status quo fetishism that is called on by the State to stabilize revolutionary situation (i.e. the French Communist Party in France 1968, the NAACP during the Black Revolt in urban America of that same year).

Following the example of the German people, the formation of Black Blocs soon spread across Europe, where they are still practiced with relative ferocity and effectiveness today.[6] By the early 1990s, these tactics began to take root in North America. Black Blocs were organized during the 1991 Gulf War, during the Democratic National Convention of 1996, and at a multitude of other demonstrations throughout the decade.

However, the effectiveness of the Black Bloc in North America seems to be just reaching certain levels of maturity in this new decade; a maturity which is paralleled with that of the broader social protest movement as a whole.

During the Battle of Seattle, the Black Bloc (numbering approximately 200) primarily focused its attention upon the destruction of corporate property. At the A16 (April 16, 2000) action[7] the Bloc (numbering approximately 1000) focused the bulk of its energies on combating police engaged in violent acts against the Bloc and non-violent protesters alike. Black Blocs were also present at both the Republican and Democratic national conventions of that year.[8] There they again demonstrated their tactics of physical self-defense and the destruction of capitalist private property and/or State property (i.e. police cars). Blocs were present at a multitude of May Day demonstrations in 2000, the first presidential debate in Boston,[9] at the inauguration of now-President Bush,[10] as well as at a number of other events.

The particularities of each of these actions resulted in a variety of Bloc tactics. These differences deserve to be evaluated in order to ascertain what specific tactics are effective in certain situations. Such an analysis is required in order for us to better prepare ourselves for future conflicts. However, it is not the focus of this essay to go into such details. The primary concern here is simply to discuss the history of the Black Bloc and to place it within a certain larger social context. Therefore, such particularities, though important, will be omitted for now in order to stay focused at the task at hand. Thus, I will here again turn to the social origins of the North American Black Bloc.

Social Composition Of The North American Black Bloc

The Black Bloc in North America, primarily composed of folk from within the contemporary counterculture, and more often than not coming from a working class background, is a political expression of the developing class conscious social revolu-

[6] Two recent examples can be found in the Prague actions directed against the WB/IMF meetings starting on September 26, 00', And the actions in Nice against the European Union meetings on December 6-7th, 00'.

[7] To protest the meeting of the World Bank, Washington, DC, April 16th and 17th, 2000.

[8] The Democratic National Convention was held in Los Angeles, California, August 14-17, 2000. The Republican National Convention was held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, August 1-3, 2000.

[9] Cambridge, Massachusetts, October 3, 2000.

[10] Washington, DC, January 20, 2001.

tion.[11] Persons and collectives making up the Black Bloc can be generally described as semi-alienated youth from a poor, declassed or working class background. This is not to imply that a number of Bloc participants don't come from the upper classes, for they do. However, before someone yells 'charlatans,' it should be stated that during this present age of neo-Liberalism (the contemporary mode of Capitalism), the basic strains of alienation run strong even outside of the more oppressed communities. On the other hand, I do not intend to imply that the natural focus of revolutionary potential has been stripped from the more exploited and materially deprived populations. It hasn't. It is only to say that as society moves in more abstracted and culturally undesirable directions that more and more people across class lines, particularly young people, will begin to seek social alternatives to the status quo. And, it is only reasonable to expect a number of them to side with the social vision of the actively revolutionary poor and working class. Besides, history has proven that while class origins can say much about the general potential and demeanor of large groupings, it also tells us that these generalities are not absolute laws when judged against the real activities of specific persons.[12] For example, one of the greatest Anarchist revolutionaries/theoreticians in history was Mikhail Bakunin. Bakunin came from an aristocratic Russian family. He himself was briefly an officer in the Imperial Army. Yet he committed nearly his entire adult life to the emancipation of all people. He stood at the workers' barricades during the Bavarian insurrection, and for this his former class origins became both transcended and meaningless. Give us ten divisions of Bakunins, regardless of their past economic standing, and our work as revolutionaries would be over in a matter of days.[13] So, to all you pretentious class concerned critics, I challenge you to tell me what *you've* done.

This being clarified, I use the prefix 'semi,' in describing the Blocs participants as 'semi-alienated youth,' to mark the fact that the vast majority of those involved are rooted in counterculture communities wherein degrees of non-alienated social relations are organically facilitated. They may be part of a small democratic worker's co-operative, an artistically oriented consensus based collective, reside in a group run commune, house or squat, subside off tax-exempt funds from the black market, or simply live as well as their anti-Capitalist logic and intuition impels them to. In short, a good deal of their lives are focused around the living example of more natural and life/creativity affirming Socialist[14] modes of existence. They try to be good folk with each other and the poor and working folk around them. They help each other out without expecting profit.

[11] Of course it is not here intended that it is the only, or even most important of such political expressions. It is only one, out of a multitude, of such developing trends.

[12] To name but a two: Mikhail Bakunin and Karl Marx.

[13] Also for the record... Bakunin spent many years in prison, including some time chained up in a tower in St. Petersburg where he lost all his teeth due to scurvy.

[14] Here I use the term 'Socialist' in its older and more accurate meaning. It is used simply to denote a more co-operative means of organizing society.

However, this is not to say that they, unlike more mainstream workers, are not alienated. For no matter how 'counter' one manages to live within an oppressive authoritarian society, one cannot escape the basic drugging of one's spirit by the hands of the State. If one lives on a collective farm, that collective is still coerced into paying property tax, or the land will be seized. If one spends their hours working to collectively create a liberating art, food, shelter and art supplies have to be had; and often this is enough cohesion to impel one to sell their labor as a wage slave. Worker co-operatives are no exception. Such operations are driven to continue dealing on a cash basis inasmuch as certain basic supplies (take paint for example, that is if the co-op is centered around that trade) are not easily attainable through barter or other means. All being said, the rat of contemporary Capitalism can be smelled in the best homes. Of course, some homes smell a lot worse then others.

Still, the Anarchist within a counterculture is less alienated from themselves and others as compared to the person squarely within the predominant culture. At least here, radical commodification, consumerism, Capitalism and authoritarianism are viewed as crap yet to be overcome, as opposed to the bedrock of social meaning. With the above understood, the question still remains as to what the deeper social, political and historical reasons are for the emergence of this revolutionary faction within the Western Nations. For the particularities of their cultural leanings seem to make them somewhat unique as compared to their proletariat ancestors. They are not friendly to the authoritarian analysis of the various communist parties, they are not often motivated by hunger (one can find lots of food in the trash bins of Uncle Sam) and they do not limit their demands and social vision to material equality. They call for a re-thinking and re-organizing of society along lines which challenge the very fundamental basis of contemporary western civilization. *They are anarchists!* But how did the broader social context give rise to them? Who is their constituency? What exactly is it that they seek to disrupt, and what do they intend to replace it with?

In order to answer some of these underlying questions, as well as to place the Block Bloc within a comprehensive sociological framework, I will now turn to a discourse on the particularities of the present Capitalist reality.

Section II. The New Capitalism And Its System Of Radical Commodification And Consumerism

As Capitalism has moved into the new phase of radical commodification and consumerism, its hold on all aspects of the perceived mass existence has seemingly strengthened. Contemporary Capitalism, by way of its inherent imperialism, has expanded its former material boundaries as to make a quantifiable commodity out of the hollows of one's private time, internal thoughts, recreation and personal relations. The older forms of classical Capitalism, as found in the pre-WWII Euro-American theater, was

primarily concerned with large scale domestic industrial production and the subsequent exploitation of the worker, through relatively straightforward means, for the ends of surplus capital (profit). The new concerns center around the exploitation of leisure, the construction of false needs along with the particular commodities to meet these superfluous and profitable ends, and the advancement of its psychological holds to include the subtle coercion of the worker to actively take part in her/his own oppression. Of course the old industrial modes of exploitation are still present, only now the pallet of oppression and dreariness is more well rounded.

The immediate cause of this shift can be found with the ruling class's ability to export massive segments of the industries (coal, petroleum, machine/auto production, fabrics, etc.) to poorer, formerly agricultural-based "third world" nations where the worker is subjected by the iron heel of puppet dictators backed financially and militarily by the primary Capitalist States along with their plutocracy.[15] Within these countries labor lacks the historical consolidation of organizational strength and past accomplishments such as the eight hour work day and workers' compensation.[16] This of course is in conjunction with the fact that within these boundaries, safety/environmental standards are hardly allotted a whisper of concern, let alone precautionary legislation. Therefore, the primary Capitalist nations, through their respected ruling class, can increase production at a fraction of the former cost while massively increasing profit.[17] In turn, the ruling class can then throw a few more peanuts of benefits and wages to the domestic workers, in order to decrease poverty-based insurrectionary sentiment while not experiencing any decrease in profit.

Simultaneously these so called privileged laborers are constantly pressured to utilize their new spending ability through the purchasing of Capitalist controlled gadgets and instruments of supposed enjoyment and/or need, i.e. complicated phone services, large screen t.v.'s, 'brand name' garments/sneakers, new top 40 musical CDs written and composed by assholes lacking even a hint of soul and/or creativity, and larger then necessary cars with remote locking devices.

> "[They'll] give you all the hits to play,
> to keep you in your place all day."

—*The Clash*

[15] This is different than colonialism in that these regimes are no longer exploited for their raw materials alone. Now their indigenous labor is utilized as a means of producing refined goods for general consumption.

[16] As I am editing this section of the work, I'm cold (Vermont winter with no gas), annoyed (my roommates wont leave me alone), have a sore throat, and am listening to Frank Zappa's 'Hot Rats.' Good fuckin' album. In all, it reminds me of the Motherfucker saying, "We are as utopian as Detroit."

[17] Here the Capitalists must still contend with armed Communist guerrilla movements as well as the occasional anti-authoritarian uprisings. These are major fascists of the continuing world social revolution, and in such they deserve a great deal of analysis. However, the scope of this text requires that I omit such commentary and this time.

In other words, false or unnecessary needs are created within this market, and are then allotted to the populace at the expense of further capital. In this way, the ruling class is able to again accumulate even further surplus capital.

To bring about this trend in popular spending, the masses are bombarded with commercial messages of indoctrination commonly referred to as "advertisements." This force-fed propaganda meets the eye nearly wherever it may wander, and by subtleties and by sheer immensity, directs the hand of the still alienated, if not still half starved, "first world" worker down the road of unbridled consumerism. Here the role of the worker takes on a bizarre character. On the one hand, the worker continues her/his former role as a person/class subjected to an exploitative economic relation. For s/he still does not own or control the means of production, and s/he is still used by the ruling class as no more then a drone capable (not without prodding) of generating profit earmarked, alone, for the already wealthy. S/he still does not control her/his own life. It is controlled by powers from economically above. And further, the general prosperity of the economy is still unattainable in *any equitable* manner inasmuch as it still rests with a minority of ruling economic elite, protected by both the laws of the land and the guns of the State.

On the other hand, by transforming the worker into a consumer, the economic system manages to make the worker into an active agent in her/his own social oppression. For here consumption is both subtly and aggressively made out to be the means by which the individual can escape the experiential emptiness of their so- called free, yet serf-like, life.[18] The unspoken message that every advertisement carries is that it is only by virtue of consuming that the single individual transcends the loneliness of provincial existence and takes part in the communion of the 'one' or at least of something greater and more meaningful. In this case the 'one' is capital and the means is the recognition of the self and other (both animated and unanimated, cognitive and non-cognitive) as facets of the universal representation of all commodities, that is money. And in turn, the individual must her/himself sell one's labor both as a means of material survival and, as this new social relation demands, as a means of becoming a commodity.[19] Furthermore, the worker must now utilize the wages received as a means of again touching the whole through the accumulation/consumption of other commodities. The promise is that as long as this process remains constant, as long as the individual consistently

[18] The State loves to sing "Land of the Free" while sticking it two the common wo/man from the cradle to the grave. The public schools teach obedience and reverence to the status quo; at one's job one is subjected to constant top down power structure; in the streets, laws written by the ruling class are enforced by armed pigs intent on tossing you in the can if you cross the line. There as many examples as there are bullshit justifications. As for specifics, I'm sure your personal experiences will here suffice (that is if your not ruling class scum).

[19] Where under classical Capitalism one was coerced into being a wage slave in order to materially survive, under the new Capitalism one often becomes a wage slave for both this reason and because one becomes convinced that it is the metaphysically right thing to do. For here work becomes more then a means of survival. It becomes a cornerstone off identity and connectedness with the larger, so called more meaningful, 'one' of capital.

retains an active relation within this process, one can know the universal wholeness of existence, and therefore the additional promise of an ensuing 'knowledge of a truth' and 'sense of well being' is also granted. This occurs insofar as the 'one' or the 'universal' has always been described in conjunction with these traits since the beginnings of religion and permanent/city dwellings. Thus, the lie is painted as truth via an implied association.

Here, the worker, drunk on continual advertisements and no longer tethered by hunger and cold, immerses her/himself in a constant state of consumption. S/he becomes convinced that superfluous commodities are necessary elements of a good life, and actively seeks them out for consumption. This, despite the fact that the purchasing of these objects or experiences play an obvious and primary role in maintaining the wealth and therefore power, through continuing profit, of those in the ruling class who control the economic rights to these things. In addition, the consumer-worker is often required to further enslave her/himself to the plutocracy by acquiring these commodities by the means of credit (credit cards, loans, etc.). By doing such, the laborer must perform additional hours at work in order to accrue the necessary capital to pay back the borrowed cash, and subsequently maintain their access to credit and hence adequate levels of material consumption. Of course these hours of labor result in the rich further expanding their profit earnings at the expense of the wage worker.

This dynamic often results in the laborer becoming more docile in her/his capacity in the workplace, in that to be fired translates into being cut off from her/his role as a commodity (wage slave) and full consumer. This is something that the indoctrinated consumer-worker dreads, as such a severing from the perceived 'one' would destroy the identity of the self and society which such a neurotic system of relations demand.[20] Therefore, where the worker of old would more quickly risk her/his job security in order to bring about positive change for their class (i.e. union organizing) the new consumer-worker is generally more conservative in order to carefully maintain her/his means to communion.[21]

> "The basic tautological character of the spectacle [this system of commodity-consumption] flows from the simple fact that its means

[20] Let it be noted that this desire for status quo is for the most part skin deep. It is a symptom of mass indoctrination, and in such it can not be understood as natural or necessarily permanent. If one scratches the surface, one will often find an underlying desire to sever the social ties to the world of the commodity. This is played out in childhood instincts by the activity of random vandalism. In the adult life, this natural inclination is often demonstrated at the bar where at folks are known to become a bit destructive towards objects and relationships after a bad week and after a fist or two full of whisky.

In my hometown, the local working class bar (where I did a lot of growing up) had a stockade fence lining its back. A favorite Saturday night pass time was punching holes through it. And I'll tell you what, this aggression was not simply foolish male aggression. If that's all it represented, I wonder why I never saw such holes punched in fences at the expensive upper class bars... Well, at least not by those fat bastards who could afford to drink there. Of course this does not occur without exceptions.

[21] See *Society of the Spectacle*, Section 13, Black & Red Press, Detroit, 1983

> are simultaneously its ends. It is the sun which never sets over the empire of modern passivity. It covers the entire surface of the world and bathes endlessly in its own glory."

—Guy Debord[22]

Where in the religious age ex-communication from the church meant social and perceived spiritual death, now unemployment serves a similar role. For even with such hard earned worker benefits as unemployment compensation, the jobless are still disconnected from half of the perceived process of meaning. In this system it is not enough to consume. A person also must be an object of consumption oneself (a commodified worker). This stands true unless of course you are among the ruling class, in which case you acquire a sort of living sainthood.[23]

This mode of thought also results in a fractionalizing of class unity. For class no longer becomes the perceived focal point of social meaning. Here, the individual (or more accurately, the believer), along with the Capitalist system of radical commodification, becomes the sole basis of human understanding. Each consumer and commodity demands its own separateness which only the unity of capital (as universal commodity) can bring together.

> "What hides under.. [this separateness] is a unity of misery. Behind the masks of total choice, different forms of the same alienation confront each other, all of them built on real contradictions which are repressed."

—Guy Debord[24]

With this mass foolery intact, the worker is no longer as likely to take personal risks for the benefit of their natural historical whole (that being class). Furthermore, the relationship of the consumer-commodity necessitates an *us vs. them* mentality. For all those who buy into this and who maintain a full connection to this process begin to recognize themselves in a similar way that insular religious and/or nationalistic ethnic communities tend to view themselves. For those included there is a passive acceptance. For those outside there are misgivings and even hatred. It is for this reason that the Right manages to use those collecting welfare as a scapegoat on which the workers can place misguided anger and resentment. Ironically, the social benefits that such persons collect are the same benefits won by the working class struggle during previous times during classical Capitalism. In short, under these new Capitalist conditions, the economic system becomes a kind of social fundamentalism and/or capital based fascism.

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[22] This stands true to a large extent even when the traditional idea of work is expanded in order to include certain modes of black market Capitalism, including, but not limited to, the sale of dangerous hard drugs.

[23] FIXME

[24] See *Society of the Spectacle*, Section 63, Black & Red Press, Detroit, 1983

To further undermine poor and working class unity, the ruling elite through the public schools, their paid-for political lackeys and mass media conglomerates aggressively disseminates inaccurate terminologies regarding class categories.

Towards this end the term 'middle class' has been reinvented so as to drive a dividing line between what is correctly a single working class. Wherein 'middle class' was formally considered to be the lower end of the upper classes (i.e. absentee farmers, owners of multiple chain store outlets) it is now used to describe a certain degree of commodity acquisition amongst laborers. It is not uncommon for a person who labors as a nurse, a construction worker, a low end clerk or even one who cleans gutters at $16 an hour to be considered 'middle class' as long as that person is in possession of a new car, home, large television, etc. Of course these items are typically made available to the worker through the development of the credit industry, and as such cannot represent any real notion of equitable or bountiful wealth. In themselves, such commodities acquired by credit represent the very real increase in profit of those in the ruling class who own and/or control both ends of this industry. At the end of the day, if you work for a wage at a profession which is controlled from above, count on each paycheck to make ends meet, and if that job represents your sole livelihood and finally if you often or sometimes (during moments of clarity) wish you did not have to be there at all, then you are most likely of a working class origin. In short, terms such as 'middle class' are as meaningless as they are divisive. They do no more then reinforce the relative stability of the plutocratic powers that be.

The stabilizing power of the new Capitalism, that of a functioning process of commodification and consumption, derives from mass belief, and when a belief is misgiven, there is always the likelihood that it can and will be reversed. This is especially the case where error is contrasted with objectively material and intuitive experiential truth. And, it is just such a contrast that the contemporary masses are confronted with whenever breaks of continuity occur in the present oppressive system. These breaks are often fraught with existential fear, anxiety, anger, misgivings and regret. Shit, psychoactive prescription drugs aside[25], it's hard to imagine a person not reflecting on the absurdity, emptiness and lack of social worth of this system when they lay their head on the pillow to sleep at night. Well, before this begins to sound too pessimistic, let's take comfort in the fact that the world is no longer believed to be flat.

During previous times, when industrial production was primarily based in what is still considered to be the industrial countries, the 'bottom line' of the ruling class limited this relation in that the general working population was not allowed the means to adequately consume in order to take part in this process. In short, the greed of the

[25] Psycho active prescription drugs are a huge factor and should not be over looked as a tool of social control. The fact is, there is NO normative model for human brain chemistry, and any medical attempt to standardize such will inevitably result in a model which is most conducive to the modes of social interaction which are most prominent in the society in which they are formed. In this case, such approaches most often result in the drugging of a person in order to make them 'happier' or at least non-combative in their role as a means of production and consumer of Capitalist controlled commodities.

domestic upper class limited the stabilization of the system. They sucked the working class for all that it was worth and threw them pennies so as they might not starve in order to work, and create Capitalist profit again another day. Here the proletariat's meager purchasing power vastly limited their ability to consume, and hence the worker could not be as easily fooled into believing in the bullshit communion discussed above.

From the earliest times of serious industrialization, Europe and the United States were fraught with a nearly constant state of relative working class unrest for these very reasons. Capitalism lacked an experiential excuse to dull the knife of mass agitation against the obviously degrading circumstances under which the great majority of people were forced to live. It was not until after World War II that the social situation began to apparently stabilize.[26] This happened, in conjunction with other subjective reasons, as the above discussed economic strategy began to take hold.

However, this period of relative stability was not accrued without certain costs still to be felt today. By curtailing domestic rebellion by fostering an internationalization of Capitalist oppression, the ruling class must continually pay the price of a greatly intensified mass alienation. This proves to be an expense in that it results in certain profound chinks forming in the armor of the plutocracy at the home front.[27] For by domestically decreasing material deprivation (poverty) amongst its domestic laborers, and by setting them upon a course for the nonexistent promised land of happiness within the 'universal commodity,' the social framework of society as a whole becomes bogged down in a world of shit, lies and experiential disappointments. In this way alienation becomes a factor which drives society in two directions; one sociopathic,[28] the other revolutionary; neither of which bode well for future stability and a continuation of the status quo. This occurs due to the underlying experiential lie of the promise of the universal ability to achieve wholeness with something both greater and more meaningful. There is a reason why people fear death in this society, and it's not because of fire and brimstone; it is the fear that their whole lives as consumers may have been a waste of time as much as their apparent (forced) happiness was no more then a plastic carrot on a string. That is not a pleasant final thought. In short, "the Jones" died miserable.

"..do you see

[26] For a well documented historical account of this period within the United States, see, Howard Zinn's *A People's History of The United States*, HarperPerennial, New York, 1999.

[27] Inherent weaknesses are not limited to the domestic scene. For this internationalization has also carried the scope of anti-Capitalist struggle to every corner of the globe. However, the form of struggle taken in these "third world" regions can be expected to develop differently from that of the domestic regions. There poverty is a more direct driving force then alienation. Hence, differences should be expected.

[28] This sociopathic tendency is a rudimentary reaction against this alienation in the void of no greater hope for a progressive mass paradigm shift and/or a lack of a sufficient social/political vocabulary and underlying understanding. Ostensibly this behavior is often demonstrated by the shooting of ones bosses, simple co-worker, teachers, fellow students, etc.. It is also demonstrated by the fairly common act of mass public shooting sprees.

now that you see that everything they told us was wrong?

The elephant caught like that
and caged
like that?
The way they kicked us and caged us too?
How sweetly sad it seems how sad and sweet passing lonely people on the street
the skulls beneath the skin
the arteries bravely pumping liquid as they rush to do
all the foolish things that they must do..."

—*Charles Bukowski*[29]

With all this being said, it is important to point out that this new Capitalism is still forced to compete with its more backwards internal sentiments. For the ruling class, still being motivated by greed, often finds itself incapable of maintaining the necessary levels of commodity availability for the domestic workers. Wherein it is rational (from the point of view of the Capitalist) to allow the domestic population a certain degree of purchasing/acquisition power in order to guarantee a basic level of material based social stability, and a continuing profit margin based on commodity sales, the underlying greed of this class often acts as a self-defeating force. Today, certain economic trends seem to indicate that the ruling class has become increasingly concerned with drawing a quick fix of mass profit at the price of steady long term increases. Towards this end, it seems that a substantial number of the plutocracy, as expressed through their political lackeys, has forgotten the weaknesses of classical Capitalism, and therefore has embarked upon a course of streamlining domestic work forces (downsizing/layoffs), cutting back of social benefits (dental, medical, etc.) and facilitated a stagnation of real wages. Therefore, the present social realm is marked not by two competing social visions (one status-quo, one revolutionary), but three; the third being a regressive vision of capitalism. Hence, these more recent trends have motivated certain sectors of the consumer-working class rank and file to take certain basic stands against a perceived cutback in their social positions. While these rumblings in and of themselves are often no more than shortsighted complaints directed against those who would challenge their status quo as consumers, they also are indicative of a developing social uneasiness. For the consumer-worker is increasingly being educated to the authoritarian, abstract and antisocial ways and means of the commodified society. They are more and more aware that the basic foundations of society are not geared for them, but rather directed at them only inasmuch as they are considered objects of manipulation from powers above. It is made more and more obvious that the basic mechanisms of society are not controlled by them; they are directed against them. As such, these realizations become increasingly tangible as this regressive capitalist trend

[29] From *Open All Night, 'Running On Empty'*, Black Sparrow Press, Santa Rosa, 2000.

is responsible for numerous lapses in commodity-consumer process. And here, some workers will inevitably reach the logical and emotive conclusion that such an economic process is ultimately not congruent with a more naturally meaningful, beneficial and democratic society. These backslides inevitably act as a kind of social shock therapy, whose outcome will be the delivering of larger sections of the working population to the side of revolution.[30] That's not to say that these anti-worker trends should be encouraged or justified by way of some long term revolutionary program. They hurt laboring people in the here and now, and therefore, working class revolutionaries must lend their hand in resisting these attacks. To do otherwise would result in the revolutionary movement becoming discredited in the eyes of the masses. As such, this is a danger which should be avoided. But still, this trend must be recognized for what it is; ultimately as a condition aiding in the radicalization of the masses.

However, while this is a very meaningful trend, it should not be utilized as a practical means from which to reinvigorate classical theories of revolution which are primarily based on a mass material deprivation. For the fact that these lapses become noticeable, the fact that they become part of a revolutionary equation, point to the reality that they represent breaks with the predominant social process as opposed to its norm. For the modus operandi of contemporary Capitalism is commodification and consumerism. And with such being the case, a greatly intensified alienation, and not poverty (although poverty is still a strong motivating force), becomes the primary motivation towards social revolution. And again, it is this mass alienation which must give rise to certain conditions which inevitably must account for its eventual social transcendence. Alienation creates its own form of revolutionary breaches.

Section III. Counterculture as Social Revolution

Therefore, this necessary increase in mass alienation has opened a new (or rather more mature) social front within the continuing revolutionary struggle. For the rise of radical commodification and consumerism has occurred alongside the rise of counterculture. This is no coincidence. Counterculture (cc) is a natural reaction against this system and is also the living embodiment of the class conscious social revolution.[31] It

[30] In the United States this regressive tendency is most often politically expressed by the Republican Party. In turn, the political expression of the new Capitalism is more often voiced by the Democratic Party.

[31] For all those who would like to ramble off arguments that counterculture is primarily an expression of upper class hedonism, or that it is somehow foreign to poor and working class communities, I would like to pointedly remind you that great numbers of cc social facilitators were historically of a working class origin. Take For example: Neil Cassidy (author of *The First Third*), Jack Kerouac (author of many books including *On The Road*), Jimmi Hendrix (who's live Woodstock rendition of 'The Star Spangled Banner' is perhaps the musical embodiment of the 60's movement), Janis Joplin, writer Charles Bukowski (although if he were still alive, and if he had the right amount of booze and was in a shitty mood, he might just hit me in the head with a bottle for putting him in such a grouping), Ozzy

develops as a natural answer to the intensified alienation brought on by this system. Counterculture becomes the living rebel base peopled by those (most often from the poor, working class and declassed population) who become or are made consciously aware of the basic fallacies and oppressive nature of the larger social/economic system.

Mass expressions in counterculture first emerged in North America with the Beats of the late 1940s to early 1960s. Then again counterculture emerged with the hippy/ radical movement of the 1960s and 70s. The mid/late-70s brought punk. Today we have a counterculture that is a kind of synthesis of previously disjoined branches. There is no snappy name for our community, but it clearly carries within it certain elements of punk, hippy, and other counter-modes of being. This is not surprising as the demarcation of this time as being the end of one century/millennium, and the beginning of a new one, subjectively seems to spark a kind of social re-evaluation of past eras. Here, this age is also is marked by a synthesis of styles, thoughts and dreams. In this we truly are a people in between times; in between the death of an old system and a birth of a new.

Counterculture, as the above indicates, assumes different variations at different times. It dies and then is reborn as a former incarnation is either co-opted or simply no longer aesthetically expresses the particularities of the present age. However, as long as the greater society which it is pitted against still exists, the conditions which demanded its initial emergence will still be present. Hence, the particular death of any one form of counterculture is ultimately inconsequential insofar as the emergence of a new particular incarnation necessarily will follow.[32]

Sociologically, counterculture manifests itself in a conscious and organic unity of all those activities that constitute the natural, life affirming, human identity. Social relations, housing arrangements, economy, recreation, art and finally politics are all incorporated into one united, although diverse, alternative community. As this community matures, specific mores, style and traditions develop. The binding factor lies simply in the conscious recognition of the common rejection of radical commodification, consumerism and authoritarianism. In this a sister/brotherhood is formed which is inherently anarchistic and is that of the counterculture.[33]

Ozbourne (writer/ singer for band Black Sabbath, masterpieces include 'War Pigs', a song still barred in the UK during war time) and Joe Strummer (of the band The Clash).

[32] Not that we should give one particular cc up to our enemies with out a fight. We must constantly struggle for the integrity of our cultural communities in order to allow them the time in which our modes of struggle and creation can become more mature. We will concede nothing.

[33] Here I concede that past incarnations of counterculture, such as the Beats, often failed to adequately develop political modes of expression. In addition, other countercultures, such as during the 60s and early 70s, at least in part, seem to have developed politically along more authoritarian Communist lines. These seeming contradictions have more to do with the greater levels of cc immaturity then they did with natural internal inclinations. Hence, the Beats, being the first major example of a mass North American Counterculture, were locked in a constant search for self affirming identity. Here there politics were little more then exercises in possibilities. Likewise, the 60-70s developed as the second functioning example of such. And to their credit, they realized the need to develop political modes. But, being

This culture is only counter in relation to the predominant culture of the commodity-consumer which its existence assumes and within whose borders of dominance it functions. Without such an other, it simply is natural, liberated, culture. But, in the context in which we here discuss counterculture, we must understand it as more than simply an opposition with the aim of dominance. For the pre-dominant culture of the post-industrial age is that of an abstract and hierarchical social system. The common form of this system is found in the most contemporary modes of Capitalism (although it is not limited to it) and with it the complete commodification of society. In short, the predominant culture is that of exploitation, oppression and intense alienation. It is a forced totality specifically defined by the commodity and the process of consumption.

In this context counterculture can only live up to its bill if it rejects this totality. It is this totality which necessitates the levels of social alienation which in turn give rise to counterculture. Thus, by virtue of its very existence, counterculture is constituted as an oppositional force posited against its socially dominant other. In this it is a destructive force. However, for it to do so it must creatively construct (or unearth) as well. The basis upon which this creative process must be built is the unity of human dignity and solidarity as implied by the act of rebellion.

> "It is for the sake of everyone in the world that the slave asserts himself when he comes to the conclusion that a command has infringed on something in him which does not belong to him alone, but which is common ground where all men-even the man who insults and oppresses him-have a natural community."
>
> —*Albert Camus*[34]

Without committing to such a construction counterculture would fail to challenge the void upon which the all oppressive systems rest. In such, any apparent victory would be false as the death of the particular temporal form of an oppressive system would amount to little more then its reemergence in a new particular form. In short it

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relative pioneers in this capacity, they often failed to develop between anything more then rudimentary lines. More then not they identified an already established means of anti-Capitalist expressions and tried to force themselves into the cracks. Hence the general friendliness towards Maoism. This mistake was not with out exception (i.e. Black Mask/Up Against The Wall MotherFucker, Free Vermont), and it was not with out a certain logic. In this case, Maoism was seen as the primary ideology of a global grassroots opposition to the predominate paradigm. And correctly understanding the struggle against Capitalism to be both in their intrust and necessarily international in character, they attempted to barrow from this analysis in order to mesh with a perceived revolutionary whole.

All and all, the short-comings and mistakes of these earlier incarnations of cc must be viewed as almost necessary given the dialectical nature of the progress of struggle. Each particular cc tried and failed or succeeded where the next cc would pick up.

Therefore, if one was to define counterculture in a very strict manner, it would be conceivable that one would term the Beats and the 60s-early 70s folk as a 'proto-counterculture', rather then that of the full kind. However, that borderlines on semantics, and seems to me to be a waist of time.

[34] See *The Rebel*, page 16, Vintage Books, New York, 1956

must posit a constructive claim or fail to address the premises that the system rests upon. Counterculture must be, and in fact is, both destructive and creative at the same time.

> "The urge to destroy is also a creative urge."
>
> —*Mikhail Bakunin*

Counterculture, in our present context, must be understood not only contra the present form of Capitalism, but also *for a* liberated society free of the arbitrariness of masters and slaves. The counterculture is anti-hierarchical while being for the consecration of a new society of fully actualized human beings.[35] Furthermore, as a creative force, it must actually create. If it does no more then postulate, then it is no more then a criticism, and a criticism alone does not qualify as a culture (be it a counterculture or otherwise). In the act of creating, it attempts to realize those new social relations that the fall of the present system will make fully realizable. In this respect counterculture is a liberating social experiment. It is "the formation of a new society from within the shell of the old."[36] It is the formation of the social revolution before that of the political revolution.

However, at this point it is marked with a contradiction, for as long as it is a counterculture, it is limited by the repressive forces of radical commodification, consumerism and the State. In this it is impelled to commit certain internal contradictions for the sake of survival. It must abide by certain oppressive laws or at the very least function semi-underground to escape certain restraints. But even underground it is compromised. The long arm of the commodity extends to all corners (some less than others). In such a society, there is no complete separateness from these restrictive traits. But, these limitations do not relegate the counterculture's existence to an absurdity. Rather, it is these limitations which light the fire of creativity. For to find dignity and affirmation through the creation of an alternative community despite the dominate opposition is truly dynamic. Such limitations impel the human mind to expand its cognitive ability, and in this consciousness is sharpened. Furthermore, the limitations to its full actualization is the impetus to its destructive aspect. It must necessarily seek the eradication of that opposing force as the condition of its coming into full being. In this it is more than a decision to organize in a particular manner. It is a revolutionary force. Thus counterculture can not be judged purely by its contradictions. It must be judged in regards to what it knowingly points to, and to the extent that it stretches the limitations of the predominant culture.

The counterculture is not a subculture, as a subculture is nothing more then a variant of the dominant culture insofar as it fails to reject the basic tenants of such. It merely rearranges the detail in order to create the desired illusion. A subculture stops at

[35] Old ccs had some hierarchy, especially in politics, however, that was forced and represented a general immaturity, not the developing line of internal regression.

[36] An old Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) saying.

establishing its identity as *quantitatively* different from the present system, but in doing it fails to become *qualitatively* different from it. At certain times a subculture can be mistaken for counterculture in that it may exhibit similar behavior and language to that of the counterculture in relation to the dominant system. But, it is merely exhorting a claim to the throne with out calling the institution of the throne into question. It may compete with the dominant culture, but its victory translates into itself becoming its former enemy. Such changing of the guard does no more then reinvigorate that which is already entrenched.

Subcultures which do not seek to transplant themselves to the seats of power, are no more then glorified fan clubs. They are incomplete or escapist at best, and social organs of enemy collaboration at worst. They are not counter.

Likewise, a counterculture which begins to demonstrate these above traits becomes degenerative, and hence must cease to be considered a revolutionary organ. Here, in its diminished state, it becomes just another subculture.

On the other hand, a healthy and functioning counterculture, represents a legitimate threat to the predominant culture in that the legitimate counterculture's expansion necessitates a weakening of its enemy's hold over the social and subjective realm. The enemy system survives first by the common belief in its false unity and second by its repressive institution (i.e. police and army). And history has shown the second of the two to be inadequate in ultimately maintaining dominance with the lack of the other. The present oppressive system recognizes the danger posed by counterculture and is thus impelled to take moves to neutralize it. Its first line of attack is indoctrination through education, media and advertisement. This measure may prolong the day of reckoning but ultimately it is not enough in the face of continuing experiential oppression and alienation. The essential lie of the system and the necessary intensified alienation of the great majority continually results in more persons from the dominated classes becoming disillusioned with the current paradigm. As discussed above, lapses in continuity do occur for numerous reasons, and it is during such lapses that the process of consumerism is unmasked as a process devoid of natural social worth. In short, the regular uneasiness of the subservient and alienated individual/class necessitates a certain anxiety which often impels the affected person to question the ultimate utility of the dominant process/system. At such a point it is only reasonable to expect that person to consider alternative modes of social interaction which appear to offer a more healthy social reality. In that capacity, the actual counterculture is viewed as an option which the affected person can consider. Its appeal will of course lie in its alternative social principals, strengthened by the fact that it stands as a functioning, ostensible and measurable example. Here counterculture can be expected to grow in proportion to this ongoing trend. And, the rate of countercultural growth must increase as the more persons included in its composition, or at least sympathetic with its revolutionary vision, necessarily results in the dissemination of its basic life affirming message at faster rates and with more prevalence.

This is not to imply that we are headed for a society where the old crew cut and blue collar shirt is altogether substituted for mohawks, ponytails and nipple rings. Shit, it's not even to say that the odd attraction of Frank Sinatra will completely give way to Joan Baez, The Who, Bad Brains, or Crass. It's only to say that the emerging culture of life (counterculture) will begin to exert sometimes obvious, sometimes subtle influence over the day to day reality and outlook of the average worker. Ultimately it's not any more important to the dominant culture if the laborer wears a J. Edgar Hoover button to work and sleeps under an American flag than it is to the revolutionary worker to don tattoos, combat boots and piercings. All that is important is that the mass of workers begin to view themselves as part of a living culture which, though presently situated in a more dominant culture, is inherently contra the basic premises of its would-be master. In other words, it's a matter of leanings regarding identity. For counterculture does not represent a threat in so much as its counter institutions seek to replace the status quo (although to a lesser degree this is also true). Its real threat is that its very example can challenge the State sanctioned belief system. As already stated, the present system of commodification-consumerism primarily rests upon mass belief. If counterculture can subvert that belief, the present paradigm can be expected to de-stabilize. Hence, counterculture, by virtue of its existence, entails within it an element or means of mass liberation.[37]

This process of mass liberation has already began. How many factory workers already listen to Jimi Hendrix, Black Sabbath, The Clash or Rage Against The Machine? How many already take part in elements of counterculture, all the while desiring more? In a word, counterculture, aside from its more puritanical definitions, is more diverse and subtle then many would like to give it credit for. Its currents, like that of the dominant culture, move through many levels of society. It seeks to help facilitate the freedom of all people, unlike the dominant culture which seeks to make people as docile as they are drone-like.

Here it must be stated that such an expansion of counterculture will not take place purely by historically deterministic means. Such a building of popular base must be actively coaxed by persons within counterculture. If counterculture simply was to exist as an isolated community secure in the notion that it would persevere with or without campaigns of concerted outreach, it would die on the vine of passive isolationism. All things being equal, maybe this would not be the case. However, all things are not equal. The predominant culture actively seeks to maintain its psychological dominance, and likewise various subcultures rooted in religion, fascism and the like actively seek to divert popular discontent into their bases of support. For these reasons, counterculture can not rest on its laurels. It must seek ways to build inroads into the common experience of the common wo/man. It must maintain a dialectical relation with those masses still not consciously brought over to the social revolution. In this, counterculture must

[37] For one reason or another, I'm here reminded of my friend Jon, who once said, "Sure, when the shit goes down I'll be on my porch with my shotgun, drinking beer and taking potshots at helicopters."

position itself squarely within the larger poor and working class communities. It must support them in their day to day struggles even when those struggles do not take aim at the root of oppression and alienation. All the while, it must provide a sufficient and accessible revolutionary critique of these common problems. It must agitate. However, it is not enough to be immersed in the political field. In fact, the political field must be understood as secondary to that of the social/cultural field. For it will not be through creating things such as a living wage that the masses will be fully brought over to our side (their natural side). It will be through the common identification of art, literature, music, social happenings and *real friendship*. These are things which touch a person directly and communicate a vision of freedom and camaraderie. And, it is through such a connection that more people will come to identify themselves as persons within a common culture of struggle, creativity and future liberation.

The political field, while necessary in as much as the political holds legitimate importance in one's life, must be understood as primary to a lesser degree in that such activities often translate into notions of "alliances," "common fronts," etc., and these concepts still imply a certain degree of temporariness and separateness and are not generally responsible for ideas of cultural commonality. They are provisional as opposed to communal. On their own they may foster issue by issue victories (which is good), but not an organic concept of unity through co-operative communities. They are incomplete.

This being said, counterculture, as briefly discussed above, cannot be content to live on the fringes of the more dominant exploitative culture. To do so would be no more then escapism, and hence the perceived counterculture would, in actuality, be no more then a subculture with a veneer of angst. Ultimately, there comes a time when this natural enemy of anti-social structures must attempt to surmount the palisades of oppression. It must seek to destroy that which prevents it from developing in its more mature forms.

Within such a counterculture it is only natural that certain people will carry the ball in this direction. And it is here that specific people and collectives will organically key in on revolutionary political action akin to that presently demonstrated by Earth Liberation Front cells on the one hand and the Anarchist Black Bloc on the other. Here it cannot bide its time and wait for the perfect moment. It must lash out at its other as a basic means of its political expression. It must transcend its relative passivity through the violent resistance of its own repression as well as the repression directed against the poor and working classes as a whole. And in such, it achieves an honesty which progressive impostors can not readily provide. This is one form of its direct political expression. It is different from much of its other political activity which often centers around piecemeal issues and community outreach. It is animated by its own revolutionary aspirations. And here it hardens itself by experiencing portions of direct, concrete struggle with facets of its enemy. This and prison support for its jailed comrades become its most direct lines of political expression.

Furthermore, by not limiting itself to Liberal dogmatic tactics, it further reaches into the hearts of the yet included poor and working class, who rarely could dig the horseshit of respectable protest and Pacifism. In essence, it develops its own means, and limits itself to that which proves effective, both in regards to objective goals, and subjective (non-alienated) needs. In short, it becomes an oppositional force *by opposing.* And, it is honest in its opposition by striking back according to the necessity of struggle, self-defense and victory. It is the physical and political expression of the self conscious poor and working class social revolution. Counterculture in political motion.

In conclusion, it is within the above social context that the North American Black Bloc emerges. In it is an important sphere of conflict between a culture of death (Commodification and consumerism) which increasingly has nowhere to go but down, and one of life which must struggle in order to realize itself in a society of cooperation and creativity.

Of course there are many more tactical, practical and theoretical issues, which have not been addressed in the above work, that we must continue to explore in order to realize the final victory of the revolution. And of course it may be necessary to modify or even disregard or reverse certain claims made throughout the above essay (absolutism is for shitheads). However, it has been my intention throughout the above document to map out a more thorough context within which we can further develop the necessary understandings of social process and transformation that will be required in order to bring a liberated victory within our collective grasp. So I trust the above met this task at least in part, and I look forward to the ongoing conversation. Well, cheers for now, and I'll be seeing you on the front lines.

David Van Deusen, GMAC
The Green Mountains, March, 2001

"To the daring belong the future."

—*Emma Goldman*

Chapter II
Early Clashes
North America, 1988-1999

Genesis

Black blocs first appeared in West Germany in the early 1980s. This militant tactic was embraced by anti-authoritarian leftist youth (commonly referred to as Autonomon) as a response to four escalating factors: 1. The increasing confrontations between police and protesters at anti-nuclear demonstrations. 2. In defense of squatting communities. 3. Germany was the scene of massive demonstrations in solidarity with the armed actions of the left-communist Red Army Faction. There it was common for major conflicts to break out between protesters and state forces, and a practical means of self defense became increasingly evident. And 4. the rise of neo-fascist street gangs accompanied by violent demonstrations/counter demonstration made such formations as the bloc appealing as an effective mode of street combat.

Within the decade the tactic proved itself effective in countering state police forces and neo-fascists in the public arena. This demonstrated effectiveness compelled anarchist, Autonomen, and radical left forces throughout Europe to adapt Black Blocs as a means to engage in street battles with the state, short of an armed uprising. Very quickly the tactic spread to other northern European nations. By the mid-80s the tactic spread to southern Europe. By the late 80s the tactic jumped across the Atlantic, making its first appearances in North America. By the twenty-first century, the Black Bloc reached east into the former Warsaw Pact nations, as far west as the Pacific coast of the U.S., and south into Mexico.

The twenty-five year history of Black Blocs is one of effectiveness and popular resistance. Its tactical success is born out in the fact that it has spread to many cities and towns over several continents. If, as some critiques have argued, Black Blocs failed to meet their immediate objectives, they would have died on the vine of blunted protests decades ago. Their very proliferation and sustainability over the course of a quarter century has proven their basic effectiveness.

North America

The first organized Black Bloc in North America occurred at the Pentagon, in Washington, D.C. on October 17, 1988. Over one thousand demonstrators—a small number comprised of the Black Bloc—called for the end to U.S. support for the right wing death squads in El Salvador. The protest, organized by the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador, managed to disrupt early morning rush hour traffic in the capital, and later to block the main entrance to the Pentagon. The Black Bloc, though small did its part during the actions. From 1988 on, Black Blocs appeared sporadically across North America.

In April 1990, a now defunct group called Youth Greens organized a 2000 strong demonstration on Wall Street in New York City. The demo was held on Earth Day in an attempt to unmask the anti-environmental practices of major American corporations; many of which became 'official Earth Day sponsors' in mainstream celebrations across the nation. One practical goal of the action was to shutdown business as usual in the heart of the capitalist beast. In support, a Black Bloc numbering fifty militants made its presence felt. The bloc aided in the efforts by constructing makeshift barricades across Broadway.

During the start of the first in Gulf War in January 1991, large demonstrations broke out across the U.S. 100,000 marched in San Francisco. 30,000 took to the streets of Seattle. Ten thousand demonstrated in Chicago and 40,000 more in D.C. A week later the protests became more intense, with another 100,000 in San Francisco, and 200,000 in D.C. In Washington, the Love and Rage Revolutionary Anarchist Federation helped organize the largest and most militant Black Bloc the continent had yet witnessed. In scenes foreshadowing the events of 2003, a bloc of 300 lead a breakaway march from the main protest contingent. Catching the cops off guard, this grouping smashed in windows of both the Treasury Department and the World Bank. Through this action the bloc drew attention to the link between imperialist wars and the capitalist institutions that underwrite them. Police reacted to these attacks by attempting to arrest a number of Black Bloc'ers. However, the bloc fought back and were able to physically prevent any of their own from being taken into custody.

October of 1992 marked the 500 year anniversary of the landing of Christopher Columbus in the so-called New World. While numerous cities were planning celebrations, many Native Americans and leftists were planning demonstrations seeking to bring attention to the five centuries of genocide of First Nation people. October 10-12 witnessed such demos in cities and towns including San Francisco, Denver, Columbus Ohio, Philadelphia, Syracuse NY, Boston, and Mexico City. In Denver the American Indian Movement (AIM) succeeded in shutting down a planned parade. In Mexico City 20,000 marched for native rights. In San Francisco a Black Bloc was organized. The bloc, like those before it, scuffled with police, and held their own against the forces of the state.

In 1996 the Democratic National Convention was held in Chicago for the first time since the infamous riots of 1968. While the Democrats were busy nominating the NAFTA supporting incumbent (Bill Clinton), thousands took to the streets in opposition to the capitalist-anti-immigrant policies of the major U.S. political parties. While the demonstrations remained largely peaceful, the atmosphere was tense. Protesters expected trouble, as did police.

Parallel to the DNC, anarchists organized a "counter-convention" where continental strategies for achieving fundamental social change were discussed throughout the week. 700 anarchists took part in this event. As the DNC got underway, so did the demonstrations; most of which entailed Black Blocs, and again Love and Rage played an important organizational role.

It also deserves mention that it was at these demonstrations which the embryo of Indymedia surfaced via an organization called Counter-Media. This media outfit—based in offices donated by the Teamsters—was largely composed of anarchists. In turn, individuals from within mobile media teams equipped with radios and cameras played the duel role of feeding protesters (especially the bloc) intelligence information relating to police movement. It has been rumored that some individuals also found ways to feed law enforcement bogus intelligence regarding protest movement. This helped to give the bloc an edge which it lacked at most prior actions up until that point.

The first major action was an immigrants rights march. There, close to 1000 mostly working class Hispanics demanded more equitable treatment from the powers that be. In support was a Black Bloc 200 strong. The day remained peaceful, despite tense moments when the bloc refused to enter the sanctioned protest pits at the end of the march.

The second major action was the 'Not On The Guest List' march which included upwards of 2000 people, and demanded, among other things, freedom for all political prisoners. As before a Black Bloc of several hundred was in support. The day became interesting when marchers varied from the permitted parade route, opting to pass through predominantly Black housing projects located within site of the convention center. There many poor and working class Blacks joined the ranks and soon one of the major entrances into the DNC was occupied by the Black Bloc, with pacifist elements in support. There a standoff ensued between mounted police and the bloc. A seeming stalemate remained in effect for many hours. However, as night set in, the pacifist and liberal elements made a concerted decision to retreat; leaving the people from the housing projects and the bloc to their own devises. The bloc, eventually realizing that the decreased numbers of protesters put those that remained in danger, called for all present to retreat away from the police lines. During this retreat the bloc came across an alternative entrance to the DNC where delegate busses were being escorted through. There, anarchists blockaded the vehicles, stopping all traffic. The cops responded with force. Scuffles erupted. The bloc's unity was fractured, and its numbers again dissipated. Even so, 50 militants managed to regroup, and began a long

march into the heart of downtown where it was known that prominent Democrats were having a fundraiser.

The bloc made two stops along the way. The first at the site of where a police statue once stood. The monument was in honor of those cops which were killed during the Haymarket riots of 1886. The statue in question was blown up by the Weather faction of the SDS in October of 1969, launching the violent Days of Rage. It was blown up again by the Weathermen in 1970 to mark the beginning of their decade long bombing campaign against the U.S. government. Before the Black Bloc moved on, words were spoken in homage to past struggles. The second stop was at a restaurant teaming with DNC delegates. There anarchists harassed these capitalists collaborators until police began to converge on the scene in large numbers. As this occurred, the bloc moved on to their primary target; the fund raiser.

Upon reaching their destination, it became clear that a massive line of riot police separated them from the premises. The bloc attempted to push through. This resulted in more fighting with the cops. Unfortunately their strength proved short, and the militants were forced to disperse.

Even so, the events of this day demonstrated many of those traits that have come to be associated with the bloc in the years since; they fought longer and harder then their liberal counterparts, and refused to allow the pigs to define their movements with out a fight.

The last of the major demonstrations at the DNC came days later when the anarchists, alone, organized a march against capitalism. The demo, which was essentially a several hundred strong Black Bloc, marched in isolation from other protesters. The police quickly moved to corral their motion, and successfully carried out a number of arrests. All told the action was ineffective. Here an important lesson was learned. When a small number of anarchists go it alone they quickly become vulnerable to the forces of the state. Until anarchists can put thousands in the street on their own volition, it is wise to work with others, even if they are only temporary allies in the context of a few shared goals.

In the final analysis, the 1996 DNC actions can be looked at as a link between the more crudely organized blocs of the 80s and 90s and those that reached high levels of success and relative complexity from 1999 on. While 1996 was still primitive as compared to, say, A16 in 2000, it was a big step towards building a meaningful militant anarchist presence within mass mobilizations.

As the 90s wore down, the Black Bloc made a major appearance at a 1999 march in support of political prisoner Mumia Abu Jamal (aka Millions 4 Mumia). The city was Philadelphia. The cause drew upwards of 10,000 people into the fray. The story here was the sheer size of the Black Bloc. It was huge by any North American standards, before or since. Estimates range from 800 to 1200 participants. While the day came and went with out any reported clashes or arrests, it must be recognized that the bloc was out in force, and was prepared for self defense if attacked. The enthusiasm shown by this grouping should have served as warning of what was to come in the

months and years ahead. Before the year was out, the Black Bloc would propel itself and the anarchist movement back into popular consciousness by inflicting an estimated $10,000,000 worth in damage to capitalist targets during The Battle of Seattle.

* * *

While the above illustrations are not meant to be the definitive story of the Black Bloc prior to Seattle, one should not fail to recognize how this protest contingent grew from humble beginnings of 50 or so militants, into a more capable street fighting force of hundreds and even a 1000. From Europe, to the East Coast, to the West Coast, and then to the heartland, the Black Bloc became an established tactic in the playbook of anarchist militants. Since those early years it has again spread, and is now prolific, turning up in dozens and dozens of cities and towns, every year, across this continent and the continent of its birth. With this history firmly established, we will now turn to the historic actions against the WTO in November of 1999.

Chapter III
The Battle of Seattle/N30: The Anti-WTO Protests November-December, 1999

Overview

Seattle is the action which has put the present social protest movement on the map of North American mass consciousness. It did not mark the beginning (or end) of a movement. Rather it represented the first significant expression of social unrest against the capitalist slave system in the U.S.A. in a generation. With the joining in of the North American population, the movement against the contemporary modes of capitalism has truly become international, and everywhere. Seattle was a glorious rebirth of a demand for an end to the insulting and deadly march of corporate power. The world is in the hands of irresponsible, money starved vampire organizations who feed themselves by the selling and trade of increasingly trivial and noxious products. The most powerful of these organizations are the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB). The functioning fact of these intensely authoritarian, abstract and elitist organizations unquestionably warrants a protest, if not a global civil war.

To begin to completely understand the significance of Seattle, one must first understand the international movement against neo-Liberalism in which it is situated. America is, in fact, a rather late bloomer within the scope of protests pertaining to the global problems endorsed and pursued by world Capitalist organizations. Protests against the WTO and the IMF and other like organizations ran rampant throughout the world long before Seattle. In 1998, over 28 countries held anti-Capitalist protests on June 18th (J18), timed to coincide with a meeting of the Group of Eight (G8). The most notable among these were in India and Brazil where in the former, hundreds of thousands took to the streets. During that same year the United States itself began to rumble with protests, small riots, capitalist property-related arsons and bombings (most of these were claimed by the underground Earth Liberation Front).

In addition, large sectors of the world were and continue to be in a process of destabilization due to popular uprisings against a forced Capitalist program (i.e. The

continuing Zapatista revolution in Southern Mexico, the popular uprisings in Bolivia and Ecuador, the increasing riots in Europe, and serious workers strikes in Russia).

At N30 (November 30 in Seattle) up to 100,000 people from within organized labor and the Left took to the streets in order to put forth their opposition to the World Trade Organization. Within this vast array of demonstrators, an Anarchist Black Bloc took to the streets in order to inflict material damage upon corporate banks/businesses, correctly viewed by them as real incarnations of the economically and culturally homogenizing Capitalist force we are beholden to. The Bloc, following police attacks on non-violent protesters, proceeded to move through the streets of Seattle smashing bank and corporate windows. In some cases the contents of the business in question were expropriated from the building and subsequently left in the streets. State officials contend that the Bloc inflicted $10,000,000 in damage. This is most likely an overestimation designed to blame the Anarchists for damage caused directly by the police force, and at any rate is most likely just misinformation.

The main thing to remember when thinking of N30 is that it was an action of such scope and power that it caught the American public by surprise, thereby giving birth to a momentum which has continued to provide a positive revolutionary impetus within the confines of American society.

That being said, it did not materialize out of nowhere. Rather it was the flower of a decade of domestic organizing and hard won movement and growth. But still, Seattle marked the time when it all came together. We had our own sophisticated Independent Media Center (IMC). We had training and years of proven tactics at our disposal. We had dedicated radical legal teams. We had an intended program of "jail solidarity" (a tactic discussed in more detail in Chapter III). We had the rank and file union workers turning out in common cause. We had the radical environmentalists. We had a diversity of tactics ranging from legal rallies to port side strikes/shutdowns, from non-violent sit-ins/blockades to physical self defense and corporate property destruction.

A significant part of this mass mobilization was organized through directly democratic and participatory means via open spokes-councils (these pre-planning meetings were open to all protesters and functioned through the vocal participation of spokespeople from the numerous affinity groups involved). In short, we finally had the functioning mass coalition that has been lacking in the United States since the Great Depression of the 1930s. We finally had a chance; and for that we could not be ignored.

In all, the protests consisted of four main days which coincided with the scheduled 'behind closed doors' meetings of the WTO delegates. The delegates' stated task was to map out an economic strategy for the new century/millennium. The direct action oriented protesters' stated task was to shut down the undemocratic and anti-worker proceedings. Given the mutually exclusive goals of these factions, it was clear that only one or the other would succeed. And in this case, we, the people, won.

The opening day of the WTO meetings (Tuesday, November 30th) were met with thousands of direct action protesters occupying all key access routes to the planned site of the meeting. Police responded with violence (tear gas, rubber, wooden and plas-

tic bullets, batons, etc.) but the protesters would not relinquish control of the streets. Elements of the Black Bloc met police assaults with acts of physical self-defense and counteraggression. Bottles, rocks, etc. were hurled at advancing police lines. Dumpsters were dragged out unto the street and lit on fire. Also, a highly mobile Bloc roved the downtown smashing corporate property and demolishing all police vehicles and limousines that they came upon. In addition a 50,000 strong Trade Union march slowly made its way through the city. Of those, a smaller number of the rank and file (primarily from the Longshoremen, Sheet metal Workers, Steelworkers and, of course, the Industrial Workers of the World—the IWW Wobblies) diverged from the sanctioned parade course and made their way to the front lines of confrontation.

The result of these large numbers and demonstrated diverse actions was that only 350 of the expected 3,000 WTO delegates were able to attend the opening session. Subsequently the opening session was cancelled. The price? Several hundred injuries and 68 arrests.

The following two days were also filled with thousands of protesters engaging in acts of civil disobedience, this despite a government declaration of the downtown as a "no protest zone." In response to the continuing militance of the demonstrators, additional police authorities were brought into the fray including hundreds of National Guard troops. This time was marked by severe police brutality more than often directed against nonviolent protesters. Subsequently the reports of injuries skyrocketed as did the numbers arrested. On December first alone more then 500 were incarcerated.

By day four (Friday, December 3rd) the city and the WTO meetings were in disarray. While city officials and Capitalist delegates seemed to be disheartened, the demonstrators remained committed. On that day a labor march of more then 10,000 defiantly paraded through downtown in protest of the "emergency" ordinances banning free speech and free assembly. This was done in conjunction with other direct actions which targeted WTO delegates. At the end of the day (actually sometime into the night) it was publicly announced that the meetings had utterly broken down due to internal rifts (and external pressure) and that no "progress" was made concerning the economic agenda of the coming year... The meeting was shut down.

The aftermath? Again the poor and working class the world over were reminded that the ruling class is not omnipotent, not even in their primary home nation. They can be defeated when we stand united. As a final thought let it be said that the United States is the home of Capitalism, and to have gained a serious foothold against this beast in its own lair is a victory, a clear signal to history that the time for change is coming.

Peasant Revolt! N30 Black Bloc Communique by ACME Collective (A communique from one section of the Black Bloc: N30 in Seattle)

On November 30, several groups of individuals in Black Bloc attacked various corporate targets in downtown Seattle. Among them were (to name just a few): Fidelity Investment (major investor in Occidental Petroleum, the bane of the U'wa tribe in Columbia), Bank of America, US Bancorp, Key Bank and Washington Mutual Bank (financial institutions key in the expansion of corporate repression) Old Navy, Banana Republic and the GAP (as Fisher family businesses, rapers of Northwest forest lands and sweatshop laborers) NikeTown and Levi's (whose overpriced products are made in sweatshops) McDonald's (slave-wage fast-food peddlers responsible for destruction of tropical rainforests for grazing land and slaughter of animals) Starbucks (peddlers of an addictive substance whose products are harvested at below-poverty wages by farmers who are forced to destroy their own forests in the process) Warner Bros. (media monopolists) Planet Hollywood (for being Planet Hollywood). This activity lasted for over 5 hours and involved the breaking of storefront windows and doors and defacing of facades. Slingshots, newspaper boxes, sledge hammers, mallets, crowbars and nail-pullers were used to strategically destroy corporate property and gain access (one of the three targeted Starbucks and Niketown were looted). Eggs filled with glass etching solution, paint-balls and spray-paint were also used.

The Black Bloc was a loosely organized cluster of affinity groups and individuals who roamed around downtown, pulled this way by a vulnerable and significant storefront and that way by the sight of a police formation. Unlike the vast majority of activists who were peppersprayed, tear-gassed and shot at with rubber bullets on several occasions, most of our section of the Black Bloc escaped serious injury by remaining constantly in motion and avoiding engagement with the police. We buddied up, kept tight and watched each others' backs. Those attacked by federal thugs were un-arrested by quick-thinking and organized members of the Black Bloc. The sense of solidarity was awe-inspiring.

THE PEACE POLICE

Unfortunately, the presence and persistence of "peace police" was quite disturbing. On at least 6 separate occasions, so-called "nonviolent" activists physically attacked individuals who targeted corporate property. Some even went so far as to stand in front of the Niketown super store and tackle and shove the Black Bloc away. Indeed, such self-described "peace-keepers" posed a much greater threat to individuals in the Black Bloc than the notoriously violent uniformed "peace-keepers" sanctioned by the state (undercover officers have even used the cover of the activist peace-keepers to ambush those who engage in corporate property destruction).

RESPONSE TO THE BLACK BLOC

Response to the Black Bloc has highlighted some of the contradictions and internal oppressions of the "nonviolent activist" community. Aside from the obvious hypocrisy of those who engaged in violence against black-clad and masked people (many of whom were harassed despite the fact that they never engaged in property destruction), there is the racism of privileged activists who can afford to ignore the violence perpetrated against the bulk of society and the natural world in the name of private property rights. Window-smashing has engaged and inspired many of the most oppressed members of Seattle's community more than any giant puppets or sea turtle costumes ever could (not to disparage the effectiveness of those tools in other communities).

TEN MYTHS ABOUT THE BLACK BLOC

Here's a little something to dispel the myths that have been circulating about the N30 Black Bloc:

1. "They are all a bunch of Eugene anarchists." While a few may be anarchists from Eugene, we hail from all over the United States, including Seattle. In any case, most of us are familiar with local issues in Seattle (for instance, the recent occupation of downtown by some of the most nefarious of multinational retailers).

2. "They are all followers of John Zerzan." A lot of rumors have been circulating that we are followers of John Zerzan, an anarcho-primitivist author from Eugene who advocates property destruction. While some of us may appreciate his writings and analyses, he is in no sense our leader, directly, indirectly, philosophically or otherwise.

3. "The mass public squat is the headquarters of the anarchists who destroyed property on November 30th." In reality, most of the people in the "Autonomous Zone" squat are residents of Seattle who have spent most of their time since its opening on the 28th in the squat. While they may know of one another, the two groups are not co-extensive and in no case could the squat be considered the headquarters of people who destroyed property.

4. "They escalated situations on the 30th, leading to the tear-gassing of passive, nonviolent protesters." To answer this, we need only note that tear-gassing, pepper-spraying and the shooting of rubber bullets all began before the Black Blocs (as far as we know) started engaging in property destruction. In addition, we must resist the tendency to establish a causal relationship between police repression and protest in any form, whether it involved property destruction or not. The police are charged with protecting the interests of the wealthy few and the blame for the violence cannot be placed upon those who protest those interests.

5. Conversely: "They acted in response to the police repression." While this might be a more positive representation of the Black Bloc, it is nevertheless false. We refuse to be misconstrued as a purely reactionary force. While the logic of the Black Bloc may not make sense to some, it is in any case a pro-active logic.

6. "They are a bunch of angry adolescent boys." Aside from the fact that it belies a disturbing ageism and sexism, it is false. Property destruction is not merely macho rabble-rousing or testosterone-laden angst release. Nor is it displaced and reaction - ary anger. It is strategically and specifically targeted direct action against corporate interests.

7. "They just want to fight." This is pretty absurd, and it conveniently ignores the eagerness of "peace police" to fight us. Of all the groups engaging in direct action, the Black Bloc was perhaps the least interested in engaging the authorities and we certainly had no interest in fighting with other anti-WTO activists (despite some rather strong disagreements over tactics).

8. "They are a chaotic, disorganized and opportunistic mob." While many of us could surely spend days arguing over what "chaotic" means, we were certainly not disorganized. The organization may have been fluid and dynamic, but it was tight. As for the charge of opportunism, it would be hard to imagine who of the thousands in attendance didn't take advantage of the opportunity created in Seattle to advance their agenda. The question becomes, then, whether or not we helped create that opportunity and most of us certainly did (which leads us to the next myth)

9. "They don't know the issues" or "they aren't activists who've been working on this." While we may not be professional activists, we've all been working on this convergence in Seattle for months. Some of us did work in our home-towns and others came to Seattle months in advance to work on it. To be sure, we were responsible for many hundreds of people who came out on the streets on the 30th, only a very small minority of which had anything to do with the Black Bloc. Most of us have been studying the effects of the global economy, genetic engineering, resource extraction, transportation, labor practices, elimination of indigenous autonomy, animal rights and human rights and we've been doing activism on these issues for many years. We are neither ill-informed nor unexperienced.

10. "Masked anarchists are anti-democratic and secretive because they hide their identities." Let's face it (with or without a mask)—we aren't living in a democracy right now. If this week has not made it plain enough, let us remind you—we are living in a police state. People tell us that if we really think that we're right, we wouldn't be hiding behind masks. "The truth will prevail" is the assertion. While this is a fine and noble goal, it does not jive with the present reality.

Those who pose the greatest threat to the interests of Capital and State will be persecuted. Some pacifists would have us accept this persecution gleefully. Others would tell us that it is a worthy sacrifice. We are not so morose. Nor do we feel we have the privilege to accept persecution as a sacrifice: persecution to us is a daily inevitability and we treasure our few freedoms. To accept incarceration as a form of flattery betrays a large amount of "first world" privilege. We feel that an attack on private property is necessary if we are to rebuild a world which is useful, healthful and joyful for everyone. And this despite the fact that hypertrophied private property rights in this country translate into felony charges for any property destruction over $250.

MOTIVATIONS OF THE BLACK BLOC

The primary purpose of this communique is to diffuse some of the aura of mystery that surrounds the Black Bloc and make some of its motivations more transparent, since our masks cannot be.

ON THE VIOLENCE OF PROPERTY

We contend that property destruction is not a violent activity unless it destroys lives or causes pain in the process. By this definition, private property—especially corporate private property—is itself infinitely more violent than any action taken against it.

Private property should be distinguished from personal property. The latter is based upon use while the former is based upon trade. The premise of personal property is that each of us has what s/he needs. The premise of private property is that each of us has something that someone else needs or wants. In a society based on private property rights, those who are able to accrue more of what others need or want have greater power. By extension, they wield greater control over what others perceive as needs and desires, usually in the interest of increasing profit to themselves.

Advocates of "free trade" would like to see this process to its logical conclusion: a network of a few industry monopolists with ultimate control over the lives of the everyone else. Advocates of "fair trade" would like to see this process mitigated by government regulations meant to superficially impose basic humanitarian standards. As anarchists, we despise both positions.

Private property—and capitalism, by extension—is intrinsically violent and repressive and cannot be reformed or mitigated. Whether the power of everyone is concentrated into the hands of a few corporate heads or diverted into a regulatory apparatus charged with mitigating the disasters of the latter, no one can be as free or as powerful as they could be in a non-hierarchical society.

When we smash a window, we aim to destroy the thin veneer of legitimacy that surrounds private property rights. At the same time, we exorcise that set of violent and destructive social relationships which has been imbued in almost everything around

us. By "destroying" private property, we convert its limited exchange value into an expanded use value. A storefront window becomes a vent to let some fresh air into the oppressive atmosphere of a retail outlet (at least until the police decide to tear-gas a nearby road blockade). A newspaper box becomes a tool for creating such vents or a small blockade for the reclamation of public space or an object to improve one's vantage point by standing on it. A dumpster becomes an obstruction to a phalanx of rioting cops and a source of heat and light. A building facade becomes a message board to record brainstorm ideas for a better world.

After N30, many people will never see a shop window or a hammer the same way again. The potential uses of an entire cityscape have increased a thousandfold. The number of broken windows pales in comparison to the number broken spells—spells cast by a corporate hegemony to lull us into forgetfulness of all the violence committed in the name of private property rights and of all the potential of a society without them. Broken windows can be boarded up (with yet more waste of our forests) and eventually replaced, but the shattering of assumptions will hopefully persist for some time to come.

Against Capital and State, the ACME Collective

Disclaimer: these [above] observations and analyses represent only those of the ACME Collective and should not be construed to be representative of the rest of the Black Bloc on N30 or anyone else who engaged in riot or property destruction that day.

Black Block Participant Interview by Steve Of Active Transformation

The following is an interview with an anarchist participant in the Seattle Shutdown the WTO demonstrations that will be appearing in the upcoming issue of Active Transformation. We believe this interview displays some important observations about the protests and the many participants, as well as the future of revolutionary anarchist struggle. For security reasons the interview subject did not give their name.

AT: First off what made you decide to go to Seattle?

BB: I had a feeling it would be important. I remember reading about the WTO in an anarchist newspaper from Minneapolis called The Blast, probably 4 years ago... and it stuck with me as a pretty evil entity. I had not heard much of it since, until about a year before the Seattle demo. The various People's Global Action events, especially the J18 demos against the G8, had been very inspiring. I always felt like protests in the U.S. have always been disappointing—but the preparation for N30 seemed interesting. There was a sense from the beginning that it would be a mass event, even if not extremely militant. On the chance that it might be a massive protest against global capitalism, me and a few others decided to go.

I had no reason to believe it would be so successful at disrupting the WTO's ability to function or even exist, at this point.

AT: Why do you think the protests were so successful?

BB: I think this was probably the most important event for the American left in the last twenty years. There have been large events, like the Gulf War protests, etc., but not that have been so diverse and interested in disrupting business as usual, and then being successful.

There were three main reasons the protests were so successful. The first reason was that there were hundreds of different organizations: labor, environmental, anarchist, students, women, anti-sweatshop—the whole spectrum. This alone didn't do it though. What made it powerful was that it was pretty understood this was not going to be a passive, stand in the street and give speeches, appeal to the masters, kinda demo. It was well understood by all that it was going to be about disrupting the conference—and that is a big step for the American movement.

The second reason it was so successful was that the strategy developed through the Direct Action Network meetings the entire week was anarchism in action. The plan developed was based on affinity groups, which are small clusters of people who know each other who have similar political goals or desires, etc. What we did was divide the downtown area into pie slices, with the convention center as ground zero. Then, different affinity groups would take responsibility for different slices, and plan however they saw fit cause disruption that would hinder the operation of the conference. This made police disruption utterly impossible. The cops could foresee very little since the strategy was so decentralized among closely knit groups.

The third, and most controversial reason, was that of the Black Bloc elevating the protest to a different extreme level. I am not saying that the Black Block was more radical or more politically advanced, but that the key to the success of the protest was the diversity of tactics, interrelating in a number of ways to cause disruption that was not policeable.

AT: Could you talk a little bit about the anarchist Black Bloc?

BB: Before I do that I would like to mention that anarchists were not isolated in the Black Bloc. There were anarchists involved in every possible way. There were anarchist labor activists, puppeteers, non-violent lockdown blockaders, marching musicians, medics, communication people, media people, whatever as well as a group of about two hundred in black masks who had prepared, also in affinity groups, to do as much symbolic physical damage to multi-national capitalism as possible.

I have seen Black Blocks used in protests in the U.S. a lot but never so successfully. It is important to note that the Black Block was not the result of some conspiracy. It too happened quite spontaneously, with people who came from all over the country—with similar desires.

The day started with Black Block people in small groups making impromptu blockades with whatever was handy in the streets: dumpsters, newspaper boxes, warning tape, planters, among other things. In addition to this the black clad anarchists sup-

plemented attempts to make human blockades at the Sheraton hotel, where many delegates, and across the street at the convention center. Where the pacifist lines were weak, the Black Block would fill in and create a second line, further away from the police. They would also surround delegates in the street and force them, non-violently, to alter course away from the hotels or the convention center. At one point a delegate pulled a handgun on protesters, at which point the protesters hit the deck, and the delegate was escorted through the police line, gun still in hand.

One false line that is being pushed by the mainstream media, as well as a lot of underground media was that the violent police response was somehow caused by the property destruction. I would like to state that the police violence had begun by 9 a.m., in response to very successful street and doorway blockades, way before the window breaking began shortly after "Reclaim the Streets" at 11 a.m. They began with tear gas, rubber bullets, etc. The first window broken actually was when a tear gas grenade was shot through a store window.

There had been minor property "transformation" throughout the morning, and even the day before. It was mostly graffiti—on buses, cop cars, the Sheraton, etc. The day before N30 a protest at McDonalds sponsored by French Farmers, caused minor destruction to windows, etc. It should have been a sign of what was to come.

When the large scale window breaking began it was quite awe-inspiring. All of a sudden people we were walking with pulled out all sorts of tools: nail pullers, hammers, crow bars. They then proceeded to very quickly knock windows out of every bank, upper class or multi-national clothing store. I even saw a woman smashing an ATM machine with a sledge hammer. I was afraid at any moment a police tactical team would break through the crowd and violently assault the Black Block.

AT: On 60 Minutes they put most of the emphasis on the anarchists from Eugene, OR. Do you think they are responsible for what happened?

BB: While I know they were there, the Black Bloc had a few hundred people in it. I know there were people there from all over the country. The Eugene people have just been very open about violent demo tactics. The 60 Minutes episode really does disfavor to revolutionary anarchism, in that it portrays all anarchists through the eyes and mouths of the primitivists—who in my mind make up a small minority of anarchist activists. The primitivists put anti-technology and environmentalism at the forefront of their politics, and downplay, in my opinion, the real social and class struggle that has to take place. While the primitivist critique is useful, it ignores the liberatory aspects of technology. Without computers Seattle would not have happened the way it did. Also drawing a line between the Unabomber and anarchism has serious marginalizing consequences.

AT: Could you talk a little bit about the police response to the events in Seattle?

BB: I would say that they messed up big time, way to our advantage. The first day they thought they would be effective by undermining what they thought to be our strategy of filling up the jails. They planned to make no arrests, and just use plenty of non-lethal force. That non-lethal force just strengthened people's resolve to disrupt

the conference. It also transformed a lot of people to move away from strict pacifism. It is easier to remain a pacifist if you've never felt the force of the state. When their strategy failed all they could do was try and maintain the police lines, which they had a lot of trouble with.

By the end of the first day a State of Civil Emergency had been declared and there was a lot of criticism of the more destructive activists. The police and the city had an opportunity to turn things around for themselves and they blew it. The cops went on a rampage for 24 hours indiscriminately attacking people all over the city. While they arrested a lot of activists for civil disobedience, the brunt of the force was directed against non-activist civilians. The police were already under a lot of heat for mishandling the day before. With the ensuing day of police rioting they had turned our struggle into a much more popular struggle, and the cops lost all respect.

AT: How do you view the other groups that were out there, like the environmental and labor groups?

BB: They were all critical to the success of the demonstration. It was the barrage from all sides that led to the all-consuming critique that has spread out across the country. Before N30 next to no one has heard of the WTO. And now almost everyone has heard of it and has a bad taste in their mouth about it. The coalition that shut down the WTO ministerial was extremely diverse and that is what made it powerful.

Even within the categories of labor and environmental groups there is a huge diversity. You go from Earth First! to the Sierra Club, and from the AFL-CIO to the Longshoresmen. While the more liberal groups made it a mass event, the more radical groups transformed the day into a celebration of anti-capitalist disruption. The Longshoremen and Sheetmetal workers both broke with the labor marshals plans to divert the demos away from the action downtown. The Sheetmetal workers came and stood against the police lines and faced tear gas with the rest of us. Other unions did the same the next day.

AT: What meaning does Seattle have for the larger movement?

BB: I can only begin to answer this in a brief context. First off it provides evidence of at least two really important things: that there is a movement and that we can win. The graffiti on walls all over the city stated clearly "We Are Winning!". By that evening when the state of civil emergency was declared the downtown had been completely altered—it felt like a revolution was underway—it was really powerful. I know that people came back to their cities totally energized to carry on the struggle.

We need these boosts. So often it feels like there is no hope for a better future. That has changed drastically for me. Another thing was that in talking with people over the next couple of days I got the impression that a good majority of the people who came out were new, young activists. That for me is really exciting. I am sure they have been totally empowered by the experience and will make our movement entirely more vibrant.

I think it is important that we build on the foundation of Seattle. We need to take advantage of this chance to dialogue between different groups. The chance for

communication between labor, anarchist, and environmental groups is open to us all to learn and develop stronger ties. We must continue to push for strategies that challenge the power of business and state, not appeal to it.

We also need to root our struggles in the communities we live in and around issues of oppression and injustice that are everyday issues to people all around us. There has been a large critique among people of color that the largely white anti-WTO protesters mobilize against injustice around the world—but fail to connect, prioritize, or even attempt to understand with important struggles going on right here. That is one of the critical lessons we need to take to heart.

AT: So what can we look forward to next?

BB: Besides the plethora of local issues and projects we can get involved in there are a few potentially interesting things on the near horizon. In April the International Money Fund is having an international conference in D.C. It is questionably the WTO's bigger, eviller brother. People's Global Action has also called for the next big international day of action against global capitalism to be on Mayday, May 1st this year. There are already plans in the works for events in Seattle, Detroit, Phoenix, London, and Shut Down Wall Street in New York City, as well as a number of other cities around the world.

One critical thing to remember is that there are a number of people facing charges from the Seattle events, some of which a very serious. It is critical to the growth of a healthy radical movement that we do the necessary legal support to free these folks and get them back out in the streets with us.

Chapter IV
A16: DC and The IMF/WB
April 2000

Overview

Between April 15th and April 17th over 40,000 people converged on Washington DC to protest against global Capitalism and specifically against the continuing practices and policies of the International Monetary Fund/World Bank (IMF/WB) which are consistently devoid of any substantive environmental concerns and are clearly in contrast to the interests of the world's poor and working classes. The protests were called by various elements of the Left in response to meetings being held by these organizations which were to take place during this time at the World Bank building.

As with most recent large demonstrations, the protest constituency was composed of three elements:

1. A large number of Liberal/Reformists from within Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs) and organized labor (i.e. AFL/CIO) This contingent was present in mass on April 16th, and primarily concerned itself with a legal rally at the Washington Monument. Their number can be estimated at 30,000.

2. A significant number of Left Liberals, Greens, Socialists, Communists, environmentalists and Anarchists. This contingent, organized in part through the Direct Action Network, utilized a participatory consensus based means of democratic organization and was committed to following through with acts of non-violent civil disobedience. This group's stated goal was prevent the meetings from taking place. Their number, as of April 16th, can be estimated at between 10,000 to 15,000.

3. A tightly knit grouping of militant Anarchists known commonly as the Black Bloc. This contingent was organized internally through the various revolutionary Anarchist federations and informal networks. As a group it also utilized directly democratic, consensus based organizational means, while maintaining a fluid yet distinct identity/relationship with the larger protest contingents. Tactically, they hoped to maintain themselves as a highly mobile regiment capable

of absorbing and reversing police and/or National Guard assaults if deemed necessary. Disrupting the status quo of Capitalism was definitely a conscious goal. Their numbers on April 16th can be estimated somewhere slightly over 1000 and somewhat less on April 17th

The combined tactics of these three groupings culminated on Sunday, April 16th with large parts of the city being effectively occupied by demonstrators. All the obvious above ground access routs to the site of the meetings were cut off. Police were prevented from moving freely throughout these areas. Additionally police assaults on non-violent blockaders from the second contingent were, on several occasions, beaten back by physical means by the Black Bloc. By nightfall, 40 were arrested. However, the protests failed to shut down the meetings. This can partially be attributed to the government's likely use of restricted underground access ways into the convention center as a means of transporting IMF/WB delegates.

While April 16th was the most effective day and involved the most people, actions were also conducted by small affinity groups during the week prior to the main event. Also, on April 15th a large march against the prison industrial complex involving a couple thousand people took place. This march lacked a formal Black Bloc. Subsequently, while in a state of peaceful disbursement, the police blockaded approximately 600 people from the rear of the march with relative ease. At that point the police proceeded to arrest (nearly) all of these protesters. To our knowledge, only two of these individuals escaped incarceration by descending into the sewer system through a manhole (they were both Black Bloc anarchists).

In addition, April 17th saw more mass protests. However, this day was marked by relatively heavy police repression (supported by the presence of the National Guard) and bloody street fighting between the Black Bloc and the State. By the end of the day, over 700 more people ended up in jail (bringing the several day total to 1350), including approximately 20 from within the Black Bloc. A total of three federal felony charges were filed, including at least one directed against a Black Bloc anarchist. What ensued was a 5 day period of jail resistance from within the penal system under the banner of "Jail Solidarity."

This strategy called for collective bargaining of release conditions, non-violent resistance/non-cooperation, a building of respect and solidarity with the general prison population and functioned according to consensus. Of those arrested, 155 persons took part, including a small number from the Black Bloc. The presence of the Bloc in jail proved important in that it curtailed what would have otherwise been a Liberal, Pacifist tone of the prisoner communiques. In the men's wing of the prison, such Anarchists helped (not without non-Bloc support) push the social/ political analysis of the jailed activists in a more thorough/radical direction. This was achieved through the democratic consensus process by which the prisoners made all collective decisions including the official endorsements of composed messages to the outside. In this way

the few individuals attached to the Bloc were able to block any motions which publicly endorsed simple reformism and/or ideological Pacifism.

Overall, the strategy of Jail Solidarity meet with relative success which included a lessening of charges and fines of $5 and the release of prisoners without having to present identification. The prisoners were released on April 21st and April 22nd.

The A16 action is considered a success as it proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that Seattle was not a fluke. Once again, thousands mobilized and confronted the Capitalist State while risking both physical harm and jail. In short, even though the IMF/WB was still able to meet, the demonstrations proved that such an arbitrary organization of the world economy towards the elitist ends of the ruling class can not freely occur with out popular resistance.

In addition, the activity of the Black Bloc proved effective in conjunction with other means of direct action. Importantly, the Bloc managed to make inroads into the consciousness of the larger social protest movement by providing non-violent activists physical protection from State brutality and by fighting fire with fire. The combined tactics of April 16th utterly demoralized the police, causing them relative confusion and immobilization.

A16 REVOLUTIONARY ANTI-CAPITALIST BLOC STATEMENT [The Call]

We are all active organizers and participants of the upcoming protests surrounding the IMF and World Bank on April 9-17. For us, these institutions are beyond reform. In addition to simply being "undemocratic" in themselves, they play a key role within a global capitalist system that must be abolished outright. That is why we are working with all our energy to bring the most effective resistance possible against them to the streets of Washington, D.C.

We are calling for an organized bloc of all stripes of anti-authoritarian, anti-capitalist revolutionaries at the upcoming demonstrations against the IMF/World Bank. We feel that it is important to present critique of these transnational financial institutions that is anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist, and anticolonialist in perspective, and accompanied by a revolutionary vision which advocates a radical transformation of society that is based on mutual aid, direct democracy and free association.

We feel that the power of each group to organize autonomously based on their own ideas shows the strength of our movement. We would like to emphasize this, which is why we want to open our call to all those who share our struggle for the same revolutionary anti-capitalist goals: the abolition of capitalism, the state, and all forms of hierarchy and oppression. We invite all autonomists, anarchists, anti-state libertarian Marxists, Wobblies, syndicalists, council communists, etc. to march along with us. We wish to support the larger anti-globalization movement by organizing autonomously

within our own contingent. We do not intend to be divisive in any way but want to develop our actions and present our ideas. We would also like to address our concerns and criticisms that we have around the movement against globalization.

The World Bank, IMF, and World Trade Organization (WTO) need to be seen within a larger framework of global capitalism. While we struggle to change the most destructive policies of these institutions we realize that they are inherently exploitative and imperialist towards workers and communities. That is why we need to connect our day to day organizing with the larger struggle against capitalism. Talk of 'fair trade,' 'pruning' and 'fixing,' such as in Seattle, simply ignores the history of working class struggle against capitalism and class society, and defeats and revolutionary goals or consciousness. Instead of a message of reforming these institutions, which would not solve the fundamental problems, we want a message of abolishing these institutions and creating revolutionary alternatives. Instead of a call for 'fair trade' or 'reform' of the global economy, we call for the international working class and oppressed communities to organize for revolutionary change of the global economy.

The strength of the working class lies not only in its own community but most importantly in global solidarity with all workers and oppressed peoples around the globe. The movement against globalization is a fight in every country for dignity and justice and we are strongest in that fight working side by side. We feel that calls for national protectionism and national sovereignty pit the working class of each nation against each other. We feel especially that the stance taken by some of organized labor, and many left-reformists, is not a stance of international solidarity and that it is not the most effective stance for advancing the cause of the international working class. We believe in internationalism and the globalization of our struggle against all of capitalism, regardless of political borders, and we work towards a genuine international unity which will one day lay the basis for a global social revolution.

We believe that the most effective protest is each group autonomously taking action and using the tactics that they feel works best for their situation. We do not advocate one particular tactic but believe that the greatest diversity of tactics is the most effective use of tactics. We are critical of ideologically motivated arguments that oppose this. This is why we do not believe that it is organizationally principled for any one group to set the guidelines for the protests or claim ownership of the movement.

We also realize that if our protests and actions are effective in shutting down the meetings of the IMF/World Bank the police may use repression and violence against demonstrators. We do not necessarily advocate violence or encourage the destruction of property, but simply that the movement recognize the very real possibility for confrontation and be open to a diversity of tactics as a means of legitimate defense. We would like to recognize the larger globalization movement for addressing some of our concerns around tactics and the role of 'peacekeepers.'

This is a call for more active participation of anarchist and other like-minded revolutionaries within the anti-globalization movement to present our vision of an effective revolutionary anti-capitalist and antiauthoritarian alternative. Help bring our vision

of a free, classless and democratic society to the forefront. At Al6 we envision an active and creative contingent of revolutionaries marching under black, red & black, and green & black flags, anti-capitalist and anti-authoritarian banners, and a hail of revolutionary drumbeats. We are mobilizing marching bands, radical cheerleaders, and planning a whole assortment of highly organized and creative actions! To all of our comrades who support this call, we encourage you to get in touch, endorse it, and take to the streets with your anti-capitalist imaginations and desires!

Organize, Educate, Create Resistance!

Do not let the blows against this capitalist
system cease!
From the streets of Seattle, to Washington, D.C.,
may our resistance be as transnational as
capital!

SOLIDARITY AND REVOLUTION!

Signed,

Nosotros Group (Baltimore, MD), Group Anarchiste Emile-Henry (Quebec), Active Transformation (Detroit-East Lansing, MI), Global Action (Eugene, OR), Mononga-hela Anarchist Group (Morgantown, WV), *We Dare Be Free* (Boston, MA), Sabate Anarchist Group (Boston, MA), Lancaster Anarchist Black Cross (Lancaster, PA), Flint Jones North-east Regional Delegate of the Workers, Solidarity Alliance (WSA-IWA), Prole Revolt (Morgantown, WV), Mid-Atlantic Infoshop (Washington, DC), *Arsenal* (Chicago, IL), Anarchist Action Collective (Eugene, OR), Antioch Anarchist Group (Yellow Springs, OH), Autonomous Zone (Chicago, IL), DC Earth First! (Washington, DC), Chicago Anti-Racist Action (Chicago, IL), New Brunswick Food Not Bombs (New Brunswick, NJ), Brian MacKenzie Center (Washington, DC), *Collective Action Notes* (Baltimore, MD), Bad Days Will End (Somerville, MA), *Red & Black Notes* (Toronto), Northeastern Federation of Anarchist Communists /Federation des Communistes Libertaires du Nord-est (Northeastern United States / Eastern Canada), Kent Anarchist Black Cross (Kent, OH), Organisation of Revolutionary Anarchists - Solidarita (Brno, Czech Republic), Movement Against The Monarchy (London, England)

Endorsing the Call for a Revolutionary Anti-Capitalist Bloc

Recently a number of anarchist groups issued a call for a Revolutionary Anti-Capitalist Bloc for the upcoming "A16" demonstrations against the International Monetary Fund in Washington, D.C. Not restricting themselves to organizing an anarchist Black Bloc, these activists extended a hand to autonomists, "anti-state libertarian Marxists," anarcho-syndicalists, and council communists to form a common front, organized separately but acting in concert as a revolutionary and anti-capitalist pole of

attraction within the larger movement against "globalization." As adherents of council communist political perspectives, the publications *Collective Action Notes*, *Red & Black Notes*, and *The Bad Days Will End* endorse this call issued by our anarchist friends. We do so not as representatives of membership organizations, and still less as "leaders" of any kind, but rather as individuals who represent publications with modest circulations.

The "A16" actions are intended to build on the momentum from last years anti-WTO demonstrations in Seattle. In the growing resistance to "globalization" and global financial institutions such as the WTO, the IMF, and the World Bank, some are now heralding the emergence of a "new movement" and even a "new anti-capitalism." These protests certainly demonstrate that globalization is not the inevitable juggernaut that the capitalist bosses and bureaucrats say it is. But the "new anticapitalism" that was on display in Seattle was a mixed bag, containing, it turned out, a lot of the old reformism, in the form of the AFL-CIO bureaucracy, the Sierra Club, the National Lawyers Guild, Ralph Nader and his ilk, and assorted "NGOs." These elements see the movement against globalization simply as a way of putting pressure on the capitalist state to curtail or revamp international financial institutions or to replace "free trade" with "fair trade." This reformist perspective brings with it an ugly nationalist protectionism, where what is needed is thorough-going international solidarity. Tensions between some among the reformists and radicals surfaced in Seattle, where "peacekeepers" willingly acted as adjuncts for the state and its brutal cops in trying to keep radicals "in line." As the movement builds for A16 in Washington, so does the need for political clarification.

On a whole host of questions, the call for a Revolutionary Anti-Capitalist Bloc takes the road of class struggle rather than reform. The call declares that the reformist message of "fair trade, not free trade" and of "pruning" and "fixing" global capitalist financial institutions is unacceptable. The call rejects the narrowness of "single-issue" organizing and opts instead for a total revolutionary critique of capitalism. The call repudiates the protectionism and nationalism that infect much of the anti-globalization movement, agitating instead for the abolition of nations. The call rejects the participation in the movement of so-called "peacekeepers" and insists on the right of groups and individuals to organize and act autonomously within the larger movement against globalization. All of these things are not only supportable, but are necessary.

The anarchists call for a Revolutionary Anti-Capitalist Bloc is not a call to split the movement. It is a call to strengthen and concentrate a political pole of attraction within the anti-globalization movement which advances the understanding that, to be against globalization, you must be against capitalism, the state, and the nation. This opposition necessitates a proletarian perspective: To be for the working class and for the working class revolutionary self-organization through workers councils.

This idea is not the stale "old left" or Leninist dogma in which only the factory proletariat, organized in the trade unions, is allowed to be the "real" subject of history. Globalization itself has meant the de-industrialization of large segments of the U.S. workforce. At the same time, modern capitalism has made of society as a whole a

"social factory" in which we are all workers. As the British journal Aufheben wrote in a recent editorial on the J18 demonstrations in London, "if we are fighting capital then we must constitute ourselves as the proletariat." Through this union of the working class and its essence, we forge the basis of a genuine international unity, which will one day lay the basis for the abolition of capitalism, wage slavery, and work itself. Its with this perspective in mind that we support the call for a Revolutionary Anti-Capitalist Bloc.

Signed,
Curtis Price / *Collective Action Notes*,
Neil Fettes / *Red & Black Notes*
Ed Caldwell / *The Bad Days Will End*

April 17, 2000, Washington, DC

by ChuckO

We did it! Anarchists from all over North America descended on Washington, DC today to help with the April 16th and 17th days of action against the World Bank and IMF. We were strong today and did an excellent job working with other demonstrators in disrupting the IMF/World Bank meetings. We did this despite a week of police harassment and a day of batons, tear gas, motorcycles, tanks and police horses. If the Black Bloc entered a marathon, I think we would win it. The RACB marched around downtown D.C. today for over 9 hours.

The RACB got started around 6:30 am, at the same time other demonstrators were locking down at numerous intersections. In the early hours the RACB was in fact several unconnected blocs, owing to late arrivals. But eventually most of us hooked up. Eventually the RACB grew to over 1000 people.

We started off from Washington Circle, on Pennsylvania Avenue and near George Washington University, and headed south through the university neighborhood. We visited several intersections that activists had secured. We didn't realize until tonight that this was the same neighborhood that they were trying to drive the delegate busses through. They were staging the buses from the Watergate Hotel and the Kennedy Center. The RACB wasn't bothered by police, but they were monitoring us from rooftops and a helicopter which floated above us the entire day. We found out later through a police scanner that the chopper pilot was relaying RACB reports to the cops on the ground. Our parade through these neighborhood was pretty jerky, but apparently this made it difficult to get delegate buses through the neighborhood. Eventually we swung around to an intersection to the west of the northeast corner of the Ellipse, where the cops started putting on gas masks. We hung around for a bit and then started swinging around the perimeter in a clockwise direction.

At one point, near the Foggy Bottom Metro station, we started running to get around a corner and some cops formed a line with batons. We were smart in ignoring

them, because our numbers were needed on the east side of the White House. We proceeded down a deserted K Street and eventually made our way to 14th and New York. The RACB quickly built barricades using newspaper boxes and chain link fencing from a nearby construction site. These barricades stayed up in some form or another for several hours.

The RACB swung through the blocks near the Treasury Building and then headed back up 14th Street. Along the way we blocked off I street going east-bound. A bunch of folks picked up several sections of chain link fencing and headed north up 14th. Our numbers at this point were between 700 and 1000. Then all of a sudden everybody started running forward, with the fencing up front. A squad of motorcycle cops at 14th and K were taken completely by surprise and they charged the RACB. They started hitting people with batons and chased several people into the park. At some point they launched several canisters of tear gas or aerosol pepper spray. Several people were overcome, but it wasn't too bad. A few minutes after the situation simmered into a standoff, I talked with 4-5 Pittsburgh anarchists who had gotten beaten by the cops. One guy had been hit in the face and a woman had been held down and beaten on the face (with gas mask on) and on her leg. She had a pretty bad bruise when I looked at it.

The Black Bloc moved on after about 10 minutes. After this point I lost touch with them for several hours because I stayed behind with Adam to hand out RACB statements to the media who were interviewing a spokesperson from the Mobilization. They were pretty interested in our skirmish, but the spokesperson did a great job of keeping them focused on the WB/IMF and capitalism.

I understand that the Black Bloc marched around the perimeter westward for 61 several hours and may have taken gas at an intersection. After the noon hour, most of the activists started partying in the streets. Many of the delegates had gotten through, but we had held this huge perimeter fairly well, thanks to our comms team and our network of intelligence bike messengers. We were also pretty exhausted. The day had gone from drizzly to sunny and humid. We had been marching around downtown D.C. for 7 hours.

About mid afternoon we hooked up with the other activists for a victory march around the GWU neighborhood. We rested several times and many anarchists were involved in some pointless standoff with the cops at the intersection of 17th and Constitution.

The police presence was heavy, but we in effect owned the streets around the World Bank conference. Despite what has been reported by several media outlets, we outnumbered the cops today.

For our efforts today we got a big thumbs up from the rest of the mobilization. Many of them have acknowledged the key role the RACB played in disrupting the streets, keeping the cops distracted, and providing solidarity to other activists holding intersection.

While the RACB block included around 1000 anarchists, there 500-1000 anarchists involved on other perimeter actions including puppeteers in the Art and Revolution Parade, Food not Bombs and Reclaim the Street activists, Mobilization organizers, and the anarchist IWW members and Anarchist Soccer League players who held intersection in the southwest quadrant. Everybody did an excellent job!

The RACB block was fairly diverse, which should shut up many of our critics. Unfortunately, the critics can't see the people of color beneath the masks.

I did hear an unconfirmed rumor tonight that the IWW meeting in Logan Circle was jumped by police hiding in the bushes. More info hopefully tomorrow.

Tomorrow is Day 2. Expect to see different strategies being used. The cops have extended their perimeter, which means that we won't be able to encircle it like we effectively did today.

The reality of what we did hasn't sunken in for me yet. But I was rather psyched that several hundred of my comrades barricaded a street not two blocks from my office.

Whose streets? Our streets!

Graffiti of the day, painted on the Lafayette Park bathrooms: "FUCKING WHITE HOUSE"

Another A16 Report From The Revolutionary Anti-Capitalist Bloc

by Shawn

Hi All,

Apologies if this sounds incoherent, I've had barely any sleep for the past couple days...

What a kick-ass two days! Taking part in the RACB was one of the proudest moments of my life as an anarchist.

On Sunday, we marched around the perimeter of the police occupied zone backing up the protesters who were trying to secure intersections by confronting cops and sometimes holding intersections until reinforcements arrived. Everywhere we went people fucking cheered.

The arrestables among us flattened police cars and bus tires and spraypainted and stickered them, they yanked out fencing from construction sites and cut loose newspaper boxes and barricaded the streets with them. (On Monday [today] I heard that anarchists picked up parked cars and used them as barricades!) The Black Bloc backed down the police MANY times over the past two days. All of this was done with incredible stealth and organization.

The Black Bloc was composed of a large number of women, the arrestables had about a 50/50 male to female ratio. The ethnic makeup was way more diverse than the mobilization as a whole.

The overall reaction to the Bloc by other protesters was very positive. There were a few hippies who were yelling at us about "nonviolence", but the overwhelming majority of the protesters were overjoyed to see us. One intersection chanted "we love the anarchists"!

The Bloc saved many peoples asses over the past two days and most of the other protesters are very conscious of that. At one of the last protests today, a group of nonviolent protesters did a symbolic crossing of the police line and had a press conference, during which they publicly stated that they supported the actions of the Black Bloc and expressed their solidarity with us.

We quite simply fucking rocked!

OK, now the bad news. At least 20 of our comrades have been arrested. We don't know if they'll be charged with felonies. Hopefully, someone will have more information about that by tomorrow. If they are charged with felonies, we need to give them all the support we can.

I'm am so proud of everyone and so proud to have been a part of the Black Bloc. Our communications people did a fabulous job, our spraypaintin', tire flattenin', cop chasin' arrestables did a fabulous job, congratulations to everyone.

—Shawn

BLACK BLOC the new MINUTE MEN, by gunga din, April '00

The Black Bloc acted all weekend as a protector of the protestors and civilians whom were being beaten without provocation by storm troopers. I was thanked by many protestors and citizens of D.C. They shook my hand on the metro and yelled positive remarks as I passed in the street. I am Black Bloc material. I was with the Black Bloc all weekend. I know: 1) At least 90% of Black Bloc never committed acts of vandalism. 2) At least 99% of us never did anything violent unless we were being attacked or were helping someone being attacked by the police. 3) There were far more of us than the media shows or most people know. Sunday we had a parade of well over a thousand people. We could have taken any store, demolished any street but did not. 4) BLOCKADING IS NOT A VIOLENT ACT! When we blockaded with whatever we could find we did it to protect the protestors. And whenever I saw any form of littering the Black Bloc ran to clean it up. 5) The people of Black Bloc are mostly vegan lower class kids or adults who grew up in rough surroundings mostly in the inner city. We want change for the improvement of everyone, with as little violence as possible. We want a world of direct democracy where everyone has a voice. Where communities decide on their children's education and who guards their streets (if anyone). 6) Right now we are building a movement of resistance. To educate and collaborate. To yell

out where people have no voice. And to protect where police brutality is going too far. If your from New York City you know that something has to change. The police have gone too far. If you want to start an anarchist resistance cell contact this email address: knewworldorder@yahoo.com

Don't forget the Minute Women!
by Shawn
April 21, 2000

Hi,
I also participated in the Revolutionary Anti-Capitalist Bloc, and I think it's important that people know that there were a large number of women in our group as well.

I have estimated that the "arrestables" among us were composed of about 50% women. Also, I think that people need to be aware of how many people of color were among us-proportionally speaking, the Black Bloc may have been more diverse than the mobilization as a whole.

Solidarity.

Chapter V
May Day, May 2000

Overview

May first (May Day) has been internationally recognized as a day of reflection and action for all those within the working class for over 100 years. On May 1, 2000, working class demonstrations were held in cities through out the world. One of the largest and most militant of these occurred in London, England where thousands took part and the day developed into one of large scale rioting.

In North America smaller demos were held in a multitude of cities including Ottawa, Montreal, Boston, Chicago, Minneapolis, Portland, Phoenix and New York. In New York City, over two thousand took to the streets with the intentions of highlighting several issues important to the laboring classes, including immigrants' rights.

The first march began at 1:00 PM at Union Square. There a small Black Bloc began to assemble. Unfortunately the Bloc was surrounded by police before they even managed a semblance of organization/preparedness. At that point more than 15 people were arrested under the pretext of an obscure city law preventing persons from demonstrating with their faces obstructed. This pre-emptive move crippled the still forming Bloc, effectively zapping its potential effectiveness by isolating it in minute numbers. Throughout the remainder of the day, the police dogged any and all protesters that even marginally resembled Black Bloc. In all 19 were detained, presumably all for a association with the Black Bloc.

Despite this development, a number people from within the Bloc managed to take part in the Amnesty For Undocumented Workers March (marching from Union Square to City Hall, numbering over 2000). Actions centered around guerrilla gardening (the existence of community gardens has increasingly come into question under the continuing oppression of the Guiliani administration) as well as other smaller actions.

The only other major mass event of the day was a march called by Reclaim The Streets which targeted the Wall Street area. There police prevented protesters from achieving their aim of effectively occupying and hence shutting down Wall Street by amassing large amounts of police in the vicinity.

May Day, New York City, was revealing in that it demonstrated the need to build the present movement into one of a more mass nature. For even though the day's protests drew a local population of a couple thousand folk, that proved to be dangerously inadequate in a city which boasts a population of nine million. New York City has a police force of 40,000, and hence can easily contain the movement of such a limited

number. Furthermore, such a scenario also demands that a Black Bloc of such a limited size cannot function effectively or even marginally without being committed to an almost suicidal program of action. Therefore, the obvious becomes again apparent.

We need to go beyond the mere ability to converge thousands from divergent localities in order to effect a particular mass action in a particular city. We need to expand the movement to the point where every city can muster a large enough percentage of its own population so that the advantage of numbers and armament of local law enforcement is effectively neutralized. And of course, it cannot stop there either. We cannot stop until we achieve the necessary critical mass of tens of millions all aimed at the social revolution. In this regard we must continue to make 'outreach' a priority, while refining our dialectical abilities to do such. Revolution is not easy.

ANARCHISTS AND MAYDAY: A STATEMENT FROM THE BLACK BLOC (NEW YORK CITY)

May Day 2000 newswire

May 1 is a holiday for workers all over the world—except America, the country that branded May Day in the consciousness of workers everywhere on the occasion of Haymarket. Haymarket Square, Chicago, was the site of a May 1, 1886, anarchist-led rally in favor of the eight-hour workday that resulted in massive police violence and the unjust execution of eight anarchist "Haymarket martyrs."

The anarchist movement has always had a close connection with May Day, first through Haymarket and then through the movement's consistent emphasis on internationalism-bringing workers from all countries together. This year, May Day has particular significance: unprecedented levels of popular outrage have focused on the havoc that the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank have wreaked on developing countries in the name of the so-called "democratic" governments that created and sponsor them. Working people everywhere are realizing that no one is immune from the repressive, unsustainable robbery that these governments perpetrate in the name of "free trade," and for which the WTO, IMF and World Bank are now the primary engines.

The evidence is everywhere:

- Sweatshop labor that feeds off the labor market "reforms" the IMF/Word Bank demand
- Destruction of the environment that results directly from IMF rapid-development policies;
- IMF created financial straitjackets that undermine the economic stability of societies that adopt them;

- Unprecedented dislocations of peoples all over the developing world for purposes of creating vast new pools of cheap labor; and
- Loss of control over the most basic issues of social development due to the oceding of decision-making power to the WTO, IMF and World Bank.

May Day is about uniting working people around the world who are outraged by these problems—problems that transcend boundaries and are remarkably similar whatever country or region we come from and whatever degree of "development" the population has achieved. We reject the idea of "development" as defined by the WTO, IMF and World Bank, and call for the people to take back the power to determine their political, economic and social future.

May Day was taken from us during the Cold War era by a McCarthyite US government bent on convincing American workers that they were not subject to the same economic forces that afflicted workers in other countries. But American workers aren't fooled anymore. As the new Millennium dawns, we're retaking May Day as OUR holiday, and the beginning of a new movement to unite with workers throughout the world.

As anarchists, we are working for a society without bosses, bureaucrats or politicians, where the products of our work are shared equitably, where decisions about social policy are made by all those affected by them, and in which people are free to lead their own lives in freedom. This is a goal of workers everywhere; May Day is our day to express it.

–Atlantic Anarchist Circle (New York City)
–Blackout Books
–Industrial Workers of the World (New York City)
–IU-330 (FW's)
–ABCNoRio Food Not Bombs
–Bruno Group

NEW YORK CITY MAYDAY-NEW YORK CITY BLACK BLOC
by gunga din May 2000

It's nice to know the state meets the Black Bloc with such paranoia and mistrust. They fear us.

At l p.m. in Union Square on Mayday a Black Bloc had started to group. Many of them had masks on and some had flags. A legal observer told some of them that they could be arrested for wearing masks, and if they wrote something political on the masks they wouldn't. I was told later a legal observer came up and told some of them that writing something on the masks wouldn't help either. Some of the Black Bloc

started taking off their masks. Police rounded up about twenty of them, masks or no masks, and arrested them. This was a legal protest. They Black Bloc were standing, talking. They had just started to group up.

This is bigotry. This is harassment. The police targeted the Black Bloc as a threat. The Black Bloc is a political movement. I know personally that none of these kids wanted to get arrested, and many of them didn't want to even risk it.

I know of no coherent coverage of the Mayday celebration in New York City. I saw Fox News interview someone, and we know they are only interested in entertainment news. So I will tell you. The parade was out numbered at times 10 to 1. By the police. Two helicopters. A police boat. Mounted police. Scooter police. Motorcycle police. Trucks, cars, buses, other large metal objects on wheels. At times it seemed we were walking on the side walk watching a police parade. People not from New York City need to understand. We have 40,000 police officers. An army of undercovers. And they don't bother with non lethal combat here. They know they can get away with murder. They blocked off anything in the city they thought could possibly be a target. Wall Street was shut down, by the police. Large groups of police in riot gear were seen miles from any protest all over the city. Milling about like lost children. The crowds of police would stretch as far as the eye could see, block after block. The Amnesty for Undocumented Workers march went from Union Square to City Hall. I don't know how many people. Thousands. The police walk along us pushing us to the side keeping us in the bus lane. Also searching backpacks and taking any flag pole in the parade that wasn't made of card board. My flags lasted a handful of minutes. At one point they noticed a girl dressed all in black. They yanked her out of the crowd, she was not wearing a mask. Her friend ran up, asking them why they were arresting her. They promptly arrested him. Quote: "Lets take him too." This caused a brief yelling match. And then the march moved on. Those two were added to the list of Black Bloc arrested for being in the Black Bloc. This is an old way of dealing with anarchists. Wiping the constitution with their asses, and arresting them for being anarchists.

Later Reclaim the Streets marched around the Wall Street area under looks of peevish disgust and uncomfortable bowel movement sneers from the many robots working there today. RTS later hung a banner from one of the bridges and raided an empty lot. Guerrilla gardening it was called. Planted things. Hung up stuff. It was fun. The police came and almost arrested all of us. I arrived late to the Black Bloc. So now I know not what to do. They arrested my friends. Threw them in jail for being open minded and political. For wanting change and freedom from police brutality and fascism. For wanting true democracy and rights for everyone. For wanting to open peoples minds to injustice.

Fuck this police state!
May 2, 2000

Chapter VI
The Windsor/Detroit Action AgainstThe Windsor/Detroit Action Against The OAS/FTAA, June 2000

Overview

The major Windsor/Detroit protests took place between June 4-6, with smaller actions occurring during the days immediately before and after. These demonstrations were held in protest of the meetings of the Organization of American States (OAS) in Windsor, Ontario, (6-4 to 6-6). Specifically, this organization was targeted both for the simple fact that it is inherently 'Statist,' and because it is pres- ently being utilized as a political tool by which to establish an American zone of 'free trade' between the northern continent and nearly all Latin American States (FTAA).

Such an economic maneuver, orchestrated behind the scenes by the large multinational corporations, would surely result in the degradation of the domestic labor sector (job losses, a decrease in real wages, etc.). We would also see an equal decrease in the already low living standard in the affected "Third World" nations due to further environmental pollution and the economic coercion of its laborers to enlist in emerging jobs which will most certainly be under sweatshop conditions.

In preparation for these demonstrations, up to 5000 law enforcement officials were sent to the city of Windsor, with an additional 4000 on call in Detroit. In effect, the entire Windsor area anywhere near the OAS meeting was turned into a militarized zone. To further undermine the progressive voice of the people, the Canadian government turned 560 protesters back at the border for little or no reason, in order to prevent them from joining the protests.

The largest demonstration occurred in Windsor, on June 4th. There, approximately 5000 people from within organized Labor (Canadian Auto Workers, Canadian Labor Council, etc.), the moderate Left, as well an organized Black Bloc contingent, spent the day marching through the downtown and rallying in front of the Cleary International Center, where the OAS meetings were being held. In tandem with these protests, approximately 800 gathered in Detroit for a march of their own.

This day's events included numerous scuffles between the Black Bloc and police involving the Bloc's use of rocks, bottles, etc., and the cops' use of tear gas, batons and the usual fascist bullshit. The convention center was surrounded by a large fence, and was protected by literally thousands of riot police and Royal Canadian Mounted Police. At one point protesters tried to scale the fence in order to make a charge towards the center itself. Unfortunately, police succeeded in brutally repelling this bold maneuver. At another point protesters managed to halt a bus carrying delegates into the conference area by lying in front of it while others slashed its tires. The bus was spraypainted with revolutionary messages before riot police stormed the area and made over 30 arrests (arrests on the day totaled 41).

The following two days also witnessed additional anti-OAS protests. However, the meetings proceeded without serious interruption. All in all, the several days of demonstrations resulted in approximately 60 arrests in Windsor, and at least one in Detroit.

Most significantly, these actions attempted to facilitate an international action involving people in Windsor, Ontario, Canada and folk directly across the boarder in Detroit, Michigan, U.S.A.. As a strategy of internationalizing the movement, making individual protests less isolated in any single city, this was a reasonable attempt. If we are to build the present social protest movement into one of international social revolution, then such coordinated efforts will be increasingly necessary.

However, given the relatively small number of protesters in both metropolitan areas (and the large number of police), such a dividing of our forces resulted in a general weakening of the demonstration. This played into the hands of the police, and despite militant and organized resistance, allowed the State to curtail the potential disruptive power of the people more than would have otherwise been possible. All and all these actions walked a tactical line somewhere between 'promising' and 'foolish' for these reasons. In the future, more attention will have to be spent discussing the need to fan the scope of action out, and the need to consolidate numbers and resources so as to not become over-matched by consolidated State forces.

Call for an Anti-Capitalist Revolutionary Bloc at the OAS/FTAA Action in Windsor, Ontario

"Capitalism, no thanks! We will burn your fucking banks!"

As participants in the OAS/FTAA shutdown in Windsor, we would like to see and be part of as powerful and empowering an action as possible. This is a call for the formation of a bloc of organized revolutionaries, anti-capitalists, and anarchists of every type. The strength of an organized anti-authoritarian bloc hints at the strength of a society that has overcome class domination.

Capitalism is a total system, and the misery it creates fills the spaces between backbreaking labor in the majority world and the spectacular boredom and excess of

Western elites. So our critique must be total, not stopping at this demonstration, nor aimed at reforming institutions like the OAS/FTAA, which lubricate the flow of wealth from the South to the North. We don't want a seat at the table, we want to burn the table down, and make space for alternative, non-hierarchical societies to prosper.

The OAS is also a player in the "War on Drugs," a euphemism and ideological tool to wage a racist war on the people in the South. The hypocrisy of this position, where only the drugs that corporations pump into our foods and taxed by the government are available is self-evident. Without judging the merits or dangers of illegal substances, it is clear that the U.S.-led initiative against growers is part of its continuing colonization of the hemisphere.

Supporting the protests against the OAS is key in the growing struggle against global capitalism. To make these protests successful, we are issuing a call for an organized Black Bloc. Working with the other protesters, we will inject our own radical element to the tactics, something we feel is necessary to put this in the context of a devouring global capitalism. We are calling all anarchists, non-statist Marxists, autonomists, Wobblies, workers of all stripes, and anyone who thinks that the only solution to this complete domination is a complete revolution. We think that each group knows how to best organize itself, and what actions it is prepared to do. This method of organizing both prevents hierarchy within the bloc and lets a wide variety of tactics be expressed.

Labor should not be blinded by the narrow vision of protectionism. Labor solidarity must be as global as capital, not just concerned with job losses here, but understanding them as connected to savage labor conditions in the South. Being bossed around and managed sucks from Argentina to the Arctic Circle, and we need a solid alliance of workers around the world to combat capital's injustice.

The police repression that demonstrations trigger is felt around the world, as the state uses its agents to violently silence our voices. This is a universal fact of capitalist power, as it uses government violence to protect itself from its critics. Often, the laws it creates are enforced only when they are used to attack capitalism. Fists, sticks, and guns are the ultimate resort of those that get to order others around. Capitalism is thoroughly violent, and disguises this violence under its ideology, so that tactics of resistance are labelled violent, protecting power with its hypocrisy. The daily operations of business inflict ruthless violence on the bodies of millions. Our tactics must be as diverse and creative as possible to respond to this.

So all of you anti-authoritarian revolutionaries and anarchists out there are encouraged to make contact, endorse this call, and shut down the OAS with black flags flying! Our desire for revolution will become reality for the OAS! Fill the streets with a whole range of organized, creative acts against oppression and wage-slavery!

Apply resistance!

Endorsed by: ARA Kitchener, ARA London, KW Youth Collective, Northeastern Federation of Anarchist Communists/Federation des Communistes Anarchiste du Nord-est (NEFAC), *We Dare Be Free*

Chapter VII
R2K: Philadelphia and The RNC July-August, 2000

Overview

During the Republican National Convention (August 1-3), between 7000 and 10,000 people (mostly left liberals, Greens, Socialists, Anarchists and Communists) gathered to demonstrate against the right-wing policies of the Republican Party of the United States. The bulk of protest activity took place on July 29th and August 1st.

The first day was marked by an unpermitted march from downtown to the convention center and beyond. It was sponsored by the Kensington Welfare Rights Union. This march attempted to draw attention to the plight of the urban poor. It was explicitly nonviolent and even went so far as to coerce protesters (through the use of parade marshals) to march in one lane of traffic and in singe file. Although some persons later composing the more formal Black Bloc did take part in this social stroll, many chose to stand aside and save their energy for the following day's events.

This march resulted in no serious conflicts and no mass arrests. It even received 12 or so seconds of distorted CNN coverage where it was claimed that 2-3000 (as opposed to the more accurate 7-10,000) were involved and that 'it appeared peaceful.' Other then that, the corporate media failed to address any issues the march hoped to bring to the public attention.

Day two was marked by mass acts of civil disobedience. The target of these actions centered around downtown Philadelphia (as opposed to the heavily guarded convention center located on the outskirts of town). There, thousands of protesters effectively shut down the city center, relying primarily upon non-violent tactics such as lockdowns and sit-ins across intersections. A smaller Black Bloc contingent numbering approximately 200 employed more confrontational methods including resisting arrest, throwing rocks at police lines, smashing luxury cars as well as police vehicles and spraypainting of revolutionary messages.

The State responded with straight brutality. In addition to pre-emptive infiltrations and arrests (including approximately 70 at a puppet-making warehouse), as well as the use of tear gas and billy clubs (a practice witnessed at every demonstration listed in this book), jailed activists (numbering over 400 and including a small number from the Black Bloc) were subjected to harsh treatment as well as torture. At times, prisoners

engaged in a hunger strike were cut off from any source of water. Access to attorneys was consistently denied. Others were threatened, hogtied and beaten. Bails were set excessively high regardless of the relatively minor misdemeanor charges filed against them. Some initially reached as high as a million dollars while the majority were between ten and twenty thousand dollars.

Despite the practice of "jail solidarity" by approximately 150 prisoners, a significant number of protesters were not released until weeks after being arrested. In the aftermath of this action police commissioner John Timoney called for a federal investigation into the activities of protest organizations themselves. The idea here is to paint the activists as anti-social terrorists, and in that way justify large-scale legal crackdowns on all related above ground organizers that effectively fight against the status quo of global Capitalism.

What makes R2K significant is the obvious collaboration of the mainstream political parties, police, corporate media and others in a joint effort to disrupt and misrepresent this growing social movement. Philadelphia is a Democratic city. The convention was being held by the Republicans. The two major local newspapers are owned by the same corporate assholes. The entire two days of protest were whitewashed and then criminalized by the large money interests through their media conglomerates and legal stooges. This, in conjunction with the continuing attempt to maximize the legal penalties inflicted upon arrested activists, represents a very real move by the State to coordinate a "containment" of the movement via, local, state and federal law enforcement agencies.

While they may succeed in punishing some of our comrades, the State should be reminded of the words of the late Black Panther, Fred Hampton, "You can jail a revolutionary, but you can't jail the revolution."

Footnote: The Black Bloc and other protesters also mobilized against the DNC in Los Angeles. There, over 15,000 demonstrators took to the streets demanding more then the Democratic Party was willing to grant. As usual the Black Bloc fought with police.

Black Bloc Press Release / Statement from R2K Black Bloc

We, the various members of the Anti-Statist Black Bloc (ASBB) put forth the following statement in the wake of the Philadelphia Police Department's blatant misinformation and the corporate media's biased reports against us. The ASBB advocates the building of an organized movement against corporate and state tyranny in America. We recognize that poor and working class people have lost control of their communities and individual lives. The Democratic and Republican parties clearly support social relations in which this is furthered. By supporting the death penalty, militarism, corporate welfare, and the cutting of social spending, amongst others, they have proven

to be political parties of profit over people as all parties have. By organizing Black Blocs and using direct action, we confront this intolerable and unacceptable system.

As anarchists we believe private property is theft, state property is a tool for the protection of corporate interests and that both must be destroyed for the creation of a society based on mutual aid and individual liberty. By spray painting a wall we transform the way we think of it from a conception based on monetary value to one based on practicality. In a system that is concerned only with profit we make our most effective protest when we hit the oppressors in the pocketbook. Property damage, as one form of strategic direct action, is an effective way to achieve this goal. This is not just a theory ... this is a fact. Since the actions of the Black Bloc in Seattle against the WTO, a running debate about global capitalism and democracy has finally entered the public discourse. We are on the brink of a new social revolution.

At yesterday's protest, members of the ASBB specifically targeted police and other government property. The ASBB did NOT attack "mom & pop" businesses, or personal property. Remember that there are other organizations and associations that work autonomously with similar tactics. We can only be responsible for OUR actions. The ASBB disavows any responsibility for damage to the personal property of working class and "mom & pop" businesses.

The second most misconstrued tactic of the ASBB is the wearing of masks. Since the exposing of COINTELPRO, it has been plainly obvious that many government organizations have been monitoring and disrupting radical organizations. This is a threat to our personal safety and liberty. In this sense, we wear masks for our protection. We do not wear masks to threaten or intimidate the public. Wearing masks also sends the message that we are in solidarity with each other as equals. We look forward to the day when we can live in a society where we won't have to wear our masks.

We also stand in solidarity with all the other brothers and sisters who came out to protest yesterday. We are NOT terrorists and we are not an isolated group. We represent a diverse coalition of different races, genders, classes, and political viewpoints that are truly interested in creating a meaningful democracy and fighting the real terrorists: corporate America and the police State. For it was not us who bombed an entire city block, destroying homes and countless memories. It was not us who shot dead Robert Brown. It was not us who brutalized Thomas Jones to a bloody pulp. All these actions are the responsibility of the defenders of private property, the Philadelphia police. We encourage all oppressed peoples to organize for active resistance against power and privilege. Onward to Anarchist social revolution!!!

* This communique was sent anonymously to WE DARE BE FREE

Communique #1
From a Wanted Black Bloc Anarchist

On Monday, August 1, during the Republican National Convention, in the city of Philadelphia, I was arrested along with one other brother in a preemptive strike ostensibly aimed at those, like myself, who intended to protest the U.S. social/political system through means of direct and uncompromising action later that day.

While walking down the sidewalk in downtown, we were surrounded by 10-15 bike cops and soon after put into custody at the Roundhouse jail complex. This all occurred an hour and a half prior to any known acts of civil disobedience, street fighting, corporate/private property destruction or legal demonstrations.

At the Roundhouse, I was charged with (1) Possession of instruments of crime, and (2) Possession of instruments of crime, conspiracy. My bail was eventually set at $10,000, and on Wednesday, August 3, I was turned out pending further court hearings, despite the fact that I refused to sign my release forms.

SOLIDARITY

My court date is set for September 16th. By the time this communique is made public, I will already have refused to appear and a bench warrant will have been issued for my arrest.

I AM A REVOLUTIONARY ANARCHIST

As such, I do not recognize the authority of the State of Pennsylvania judicial system. I refuse to appear before them in order to plea my "innocence". In addition to being absurd, such an act would confirm a recognition of legitimacy upon them which I refuse to give. Besides, the court system is simply a tool of the State, and as such, it too is my sworn enemy. Therefore, my necessary relations to it will never be and can never be that of "innocence." To state it plainly, I am GUILTY. GUILTY of working towards the destruction of that very same court system which seeks to place judgement on me and others. GUILTY of working towards the absolute demise of the whole life denying State apparatus. GUILTY of dreaming of a liberated world where wo/mens consciousness and material relations will at last be free to develop creatively in a society of love, equality, abundance and direct participatory democracy. In a word, all I am willing to confer to Pennsylvania, the Federal Government, as well as any and all authoritarian, bureaucratic and innately oppressive STATES is the absolute hatred and rejection that all exploited people feel and know towards their natural enemies.

However, let it be known that my hatred runs only as deep as my love for humanity and the dream of complete Social Revolution.

Therefore, I have come to the decision to continue my small role in the ongoing social and political revolution by semi-underground means.

From struggle comes victory and dignity. Strength and courage to the Black Bloc.

—from somewhere in the New American Dawn. David

FREE MUMIA ABU-JAMAL

Chapter VIII
D2K: LA and The DNC
August 2000

Overview

Los Angeles, urban sprawl heavy-weight of the U.S., home of Rodney King and the L.A.P.D, a city of angels...

Seemingly the perfect place for a jerk-off session for the other dumb animal—the donkey. Al Gore in all his frigid glory, basking in the approval of his dull chums and his wife's nazi P.M.R.C. squads. The Democratic National Convention, August 14-17, 2000, was staged under the foggy, polluted sky of a city accustomed to rioting, police brutality, and just about every inequity the American dream can muster.

There had to be some action right? Yes, there was. There was a concert, there were demonstrators, the Black Bloc was there, the police couldn't keep their clubs to themselves, over 150 were arrested and the little presidential porkers stayed safely tucked in their blankets ignoring the wolves at the door.

A national convention, Republican or Democrat, might as well happen in outer space as far as the inclusion of the people who actually live in the designated party spot. L.A. as an entity probably didn't even really notice the presence of the exalted nominee in their fair midst. If they did, it's amazing that the national press reported no substantial body count the following day. Then again, substance is hardly a viable commodity within the confined bounds of Al Gore or the Times, Heralds, and Posts who tell us how it is, was, or will be.

Los Angeles bore witness to several days of marches from many protesting groups such as the Greens, peace activists, anti death penalty people, the local teachers and city workers, etc... People marched and represented their opposition and dissent with the current political state of affairs.

In all there were five main days of protest, August 13-17. Each of these days carried their own slant regarding the overall critique of the status quo, and each drew thousands into the streets. The largest of these manifestations took place on Tuesday the 15th at the "Human Need Not Corporate Greed" march. There the number of demonstrators can be estimated at 15-20,000. Thousands more took part in the days of protest.

D2K, R2K, pick your king, the closed door you yell at and the police department you want to get maced by. Representation is no more than what it is: a sugar-coated means of authoritarian domination of the many by the elite few. Outside both of these dubious banquets, the Black Bloc and other life-loving people made the necessary stand, and got the usual expected welcome of the guard-pigs. The obvious brutality of the coppers, the backstabbing bullshit of corporo-conglomerate news commentaries, and corralling maneuvers of so called progressives like the highly authoritarian International Socialist Organization (ISO) are just shadows of the brutal light cast on our attempts to focus attention on reality as WE see it, and as it is.

Los Angeles, city of riots, Watts, the Barrio, etc...

Black Bloc's view of last night's police riot by Left Out

I want to preface this article by saying this represents only my views and do not necessarily the views of the rest of the Black Bloc.

As an individual in the Black Bloc, I felt that the police showed its true colors last night with the indiscriminate gassing and shooting of the people.

Yesterday, from the early morning the police were egging for a fight. The police marched alongside us while giving us ominous looks that would foreshadow the tone for the rest of the day. Unlike the day before the police blocked the paths out of The Cage creating an atmosphere of even more tension. I think there was an attempt to break that tension by the Black Bloc's playing of Duck-Duck-Goose.

On our way back, some protesters had a direct action and the cops divided us from these brave comrades. We attempted to move forward to be with them but the police violently pushed us back. This practically created a running stampede. The cops pointed their paintball guns directly into our faces, too. The cops were practically asking for a standoff.

At Pershing Square protesters waited for the next march. The Black Bloc decided to stay at the square until protesters came back for the final march in order to save our energy. Cops were surrounding Pershing Square with lines of riot police, bicycle cops, and filming us from a close distance away. I felt that at that time no matter how the protesters reacted the cops were going to shut us down during the concert rally.

We arrived at the Staples Center around 6 PM as the police surrounded us, intimidating us. The cops are the ones with the guns, tear gas, helmets, and other weapons while we have nothing but our bodies. The corporate media criticizes the Black Bloc for its masks and other supposedly intimidating tactics while the truth remains that the fascist repressive apparatus has the lethal weapons.

Being trapped in this cage with cops surrounding us did not make protesters feel safe. There were some protesters that did not feel that they were going to let this pass

without some kind of statement. For better or worse there were some plastic water bottles thrown over the fence and police responded with pepper spray pellets, injuring many comrades. More things were thrown over such as rocks of dirt, protest signs, and a kind of smoke bomb. After some time, the cops turned off the electricity to the cage and ordered dispersal. It wasn't enough time for everyone to get out and many protesters were hit with rubber bullets, pepper spray and batons. Most of them were hit while running AWAY (including an 11 year old)!

The fact is, the police exist in order to protect capitalists' property as well as the interest of the rich, in general. It is systemic so that even if a cop feels that the police are overreacting they must follow orders. However, we could see in the eyes of the cops how much they detest us. We are a real threat to them. Why did they react to plastic bottles being thrown while at the L.A. Lakers "riot" they did nothing? Again, it is because we are a real threat to the status quo. My belief is that we must uncover the true blue of the police, especially a police department such as the LAPD. The LAPD has beaten, killed, and planted evidence against mostly people of color and the poor. It is high time for them to understand that we refuse to put up with this abuse any longer.

Thanks.

From the Police State known as the City of Angels,
Left Out

Letter from Four Persons who were in the D2K Black Bloc by Antibody, Spazz, Sketch and Entropy

The Black Bloc is not an organization (as in something that you join which has bylaws and a clearly defined membership boundary). It is a tactic used by anarchists and egalitarians in opposition to government-backed corporate control of peoples lives and the economy that we all exist within. During the week of the Democratic Party National Convention in L.A. many persons masked up and wore black clothing to join the marches as a large and visible contingent of invisibles. We marched under a banner with a circle A (anarchy) and a circle "E" (equality) which said "Whoever They Vote for We are Ungovernable."

Someone asked us, "so do you think you got your message out?" I wonder what that message would have been. We can only speak for ourselves as four individual participants in the Black Bloc (many Black Blocers felt they were sending a message), but to us we weren't a message. We just were there.

And maybe that confused some people.

Black masks provide anonymity and safety for individuals [and] visibility as a group. When we stand in front of the police, the government, politicians, and their bosses in the corporations, they can not question our legitimacy (are we "good" protestors?) because we don't care what they think.

And they know it.

Is that a message? What message is being sent by 9000 police in black and blue riot armor with clubs and teargas?

If you've never noticed someone and then they put on a black mask and you can suddenly see them, that isn't necessarily a message, but something has changed.

Every organism, life itself, will fight to stay alive. It is healthy to be willing to protect yourself to stay alive. Our presence represented a growing healthiness of the movements to end corporate dominance. By no means is the Black Bloc the only indication of this growing healthiness or the most significant, just one of the most visible [Note that as the week went on and we discovered we were being treated as a message, we worked hard to prevent the police and the media from wielding our image to eclipse the many other messages of the protests.] The Black Bloc is no different from the rest of the protest movement in the same way that my liver is no different from me. My liver is a part of me and having one makes me healthy. Just so, the protest movement isn't any different from the general public. Were a part of you (the part that willing to defend yourself) and that makes you healthier.

Personally (speaking as four individuals), we don't think the phrase "class war" is a very good metaphor for what protestors do. Rich people can romanticize war, reach out and touch the danger, feel the thrill, and tell the tale. The rest of us get killed or maimed. War sucks. Immunology offers a better metaphor, because the democratic well being of this nation has become diseased. Corporations are a cancer that will kill us if we let them. The Black Bloc is just one tiny element of the growing movements dedicated to bringing health and strength to the body of the nation and healing to the community of peoples throughout the world. We'll do our bit to eliminate the cancer.

Anarchists never problematise the relationship between collective strength and individual freedom (why would we?) so therefore we can end this letter with the traditional anarchist salutary.

Solidarity and Autonomy, Antibody, Spazz, Sketch,
& Entropy of Black Bloc D2KLA

Chapter IX
03: Boston and The Debate October 2000

Overview

On October 3, 2000, the first presidential debate between George W. Bush and Al Gore took place in Boston, Massachusetts. This elite and exclusive (ask the Green Party) political fiasco was held on the University of Massachusetts campus and was met by protest, mostly from liberal supporters of Ralph Nader.

The Black Bloc, consisting of about sixty people, was also in attendance, providing both healthy physicality and anti-electoral gusto to the unholy proceedings. The overall crowd made up several thousand people and was stifled by the police who behaved in their usual pepper-spraying, club-swinging way.

The Black Bloc's actions outside the debate hall consisted of physically representing the anarchist option to a corrupt "democratic" system and also to remind the cops that arresting protesters can sometimes take work. The peaceful sit-in protesters found themselves prey to the repressive methods of police crowd control which resulted in the Bloc de-arresting several people.

This Boston action also witnessed the trend of ambivalent feelings toward the Black Bloc from the other protesters. There are numerous people within the protesting Left who see the Bloc as a negative and dangerous force while others cheer for them. This ambiguity appears in different degrees at most protests, as in Seattle, where confused pacifists attempted to physically restrain the Bloc from destroying corporate property. In Boston this consisted of cheers, jeers, and somebody stomping on a black flag.

All in all, the first debate was not a monumental protest event since the whole rigged corporate feel of the proceedings was not of great importance from any standpoint anyway. However, the Bloc's attendance was a remarkable thing in a public relations way, in that it further instilled the image of Anarchism as a very real and consistent movement counteracting the depraved social landscape of the American political "shitstem."

The more interaction other people have with the Bloc the better. It is important for folks to have first-hand dealings with Anarchism, as the vividness of personal experience emboldens people to question themselves more actively than they usu- ally do based on second-hand words or television images.

So, Boston was a worthwhile action demonstrating the necessary commitment of the local Anarchists to letting no silly political aberrations get through un-molested which is a fine thing. Why should the two-headed monster get to talk to itself without interruption while a country watches in silent stupor?

This is not to say that most people are dumb or that Nader supporters are inconsequential. However, Nader, though probably well-intentioned, is essentially just adding another temporary head to the aforementioned monster. This cannot be ignored and it is imperative that this issue be addressed.

Black Block Perspective on Boston O3 by Nicolas of The Barricada Collective October 4, 2000

Note: Please keep in mind that these are simply my views and do not necessarily represent those of the entire Black Bloc.

The Black Bloc at O3 was quite effective given it's numbers, and contrary to the claims of some, provided crucial assistance to demonstrators at several times, despite having to endure interference and insults from some groups of protestors. The Black Bloc at yesterdays demos/actions was, in my opinion, quite effective given the lack of backing and our own numbers. At the first event of the day, the Freedom for Sale trail, there really wasn't much of a Black Block to speak of, just a few random packs of masked anarchists, which was fine because there really wasn't much need for a Black Bloc at the time. For the march from Dudley to UMASS there was quite a few more people masked up, and several attempts to get people together, but they quickly disintegrated. Frankly at one point many people were quite disheartened by what seemed to be an irremediable disaster of a block.

However, as the march neared the debate site and police lines could be seen not far off we managed to mass everybody up at the front and form two lines of people, arms linked. While this did give the press some good photo opportunities, at the time it turned out to be pointless as the cop line wasn't stopping us at that point. It did however serve to get us together, keep us together (relatively), and get us started organizing. In all at it's peak moments the Black Bloc probably had around 50-60 people in it.

Once at the actual police barricades/lines we grouped to decide what we would do in view of the situation and our size. At around 8:30 we decided to storm the police. Personally, I viewed it more as a symbolic battle than anything else given that it was highly unlikely given the ridiculous amount of cops present that we would make it through. We went at it however we could (kicks, poles, etc) but where eventually pushed back by a combination of batons and pepper spray. If I understood correctly three people were arrested in the clash as the cops pulled them over the barricades.

Another who has about three quarters of the way gone was successfully unarrested as people swarmed the two cops that had him.

Afterwards some other activists decided that they were going to go over the barricade peacefully. Of course to me, this is suicidal pacifist self-martyrization, but if they choose to do it that's their choice. They walked across, hands in the air, only to be gassed and clubbed by the police. After that things died down for the next few hours, and we actually lost a few people who thought that the night as over.

t around 11:30 everybody knocked over the barricades and began sitting down in the street in front of the riot cops. Honestly I, as well as most of the bloc, was relatively far when that happened so I don't know too much about that particular action. What I do know is that by the time the Black Block got back together about 100 people were sitting in the street in front of the cops. The Black Bloc proceeded to grab as many barricades as possible and blocking the road with them. Eventually quite a few of them were stacked so that they provided a decent defense against cops.

On a side note, a further example of the intolerance of some towards our views (in Seattle so called pacifists physically attacked anarchists, de masked them, impeded their actions, etc), somebody had no better idea than to yank the black flag that somebody was holding atop the barricade, run back with it, throw it on the ground, and begin stomping on it. This obviously led to a near brawl, and what was funniest was that some people were telling us to "calm down" and "stop it." In any case, a standoff ensued for the next 15 minutes approximately, with the riot cops facing us, about 50 non-violent protestors sitting on the cops side of the barricade, the actual barricade, and then the Black Block. The people sitting in front of the cops made it clear to us that they were willing to be arrested, and therefore did not want us to try to pull them away from the police which was fine.

However, when the riot police moved forward, beating their batons on their shields, and began gassing and beating people several yelled out for help and held their hands back so that somebody could grab them. Again, the Black Bloc, described by some of our so called allies as "hooligans" and "cowards," obliged, putting themselves in the middle of the baton swinging cops and effectively de- arresting quite a few people (I myself saw three, and I was a little busy to do much looking around).

After a little while most of the people in front of the barricades were either arrested, in the back getting medical help, or once again among the crowd. This is where the Black Bloc took to defending the barricade however we could (holding them in place, throwing them back at police, and fighting). This kept the police busy, buying valuable time to people trying to move away, and also allowing those engaging in nonviolent resistance to re-organize, so that when we retreated, which we did after repeated gassing, there was another line ready to resist. This shows perfectly well that different tactics can, and should, be used together in order to be more effective, and we are more than open to that. Our objection is to people who interfere with us, showing a total lack of respect for people with different opinions and tactics, as well as disparaging us by calling us "cowards" and "hooligans."

That was essentially the last conflict of the night.

I think that what many fail to understand is that as anarchists we are opposed to capitalism and the state and with the Black Blocs we are attempting to take resistance a step further through direct action. It is also important to note that all decisions in the block are taken through consensus and we always keep the safety of others well in mind. We do not expect, or ask, that everybody agree with our tactics, but we do expect the same respect from others that we give to them.

It is very unfortunate that some people (a minority however, as many cheered us on or wished us good luck despite not participating) are so ideologically narrow on the issue of tactics that they have to resort to insults, interference, and lies in order to try to maintain the moral high ground that they so cherish.

For class war, Nicolas

The Black Bloc and Movement Solidarityby BB, October 2000

Despite differences in tactics, and sometimes over arching strategy, I believe deeply that those committed to peaceful protest and those committed to assertive direct action can work in unison. If we defuse unnecessary animosities and attempt to open communication, we can both work toward each other's mutual benefit.

Disclaimer: I speak only for myself and use the pronoun "we" for functional reasons only.

Essentially, we are all disgusted with the current economic system which places power in the hands of an elite few at the extreme support us detriment to humanity and the natural world. We are also equally disgusted by the current American political system which strips every individual the right to assert her/his political power and forces us to choose between a few party-backed, corporately-sponsored puppets to make decisions for us. These systems continue to exist because of well orchestrated illusions called representative democracy and the free market. We are demanding, I presume, that the fundamentally misleading and tyrannical nature of these systems be exposed. Simultaneously, we are committed to exploring and implementing political and economic alternatives such as direct democracy, community control of resources, cooperative labor, and establishing autonomy. Some, including many Naderites, believe that these goals can be forwarded by strengthening leftist power within the political structure, and forcing it to provide concessions to disenfranchised and oppressed people. Others, including many within the bloc, reject this strategy as being counterproductive, directing revolutionary political energy into bureaucratic and ultimately meaningless reforms which fail to change the actual power structure of the state.

Despite these differences, however, we can work together to forward our collective goals. Few within the bloc would have been upset had Nader entered the debates. I

personally think that he would have undermined the validity of both mainstream candidates and brought forth important issues which could have persuaded the American public to question the corporate power structure. On the other hand, I do not support his bid for the presidency because I do not support the concept of the presidency. In fact, I would rather have more openly oppressive conservative politicians come to power than more subtly oppressive liberals. No matter who wins, the poor lose, and will continue to until we all rise up and demand fundamental control over our political and economic decisions. And flagrant oppression breeds dissent while subtle oppression breeds apathy and complacence. Nevertheless, we were all in Boston a few days ago to expose the debates as a corporate, elitist mockery of democracy. I believe we can all agree with that.

Given that goal, softcore and hardcore tactics were both appropriate and didn't need to conflict with one another. Because it is the disruptive, as well as creative and noisy, nature of protest that attracts media attention, civil disobedience was a good choice. Virtually all disobedience was also perfectly constitutional, given that UMass is public property and that it has been specified by the U.S. Supreme Court that protests "must be allowed to occur within the reasonable sight and hearing range of those against whom or for whom the participants are demonstrating." When the police created a "free speech zone" barring demonstrators from the general vicinity of the Debate center, our civil rights were violated. Therefore, we were absolutely justified in attempting to breech those barriers. Additionally, even if such a move were not protected by the U.S. Constitution, we have an ethical right to participate in our political system, and to impede the functioning of, and indeed remove, that system if it no longer serves the people. So, some within the Black Bloc chose to push back, tear down, and rush some of the barricades. This was not an attempt to incite the police to attack us, however. We are not masochistic, nor do we want merely to "fight with the police." As I understand it, we wanted to move our demonstration to the debate center itself, and block the participants from leaving for as long as possible. Because the police violently prevented us from doing so, we were forced to engage them. Had we made it to the center it would have provided massive media coverage and effectively communicated the outrage we feel toward our misrepresentative political system. Some Greens contend that in blocking participants from entering/leaving the debates, we are acting undemocratically and violating their freedom. I contend that our political machinery, which is propped up by illusions of democracy such as the meaningless corporate debates violates our fundamental freedoms daily. In order to free ourselves, and consequently our brothers and sisters, we must attack such a system and attack it intelligently. If in the process we violate the "freedoms" of corporate elites to rule us, so be it. Many Greens, and also many anarchists, were disapproving toward those in the crowd who launched plastic bottles and occasional sticks at the riot police, some calling this "violence. The projectiles, however, had no capability of harming the well-protected officers, but served as an effective distraction and annoyance. When police are pelted with small, harmless objects, they can't pay as much attention to

beating back those on the front lines who are trying to breech the barriers. There were also complaints that the bloc would rush the police, then run away, leaving peaceful protesters vulnerable to attack. Such is a complete misperception. Yes, after one of the orderly breeches of the blockades, the police rushed us and some retreated. Yet, those who retreated did so to gather medics for the injured and to regroup to decide how to proceed. The plan was that while the police were busy handling the initial broken blockade, we would rush forward at another point. This plan failed due to lack of general coordination. But let me assure anyone who felt betrayed that we are here to protect you as much as we're here to defy the police. Also, ALL of those beaten and sprayed as a result of the rush were blocers, many of them my close friends. As a testament of support, we risked our own safety to dislodge and drag many police barriers between seated protesters and police in order to block oncoming horse and riot police. The message: we respect and will assist all those struggling against capitalism and the state. Sometimes our tactics differ, and yes, sometimes we make mistakes, but we're here for each other.

To an equal or even greater extent, the bloc needs softcore peaceful protesters as well. The community created in the streets through singing, peaceful blockading, puppet shows, etc.is inspiring and important. Not only does it add to the festive mood of protest events, it also makes for good public relations, which is essential at this point. Softcore folks also provide inspiring numbers and support, and their contributions are just as important as those practicing direct action.

These differing tactics can coexist simultaneously, and add to the strength of our movement when they do. The Black Bloc will continue to break police lines, occupy buildings, takeover areas, unarrest people, etc. with the goal of moving from protest to actual resistance. This does not preclude anyone else from less confrontational tactics. I, for one, also commit myself fully to avoiding placing people who do not want to confront the police in dangerous positions. This means that I will avoid inciting the police and running off leaving others in harm's way. We need to use all sorts of tactics to achieve our common goals. This is one of our greatest strengths, and confuses the hell out of the police who are trying to shut us down. Let's try to communicate without placing blame on one another. If we do, I am extremely confident that we can coordinate actions which allow room for multiple tactical angles, and fuel the unity and momentum of our growing movement.

SOLIDARITY NOW AND FOREVER! DON'T LET ANYONE DIVIDE US!

-one participant in the 03 Black Bloc

Chapter X
017: Saint Louis and Another Debate
October 2000

Overview

St. Louis was the stage for the third and final presidential debate. Ralph Nader and a whole slew of other leftists gathered outside and protested the debate as yet another exclusive anti-progressive media event. There were speeches, chants, marching and sit-ins. The Black Bloc made an appearance numbering under a hundred.

The Black Bloc's showing for this protest impressed many people, not so much because of numbers but because of homemade shields, goggles, gas masks, and cheerleaders. The appearance of the Bloc at O17 was very positive. The absence of the usual conflicting reports from other protesters indicates that the Bloc was both appreciated and supported, especially when the speech portion of the protest ended and those who attended started marching and meeting with police resistance. At this crucial point, the Bloc's presence and readiness to protect and serve the cause and its people was felt.

The police pepper sprayed, clubbed, and arrested some protesters (7) at the end of the evening. Interestingly enough, this police intimidation of protesters took place after the Bloc had already dispersed itself as a result of internal concerns.

The Bloc's activity in St. Louis involved little if any violence yet the preparations for such an eventuality showed signs of a movement which is acquiring a strong sense of itself and its legitimacy.

Black Bloc! Congrats and Strategy
Carbondale, Illinois, October 2000
by Treesong

Hello all,
It was great to see some fellow Black Bloc anarchists out there for O17! I couldn't

participate much in your planning and shield wielding because I was working with my own local affinity group, but it was great to have you there, and I was more than happy to dress in black and join in the drumming and chanting. "I scream, you scream, we all scream for anarchy!" has got to be one of my personal favorites! Speaking as someone with very few anarchists in my home town, the huge circle A banner and the more classic homemade black flag were a joy to behold. In addition to thanking all you wonderful folks for being there, I'm also looking for open minded anarchists who are willing to discuss creative resistance techniques. An example comes to mind: someone related a story to me that at one of the mass demos, anarchists alerted the press that they would be doing an action at a particular street corner. When the reporters got there, they were expecting something along the lines of blockades, window smashing, etc., but what they found was anarchists doing guerrilla gardening and teaching it to children and the community. That's the sort of action that really makes people think, eh? The shields were a great idea too, because they offered both a stunning, thought-provoking visual image and a useful tool for defense, should the need arise. What I am looking for is just that sort of thing—strategies that will unite thought and action for the maximum effectiveness in all that we say and do. We need to think and act in a way that is both strategically useful for engaging in direct action, and is also strategically useful for swaying hearts and minds over to the anarchist cause. Any action that allows us to express the sentiment "No Gods, No Masters!" in both a poetic way, and in a way that actually dethrones the gods and masters, is exactly what I'm looking for. Anyone have any thoughts on this? Please email me at treesong@treesong.org If you have security concerns about discussing strategy over e-mail, you might try using a library e-mail station to retain some degree of anonymity, or stick to suggestions that don't overtly suggest illegal actions, such as the Black Bloc gardening example above. However you manage to do this though, let's get some discussion going; together, we can make the joys and freedom of anarchism a reality.

Thanks,
Treesong

Chapter XI
Montreal Actions Against The G20 October 2000

Overview

The days of October 23rd to 25th were days of protest against the "Group of 20" meeting in Montreal. The Group of 20 is an organization made up of the world's seven wealthiest nations (group of seven), the World Bank, the IMF, and several of the bigger developing third world nations. This group was founded in order to insure the stability of the world financial market. The whole shebang is essentially an unholy trinity consisting of the father (G7), the son (WB), and the holy spirit (IMF) followed by an avarice-fueled Amen from third world puppet leaders. Christian analogies aside, the G20 is an innovation which anyone against the ravages of Capitalism must recognize as an enemy organization.

The three day protest was at its most intense on the first day. The 23rd involved around a thousand people representing a wide variety of groups. Near the end of the day, demonstrators began pelting the building in which the G20 was meeting with paint bombs. A trash can was also lit on fire. This, coupled with the paint, threw the police into a frenzy of pepper spraying, clubbing and 39 arrests. The Black Bloc, small but well organized, took part in the paint bombing and subsequent free-for-all with the cops.

The second day consisted of a demonstration organized by Quebec's second largest trade union, the CNTU. The turnout of around two hundred protesters was a permitted rally. Despite this, the police again used heavy-handed methods to control the crowd. Seven arrests were made in the process of pushing the protesters around within their legally sanctioned area. These arrests were supposedly made because the seven had been recognized as participants in the prior day's unrest.

Day three consisted mainly of a protest organized by a Montreal student union which was pacifistic and ultimately non confrontational. This protest had a fairly small turnout and resulted in very little activity.

From a Black Bloc perspective, the first day was the most significant. The anarchist tone of the day's events, the physical nature of confrontation, which some called hooliganism, made it a classic Black Bloc protest. It is important to note that the fol-

lowing two days, which were more structured therefore less openhanded, had drastically smaller crowds. While some of the numerical change of the protest can be attributed to the police violence of the 23rd and even perhaps a feeling among protesters that enough had been accomplished, the main reason may be that giving those present freedom of action and allowing protests to be multi-representational leads to a greater resistance.

When pacifistic fundamentalism stifles the voice of dissent, or when special deals are cut with a police force that has proven itself irrational, one must not be surprised if many potential demonstrators choose to stay home. This is not to say that pacifists are not a necessary and integral part of the movement, or that the CNTU's efforts are unappreciated. It is just an observation based on a concern for the effectiveness of demonstrations and their actual effect on creating change.

The three days of protest, regardless of any tactical criticism or considerations, truly served their purpose in exposing the Group of 20 for the elitist, capitalist sewing circle, which it is.

Violence and Pacifism by Mathieu (translated from original French by X)

Note: While the below text may, or may not have been written by a person from within the Black Bloc, we feel that the content of the material is directly relevant to the Bloc. Therefore we have decided to include this work in this anthology.

Violence at protests

The unnecessary and repressive means used by the police against protesters of globalization during G20 this past week in Montreal once more demonstrate that it is getting tougher and tougher to protest in Quebec and throughout the World. The police systematically arrive at protests, which they deem unlawful, and deal with the situation by using pepper spray and, now, cavalry, or by paralyzing neighbor- hoods by cordoning them off with gigantic 'sanitary tape.' This is just a foretaste of the military state which will be seen in Quebec City next April. These protests are often the staging of arbitrary arrests whose sole purpose is to collect private information about the militants in attendance.

The arrests of more than 100 people in Westmount last May were apparently a result graffiti drawn on the facade of the Bronfman family's home. The real explanation for these arrests were essentially that of 'illegal assembly,' an article which should be contested in supreme court because it contradicts in several points the charter of participants along with the rights and freedoms therein. Faced with such overblown

opposition, one should not be surprised to see people using increasingly radical means of resistance. One can hardly remain calm after witnessing the sordid use of power against the people. For militant pacifists, condemning violent protesters only aids and re-inforces the mindset of those in power.

Believing that sitting in the street and letting oneself be arrested is the only way to protest and that such actions will stop the police from using force is naïve, if not dishonest. This attitude contributes to the mainstream media's attempts at minimizing the importance of protesters' statements. The police has learned that arresting too many militants paralyses the judiciary system (SalAMI's argument). That is why they now only arrest a few militants while gassing and scaring the others until they leave. If a few trash-can fires can keep the media from covering the actual stakes involved in protests, than we should be questioning the press and its ties to those in power rather than dividing a social movement whose eclectic ideas and actions are its strength. Let us thank the anarchists on the front lines if the police consider chalk graffiti and paint balls to be valid reasons for using batons, like they did last Monday. The criminal charges which should weigh on those officers would inflame the courts of justice for much longer than the simple 'participation in a riot'...

Chapter XII
N16: Cincinnati and The TABD November 2000

Overview

Between November 16 and 18, 2000, more then 1000 people (200-300 Black Bloc) converged on the city of Cincinnati, Ohio to express their opposition to the Capitalist practices of the leading multi-national corporations. Specifically, the ensuing protests were directed against the annual meeting of the Trans-Atlantic Business Dialog (TABD).

The TABD is an organization composed of more the 100 CEOs from the larger corporations such as IBM. It was founded following a meeting between the worlds most influential industry heads held in Seville, Spain 1995. This meeting was facilitated by the Clinton administration's Commerce Secretary Ron Brown, in part as a means to allow these large Capitalist movers a means to discuss their concerns regarding international trade amongst themselves and with top ranking government officials. This organization has since crystallized into a powerful Capitalist advocacy group.

The weekend of protest, while small in comparison to the other mass actions we have discussed, maintained a relative militance through the activities of the Black Bloc and resulted in significant corporate property destruction, the overtaking of police barricades and the subsequent hospitalization of at least one protester (for injuries related to massive oral ingestion of chemical irritants), and the arrest of 53 persons.

On the first day of concerted action, November 16th, a teach-in attended by 500 people was held in Fountain Square. That same evening 100 people paid a boisterous visit to the Music Hall where delegates attempted to enjoy a special performance of the local symphony orchestra. Two protesters managed to infiltrate the event in order to express their popular opposition to these would-be 'masters.' Both were arrested. Outside, the police lines were briefly challenged and a few barricades were overturned, but, all in all, the action began and ended with relatively little incident.

The largest demonstration occurred the following day on November 17th and involved over one thousand protesters. Initially, this demo materialized as a permitted march through the downtown. However, as this march neared its official "end," the Black Bloc (composed of 200-300) diverged from the sanctioned parade route and

proceeded to challenge police barricades (in some cases tearing them down and using them to deter advancing law enforcement officials). In addition, the Bloc facilitated the smashing in of a number of bank windows. Interestingly enough, a good percentage of the less militant protesters followed in the wake of the Bloc.

The cops responded by firing tear gas canisters, rubber bullets and bean bags into the crowd. After a prolonged period of street fighting, the police gained the upper hand and managed to surround and contain a large percentage of the protesters. At that point several people were arrested, and the protest contingent was forced to disperse in small groups of four or less.

November 18th, the last major day of action, was marked by more violent confrontations between protesters and police. Two different demonstrations (the second of which was in solidarity with local African-Americans against ongoing police brutality) were both met with police use of tear gas and the batons, as well as 47 arrests from this action alone.

Finally, despite the relatively small numbers, this protest deserves credit as it maintained a line of consistent action directed against every major Capitalist meeting over the course of the last year and a half. Resistance grows as constant and consistent pressure is applied to corporate oppressors wherever they meet to play their games with our lives. Whenever solidarity of action is displayed, the movement grows.

Call for Anti-Capitalist Action on N16 in Cincinnati
By The Columbus Anti-Racist Action

We are calling for Revolutionary Anti Capitalist people to come to Ohio and join us in opposing yet another undemocratic authoritarian structure functioning quietly in peace this year. On November 16th thru 18th the Trans-Atlantic Business Dialog (TABD) will hold their annual CEO meetings in downtown Cincinnati. The TABD has positioned itself as the executive vanguard of the World Trade Organization. They represent the interests of the European Union and North America in the process of the globalization capitalism. These meetings will bring more than 100 CEOs and top government officials together to resolve trade "issues." This body represents the interests of the white, first world, capitalist elite, and exists to impose their collective will, not only the governments and capitalists of other nations, but on the working peoples of the world as well. Anti-capitalists of all backgrounds and philosophies must come together to opposed these authoritarian and exploitative policies and procedures. The TABD is yet another anti-democratic structure in the capitalist elite's march toward unopposed world supremacy. Along with the WTO, IMF, World Bank, UN, NATO, and NAFTA, the TABD is just one more tool for reducing inter-capitalist conflict, allowing them to better exploit the rest of us.

Many coalitions are calling for actions, rallies, marches, and teach-ins during this latest undemocratic meeting to divide the world's resources and the fruits of all people's labor for the benefit of an elite few. Many of these actions will be legal, permitted, and reformist. Others will be of a non-violent, civil disobedient nature. But regardless of these various coalitions' stances on tactics, none of their political statements represent our views or needs. For this reason, we find it necessary to organize in solidarity with these coalitions, but autonomously, on our own terms and with our own explicitly anti-capitalist analysis.

We are not necessarily calling for any specific tactic aside from revolutionaries visibly standing together against imperialism and exploitation. We feel it is important that we stand apart from the advocates of "fair" trade and green capitalism. Whether it is the TABD or another global capitalist structure, our opposition is the same, we stand with indigenous people and the working class the world over against the facade of "improvements" on global capitalism; capitalism cannot be improved, it must be destroyed. We stand for a bright future, when the fruits of the world's labor are used for the needs of the people that do the producing.

To that end we are against narrow economic nationalism. We refuse to play the game of pitting the working peoples of one nation against the working peoples of another, one state against another, or one eco-system against another. Capital is globalized; the resistance of the working class must be as well.

The first-world business leaders who comprise the TABD think they can quietly meet in a very conservative Midwestern city, plan, dine, drink, play, and slip back to their palaces and offices. We aim to show them that even here they will meet resistance. This is why we reach out to anti-capitalist people of all ideological persuasions to join us in our disruption of business as usual in Cincy.

We feel it is important as well to stand together with the rest of the movement in solidarity and opposition, but at the same time visibly apart in our presence and analysis. It is time we spoke out about what we want, both within the anti-globalization movement and to the world at large. It's time for the world to hear the voices behind the masks.

Our place and purpose is to keep resistance solidly anti-capitalist, uncompromising, total, and global. Let the capitalists have no quiet city. Let the forces of reform no longer use us capitalism feel playground, that resistance can happen anywhere, and that revolution is afoot the world over.

Toward the new world we carry in our hearts, In Solidarity, ARA Columbus
Endorsed by:

The Anti-Racist Action Network
Eugene Anarchist Action (Eugene OR)
Kent Anarchist Black Cross Federation Support group (Kent OH)
Kent Anti-Racist Action (Kent OH)
Chicago Anti-Racist Action (Chicago IL)
Radical Artist Terrorist Team (Yellow Springs OH)
Antioch Anarchist Group (Yellow Springs OH)
Yellow Springs Anti-Racist Action (Yellow Springs OH)
Prole Revolt (Morgantown WV)
Some Cincinnati Anarchists (Cincinnati OH)

N16 from a Black Bloc perspective by Yertle the Turtle November 20, 2000

"Organize, Fight Back! Rise Up, Rebel!":
Five Days in the Life of a Female Black Bloc Anarchist
Yertle the Turtle's N16 Journal and Write-Up

My affinity group consisted of myself, code name Yertle the Turtle; Gertrude McFuzz, age 17, a high school senior; SamIAm, age 22, a senior at UK; and Pop, age 22. We fit the norm for protesters there; many of the protesters were college-aged, white kids; not to say that there were not African-Americans and older people there as well. We left Lexington on Wednesday, November 15 at 5:30 and drove to Cincinnati where we found the warehouse that we and other KSPN (Kentucky Student/Youth Progressive Network) were staying. We were the first group there; the owner's daughter arrived a few hours later. The four of us decided on an affinity group name (The Dr. Seuss Flying Brigade) and our code names. The five of us were the only ones in the warehouse that night.

November 16

We just got back [to the warehouse] and I couldn't tell you how happy I was to take off my shoes and coat. We got up at 9 am and walked 2-3 miles to Fountain Square, where we froze our asses off and finally the rally started at noon. It lasted until 1 and FNB served lunch: lentils, bread, oranges, and chai tea. At l pm, 300-600 of us marched to the Kroger HQ to protest human rights violation by Mt. Olive Pickles of migrant workers in North Carolina. There were 50-100 police in riot gear and they blocked the entrance to Kroger. Two black men were there protesting police brutality. Their friend was one of two black men shot by the Cincinnati Police last week. Three men have been killed in police custody in Cincinnati in the last two weeks. Then the DSFB

(Dr. Seuss Flying Brigade) got stopped and harassed by police for wearing scarves: Cincy has a rarely enforced mask ordinance that says they can ask you to show your face, at which point the law says you can re-mask; this law was created to scare Ku Klux Klan members. However, the cops asked for ID and took Polaroids of my friends (unconstitutional AND illegal). Pop's foot got stepped on by one of the horses and his big toe was crushed, he limped around the rest of the weekend and didn't complain at all. It was really disgusting. The medics at the info center taped it up, and it was funny colors.

After we left Kroger we caught the Metro (Cincy bus system) to Eden Park and played a game of anarchist soccer. We stayed there until five, then we got our car and drove to the Music Hall in Over-The-Rhine (a poor neighborhood known for its diversity and controversy), where the TABD delegates were symphony-goers. First we ate across the park at Nast Trinity Church where FNB was serving food (tofu soup, bread, oranges, and juice), then we went to the Music Hall where a bunch of us gathered and chanted. An example of one of our chants was: "That's bullshit, get off it, the enemy is profit! Disease and starvation cannot be cured by corporations!" The music hall was finally barricaded by riot cops, forcing many of us into the street. A chant that was first used there and continued throughout the weekend was: "This is what democracy looks like! That is what a police state looks like!", which was all too true. It finally lost its steam and we all drifted away.

We went to the Info Center and filled out legal defense forms so that we could participate in jail solidarity if arrested. We had to put our real names, addresses, and phone numbers alongside our affinity group name and code name, so that if arrested we could call the legal number (which we wrote on our skin in permanent marker and give them our code name without letting the cops know who we really were. Jail solidarity has worked well in the past at other protests. We told two college kids from Georgia that they could stay with us because they didn't have lodging for the protest. Pop went to Antioch to represent our affinity group at the Black Bloc meeting. We got back here and SamIAm's sister, her friend, and a couple more are here, so it looks like there'll be ten or fifteen at the warehouse tonight. I'm looking forward to tomorrow.

November 17

Today was the most exciting, fun, radical display of grassroots progressive action I've ever been a part of. It was absolutely amazing! We all met up at Sawyer Point (by the river. There were almost a couple thousand protesters there and it was snowing. We had a legal march to Fountain Square, including once around the Omni Netherland Hotel. The Black Bloc stayed pretty tight and led some pretty good (and controversial) chants on the way there. Once there, there was another rally, which was pretty rad. A kid from Refuse and Resist spoke, two Black Bloc kids spoke out against capitalism, and last but not least were the New Kids On The Black Bloc ("oh-oh-oh-oh, no WTO! It's not right, in our lives, you got the wrong stuff, TABD..." etc.).

After that, we were supposed to follow the friendly (yeah right) horsey cops back to Sawyer Point, but us Black Bloc kids thought it'd be fun to turn left, so we all started running the "wrong way", taking back the streets. We slowed down, regrouped, and noticed that all the rest of the protesters (not just Black Bloc) had followed us. We started chanting "Whose streets? Our streets!" and marched toward the Omni Hotel. We pushed through any horse cops that tried to stop us, and I almost got trampled by a skittish horse. When we got to the Omni there was a thick blockade. We knocked down their barricades and carried some with us to keep the front of the march safe from police. We walked through the Square once we stopped and realized that the Omni was untouchable. We marched uncontrolled down the streets in a huge group. Many kids had spray paint and were tagging obvious anti-capitalist targets (large corporate stores, banks, etc.). One kid had a hammer and broke a bank window (it was duck-taped the next day). Many blocks later the cops stopped us with a barricade to our right and straight ahead. To the left was the risk of getting trapped by the river, behind us cops were starting to block us off. The police had spray bottles of some kind of new mix between tear gas and pepper spray. Some were spraying it directly into individuals eyes and/or mouths, and some were throwing canisters into the crowd. I saw one boy go down, and three medics were assisting him, the cops had held him down and sprayed the shit into his mouth and eyes. He was later hospitalized. People started running. I stayed close to the middle of it trying to help others and get a group consensus on what to do, until my right eye became one cop's target. At this point I had been standing on the sidewalk, causing no harm. The most I was guilty of the whole day is walking where we weren't allowed (in the streets, but whose streets are they?). I grabbed SamIAm and told him that I'd be okay, just get me out of there. A medic doused my eye with water, and it wasn't fatal to begin with of course. After we left, three kids (one from the Louisville ARA) were beaten and arrested on charges of rioting. They were guilty of the same exact thing as the other hundreds of us who escaped mostly unscathed. SamIAm, Pop, and I went towards the river with about 20 other kids. Somewhere in the mess we lost McFuzz, and Pop called legal to see if he had called in from jail. All of us debloc-ed (tried to get rid of our all black, suspicious appearance) and found a communications guy who told us that the cops had people trapped at Sawyer Point, and at 3rd and Main. After we got word that Sawyer Point was cleared, we decided to head towards the other hot spot to create a diversion and help them out. We got there right as the cops were leaving, and went back to Fountain Square where everyone was supposedly gathering. There weren't many there, so our group went to the Info Center to see what was up (and warm up!). We stayed there until about 5 pm and walked to Union Terminal, where the TABD delegates were dining and there was a labor picket and FNB. It was cold, and since we weren't with the labor groups, we didn't do much (although we sympathized with their cause). Luckily, we found McFuzz there safe from harm. We got the car and met the Georgia kids (Wind and Water) by the river and drove to St. George's Church on Vine Street for the People's Party. We ate food and left because we were really tired. Pop went to Antioch again for another Black Bloc

meeting. There are about 20-30 kids here tonight. THIS IS WHAT DEMOCRACY LOOKS LIKE!

November 18

The shit hit the fan today. We slept in at the warehouse until about 10:30, then went downtown for the Pig Rally. We had papier-mâché pigs to deliver to our targets (Kroger, Chiquita, Proctor & Gamble, the GAP, and the TABD). The four of us were a little late to Fountain Square, and about a block from there some kids told us that the police harassed and arrested their friends because they refused to identify themselves (illegal AGAIN). They said that police were stopping and even searching people that looked like protesters. They warned us to de-bloc and stay away from the Square; also to rid ourselves of anything potentially arrest-worthy (like our rocks and spray paint). Luckily at this point the march started and the police let us join it. We marched to the Kroger Building, where we had a permit to picket in front of; however, the police had barricaded it and we were unable to cross the street and stand where we had been told we could. We filled in the sidewalk on the block across the street and were surrounded on the rear end by riot cops. We had a chance to take the streets before they completely surrounded it, but most of the Black Bloc was still at Antioch and the majority of demonstrators present were pacifists. A few of us stood in the street, and the horse cops tried to push us back and threatened us. One of them ran their horse into a young male activist. A woman got his badge number (like that'll help). After a bit, a foreign man begged us to stand with his people in solidarity and cooperate with the police, so we complied. After peacekeepers spoke with the cops, we were allowed to continue on our way to the Chiquita HQ. After we got there and delivered the pig, we were told to disperse. Most of the crowd walked back to Fountain Square (on the sidewalk, no chanting or anything), which was surprisingly barricaded and full of riot cops. After we saw more cops on their way, we decided it would be unsafe for us to stay and headed to Washington Park to get lunch from FNB. Here is the story we got about what happened at Fountain Square after we left: [it was backed up in Sunday's Enquirer] Riot cops surrounded a kid that was carrying a flag and arrested him because the stick holding the flag was a "weapon." His girlfriend pro- tested and they arrested her as well. Two photographers, one from the Cincinnati Enquirer, were pepper-sprayed for taking pictures of the arrests.

After lunch we walked to Lytle Park, where there was an unpermitted "Don't Beat Me" march against police brutality. There was a much smaller amount of people there than expected, due to three things: 1) someone (police?) had started rumors that the march had been canceled; 2) the march was started by someone (police infiltrators?) WAY too early; and 3) the Black Bloc's van carrying our banners and body armor had been detained in Antioch by Yellow Springs police who were out of their jurisdiction on campus. The marchers were not given enough time to organize and were led the wrong way into a police trap near the jail. The bloc had been trying unsuccessfully

to get organized and keep "fluffies" (non-Black Bloc protesters) out of our ranks. We ended up near the rear, which was another mistake we made.

A television news camera was present at the beginning, but received a phone call and left immediately (who called?), right before we were blocked in. The police began tear-gassing people immediately. Keep in mind that all we'd been doing is walking on the sidewalks, chanting. Roughly a third of the Black Bloc took off through an alley but we yelled at them to slow down and bloc up. Before we could all get together and escape (we were SOOO close) riot cops with clubs and/or guns in hand blocked off the escape route. They yelled at us to get on the ground. We ran back to the rest of the group (panicking now) and got tear gas in our lungs immediately. After several beatings and arrests, they began letting us out in groups of four. The Black Bloc reorganized about two blocks away (a little too close) and was again encircled. We were stuck in a fenced-in parking lot; a gap in the corner was the only way out. SamIAm told me to run and I took off. I got out, but SamIAm, who was right behind me, got blocked in. I was the last escapee. I was alone and freaking out. I started bawling, I had been crying since they started beating my friends at the first trap. Luckily the medics had been allowed out and they were standing there right next to me. They asked what was wrong and I told them as calmly as possible that I was having a panic attack (not the first in my life). They put a few drops of an herbal substance called Rescue Remedy on my tongue and got my breathing back to normal (THANKS MEDICS—you guys rule, I know you're out there!). One boy, and two girls (including myself) were the only Black Bloc kids who had gotten out. We headed to the library, which is where the Black Bloc was supposed to meet if anything like that happened. There we found the kids that had been stuck in Antioch with all our really important supplies, and who hadn't been able to join the march.

We all de-bloc-ed and the ones who couldn't went inside. I did an audio only interview for Indymedia explaining what was going on and then saw riot cops coming and ran inside. I hid on the ground between two bookshelves but the kids in the lobby were forced to leave the library by cops in full riot gear (in a library?!?). After the cops left I found one other kid who'd been able to hide successfully. We went outside and the Indy Media folks told us that the police were escorting small groups of kids away from the area and that anyone who looked like a protester (especially Black bloc) was in danger. Also, that they were looking for a Black Bloc female wearing a scarf. The police had been overheard saying "I want to get her" and "I want a fucking riot." Me and the boy walked around the library where I found my affinity group (how relieved we all were that all four of us were safe!). They told me that the cops had indiscriminately sprayed and beaten the people in the parking lot, and that five more Kentucky kids had been arrested. At least three of them had been at the warehouse with us the night before. Our group was in the small section of Black Bloc-ers who knew where the alternate safe place was. We went there, ate, and had a long meeting in a back room. We decided that the meetings at Antioch had been infiltrated by someone disguised as one of us. After that some people, including Pop, went back to Antioch. We went

back to the warehouse and hung with the KSPN kids, who were definitely feeling disillusioned because they were all peaceful protesters and hadn't experienced or expected anything like this before. It seemed like they were in shock.

November 19

There were 47 arrests made yesterday, which makes 54 total Thursday-Saturday. Today we went down to the jail and showed support for our friends. They watched us out their tiny windows and we drummed and held signs for them. We made a circle A (anarchy) out of people. SamIAm, McFuzz, and I left around 2 pm to come home. I feel bad for the kids that got arrested. They did the same stuff as the rest of us, some of them did less. A lot of kids are staying in Cincy until their friends get out. I think N16 was a great first large-scale action experience for me and the other inexperienced activists. For McFuzz, SamIAm, and I, it was our first Black Bloc. The consequences weren't as bad as Philly or L.A., and we accomplished a lot with a lot less people. I plan on continuing with the Black Bloc and being a pretty militant anarchist, also with staying involved in FNB and the ARA. And if I ever hear anyone doubting police brutality, I can think back to this weekend and tell them how I was run into by horses and pepper sprayed repeat- edly. Also the cops' apathetic looks when I was crying, and asked "Don't you men have any children?" One even said "Yeah, but they have a hell of a lot more sense than you guys" (and continued pepperspraying and beating kids for standing on the sidewalk). And how my friends were beaten, and my affinity group was forced to walk into traffic because their police escort wouldn't let them stop, and even said he hoped they got hit by a car. And everything else about N16. I learned a hell of a lot, and I think we all did, as a movement and as individuals.

Love, Yertle the Turtle

Black Bloc Organizers Respond to Mike Dolan By Columbus Anti-Racist Action Southern Ohio, November 21, 2000

We have included Mike Dolan's most recent posts to Indymedia sites as context along with our response. The next comment will include all our previous correspondence with Mike, unedited as well as our initial call to action so as to provided context to the reader without being too long. We encourage people to discuss these issues but to keep the discussion principled and on target. We hope that this will stimulate good discussion on the politics of the anti-globalization movement. Please also feel free to forward this information as widely as you please and discuss it on your own listserves and in meetings of your collectives.

Solidarity,
Columbus Anti-Racist Action

To Mike Dolan:
Your recent post on the Indymedia site in regards to the actions in Cincinnati in opposition to the TABD was a great disappointment, though certainly not a surprise. The correspondence that has been traded between yourself and this collective has been included with this post, as we feel your recent statement is a con- tinuation of that conversation, which you have now made public. In the letter you initially wrote to Anti-Racist Action (ARA) Columbus in response to our call for anti-capitalist action in Cincinnati you assured us that you will "never endeavor to marginalize [our] message or [our] actions." The reality is that you have tried to silence and marginalize the radical left in the anti-globalization movement from the start, while simultaneously accommodating right-wing racists, union busters, and the state. Your post is only the most recent in a long line of actions which have pursued these goals. As you have chosen to reopen this dialogue in a public forum, we would like to take this opportunity to respond to the post in question, as well as your politics as a whole.

In regards to your first point, we would like to assert that attendance at CHE events was not low due to "so-called 'liberal' constituencies" being frightened by the possibility of "confrontations between so-called 'radical' (self-styled 'anti-capi- talist blocs') and the police." The lack of representation from these constituencies lies in the fact that CHE has no mass base in the community. When we began organizing for these actions, we reached out to CHE. We took the time to travel to Cincinnati to attend meetings (without the luxury of paid expenses or salaries for doing so). We arrived early and happened to overhear comments such as, "This coalition doesn't endorse any direct action; we don't want any direct action; and what if those people from Columbus come down?"

While in the meeting we witnessed a discussion about reaching out to communities of color. Again, this discussion was framed in terms of working with "those people." When a union representative at the meeting suggested that holding the main march on a Friday would drastically decrease participation on the part of union members, no changes were made to the schedule. CHE made no effort to support the ongoing struggle against police brutality and rampant racism in Cincinnati. No attempt was made to link issues of gentrification of the Over-the-Rhine neighborhood or police murder (you do know that the Cincinnati PD went on a killing spree the week before the protests?) to issues of globalization. CHE was not willing or able to do the outreach necessary to their own constituencies and to communities in Cincinnati in order to mobilize a mass base around their analysis of globalization and the appropriate way to protest it. This is why turnout was low at CHE events. It is surprising that you would criticize CHE actions as being poorly attended, and then characterize these same events as successful in your second point. This suggests that according to you, a successful action is one which is "covered by the mainstream media fairly well."

We are under the impression that the movement to stop globalization or global capitalism is about resistance to oppression, not about symbolic action or getting good press. How is pursuing the approval of NBC, which is owned by GE, or ABC which is owned by Disney, an act of resistance to globalization? We are not here to engage in a futile dialogue with the manufacturers of nuclear weapons and racist cartoons about the lengths of our chains and the sizes of our cages, nor do we measure the successes of our actions in terms of praise and approval from these organizations. Your third point stands in direct contradiction to your conclusion that "the elements of the anticorporate globalization 'movement' need to coordinate better and avoid marginalizing one another in the planning of these big tent actions." The statements made in your third point are a transparent attempt to discredit the actions of the Radical Anti-Capitalist Bloc (RACB) and the many other affinity groups and individuals who decided to join the bloc in its break-off march. The fact is that more than the majority of the protesters present at this "big tent action" chose to march with the RACB on Friday; your attempt to downplay this action suggests that the main goal of your post is to erase the presence and silence the voices of the majority of the protesters. This is certainly not in the "democratic" spirit you claim to pursue. The fact is that your "big tent" is not as inclusive as the terminology would suggest. Apparently, "big tent unity" comes, for us, at the price of our silence and obedience. This was made clear when we were ordered by CHE to march silently to Fountain Square, and when we were publicly told to leave if we did not organize around CHE's agenda and tactics. It's also clear again that you would rather have Buchanan in your tent than working people and people of color. Perhaps this is why you and CHE had few people other than us at a demonstration you called. After all, it is easy to say people were afraid to be near us; much easier than blaming your racist politics and paternalistic attitude. You can not reach out to people who are specifically targeted for extra suffering by fascists and then turn around and share a movement with fascists; the tent simply is not big enough. We understand now that when you asked us to keep our correspondence with you private, it served a number of functions: your racist politics were not exposed prior to the Cincinnati actions; your boss, Lori Wallach, was not exposed as an informant for testifying against the Black Bloc in Congres- sional hearings; and you were able to avoid taking responsibility for cop-baiting us. The Anti-Racist Action Network is a decade old, continent-wide, and well respected for the anti-police work we do. In our correspondence, you accuse us of divisiveness and you state that "even if you are not working for the Man you are giving aid and comfort to the enemy when you taunt others in the movement. Third-string COINTELPRO tactics, like cop baiting, are far more useful to the "Man" than is raising principle issues concerning race, class, and fascist collaboration. We feel these are essential discussions. Your alliances and your stand are clear to us, and there is no room in the big tent for informants and racists. Apparently the good will of a murdering, racist police force and a fascist like Pat Buchanan are more important to you than working with radical youth, working class people, and communities of color. If you are sincere in your pursuit of

an inclusive anti-globalization movement, you will uphold the promise you made us (and, therefore, the RACB) in your second letter to Anti-Racist Action Columbus that we will "never hear [you] marginalize any of us publicly in either the mainstream or independent media." If you are sincere in your pursuit of an inclusive anti-globalization movement, you will cease collaboration with right-wing racists like Pat Buchanan and union-busting textile magnates like Roger Milliken. We intend to pursue an inclusive anti-globalization movement, and will await actions on your part which suggest you intend the same.

Sincerely,
Columbus Anti-Racist Action

N16 arrests Cincinnati "direct action" by Mike Dolan

November 18 2000, Sat, 12:05 pm
Oakland, California phone: 510-834-8129

Just three comments about the mobilization against the TABD in Cincinnati:

1) The turnout was quite low and part of the reason is that so-called "liberal" constituencies that have serious membership - e.g., organized labor and mainstream enviro groups were concerned about the confrontations between so-called "radical" (self-styled "anti-capitalist blocs") and the police. Tear gas, property destruction, arrests, etc. So they stayed away.

2) The events that were organized by CHE and Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch—namely, the rally/press conference at Fountain Square and the Teach-In at St. Peter in Chains, both on Thursday—were successful. A multi-sectoral critique of corporate globalization was described and proclaimed at both events, which the mainstream media covered fairly well.

3) The "direct action" seems to have consisted of some folks leaving the permitted march route on Friday, knocking some stuff over and moving some barricades, maybe breaking a window or two, and then getting gassed and divided up by riot-geared and mounted cops. I'm a little surprised that nothing more creative was planned by the CDAC or any of the affinity groups who came to Southern Ohio to help expose the pernicious agenda of the TABD. There were probably some more clever and energetic actions that haven't been reported in the Cincy rags; I look forward to hearing about them.

The elements of the anti-corporate globalization "movement" need to coordi- nate better and avoid marginalizing one another in the planning of these big tent actions.

Mike Dolan

Red November, Black November: A tribute to the Black Bloc at N16 by Ralph Chaplin + friends. 11/22/00

Red November, black November. Bleak November, black and red; Hallowed month of Labor's martyrs, Labor's heroes, Labor's dead. Labor's hope and wrath and sorrow. Red the promise, black the threat; Who are we to not remember? Who are we to dare forget!

Black and red the colors blended, Black and red the pledge we made; Red, until the fight is ended, Black, until the debt is paid. August Spies and Albert Parsons With Joe Hill and all the rest. Who are we to not remember? Who are we to dare forget!

Black the flag and black the mask, Red the hearts that beat as one; Spur us to this better task,

Like rays of light from autumn's sun. Red November, black November, Red the promise, black the threat; Who are we to not remember? Who are we to dare forget!

Chapter XIII
J20: DC and Inauguration Day January 2001

Overview

Inauguration Day, January 20th in Washington D.C., was marked by the largest protests against the swearing in of a United States President since Richard Nixon in 1973. Of the more then 20,000 demonstrators, over 600 were composed of Black Bloc forces.

The majority of the protesters were of your common leftist stock, with a small number composed of Democrats angered over what is widely viewed as a false or fixed election result. These assertions, that Al Gore was the rightful victor, are probably accurate, but are ultimately irrelevant from an anarchist perspective. This plan was coordinated by the Justice Action Movement (JAM), a Liberal coalition open to dissenting Democrats and the nonviolent Liberal Left, and openly hostile to the non-pacifist Black Bloc. The strategy of these protesters was to fan out along the Presidential parade route in groups of less then twenty-five, as such small groups do not require a permit for their 'legal' presence. The idea was to line the entire parade route with a visual presence of anti-Bush, anti-Republican protesters. That way they believed their voice of dissent could not be as easily ignored as would normally expected. Of course, the corporate media still managed to do a 'fine job' of not mentioning them.

The State responded to the presence of these protesters by forcing citizens to pass through police and Secret Service check points where they were subject to arbitrary searches, where all banners and/or flags posted to poles of more then a quarter inch in diameter were confiscated and where select individuals were even denied entrance if the law enforcement agents deemed it necessary. This was the first time in U.S. history that public access to the Presidential parade route was restricted in such a manner. Welcome to the Police State.

The day's events became interesting at two major junctures. The first being when approximately 250 persons from the Black Bloc were surrounded by police and threatened with mass arrest. This situation was resolved when a large number of demonstrators from within the National Organization of Women (NOW) and JAM surrounded the police and demanded the release of the prospective prisoners. The police, being greatly

outnumbered, caved in and allowed the continuing movement of this Black Bloc faction. This act of solidarity demonstrated an underlying recognition of 'common cause' on the part of the rank and file constituents of the growing social protest movement, despite the "official" Liberal leadership's hesitance to embrace a more radical analysis and tactics.

The second interesting event of the day occurred with the Bloc's charging and toppling of a police/Secret Service check point, and its subsequent forced immersion into the direct vicinity of the Presidential parade route. This act proved once again the vulnerability of law enforcement in the face of mass militance. The myth of the invincibility of organizations such as the Secret Service is quickly being dismantled through the demonstrated abilities of the people to subvert their physical machinery and organization.

The ramifications of this act rest with the likelihood that as more tactical victories are achieved by the Bloc, the Bloc will grow more confident and hence more militant in future actions. Of course this will not occur without State escalation, which in turn will demand tactical modification on the part of the Bloc.

The day's action drew a few arrests, and was marked by several militant confrontations between the Black Bloc and law enforcement. These clashes, the most significant of which occurred at the Navy Memorial along the Presidential parade route, routinely resulted in tactical retreats on the part of the police.

It deserves mention as a final point that the Bloc managed new tactical displays of competence by adapting "Autonoman"-like regimental structure by marching in a tight-knit formation organized according to affinity groups, and by lining their perimeters with banners in order to make select arrest of constituents a more difficult task. This is a positive development in that it shows the willingness and ability of the Bloc to refine its practices according to practical needs.

In the end, the action of the day created an atmosphere of dissent towards the ruling clique of bureaucrats. President George Bush Jr.'s limo was pelted by bottles, eggs and rocks from the Black Bloc, and he was forced to witness protesters throughout his so called victory march. It was a day well spent.

A Call For a United Revolutionary Presence At The Presidential Inauguration

On Saturday, January 20th, 2001 thousands of people from all over the United States will converge on the streets of Washington, D.C. to protest against the dictatorship of the corporate class, the circus of US representative "democracy," and the international death machine that is the US government.

The demonstration in Washington the day of the presidential inauguration is a great opportunity to demonstrate our opposition, not only to whoever it is that may

eventually win the presidency, but to the entire state system, from the dictatorship of capital, to the sham of representative democracy by making Washington ours during inauguration day and disrupting the ceremony of the ruling class. In the spirit of the mobilizations of the past year, from Seattle, to Washington, to Cincinnati, and everywhere in between, we are calling for revolutionaries to stand together as a bloc and refuse to serve as mere numbers for reformist and authoritarian organizations that don't represent our desires, aims, or Instead, we propose a demonstration that not only highlights our opposition to the present order, but also puts forth revolutionary antiauthoritarian alternatives. Therefore, we are calling for antiauthoritarian revolutionaries to bring their banners and flags, be they black, red, red and black, black and green, or whatever else and gather in Washington at 10 am on Saturday, January 20th, 2001 at Pennsylvania Ave. and 14th St. NW under the slogan "Class War Now... For a Classless, Stateless Society."

We are not calling for any particular tactics, simply for revolutionaries to come prepared to march on the Presidential Inauguration and for a festival of resistance, struggle, and revolutionary alternatives to the capitalist system. It will take a lot of work to make this mobilization a success and a show of force for the North American revolutionary movement. If you wish to help make the January 20th initiative succeed, spread the word, organize caravans to Washington, copy and distribute this call, make banners and flags, keep in touch as details of the mobilization become available, contact us to endorse the call, and come to Washington on January 20th ready for a festival of resistance.

–The Barricada Collective, Sabate Anarchist, Agitate! (Baltimore), The Onward Collective (Gainesville), ABCF People of Color Caucus, Anarchist Black Cross Federation-Houston, Radio Sexto Sol (Houston), People Against Racist Terror, Anarchist Soccer League (New Brunswick), ABCF-Kent, Infoshop.org (Washington, DC), ARA Columbus, Brighter Days Collective (Lansing), Aron Pieman Kay, Global Pastry Uprising, Tenant's Voice (Kansas), Free Anarchist Collective (Detroit), Grain RAGE (upper Midwest), Resistance Against Genetic Engineering, Anarchists Anonymous (Minneapolis), GALA (Green Anarchists), Insurrectionary Anonymous, Active *Transformation* Newspaper Collective (Detroit/Lansing), Brian MacKenzie Center (Washington, DC), Stenka Razin Anarchist Group (Kansas City)

Statements Concerning Up-Coming J20 Action By The Barricada Collective

The Revolutionary Anti-Authoritarian Bloc has been working hard to make the January 20th mobilization a success, and so far it looks like interest is high, as we are currently networking with people from all over the USA who plan to come to Washington and march with us. In order to keep people up to speed on what is being

planned we are posting the following information, as well as re-posting the call for those who may not have seen it. We also cannot urge people enough to subscribe to the email list, as it is our most effective method of communication. We strongly encourage people to help spread this information as much as possible, by forwarding it to lists that they may be on (especially city or regional lists) or by printing it and distributing it, in order to help continue to get the word out.

If you have any questions whatsoever, please do not hesitate to contact us at barricadacollective@hotmail.com.

The RAAB plans to take part in a variety of actions during inauguration day. For a variety of reasons, we cannot at this time disclose the details for all the events planned for the course of January 20th. For the moment the initial assembly point is around the large Class War banner that will be at Pennsylvania Avenue and 14th St. NW. However, amongst other things, there is currently talk of a march which will start earlier than the International Action Center march. This is however not yet confirmed. Therefore, for regular updates on this as well as other events please send a request to be subscribed to the *Barricada* e-mail list: barricadacollective@ hotmail.com.

Also, we would like to take this opportunity to make it clear that the decision to march at the IAC march does not represent an endorsement of the IAC. We are simply choosing to use the IAC march as the initial assembly point for the bloc because of issues of safety and convenience, as the IAC meeting location will be legal and crowded. We will however be an independent bloc with our own banner and our own re-vindication. During the course of the march "For Class War, For a Classless, Stateless Society," information about the rest of the day's events will be distributed through fliers and word of mouth.

Needless to say, Washington on January 20th will be a city swamped with all the branches of the repressive forces of the state, including over 4,000 policemen. Therefore, we are providing some information that we feel it is important for people to have in order to minimize the risk of unwanted run-ins with police and to help those who come to Washington this day.

- There will be what is being termed a "Hub," for meeting during the day, although not necessarily a convergence center. Again, for the address once it is available, contact Barricada.

- Groups of 25 people or less do not need a permit to demonstrate along the inaugural parade route. Inauguration intends to eventually disperse into groups of 25 or less along the parade route and have a presence by being spread out around the city. The bloc will decide, through consensus decision making when the time comes, what direction to take once the march has ended. However, it is important that people who intend to come in "Black Bloc" are dressed in a manner that would make it at least to some extent feasible to mix in with the crowd. For example, patches and easily identifiable pieces of clothing are not suggested. This is always the case, but even more so for January 20th.

- Banners and flags our obviously suggested and welcome, but they may become a nuisance later in the day if you do not have a place to leave them and they are large and/or heavy. Therefore, think about whether you want to have them with you or not.

- A final note, for those who receive Barricada's monthly magazine: In the January issue there is a text very similar to this one. However since going to press we have decided to no longer work with the Justice Action Movement.

They have been showing themselves to increasingly dominated by centrists and reformists collaborating with police and welcoming even Democrats who clearly state that they are protesting simply because they feel Bush should not be president in their desperate pandering to the mainstream. There has also been a lot of anti-anarchist, anti-Marxist, and pro-patriotic talk on their discussion list. Therefore, while we wish them the best of luck, we are separating ourselves from them as, while we attempt to be inclusive and non-sectarian, we have to draw the line somewhere.

Some Notes on the DC Black Bloc by a RAAB Organizer January 21, 2001

- Some people said it seemed that the bloc march had no direction. We knew exactly where we were going, for a short march around the area and then to ***Washington Post***, and indeed got there. Unfortunately, possibly due to the fact that it was just us, some people were rather timid, and it didn't get the treatment it deserved.

- A lot of people have commented that it was one of the best organized blocs they have been at, in that the banners down the sides helped keep it very tight and to a large extent the demo was composed of people in organized lines of affinity groups, rather than simply a mass of people. This is more secure and effective. Plus comms was good and we did after all manage to get approximately 600 people with only two months work.

- When the police surrounded everybody about 80 from the bloc escaped through an alley, others turning back, and about 10 were able to break my opinion the DC developed a good protestors, we had a bloc was a success. We relationship with other long, large, and organized through the police lines. Meanwhile a decent sized bloc assembled across the street and tried to stop traffic to put pressure on the police. Three times the bloc charged, but the farthest we got was halfway across. Eventually the TAC march came through the area and police were forced to let everybody go as they were becoming themselves surrounded by protestors.

- Probably one of the most impressive actions was when a wagon was taken and it wasn't used to smash just a barricade, but to completely barrel through one of the checkpoints. The wagon sent the barricades flying, the cops scattered and we all surged through. Had it not been for a quick thinking secret service agent who drove his car into the middle of the road, rest assured the bloc would have kept going right into the parade route with no problems. In any case, once we were past we encountered lots of plainclothes police and secret service, but fortunately everybody they got was unarrested (one of them got a barrel thrown at him). In terms of property damage, several windows were broken, a luxury car was damaged, and the secret service car that blocked the wagon was quite damaged as well.

- Things were quite calm for a while until we went to Navy Memorial. Quite a few American flags were burnt, the black and red and black flags were hoisted, two Black Blocers did an amazing dive over the cops and into the crowd to avoid arrest, and we did indeed fight them off the square. From this point on there was about an hour and a half of constant fights back and forth between Black Blocers (supported by a good 15 RCP Youth) and riot police with shields and secret service. Again, the bloc fought well, had several unarrests, and only two arrests.

- When the parade went by it was greeted with a decent hail of rocks and bottles. There was talk of going to the balls, but when we reassembled for the last time (at about 5) we were only about 50, so it was decided to call it a day.

- All in all, given the tight security, and the actions that were done, I have to say that in march, we completely destroyed a police checkpoint and arrived to within one line of police from breaking into the parade route, we only had about 5 arrests, and most importantly I think, we demonstrated yet again that from now on every time there is a ceremony of the ruling class it will take thousands and thousands of cops to keep them safe.

A RAAB organizer

Account and Analysis of Inauguration Day RAAB Wednesday, January 31, 2001 By The Barricada Collective

Analysis Follows After Account of Day's Actions

–The Revolutionary Anti-Authoritarian Bloc in Washington, January 20

Account of the Day's Events

Over 600 people took part in the Revolutionary Anti-Authoritarian Bloc (RAAB) in

Washington, D.C. on Saturday, January 20th, inauguration day, marching for over one hour through the streets of Washington before embarking on a day of direct action against the state, including the smashing of a parade route checkpoint.

The impressive and energetic march, which attempted to re-create the German Autonome Antifa style of marching by organizing itself into tight lines of affinity groups and surrounding itself with banners reading, amongst others, "Class War... For a Classless, Stateless Society ... Autonomous Resistance," "Not Chaos, Not Violence ... Freedom," and "Whoever They Elect, We are Ungovernable," initially headed towards the Presidential parade route. A police checkpoint was passed without incident and the RAAB then marched one block parallel to the parade route. However, given that there were still several hours until the parade began, it was decided to move on.

The RAAB then headed back in the direction of the initial starting point, but this time with the intention of exposing the role of the corporate media in sustaining the dictatorship of capital called "representative democracy." To this end the RAAB headed to the central offices of the Washington Post. Once there several people decorated the front of the Post building with anarchist symbols and paint bombs, while the hundreds behind them chanted, "Fuck the Corporate Media." This action was merely a warning to the Washington Post and all other media outlets that choose to defame social movements, anarchists and other revolutionaries in particular, and constantly show themselves to be the enemies of the people. Had it not been for the need to keep moving due to police presence and the dissuasive set-up of Washington's wide streets, they would be lamenting a lot more than some graffiti. Next time they may not be so lucky.

It was however decided to move on as the bicycle scouts tracking police movements informed those handling communications for the bloc that police units were beginning to assemble and follow the bloc. In response to this people began to drag newspaper boxes and construction fences into the streets as they passed in order to halt the advance of the police.

At approximately 11 a.m. a line of police managed to assemble in front of the bloc at 14th and I despite the efforts of the scouts. However, the bloc decided, possibly mistakenly (for analysis read **The DC RAAB: Self Criticism and Self Congratulation**), that it was not necessary at this point to engage the police as they could be avoided by simply heading up the intersecting street. Once arrived at the parallel street, 14th and K Streets, the bloc was again stopped by a line of police and this time surrounded. A brief scuffle ensued during which an unsuccessful half-hearted attempt to break through the still quite thin police lines was made. Meanwhile, a group of about 60 entered an alley and attempted, again unsuccessfully, to maneuver a dumpster into the street in order to use it as a battering ram against the line of police. However, the dumpster proved to be too heavy and difficult to maneuver, never making it out of the alley.

The end result of this was that about 250 members of the bloc were encircled by police, while those who had managed to escape, either through the alley or by

breaking through police lines (which about 30 managed to do) were dispersed around the surrounding area. Most people immediately began heading towards the first designated re-assembly point, the Navy memorial. However, word soon came in through the communications people that the International Action Center march, along with NOW and the Justice Action Movement, was headed in the direction of the trapped RAAB marchers. Finally, as word spread about the situation it was the police themselves that found themselves being slowly surrounded by demonstrators and unable to move those surrounded into the arrest busses already on the scene.

In the meantime those in the RAAB who had not been surrounded were able to re-assemble in the park across the street from the police corral, which was now five lines thick. In order to attempt to put more pressure on police to release the trapped demonstrators several charges against the police were carried out in order to take the street, block traffic, and further surround police. However, the police lines held and the furthest the bloc and allies made it was halfway across the street. In the meantime a RAAB member perched atop a streetlight set fire to an American flag and showed those trapped that they were not alone by raising the black flag. Police then tried to arrest him but he escaped by jumping into the crowd.

At approximately 12 pm police succumbed to the pressure of the thousands of protestors and released all the trapped RAAB members, as well as those who had joined them in solidarity. The RAAB then quickly re-assembled, now lower on numbers and banners, but no longer isolated and now as part of a larger march.

As the march progressed the bloc decided to not repeat the errors of the morning and better arm itself in case of a future confrontation with police. Therefore, when passing by a construction site members of the bloc took a large, and heavy, construction wagon and began filling it with cones, plastic barrels, and large wooden poles. In order to avoid having all this confiscated the wagon was placed in the middle of the bloc and surrounded by banners and people on all sides.

Several blocks later the march arrived at one of the controversial police checkpoints leading to the parade route. However, scouts informed the bloc that there was a weaker checkpoint only one block further down, so it was decided to head there. Once arrived members of the RAAB began asking the crowd assembled in front of the police barricade to move out of the way as it had been decided to show the police, in no uncertain terms, that the RAAB had no intentions of submitting itself to searches, or any other of the police's wishes.

Once the road was cleared of all bystanders and only a metal barricade, some policemen, and some secret service agents stood between the RAAB and access to the parade route, the banner in the front was moved out of the way and the bloc charged. In one of the several inspiring moments of the day police and secret service scattered for their lives and the metal barricades of the state were toppled by the power and determination of the RAAB as hundreds of anarchists and revolutionaries, not 30 as the corporate press reported, as well as newly empowered and emboldened reformists, surged past the no longer existent checkpoint. However, in the rush to pass

the checkpoint the bloc lost some of it's compactness, leading to several individuals suffering close calls at the hands of plainclothes policemen and secret service agents, such as the individual seen being rescued thanks to the efforts of a barrel wielding RAAB member.

Once past the checkpoint and properly reassembled the RAAB, now numbering approximately 200 and aided by a group of Revolutionary Communist Party Youth, found itself less than one block, one line of metal barricades, and one line of police, away from breaking into the parade route itself. Rest assured that had it not been for a quick thinking secret service agent who thrust his car in front of the wagon that had been used to destroy the checkpoint, the RAAB would have had no problems storming through the final line of defense and pouring into the parade route, thus forcing its cancellation and succeeding in its attempt to disrupt the ceremony of the ruling class and proving that, regardless of how many thousands of police are on hand to defend them, the ruling elite will never be safe.

Unfortunately, the sad fact is that the Secret Service agent did react quickly and manage to rob the bloc of a great weapon, not without losing a window and earning a nice dent however. Eventually the bloc, once again led by the "Whoever They Vote For, We Are Ungovernable" banner made it to the front of the crowd and found itself face to face with the final line of police guarding the parade route. A half-hearted attempt to charge through was made as people began kicking at the metal barricades. However, the snipers visible on virtually every rooftop and the concerns of many about getting shot took away from people's conviction.

At this point the RAAB found itself in a rather odd position in that retreating was no longer an option, nor did it seem desirable given the sacrifices made to arrive so close to the parade, yet advancing no longer seemed possible (by now the final line of police had swelled to five). The group then assembled into a large circle in order to discuss what to do next. Eventually, after much discussion, it was decided that it would be best, given the large number of protestors in the area, to do one of the things which the bloc does best and try to build allegiances with other protestors and work them up by being as vocal as possible, while temporarily staying away from some of the more "radical" chants and searching for common ground. The RAAB thus spent the next hour or so milling around and chanting, with slogans such as "Whose Streets ... Our Streets," and "Bush Says Death Row ... We Say Hell No," among others.

Eventually though word came in that a group of 15 or so members of the bloc were at the Navy memorial where the NOW protestors where, and that they had expressed an interest in having the rest of the bloc join them. It was therefore decided to head in that direction. Once there the RAAB, emboldened by the presence and support of quite a few members of the Revolutionary Communist Party Youth and other protestors, began burning US flags to chants to "Yankee, Yankee Go Home." The RAAB then turned its attention to the Navy Memorial mast and began taking down all the flags on it as members of the Black Bloc and the RCP climbed on it waved the black flag and the red flag, respectively. Once all the flags had been taken down

a black flag, a red and black flag, and an upside down US flag were hoisted. Seeing this the police responded by sending a squad into the crowd to defend the memorial. Once the police had penetrated the crowd they proceeded to surround the memorial, leaving two unfortunate RAAB members who did not get off in time stranded, one of which has now been dubbed "Super Anarchist" because of his apparent ability to fly. However, "Super Anarchist" did land, and fortunately safely into the midst of the Black Bloc who wrestled him away from the hands of the police.

Immediately after this all the protestors, many less radical elements included, banded together to surround the police and begin advancing on them. It was again an inspiring sight to behold the force of the people as the police retreated, looking terrified and tripping over themselves.

What followed was approximately an hour and a half of charges back and forth between the RAAB and different law enforcement agencies, ranging from plain-clothes police, to shielded riot police, to secret service, as well as several members of the extreme-right who attempted to pepper spray members of the RAAB. One of the most violent battles came after plainclothes police charged into the crowd attempting to arrest several demonstrators, only to have the RAAB successfully unarrest them. However, despite the many unarrests, a constant during the day, the police did manage to arrest two people during the course of the events at the Navy Memorial.

During this time the presidential limousine went by, however it was going so fast that people barely had time to react before it had whizzed by. It was regardless met with a decent stream of rotten fruit, bottles, eggs, and rocks. This also came after the parade was forced to stop for several minutes before the secret service was convinced that it was safe for the President to drive by. Regardless, we can only hope that Mr. President saw the red and black flag flying high as he drove by, and let it be a warning to him of what to expect these next four years.

Once the parade had gone by it became evident that there was no real purpose to remaining on the spot, and, with the President gone and the crowds beginning to dwindle, it was becoming a safety threat to remain on the spot as it was only a matter of time before police's attention became focused solely on the bloc. It was therefore decided to de-bloc and re-group at another location at 5 p.m. in order to discuss paying a visit to the inaugural balls. However, when the time came the bloc had dwindled, due to exhaustion, arrests, stragglers, people lost, and people having to leave, to just over 60. It was therefore decided to call it a day and go back to advancing the class struggle in our local communities and work places until the next large gathering in Quebec City in April.

All in all, the inauguration day bloc, which was definitely not without its mistakes and misjudgments (discussed in other article), can be considered a smashing success for anarchism, for a variety of reasons. A well organized and well publicized march of 600 strong was put together with only 2 months notice, the police were handed several important defeats, the bloc showed once again just how strong it is and how no matter how many police and how much scare propaganda we can always adjust, a lot of people

were radicalized by the bloc and very supportive of its actions (even some Democrats), and a lot of important alliances were either built or strengthened.

Analysis of the Inauguration Day RAAB

Despite the overwhelmingly positive response to the actions of the Revolutionary Anti-Authoritarian Bloc on inauguration day, from both bloc participants and other protestors, it is clear and undeniable that not everything went well. Therefore, in order to not fall into dangerous self-congratulation we at the Barricada Collective have decided to analyze as deeply and honestly as possible, regardless of who it may offend or please, what in our opinion went well and what didn't, what we should try to repeat next time, what to avoid, and what to change. In order to make this as clear and concise as possible, we have decided to take the criticisms and congratulations on a point by point basis.

Why a Presence at the Presidential Inauguration?

When the call for an organized revolutionary anti-authoritarian contingent at the inauguration was first made public quite a few people were openly opposed to it, for a variety of reasons. However, the most commonly heard reasons were that a bloc without a particular target would be ineffective and pointless, and that anarchists or revolutionaries should not grace the presidential inauguration with their presence. Evidently, in both cases, we disagree. It seems that because the Black Bloc in the last year has mainly served as a tool to achieve a certain goal, such as damage property in Seattle or attempt to shut down the IMF meeting in Washington, many people have begun to see it as merely a tool to attack precise targets. However, we see the Black Bloc as a lot more than just that. To us Black Blocs do not always have to be directed at a specific target. They can also be geared towards propaganda and simply to present an organized contingent at an event, such as Millions For Mumia for example. Regardless of this, we believe that not only was there a clear target for inauguration day, or several for that matter, but there was every reason to be at the presidential inauguration.

To us the Presidential Inauguration represents everything that we oppose about the state and the dictatorship of capital otherwise known as "representative democracy." Thus, by being there we were attacking the root of all we believe is wrong with our society, the state itself. However, we also wanted to draw the connection between the state and all those powers that help to preserve the current order. This is precisely why we decided to march on the *Washington Post*. We also wanted to take the opportunity, given the large numbers of press, both corporate and independent, from all over the world that would be present to not only draw attention to everything we oppose about capitalism and statism, but also to highlight our alternatives to this system. In other words, the constructive aspect of anarchism. It is for this reason that we chose to lead with banners reading "Class War. For A Classless, Stateless Society," and "Not Chaos, Not Violence ... Freedom." We also attempted to de-centralize as much as possible the propaganda efforts in order to maximize the amount of fliers, pamphlets, and other propaganda materials. However, we must recognize that one of the Barricada

Collective's worst mistakes was that we, literally, forgot to make the fliers. They were ready to go and a member of the Collective was on the way to making the photocopies but got sidetracked and never made it to the copy shop. Regarding the clear target, well, nothing would have been better than to have shut down the ceremony of the ruling class. Many people thought it was suicidal and not within our means, but as anybody who was there saw, we weren't far from succeeding.

The Call and the Two Months of Organizing

As has already been established, organizing for the RAAB got off to a rather turbulent start. The first point of conflict came when some people objected to the language of the call. This in our opinion was not a major concern, as if people disagreed with the call they were more than free to write one of their own, as that is the nature of a call. One, or more, groups writes it and others are free to endorse it or not. A more important point of conflict arose in that several people objected to a Boston based group putting out a call for a demonstration in Washington without, as they believed, consulting local people. In fact Barricada did try to contact somebody in Washington several months before making the call public, but never received an answer as the mails were lost in cyberspace. This was quickly straightened out fortunately after the call was made public and we were put in contact with a group of very dedicated and serious Washington organizers who we worked with extensively and without whom a lot of what was accomplished would have been impossible. Once this link was established the next two months were essentially a blur of outreach and logistical work, with us handling communications with other groups planning to attend, keeping people up to date as to what was happening, organizing the pre-march meeting, and essentially doing the most we could at a distance. Meanwhile, the people in Washington took care of the logistical aspect of the mobilization and made certain that everything necessary for a smooth bloc was provided for, such as communications, scouts, a meeting place, and everything else that goes with a mobilization of this sort. All this being said though, and without for one second denying that having a local group put out and organize an event in a particular city is preferable and ideal, we do not necessarily believe that this always has to be the case. If a group wants to take on an initiative in a particular city that no local group feels the need for and is willing to accept the responsibility and organize in a serious and responsible manner to make it a success, taking into account everything that is needed for an initiative to succeed, why should they not? This turned out to not be an issue in organizing for the inauguration, but we feel it is something to keep in mind.

The Night Before: The Organizing Meeting

Unknown to many people, even many RAAB participants, an organizing meeting attended by over 100 people was held the night before in Washington to discuss issues relevant to the next day's action. Given the precedent of police infiltration at the bloc meetings in Cincinnati (which has not been confirmed but many suspect) and the high level of security around the Presidential Inauguration we devised a rather complex way of getting people to the organizing meeting in order to keep security as tight as

possible. At one point we suspected it might even make it too complicated and a lot of people would miss the meeting because of this, however, the high turnout showed this not to have been an issue. People who were attending were also free to bring with them as many others as they wanted, provided they were people who they thought were completely trustworthy. Once the scheduled time came the doors were promptly locked and the meeting, at which people were supposed to speak as freely as possible within the limits of reasonable safety, began. Anybody who was there can vouch for the fact that the start was slightly on the turbulent side as there was a lot to be covered, several points of disagreement, a lot of stress, and not much time to sort everything out. However, we had purposefully decided to make the meeting as last minute as possible in order to have as many RAAB participants as possible in the city and so that any particulars that came up would only have a few hours to be leaked if our security was breached. Something that we can all congratulate ourselves on is the fact that everybody seemed to understand the importance of being punctual at the meeting and only two people arrived after the doors were locked. The first hour of the meeting was devoted to discussing how best to assemble without allowing police to arrest people or break up the march before it even got started, given the lack of a permit. After much discussion back and forth it was decided to stick with the original plan but to try to be as punctual as possible in order to bloc up quickly. As was seen the next day, the discussion as to how best to assemble turned out to not be as important as we thought it was as police presence at the bloc assembly location was minimal. It is hard to believe, but to this point the only logical explanation that we can come up with for this, given that several police authorities stated that the RAAB was one of their principal security concerns, but it really does seem as though the police were somehow unaware that we had changed our meeting location. We say this because, while there was almost no police were the RAAB assembled, there was quite a bit, and in riot gear, at Freedom Plaza. It is hard to believe that such a display of force was for the IAC and other groups of that sort. The meeting then went on to discuss other issues, such as regulations on banners and flagpoles, re-assembly points, jail solidarity, the relationship to JAM and other groups, etc.

This brings us to some important mistakes that we, as organizers, have to take responsibility for. The first is that we paid too much attention to the scare tactics of the police. We didn't want them to have any excuse to pick people off or hassle them when they were on their own. Therefore, we advised people to stay away from anything at all that might be interpreted as a weapon, as well as urging them to avoid flagpoles thicker than three-quarters of an inch by three-quarters of an inch, which the police had promised to not allow past checkpoints. In reality what happened was that even though police at no time had any opportunities to give people trouble over these things, most people didn't have them. We were therefore, despite our large numbers, vastly unprotected, as we didn't even have a decent amount of flagpoles to work with. End result is that despite marching tight, we were easy to disperse as those in the front and on the sides were essentially punching bags for the police. It is essential that

this mistake is not repeated in Quebec City this April and we are already working to ensure that the bloc is better prepared for next time.

The second important organizing error for which we have to take responsibility is what turned out to be a very poor choice of a reassembly point. The first re-assembly point which we chose, the Navy memorial, turned out to be a great choice, and the third re-assembly point, the one latest in the day, at McPherson Square, turned out to be unnecessary. However, our second re-assembly point choice, the Justice Department, turned out to be, quite simply, terrible. For some reason we thought that it would be good to have re-assembly points on both sides of the parade route. However, it turned out to be a 45 minute walk from where we were on the North side of the parade route to the Justice Department on the South side. Most people simply did not bother to go, and those who did found themselves virtually alone, and quite far from where the rest of the bloc was. Despite these two, quite serious, errors of judgment on our part, the meeting in our opinion went quite smoothly given the amount of people present and all the issues that needed addressing in a span of just over two hours.

The Morning March

The beginning of the march was probably one of the most well put together aspects of the demonstration. People were punctual, the banners were unfurled at precisely 9:45 a.m. as announced, and the march moved off the square at precisely 10 a.m., again, as announced. The idea of recreating the German Antifa style of marching, while by no means wholly effective, was decent in our eyes for a first serious try. Rather than marching as one large mass, as most blocs in the past have in the US, people formed to a large extent into organized lines of affinity groups. This increases security for people and helps create an atmosphere of trust. The banners down the sides also served to help keep people tight, yet, due to the lack of flagpoles down the sides, it turned out to be more of an illusion than anything else, as when police charged the banners fell and in several cases, people scattered. Therefore, while this was a step forward, for next time, poles on the banners (the stronger the better), helmets, and padding. For those concerned on how to find it cheap, used soccer, football, and or hockey equipment makes for great protection, as does, to a lesser extent, foam. Regarding helmets, construction helmets can usually be found at a reasonable price. Of course, next time being Quebec there is the issue of the border to deal with, so it is suggested to arrive early in Quebec and set about obtaining what you need once in Canada. We strongly disagree with those who claim that the Black Bloc tactic is getting old and outdated. On the contrary, it is still in a growth stage in North America. The Black Blocs are getting larger and better organized at every important mobilization, and the time has now come to start focusing on how to protect ourselves adequately. And, since we are growing and still making mistakes, not surprisingly several were made during the one hour march through Washington. The first being that, in our efforts to build bridges with other activists we decided to head first to the IAC meeting point. However, this meant going through a narrow and crowded street. When passing by the IAC area quite a few Black Bloc stragglers were lost in the crowd. The second,

and probably one of the most significant, mistakes was the decision to not engage the police in direct confrontation when the first line of police formed in front of the bloc at 14 and I. Had the bloc charged the very thin police lines and advanced only one more block we would have arrived at the park and made it much more difficult for police to encircle us. However, seeing how we were very close to an intersecting street and it was still early in the day, we decided to try to avoid the confrontation. However, it was our detour that allowed police to re-group and gave them a second chance, which was all they needed, to trap approximately half of the bloc. Had Voter March, NOW, the IAC, and all the others not happened to converge on the scene, chances are we would have been loaded into the arrest busses, marking the end of the day for many a participant of the Black Bloc. Which brings us to the next point to analyze.

The RAAB and Its Relationship to Other Protest Groups

One of the most difficult aspects of organizing the RAAB was trying to work with the Justice Action Movement. While we wholeheartedly agree that we do need to avoid isolating ourselves and build working relationships with other groups, we also need to draw the line somewhere. JAM definitely pushed us too far. First, they showed a complete lack of solidarity towards anybody who did not choose the same tactics as they did by releasing the typical "we will not engage in this, that, or the other" statement. This in itself is unfortunately not uncommon. However, JAM, which supposedly functions on consensus, was able to "achieve consensus" for this statement by purposefully bringing it up at a meeting where they knew that those who disagreed with the statement would be unable to attend. Additionally, JAM decided to spread demonstrators out across the route in groups of 25 or less (as groups that size did not need permits to assemble). We feel this, had it happened, would not only have been a terrible waste of our large numbers, but would have put many people at risk, from police or from overzealous right-wingers. Furthermore, JAM demonstrated a complete lack of any sort of political character. This can be seen that the discussion on their list as to why they were protesting the inauguration yielded nothing, and they even welcomed Democrats who clearly stated that the only reason they would be protesting was because Gore did not win the election. Hardly a stance against the parties of the ruling class. JAM also insisting on working closely with the police, to the extent of even paying to take a high ranking police officer to dinner. This cannot be interpreted as anything but an insult to the thousands of activists who have been beaten, jailed, and prosecuted over the last year. To further show their political naivety, they insisted on under-funding the legal collective, convinced that since they had been so kind to the police, there would be no reason to expect many arrests or trials. Yet, it does not end there. The JAM list was also full of comments suggesting that protestors dress as patriotically as possible in order to show that they too were "proud Americans exercising their first amendment rights" as well as people reacting with horror at the suggestion that protestors dress in red in order to be more clearly seen as such. These types of attitudes seem to us to be hardly anything that anarchists and other revolutionaries should be tolerant of. All this prompted Barricada to publicly distance itself from JAM, as honestly, we did

not want our name associated with such a group. However, as the final demonstration of their lack of organization and naivety, based on some rumors that the inauguration would take place indoors JAM approached organizers of the RAAB, literally, the night before after having trashed, disrespected, and attempted to isolate the RAAB in order to ask that the RAAB act as support for direct actions that they would like to carry out. Not only was it terribly out of place for them, after realizing that their organizing was largely deficient, to ask the RAAB to drop all it had been working on in the last several months because they had a sudden change of mind, but since when are effective mass direct actions organized in less than 12 hours?! Nobody will deny that we need to expand and build alliances with others, however, we need to be somewhat discerning when we do so in order to not become simply the shock troops of reformists. We should make it clear to those that use us at large events and then turn around and denounce us to the press that we will not tolerate that kind of behavior. We also have to be careful not to put our aspirations on the back burner simply to please reformers, and this was essentially what JAM was asking us to do when they came to us the night before the inauguration. So, in our opinion, the question was whether we really wanted to serve as the front line for people calling for reform, or whether we wanted to put our alternatives and our objectives on the table. All that said, anybody who was in Washington on inauguration day saw that it was the solidarity of thousands of other protestors that saved the trapped participants of the RAAB from certain arrest. And by the same token it was the actions of the RAAB that allowed many to arrive at the parade route unsearched and unhindered, teaching everybody a valuable lesson in the importance of solidarity and mutual aid.

The Re-Assembled RAAB, the Charge on the Checkpoint and the Battles at the Navy Memorial

Once the RAAB was back on the move, this time as part of a larger march, it seemed to hit its stride, and from then on the day was mostly composed of victories. The first significant victory in our eyes was the charge on the police checkpoint. In a spectacular show of force by the RAAB the checkpoint was completely destroyed, hundreds of RAAB participants poured through, hundreds of others cheered us on as we advanced, and the police and secret service were handed a humiliating defeat. Not only this, but no arrests had to be lamented at this point due to the heroic unarresting efforts of many RAAB participants. However, we must admit that we were rather disappointed when the bloc decided that an attempt to charge the final line of police was not worthwhile, given what many people saw as the risk of being shot at by the snipers on the rooftops. In most cases the argument centered around not feeling that the President of the US was worth dying for. However, first of all we think that the concerns were a little exaggerated, as we have trouble believing that the forces of repression would dare to start shooting at such a large crowd with every television camera in the world watching. But, assuming they had, what better to expose the violence of the state than having the whole world see unarmed protestors being shot at from rooftops?! Furthermore, what better way to disrupt the ceremony of the ruling class and express

our rejection of the state and everything it represents than shutting down the inaugural parade?! And, we have seen in past mobilizations that other protestors, of which there were many where the RAAB was, are usually not willing to confront police with us, but when the bloc opens the path they usually follow, and we believe this would have been the case had the parade route been breached. Regardless, we decided to respect the desires of the bloc and go with what most people felt was best, which was to highlight the common ground between ourselves and the other protestors present. Eventually however we moved on to the Navy Memorial where more of the day's successes took place. Again, important alliances were strengthened, such as with NOW or with the Revolutionary Communist Party Youth Brigade who, despite the deep ideological differences, it has become evident we can always depend on in the streets (as was demonstrated in Philadelphia and inauguration day). Many other protestors were also radicalized as when the police were first surrounded and forced off the square many people who were clearly not with the RAAB or the RCP could be seen linking arms and helping out. Needless to say the raising of the black and red and black flags was a great inspirational victory for all and the many unarrests and successful battles with police were also very positive.

The DC RAAB: The Wrap-Up

All in all we believe that the inauguration day mobilization was, despite the difficulties and setbacks, a smashing success. Over 600 people were mobilized with only two months preparation, the secure meeting arrangement proved to be, while certainly not perfect, quite effective, anarchists and other protestors developed stronger ties and a good working relationship, a great example of the importance and effectiveness of mutual aid and solidarity was experienced first hand, several important blows were handed to the police and the secret service, and we showed that regardless of who is president, our struggle remains the same, and will only grow larger and stronger. Finally, important steps were taken towards creating better organized, better prepared, and stronger, blocs for future actions and, rest assured that at least we at Barricada will continue to work to re-create the very effective tactics of the Italian and German autonomes on the North American continent. For now however it is back to our local communities and work places, back to taking back our lives every day, and to giving the enemy hell every night. See you all in Quebec!

The DC RAAB: The Thank Yous

There are a lot of people without whom this mobilization would not have been the success that we feel it was. First and foremost we would like to thank the organizers in Washington who worked with us and without whom we would have been flying blind. Secondly we would like to thank the long list of groups who came out and endorsed the RAAB call. These are Sabate Anarchist Collective (NEFAC), Agitate! (Baltimore), The Onward Collective (Gainesville), ABCF People of Color Caucus, Anarchist Black Cross Federation - Houston, Radio Sexto Sol (Houston), People Against Racist Terror, Anarchist Soccer League (New Brunswick), ABCF - Kent, Infoshop.org (Washington, DC), ARA Columbus, Brighter Days Collective (Lansing), Aron Pieman Kay/Global

Pastry Uprising, Tenant's Voice (Kansas), Free Anarchist Collective (Detroit) Grain RAGE (upper Midwest Resistance Against Genetic Engineering, Minneapolis), Anarchists Anonymous (Minneapolis), GALA (Green Anarchists Insurrectionary Anonymous, Minneapolis), Active Transformation Newspaper Collective (Detroit/Lansing), Brian MacKenzie Center (Washington, DC), Stenka Razin Anarchist Group, and The Defenestrator. We would also like to thank www.infoshop.org for providing the RAAB with a web page, all the people who acted as scouts, and finally of course, everybody who came out and helped to swell the ranks of the resistance.

— Until We Meet Again

Chapter XIV
A20: Quebec City
April 2001

Overview

The protests in Quebec City against the FTAA (Free Trade Agreement of the Americas) were the most serious and militant in North America in recent memory. Certain moments began to take on the air of civil war. Scenes from Palestine emerged and faded in the course of two days and nights in the Northern spring. At least one protester was critically injured after receiving a rubber bullet to the throat. One unconfirmed report has come to our attention that an elderly woman, who was a resident of the city, died of causes related to ingestion of massive amounts of police tear gas and/or other chemical weapons. A multitude of others were hospitalized. I saw one person carried off with two broken legs. Also many cops were injured, at least one seriously. The police fired thousands of cans of tear gas and other like agents at us (often directly into the crowd). They utilized water cannons, liberally fired beanbags and rubber bullets at us. They attacked us with batons and made use of attack dogs. Anarchists and militants generally protected themselves with homemade shields and responded with bottles, clubs, rocks and Molotov cocktails. In the days leading up the clash prospective anti-Capitalist militants were arrested with small explosives in Quebec. Some others were nabbed with dynamite while attempting to cross the border. Things have changed. The movement is becoming more serious; more complete. And it will only get heavier as we begin to win.

The A20 actions were geared against a meeting of North, South and Central American heads of State (4/20-23) assembled to discuss the proposed expansion of NAFTA (the North American Free Trade Agreement) to include all American States with the exception of Communist Cuba. As discussed in chapter V, such a functioning agreement would utterly fuck the North American industrial working class as well as the indigenous and working people of all Latin American Nations. In contrast to this convergence of heavyweight puppets, 75,000 people made their way to the streets of Quebec City in order to unmistakably make their opposition known. This on top of a large positive turnout from the local city population may have brought the numbers up to closer to 100,000.

The two primary days of mass organized resistance took place on Friday, April 20th and Saturday April 21st, with smaller actions occurring on the 22nd. The first day, primarily organized by CLAC and CASA, both being more or less Anarchist influenced organs, was the smaller of the two, numbering well over 20,000. Here the barricades erected around the older part of the city, where the conference was being held, were challenged by thousands of militants. At one point protesters, the majority of which can be considered Black Bloc Anarchists, managed to topple 150-300 feet of the chain link security fence. However, the police were able to maintain their lines, not with out some intense struggle, and hence the meeting was not stormed. However, the meeting was delayed. Word on the street is that this was due to President Bush's concerns regarding the security of the perimeter. (I suppose he remembers us from Inauguration day?)

Street battles continued all afternoon and into the evening, and were complemented by sophisticated cyber attacks targeting corporate and State interests via the internet. An extended siege took place in front of a theater where Black Bloc Anarchists battled police with projectiles. Here protesters suffered some injuries due to rubber bullets and tear gas canisters fired directly at them, but fortunately many potential casualties were averted due to the heroic defensive action of a group of maybe 10 Black Bloc Anarchists armed with shields. These brave folk faced down countless volleys, putting themselves between the police and the protesters. It goes without saying that they absorbed many rounds of police projectiles that would have otherwise connected with the crowd. They did this and suffered their own related injuries in the process. I witnessed one Quebecois give them a twenty spot in order that they get a beer on him later in the night. If you ever meet any of them, I suggest you buy them a pint for their efforts as well. They deserve it.

Eventually the crowd was forced back by riot police. The protesters' numbers began to diminish as the day began to wane, and at some undefined point all dispersed, and retreated to wherever it was that they slept, or drank, and began to contemplate the clashes guaranteed for the following day.

The next morning brought tens of thousands more into the fray. Thousands of Quebecois Left-Nationalists emerged poised against the Capitalist status quo. Tens of thousands turned out for a rally called by organized labor. Thousands more, made up of greens, Socialists, Liberals, Anarchists and Communists, students and workers, fanned out across the city creating a virtual carnival of resistance; loud and unmistakable if not sometimes obscured by thick clouds of tear gas and the 'BANG! BANG!' of police weapons. And yes... A Black Bloc emerged from this. I say emerged because its initial organization for the day seemed to be lacking. Instead of all meeting in a defined spot and moving as a large group, black clad Anarchists and affinity groups simply began to find each other and in such several smaller Blocs eventually surfaced. Some smashed bank windows (one bank was lit on fire), others went to the front and engaged riot police with rocks and bottles. Some from the Bloc also helped facilitate the toppling of the security fence at several junctures throughout the day.

The total number is hard to estimate. Possibly there were several hundred from the Bloc present at the day's action. One of the largest cohesive sections numbered around 75. This contingent launched several attacks on sections of the perimeter fence, and unloaded a number of petrol bombs at the police in the process. These attacks were more charges, brief clashes and tactical withdrawals than sustained battles. However, wherever they marched in the residential working class neighborhoods, they received healthy cheers from residents and other protesters alike; the only noticeable exception emanating from a contingent known as SalAmi (French for 'bad' or 'dirty friend'). This group booed the actions of the Bloc. It has been reported that in at least one instance individuals connected with this group went so far as to attempt to physically restrain persons engaged in militant direct action. While this contingent of self proclaimed "non-violent" activists marked the exception to the general rule, their demonstrated hypocrisy in engaging in violent acts against the Bloc, justified in the name of ideological non-violence, deserves mention as a sickening example of non-solidarity and counter productivity. For the most part the Bloc ignored them to the best of their abilities, deciding that any internal conflict would be better dealt with after the demonstration at hand.

Eventually, the above mentioned section of the Bloc made its way to a portion of the city which the highway entered upon. There, a long battle was sustained by themselves and more than 1,000 additional protesters in the rear. It was there that protesters fought with police for a matter of hours. At that juncture a police line stood exposed. This seemed a tempting target as most police enjoyed the relative security of a chain link fence separating them from demonstrators. However, this line was covered by sharp shooters armed with "non-lethal" fire arms and tear gas grenades. Despite this advantage in armament, Black Bloc Anarchists consistently hurled gas canisters back at these cops and on occasion made attempts at charging the line. Unfortunately all such attempts were driven back by force of police projectile weapons. After several hours a phalanx of riot police swooped down on the protesters from the rear and after another extended battle forced them from the scene. The Black Bloc Anarchists and protesters generally fell back to positions directly under the highway ramps. There they lit barricades on fire and held the police at bay for long hours into the night.

That day of protest, like the day before, failed to halt the FTAA meetings. But it did cause an early adjournment most likely due to tear gas filtering into the air ducts at the convention center.

All and all Quebec marked a turning point. Although it did not have the immediate psychological impact on the general North American population as did Seattle, it did result in the further militant radicalization of the actively involved social protest population. It showed how much street power we can wield even when greatly undersupplied in relative riot gear.

This action lacked the acute psychological weight of Seattle for two reasons. 1. Seattle took the world by surprise. In Quebec, anything short of a complete shutdown of the FTAA meetings was to be expected. 2. Quebec was marked by a virtual media blackout

in the United States. When protest reports did surface, numbers were put at the low thousands as opposed to the tens-of-thousands that were present in actuality. Also, to my knowledge, all reports of injuries (both serious and otherwise, were completely ignored by U.S. corporate media. As far as the mainstream media was concerned the meeting took place without a hitch or a significant display of popular opposition. This media blackout was supported by an FBI raid and subsequent functional disruption of the Seattle Independent Media Center as well as a similar attack, by Canadian officials, on the Quebec equivalent. These raids were officially justified by the surfacing of an anonymous email posting on the organization's open access website, which reportedly made threats against President George Bush Jr's life. The end result was that the flow of accurate independent news reporting from the scene was greatly stifled, while the corporate propaganda of CNN, NBC, The New York Times, etc., flowed more or less unhindered. However, the effectiveness of this initial campaign of reactionary propaganda can be expected to recede as protesters begin to tell the real story of events in their hometowns across the continent. The truth will spread by word of mouth alone in due course.

As far as the action itself is concerned, the events of Saturday the 21st once again demonstrated the ability of even a small, yet dedicated Black Bloc. However, one has to pause and wonder whether or not the police barricades could have been surmounted if only the Bloc was formulated in a more cohesive, organized form.

Also, it demands mention that while many who took part in the Bloc(s) that did emerge were prepared with body armor, gas masks, clubs, etc. many more were equipped with no more then a black bandanna, and what ever rock or stick they happened upon. And even so, they managed to fight heavily armed forces of the State with ferocity for hours. Again one has to wonder what way the tide would have ultimately turned if a substantially larger percentage of militants were properly equipped. Of course this relative unpreparedness had a lot to do with the fact that many choose to attend with only a skeleton kit of required gear for fear that Canadian officials would conduct searches at the border crossings and at random highway check points (as was rumored) en route, and that such equipment would be used as grounds for non-entrance, detainment and/or leveling of political conspiracy charges.

To round out this overview let me reiterate the numbers. In the days of protests more than 450 were arrested. A good percentage of them taking place on the night of the 21st. All told, there were 75-100,000 social protesters pitted against approximately 10,000 Provincial and Federal police, primarily stationed behind a protective barrier. In the clashes at least one cop was seriously injured with another 71 treated in hospitals. On our side at least 100 required medical attention. In all the State fired 5000 tear gas canisters in order to repress the voice of the people.

Footnote: This was not the first time the Black Bloc and anti-capitalists mobilized against the FTAA. In June of 2000 five thousand converged on Windsor, Ontario, to demonstrate against similar meetings. There a Black Bloc fought with police in front of a security fence, similar to that used in Quebec.

Je Me Souviens..

Revolutionary Anti-Capitalist Offensive Spring 2001 [The Call]

On the weekend of April 20th to 22nd the ruling elites of the Americas will gather in Quebec City to discuss the implementation of the FTAA (Free Trade Area of the Americas) and, to a large extent, the future of us all. The FTAA represents essentially an expansion of NAFTA to include the entire Americas region. The objective? To further clear the way for laws allowing corporations to sue member nations when they feel a government measure impedes "free trade," to further attack the already fragile social safety systems we have, to pave the way for possible privatization of schools, hospitals, and all other social services, and to further consolidate the dictatorship of capital in the Americas.

It is the lives of everyone in the Americas they will be playing with at the summit in Quebec City, the lives of every American (Northern, Southern, or Central) worker, peasant, unemployed, retiree or student. Yet, for some reason, the "democratic" leaders that govern us have neglected to invite us to this summit, or even to show us the texts they will be discussing for that matter. They have even gone as far as to build an enormous fence around a large part of Quebec City to keep us out. All this has prompted many reformist organizations to protest, and they will be in Quebec City to demand a "place at the table."

Yet we, anti-statists, anti-authoritarians, anti-capitalists, and revolutionaries, will be converging on Quebec City for a different reason. We are not interested in a place at the table of capitalism, or in providing a more humane and friendly face for what we know to be an inherently flawed system. We have a different vision, one of a society based on mutual aid and solidarity, where people are not robbed of the fruits of their labor, and where decisions that affect everybody are made by everybody, rather than by a select few. And, just as importantly, a society where people know who their enemies are, and are ready to stand up to them. We are interested in nothing less than the destruction of the "table of capitalism."

The Summit of the Americas is an attack on all of us and must be treated as such. We must show the ruling elites of the Americas that we are ready to resist their attacks and fight back. We must show them that we are ungovernable and that no amount of police can keep them safe from the anger of those they oppress.

Friday April 20th is the day of action called by the Anti-Capitalist Convergence and the Summit of the Americas Welcoming Committee. Actions on this day will be divided into three "blocs." A green bloc with no, or minimal, risk of arrest; a yellow

bloc, for people planning to do civil disobedience; and a red bloc, for the "disturbance oriented" crowd.

We are thus calling on all militant revolutionaries to converge on Quebec City on April 20th in the Red bloc to show the ruling elites that no fence is strong enough to withstand the force of the people when class anger erupts. It's time for the Revolutionary Anti-Capitalist Offensive!!

IT DIDN'T START IN SEATTLE, IT WON'T END IN QUEBEC

More Information (Contact, Meeting Times and Places, etc.) will be provided as it becomes available.

Autonomous Organizing Collective of Anti Authoritarians from the Midwest, Northeast, Montreal, and Quebec quebecresistance@hushmail.com

[Some Final Notes From The] Revolutionary Anti-Capitalist Offensive in Quebec

PLEASE FORWARD AND DISTRIBUTE AS EXTENSIVELY AS POSSIBLE

Revolutionary Anti-Capitalist Offensive
Meet: Pleines d'Abraham between 12 and 12:30 p.m. Look for the large banner reading "Offensive Revolutionnaire Anti-Capitalist" (Black with white letters)

First Re-Assembly Point: Parc Samuel Holland, 5:45 p.m. (Chemin Saint Foy and Rue Holland) Second Re-Assembly Point: Under the Overpass of the Dufferin Highway, in the Charest Neighborhood on Charest Boulevard, 21:30 p.m.

On Friday, April 20th all revolutionary anti-capitalists and anti-capitalist movements present in Quebec will meet at 12 p.m. on the Pleines dJzEAbraham (a large park). From there, at 2 p.m., there will be a march from which the different affinity groups, clusters, and blocs will begin splitting off in order to begin the day of action.

The Revolutionary Anti-Capitalist Offensive bloc will meeting on the Pleines d'Abraham between 12 and 12:30 p.m. Due to the attention that we have drawn from the authorities, and because the assembly is one of the most critical points, we cannot at this time make public where exactly we will be meeting. For this reason it is important that people be punctual and on the lookout between 12 and 12:30 p.m. for the Offensive Revolutionnaire Anti Capitalist banner (black with white letters) and head quickly towards it once it is unfurled.

Also important to keep in mind is that we will have to wait a while before we get moving and begin the day of action. During this time we will be in a place that is supposed to be a safe zone for participants of all levels of commitment (green, yellow,

and red as defined by the CLAC/CASA). It is thus important that we act responsibly during this time and not put people in situations which they do not want to be in. In other words, do not get anxious. There will be plenty of time for action throughout the weekend, but we need to recognize when it is and when it isn't appropriate.

In addition, please keep in mind that the re-assembly points will not necessarily be used. They are just in case we are dispersed during the course of the day so that we may be able to regroup and continue.

We would also like at this point to formally urge red bloc oriented people to assemble on Saturday, April 21st at the large unitarian demonstration within the anarchist contingent. Once more, we will be expecting the parameters of the march (the reasonable ones at least) from the starting point to the ending point. Yet the day is long and the targets are many, there will be an appropriate time. Do not get anxious.

Also, the CLAC/CASA recently decided that, in case of an attack, the convergence center will be defended by means of active resistance. If the authorities attack us, it is our job to make it as difficult as possible for them by resisting by any means necessary (within the limits of reason of course). We therefore urge all red action oriented people, even if they are not staying at the convergence center, to be ready to head to it as fast as possible, at any time of day, in case of an attack.

We would also like to state that, while we urge people to try to cross the border as discreetly as possible (and many guides are available as to how to do this), in case of failure, we strongly urge people to head to the Burlington, Vermont convergence in order to swell the ranks of the mass crossing attempt and increase the possibility of success.

Finally, since this will be our final statement until only a few days before the beginning of the mobilization, there are several issues we would like to clear up, as well as points that we would like to make. Some of these we originally thought to be unnecessary, but the course of events has shown us otherwise.

<verbose>*</verbose> Simply because the bloc is termed red bloc does not mean that you should dress in red, as many have asked. We of course, suggest black and a change of clothes.

<verbose>*</verbose> Because the red bloc has been organizing, for security reasons, outside of the CLAC/CASA general assemblies and consultas, many people have expressed concern over what it is that we plan to do and what people will be in solidarity with under the umbrella of diversity of tactics, as the three blocs are supposed to be in solidarity with each other. Particularly, there have been concerns, mainly raised by the scare tactics of the authorities, about the possibility of people bringing firearms and explosives.

The RACO organizing collective, being by no means the centralized command or authority of anything, does not know of, or exercise control over, everybody intending to come to Quebec and planning to participate in the actions. In that sense, we are as much in the dark as everybody else.

However, in response to the widespread media and police misrepresentation (used to divide activists and cause mistrust within the movement), we would like to make it very clear that the RACO organizing collective does not advocate nor encourage the use of firearms or explosives, as has been falsely reported.

This is not to say that we are ideologically opposed to the use of such weapons, as everything within our reach must eventually be utilized against the state. However, we do feel that it would be counterproductive to make use of these weapons at a mass mobilization, as it will undoubtedly put many innocent people in danger and alienate us from the broader movement.

<verbose>*</verbose> Also due to the misinformation of the state authorities, many in Quebec City worry about the possibility of anarchists indiscriminately attacking all stores, businesses, and cars.

Once more, while we do not speak for everybody, we would like to point out that when there is property damage by anarchists or anti-authoritarians at mass mobilizations it is usually aimed at multi-nationals, state property, and the establishments of the elite. Furthermore, it is often in response to the violent police provocations. The common man/woman has nothing to fear from us.

In conclusion, organizing is going very well, and we will be thousands in Quebec. Do not let the scare tactics of the state dissuade you. Everybody to Quebec! And to the barricades!

<verbose>*</verbose> Autonomous Organizing Collective of Anti-Authoritarians from Montreal, Quebec, the Northeast, and the Midwest quebecresistance@hushmail.com

The Black Bloc in Quebec: An Analysis by Nicolas of The Barricada Collective

As the dust settles from the massive and hugely successful anti-capitalist mobilization in Quebec, it becomes time to take a look at where the revolutionary anti-capitalist movement stands, some of the lessons of Quebec (for the movement in general, and for Black Blocs more specifically), what went well, and what didn't go so well. In addition, the events of the 20th and 21st in Quebec, coupled with the uprisings of the oppressed African-American communities of Cincinnati, go a long way towards dispelling several somewhat common claims of the liberal and authoritarian pacifist left regarding Black Blocs, and more specifically, Black Bloc tactics and their acceptance, or lack thereof, in oppressed and impoverished communities.

The Media, the Grassroots Effort, and the Local Community

The first important lesson of Quebec is that there can be no understating the importance of a radical movement, such as ours, developing a strong working relationship with the communities in which we will find ourselves. While it is true that the people

of Quebec have a proud history of resistance to authority and street-fighting, the massive participation of the local population in the battles of the 20th and 21st cannot be attributed solely to this. Since a large part of the action took place either in the St. Jean-Baptiste neighborhood itself or in the areas directly surrounding it, a large part of the warm welcome that greeted the Black Bloc and others, which included citizens opening their doors to militants, offering water and vinegar, and often taking to the streets themselves, has to be attributed to the public relations work done by CLAC and CASA, as well as by local anarchists. We must make no mistake about, had it not been for the massive participation of Quebec locals, chances are that the police would have not had too much difficulty controlling, and eventually dispersing, what would have been a group of very isolated militant anti-capitalists.

This leads to another point which, although many feel should already have been clear, until recently was resisted by just as many. This is that we have nothing to hope for from the corporate media, we should expect nothing from them, and we should absolutely not change any of our tactics or messages in order to pander to them. We should instead treat them as the servants of capital, and thus our enemies, that they are. This is not to say that they are not on occasion capable of writing accurate or somewhat positive articles about revolutionaries, as indeed several articles in the Quebec press about the Black Bloc were quite good. However, it seems that corporate journalists are only inspired enough to research articles and abstain from repeating police misinformation after they are targeted by demonstrators and shown that their lies and misinformation will not be tolerated. Fortunately, this message seemed to be abundantly clear to the Black Bloc participants in Quebec City, as people made it a point to deny pictures to journalists, stop them from filming, taking their tapes and rolls if they were caught doing so, and targeting any and all media vehicles that crossed their paths.

Once more, the massive propaganda effort carried out by CLAC/CASA and Quebec anarchists, distributing tens of thousands of newspapers and fliers, often door to door, was successful in countering the fear-mongering of the police and media, and certainly changed the dynamics of the demonstrator/local citizen interaction, from one of fear, to one of solidarity. This is the clearest example possible that our energies should not, as many liberal leftists seem to think, be directed towards developing a "good" relationship with the corporate media, but to fighting them while at the same time developing our own links with people and strengthening our media outlets and projects.

The Black Bloc: Material Preparedness

It can be said that, despite all the inconveniences and setbacks (which were quite a few), the Quebec City Black Bloc was one of the most effective in terms of actions performed, its relationship with other demonstrators and locals, the number of arrests suffered, how far it went towards exemplifying to "middle of the road" demonstrators the importance of fighting back, and the image it conveyed of anarchism (which is of

course not limited to the Black Bloc, but it is for the moment our most well known aspect). Once more, the effectiveness of the Black Bloc, particularly during the course of Saturday's actions, is not due to sheer luck. It is the result of several very clear factors, some which are definitely positive, some which, while they may sometimes work in our favor, certainly need to be analyzed more closely, and some which are certainly negative.

In the run-up to the Quebec City mobilization, many expected the Quebec Black Bloc to be the largest yet. Evidently, it did not turn out to be so, mainly due to the border issue. However, the relatively small numbers, definitely never more than 500-600, were balanced by the level of preparedness and commitment of many of the participants, and the support of the locals.

Furthermore, the effectiveness of the Quebec Black Bloc is without a doubt to a very large extent due to how well equipped it was. Many people had the basic gas masks and goggles, but a great deal also were equipped with helmets, shields, padding, heavy duty gloves, bolt cutters, ropes, grappling hooks, and not to mention the abundance of batons and hockey pucks. The fact is, it was very probably the best equipped Black Bloc in North American history. Evidently, this allowed people to resist tear gas attacks better, stand up to rubber bullets, bring down the fence in different areas with great speed, and in some cases even hold their own in hand to hand, or baton to baton, combat with riot police. This all served to embolden the Black Bloc, and others who were present, and allowed for scenes such as those that took place during breaches in the perimeter with Black Bloc participants chasing riot policemen or on the highway overpass with dozens of people charging police lines.

The one nagging question is: despite several important setbacks, such as the arrest of the Germinal affinity group on it's way to Quebec with a lot of material, and all the people, including most of Ya Basta! that were stopped at the border with quite a bit of material as well, what would have happened had it all arrived safely in Quebec City!? Hopefully, this question will be answered this October in Washington DC, where for most people at least, there will be no border to cross.

The Black Bloc: Tactics, Empowerment, and "Other People."

The Quebec City Black Bloc can also be seen as having been clearly successful in dispelling the common claim of liberals, authoritarian pacifists, and others who oppose militant street tactics. This claim, which we have all most likely already had to listen to, is that the actions of the Black Bloc are somehow the result of the alienation of middle or upper class youths who, due to the boredom of their lives or some misplaced sense of rebellion, seek cheap thrills at demonstrations, but that they are actually alienating to those who suffer repression on a constant basis and in the end counter-productive.

However, the fact is that oppressed communities, such as the African-American community of Cincinnati most recently, afraid to resist their oppressors by taking the streets and fighting back. Militant tactics are not alienating, but rather empowering,

serving to demonstrate that there is no need to kneel down and beg when faced with repression, the power of the people, when not pacified reformism and the avenues of the state, infinitely more powerful.

This was again made willingness of the people of the streets to fight alongside other demonstrators, as well dislike of police. While the situation of the French speaking people of Quebec has certainly changed dramatically over the last several decades, a large section of the Quebecois youth, and of the population in general, still identify themselves as oppressed, primarily due to the question of national liberation. In any case, the fact is that they took to the streets en masse and resisted alongside the Black Bloc and other demonstrators. All this despite the fact that repression after riots and street battles is often swift and heavy in Quebec, and nobody is more aware of it than the locals.

The vast, and still growing, support for the Black Bloc and its tactics was also made abundantly clear simply by the fact that almost anywhere the bloc went in Quebec, it was met with cheers, clapping, and all sorts of encouragement, whether from fellow demonstrators or from locals. Of course this was to a large extent due to the fact that almost everybody's energies were focused on the perimeter fence, which few people had qualms about destroying. However, even the militant tactics (Molotovs, stones, direct confrontation) were overwhelmingly greeted with cheers.

There was however one glaring exception. This occurred when the Black Bloc severely damaged the CIBC bank offices, destroying virtually every window and setting fire to the inside. As soon as the action began several people from SalAMl began putting themselves in the way, some physically interfered, many booed, and one even pepper-sprayed somebody in the Black Bloc. Many are claiming that this is proof that the only reason that the bloc had so much support was that property damage was kept to a minimum, but that this incident shows that it is not an accepted tactic.

This is simply false, and it is important to show it as such. While the Black Bloc focused primarily on the fence, there was still quite a bit of property damage. Several banks, a Shell gas station, a Subway restaurant, quite a few media vehicles, and at least one police vehicle. All of these actions took place in very crowded areas, and the only time they drew any significant negative response was with the SalAMI authoritarians, who had refused to work with CLAC/CASA precisely due to the issue of diversity of tactics.

Black Bloc Spectators?

That we live in a spectator/consumer oriented society is no news to most people. However, with the recent rise in acceptance of the Black Bloc and it's tactics a phenomenon that is most likely the result of this spectator society seems to be spreading to the Black Bloc. It was true in DC during the inauguration, and it was certainly true in Quebec. Whether it is something to be criticized, accepted as inevitable, or encouraged remains unclear (at least to this writer), but it certainly needs to be addressed.

Quite simply, this is the phenomenon of the "Black Bloc spectator." People who dress in black, march with the Black Bloc, chant, etc. Yet, when conflict begins, be it unarresting, property damage, confrontations with police, or whatever else, they disappear, or watch safely from the back. Examples of this would be the people who ran as soon as the first line of police appeared in DC during the inauguration or those who disappeared when the fence was torn down on Friday the 20th in Quebec. In both cases after events such as these, the blocs numbers were halved. Of course some of this is due to other factors, such as dispersal, being lost in a crowd, etc., but a fair number of people in the Black Bloc seem to be there simply to add to the numbers.

This does have its advantages however. The first is that the larger the mass of people, the more the cover for those doing direct actions. Secondly, regardless of to what extent one participates or not, being in a Black Bloc is in itself a risk that one has taken and implies a certain level of commitment, and it is very possible that those who are shy about taking part in direct actions are so only out of inexperience, but will eventually learn from watching others.

Yet, the disadvantages of having many "spectators" within the bloc are also clear. Among others they include giving people who are doing actions a false sense of security and making large cohesive actions more difficult to carry out. However, the greatest disadvantage is that going to a Black Bloc without being prepared to assume the possible risks and consequences is to a large extent irresponsible. The Black Bloc is a tactic, and like any tactic the people carrying it out have to meet certain criteria in order to make it effective. If one is not willing to deal with heights, one should evidently not enter an affinity group doing banner drops from buildings for example. Likewise, if one is not prepared to fulfill at least one of the functions generally expected from people in a Black Bloc if the need arises, then it is probably a bad idea to be in one.

A clear example of this is the effectiveness of the Black Bloc on the 21st. While relatively small, fluctuating between 50 and 200 people for most of the day, it was composed primarily of people who were prepared both mentally and materially for the risks associated with being in a Black Bloc. This resulted in people staying tight, avoiding arrest, being mobile, and accomplishing many very effective actions.

Being a tactic, the primary concern of any Black Bloc should be effectiveness. If a Black Bloc is not effective, whether it be at getting a message across, heightening visibility of anarchist or revolutionary presence in a struggle, or performing specific actions, then it serves no purpose. It is not meant to be an all are welcome free for all. This is something that the German autonomes understand (precisely the reason why each line is composed only of people who know each other, to weed out cops and tourists), and it is probably something we in North America should begin to think about. Anarchism is about freedom, but it is also about personal responsibility. If one is not willing to accept that as a participant in a Black Bloc one is, amongst other things, responsible for looking out for the safety of others (i.e. being willing to perform unarrests) and having other people's backs when they need it, then you are not acting responsibly.

Conclusion

Despite the inevitable shortcomings and setbacks, it is fair to say that Quebec City marked a step forward for the revolutionary anti-capitalist movement, and certainly for the Black Bloc. It is becoming clearer and clearer that we are riding a wave of popular discontent, coupled with interest about (and open minds towards) anti-authoritarian alternatives to capitalism, that North America has not seen in many years. What we need to begin looking at now is how to better structure ourselves in order to be more effective in future actions and in order to defend ourselves from the inevitable repression of the ever more threatened state, how to continue to build our links to other communities, and how to begin laying the groundwork for a new society. In short, how to build an effective, grass-roots, anti-authoritarian movement towards a classless, stateless society. The infrastructure is to a large extent already in place, it is a matter of using and expanding it intelligently.

See you in October!
Nicolas, Barricada Collective

A Denunciation OF SalAMI [From Sections Of The A20 Black Bloc]

The following is a statement that may be endorsed by any Black Bloc member who was present in Quebec City for the actions on Friday April 20, and Saturday April 21. This will be made public (i.e. sent to SalAMI) by Tuesday May 15th. If you would like to endorse this, please respond by then.

<right>—Lady</right>

SalAMI means "dirty friend" in French. The purpose of this document is to publicly denounce a citizen-based network called SalAMI. This is written out of response to tactics and forces used by members of SalAMI against members of the Black Bloc, during the protests of the FTAA in Quebec City.

Forming in 1998, Operation SalAMI is a "direct action network born in the context of a citizens right campaign against the MIA." Their long-term mission is "the desire to create a new form of social power with the potential to counter and even reverse the dynamics of impoverishment and destruction caused by the sway which a small elite holds over the resources and the people of the world." We would like to point out that actions taken against Black Bloc members, directly contradict their mission statement for democracy the end to destruction by the small elite. In fact, it suppressed a heavy form of social power that counters and reverses the destruction they speak of.

On Friday April 20 2001, persons identifying themselves as members of SalAMI held down a member of the Black Bloc who was allegedly seen participating in the physical destruction of a corporate power symbol. These members of SalAMI worked in arms

with members of elite forces (police and state) of oppression to attempt an arrest of the individual. This is not what democracy looks like. On Saturday April 21, a group of 20-30 people, several of them identifying themselves as SalAMI, used public shaming against a Black Bloc member after a bank (symbol of corporate power / capitalism / classism / small elite /etc.) received a blow to the window.

The group began a unified "booing" and pointing to single out the individual to police and other protestors. One person form the group ran forward and began screaming at two Bloc members. The tone and intent were clear, but it was not sure what was actually said because this man spoke solely in French. On the same day, two men attempted to attack a Black Bloc member with pepper spray. When asked to identify themselves, it was confirmed they were members of the processed meat crew. The situation de-escalated when the two men were quickly outnumbered by the Bloc's solidarity to their members.

Much time was spent by this network lurking around the Black Bloc, following them like the po[lice], and trying to observe tactics and actions taken. Through the demonstration of these interests, it is concluded that SalAMI members played into the hands of the state. Time was spent "fighting elite holds over the resources and peoples of the world," by attempting to smother and arrest Black Bloc actions. These attempts were both pitiful and counterproductive to the Anti-Fascist/Anti-Capitalist movement as a whole. These "non-violent" anti-property destruction people who din we are wrong because of our historically displayed principles against symbols and practices of rampant destruction to the environment and peoples of the world, need to recognize that we essentially want the same things as the people who choose to stand up for oppressions by sitting in front of a police line. The major difference is that we demand an end to these oppressions by ANY MEANS NECESSARY! Only a revolutionary (Anarchist) movement, utilizing both violent and non-violent means of action, will be able to prevail. It is critical that we always resist tactics used, like those of SalAMI, against our solidarity. We will continue contending oppressive bindings by using these actions, which we know break away these ties. Through this specific mass demonstration in Quebec City, SalAMI has proven that they are one with these bindings (state, police, etc.) working to keep muzzled the voices of individuals who strive to end the tyranny over all peoples.

Black Bloc members,

Lady, Un-named (Columbus ARA), Dustin, Uh-Oh (Cleveland ARA), David (Green Mountain Anarchist Collective), Uraich (ARA)

Chapter XV
DC and the Twin Towers: A Battle Postponed
September 28-29, 2001

An Overview

The demonstrations planed for the capital during late September of 2001 (timed to coincide with the meetings of the IMF-WB) were anticipated to be the largest and most militant yet in the growing U.S. anti-globalization movement. Coming on the heels of mass anti-capitalism actions in Europe (Gothenburg, Sweden and Genoa, Italy) many believed that these actions would mark a new phase in the domestic class struggle. Upwards of 200,000 people were expected in the streets, and the Black Bloc was expected to reach sizes at least double that of the previous year. Some law enforcement officials were publicly stating that they expected the Bloc to be 10,000 strong. While this should be considered an overstatement, it is possible that it could have reached numbers closer to 3000.

Key anarchist collectives across the continent were formulating plans which would have brought Black Bloc tactics to a new level sophistication. The two most prominent possibilities (which were not necessarily considered to be mutually exclusive) were to 1. occupy a recently closed down hospital, and 2. organize a highly mobile street fighting brigade utilizing a more comprehensive internal structure.

In the first case, it was believed that by taking over, and holding this hospital, the Bloc would be able to focus attention upon the failure of the social system under capitalism, and the growing demand to prioritize human needs over corporate profit margins. In the second case, it was hoped that the Bloc would be able to reach a new level of effectiveness without falling into the pattern of disarray and confusion in the face of police attacks. These bold plans were not without risk. The police shooting of Black Bloc protesters at recent demonstrations in Europe added to the already intense atmosphere. With the death of anarchist Carlo Giuliani, who was shot in the head during the G-8 protests in Genoa, nobody was taking the encroaching demonstrations lightly. However, as events unfolded, these experiments in Black Bloc tactics would have to wait.

The tragedy of the September 11th attacks on the four commercial airliners and on the Twin Towers in New York City would not only compel the main event organizers, the Mobilization for Global Justice coalition, to pull out of the protests, but also tens of thousands of previously committed union members, and leftists. The IMF and World Bank, for there part, eventually moved to cancel their meetings.

As the World Trade Center fell, taking with it thousands of innocent lives, the Left paused. For a moment confusion and fear swept the nation. In the immediate aftermath of the attacks troops surrounded the White House, parts of the capital were evacuated, the borders were shut down, all commercial aircraft were grounded. Rumors ran wild about other terrorists attacks. Much of the government went into secured hiding. For many Americans, the situation was initially beyond their comprehension. One must keep in mind, that the U.S., unlike Europe and much or the world, has not suffered a modern war on its own soil. In short, Americans are not accustomed to living like folks are compelled to in places like Palestine, Belgrade, and Baghdad. The U.S. government came crashing into this void like gang busters.

First they told us the attacks were launched by foreign Islamic extremists. Then they told us this enemy would have to be hunted down and killed in order to preserve freedom. What they didn't tell us was that many of these terrorists where trained and supplied by the CIA during the Cold War. A generation ago the Federal Government hedged its bets on these people, wound them up, then pointed them at the Soviet Union and her allies. In addition to directly challenging the security of the Soviet Union's southern boarders, they hoped to limit communist influence in the Arab and broader Islamic world. One should recall that at in the 1970s the predominate, armed, underground organizations (and popular movements) were left wind and secular by nature. Groups like the Palestinian Liberation Army were found working with left wing European guerrillas like the Red Army Faction, and the Provisional Irish Republican Army. And again, Arab states, who often claimed a degree of socialism, displayed strong sympathies for the Eastern Bloc. These were trends that the Western capitalists sought to over turn through the covert support of Islamic Extremism. The maxim, 'the enemy of my enemy is my friend' may, at times, be true. But what happens when your primary enemy disappears? So yes, on September 11th, 2001, just over ten years after the collapse of the Warsaw Pact, the U.S. experienced a horrendous act of terrorism on its own soil. These were terrorists of our own creation.

As the smoke was still rising, the government moved fast to use this tragedy not as a moment for self reflection—not as a chance to reevaluate past foreign policies that may have backfired, but as a tool to attempt militaristic homogenization abroad, and pacification of decent within. President Bush immediately announced the intension to go to war with Afghanistan, who he claimed were shielding those responsible for the attacks. Congress pushed through the now infamous USA PATRIOT Act (rumored to have been largely written following Seattle) which essentially stripped the protections guaranteed to civilians under the Bill of Rights. Police and military spending grew

exponentially. And by 2003 it became clear that 9-11 would also be used as a pretext to invade and occupy oil rich Iraq. However, lets not get ahead of ourselves.

In the days immediately following 9-11 it became clear that the U.S. would invade Afghanistan. In response the planned IMF-WB protests evolved into not only an action against globalization, but also against the impending war. The Anti-Capitalist Convergence and a new anti-war coalition (ANSWER) called for a demonstration on September 28th. Religious and pacifists organizations such as The American Friends Service Committee called for a rally on the 29th.

On the 28th, an estimated 10,000 people took to the streets voicing their opposition to war. Of these nearly 2,000 were represented in the explicitly anti-capitalist contingent, including a Black Bloc several hundred strong. Simultaneously, more the 80 solidarity demonstrations were organized in dozens of other U.S. cities and across the globe. Some of the larger of these were in San Francisco (10,000), Los Angeles (2,000), and Athens Greece (10,000). In D.C. events got underway around 9:00 a.m. with the anti-capitalist contingent, behind a banner that read "No War But Class War", and the Black Bloc marching from Union Station. As this group approached the IMF building riot police encircled them. After an hour long stand off, the pigs relinquished, and the march moved to link up with the larger protest organized by ANSWER. Along the way they passed a construction site where workers cheered their support.

After linking up with the other demonstrators, the combined forces of tens of thousands of people headed towards the Capital building. Both phases of the march included a limited number of confrontations between the Bloc and the police. Even so, the day was largely peaceful, and only a handful of protesters were arrested.

The following day a rally was held by overt pacifist elements drew an estimated 3,000 people.

While 10,000 anti-war demonstrators is a far cry from the 100,000 previously expected at the IMF-WB actions, the demonstration should be understood as a powerful statement against the path that the powers that be were about to traverse. Given the level apprehension and fear cultivated by the government and corporate media following 9-11, it is a testament to human fortitude and willingness to stand on common principle that anyone, let alone 25,000 were willing to make their opposition known in the streets of Washington, D.C.

IMF/World Bank Protests - Sept 2001
Statement from NEFAC
The Call

This is What Direct Action Looks Like
September 24 - October 3

(The following call was issued before the attacks on September 11, 2001)

> "Direct Action is representative of the combined battle against exploitation and oppression. It announces, with inherent clarity, the direction and orientation of the working class's endeavors in its relentless attack upon capitalism. It means that the working class, in constant rebellion against the existing state of affairs, expects nothing from outside people, powers or forces, but rather creates its own conditions of struggle and looks to itself for its means of action"

—Emile Pouget

The World Bank and International Monetary Fund control more investment capital and have more policy influence in the world economy than any other institutions. They restructure economies for neocolonialism, steering production to elite markets, while locals suffer for basic needs. They lower wages, proliferate sweat shops and repress organized labor. Their development projects are environmentally destructive. They privatize education, health care and water; burdens felt most heavily by women world-wide. They force relocations, and destroy communal possession of the land. All under the guise of neoliberalism—that racist irrationality which denies the historic and current realities of the mass exploitation and dehu- manization of people of color, especially those living in the "Global South." These reasons, and more, make the World Bank and IMF the target of protests against the rising tide of capitalist globalization. However, the strength of the working class is not in protest—it is in direct action.

In the center of the corporate empire, the fortress of greed and arrogance is guarded by fire-proof storm troopers waging chemical warfare. Inside this fortress sit the mobsters of capitalism, loan sharks growing fat from offers that cannot be refused. The global capitalist police state is built on a foundation of lies. The heart of their "democracy" is a farce. It is a colony of tyranny. In a house of white supremacy hides a naked emperor surrounded by glory-hungry generals and power-hungry politicians—unelected, unaccountable, unwanted, and unnecessary. If this is what "democracy" looks like, we want none of it.

How can you speak truth to power, when it is from lies that power sprung?
How can you appeal to power, when it is through your acknowledgment that they rule?
How can you condemn self-defense, when their lies have always been backed with violence?
How can you condemn sabotage, when everywhere it is the accumulation of property

and profit that destroys?
We want no seat at the table for a feast of blood money.
We march to nowhere, we march in circles.
Hopping from summit to summit in hopes of being seen by the powerful,
or even noticed by their lackeys in the media.
Our signs ignored.
Our puppets mocked.
Our red & black banners torn and sullied.
Our voices, cheers and songs choked on gas.
Our drums and dancing silenced by baton and bullet.
Our cries for justice held in contempt.
And still, we resist!

The crunch of glass under our feet does nothing to change our world. A spectacle of militant protest is quickly forgotten. Symbolic confrontation with an inner tube or a Molotov cocktail is still symbolic confrontation. Dining on ashes does not satisfy our hunger. Protest, protest, protest... is not there more than this? There is direct action.

We call upon revolutionaries throughout the world to join the Anti-Capitalist Convergence against the globalization of oppression and neoliberalism.
We will act without intermediaries, there can be no mediators in class struggle.
We will defy the authority of the state, their laws were only shackles.
We will violate the property of the capitalists, they can offer us nothing that wasn't already ours.
We will take direct action.
For anarchy and communism!

North Eastern Federation of Anarcho-Communists (NEFAC)

Members:
Roundhouse Collective (Baltimore)
Sabate Anarchist Collective (Boston)
Groupe anarchiste Emile-Henry (Quebec City)
Union locale de Quebec (Quebec)
Supporters:
Barricada Collective (Boston)
Prole Revolt (Morgantown)
Freyheyt Collective (Toronto)
Friends:
Houston ABCF (Anarchist Black Cross Federation)
ABCF People of Color Caucus
Infoshop.org
Global Toxin (Maryland)

Call to Action Against The War!

(The following call was issued in light of the September 11th Attacks)

The Anti-Capitalist Convergence is continuing our mobilization in Washington, D.C. September 24 through October 1. We are calling for a march against the growing capitalist war on Saturday morning, September 29th and invite all those interested in creating a world free from terror, hate, racism, poverty and war to demonstrate our unity and vision for a better world.

For the past 5 months we have been organizing a mass mobilization against the fall meetings of the IMF and World Bank because of their role in enforcing global capitalism. In the process of this organizing we have been working to strengthen our community by making the connections between capitalism and issues local to D.C. We had been planning a large, diverse and beautiful protest and were optimistic that these demonstrations would be a ground breaking step for the Anti-Capitalist movement.

Like most people we were shocked by the events of September 11th and stopped mid-action, mid-thought, our lives interrupted and forever changed. The enormity of this crisis has affected us all. The IMF and World Bank have cancelled their meetings and many groups have called off their events. The political climate in the United States has severely changed, emotions are running high and the country is extremely tense. In recent days we have seen the militarization of our city, increasingly blatant racist attacks and blind patriotism. Media hysteria and government rhetoric are pushing people to unite through religious bigotry and nationalism. Security, particularly here in Washington, D.C., has been heightened as the country prepares to go to war.

The US government has failed to recognize the interconnectedness of all the forms of violence. Bombing, encouragement of dictatorships, sweatshops for benefit of US corporations, third world debt, world hunger or lack of shelter and health care are all forms of violence. The fear and desperation that grows from poverty and oppression is crucial to any understanding of violence throughout the world. 35,000 people die from starvation each day even though there is enough food to feed all. Terror is still terror whether it is from death from starvation, fear of enslavement by corporations or fear of bombs or airplanes falling. Until we understand the violence of our economic, military and foreign policies, we will continue to foster the conditions that make this kind of terrorism possible.

We demand that no more terror or violence be perpetrated in our name. We are a movement devoted to social justice. There is no justice to be found in retribution, war, racism, corporate globalization or capitalism itself. We condemn any and all retaliation and religious persecution of Arab, Arab American and Muslim peoples and we oppose any attack on our constitutional rights. We will not hand over our civil liberties to the greater good of the State.

We strongly see the need to come together and act on our visions of the world we want to create and not on our fears. Though we came together against the Bank and

Fund what we came together for is even more important now. We want to continue to mobilize, though we are all uncomfortable carrying forth in the way we planned. The tactics that were ideal to the original situation will not have the same effects at this time. We are no longer calling for militant blocs. We will take action to inspire, motivate and demonstrate that a world based on needs not profit; a world of mutual support; a world free from oppression is possible. This is a time to come together in true solidarity, in a way that supports all those working for a better world.

Our plans include a convergence week starting with the opening of the Anti-Capitalist Convergence Welcome Center on Monday, September 24. All week long we will engage in skill shares, art, organizing meetings and outreach. At a time when many people think that war is the answer to violence talking to our neighbors will be a revolutionary act. We plan a Community Dialogue with people about what is happening in the world by asking them Why? We will continue to make connection between critical local issues like the lack of housing and health care and global capitalism.

On Saturday morning we will hold Anti-Capitalist March Against Hate. That afternoon we will establish our Temporary Autonomous Zone to support and provide for ourselves in a caring and inclusive way. It will be a hate free zone, a war free zone, and a capitalist free zone. We encourage everyone to make a contribution whether it be a class for the free school, offering basic medical support, drumming, clothing swap, skill shares, performance, strategic discussions, food and more!

Saturday evening we are extending an invitation to friends and neighbors to join together in a "Food Not Bombs" Community Dinner. When the state's pro-war rhetoric claims that "America takes care of it's own" yet spends billions on a war when many of its people go to sleep hungry and homeless it's time for a change. We want to model that change.

We urge people to take action together in Washington, D.C. Taking action at home is equally important, however. If you cannot come to Washington, organize an action, talk to people in your neighborhood or set up your own autonomous zone. People are rising up everywhere saying no to hate and no to war. Join with anti-capitalists and other around the world as we take action for justice!

Interview Concerning September 28th Protest Against War & Globalization

("Margaret" marched with the Black Bloc on September 28th, and has marched in numerous other Black Blocs over the course of the last five years.)

Interviewer: There was much anticipation surrounding upcoming September 2001 anti-IMF/WB demos prior to 9/11. Many felt that it would mark the largest and most

militant anti-globalization protest in North America to date. Rumors circulated that elements of the Black Bloc were planning the occupation of an abandoned hospital. Other rumors circulated that the Bloc would be more tightly organized and in the street in a big way. Can you confirm either of these rumors? What was really in the works?

Margaret: I do remember the rumors about the abandoned hospital, but my affinity group chose to avoid that. We came in to D.C. just for the demo, so we weren't able to participate in any pre-planning meetings.

Interviewer: The last major D.C. protest (A16) had a Black Bloc 1000 strong. What did you anticipate the Bloc numbering at this demo prior to the attacks on the Twin Towers?

Margaret: The same as at A16, if not larger. There was a great deal of talk leading to the action, in terms of "this is going to be the biggest/most organized BB ever" sort of rumors. I think that these rumors were true, as a lot of lessons had been learned since Seattle, A16 and [the Quebec City] FTAA [riots], and people were studying German Antifa models and were highly influenced by them.

Interviewer: What was your reaction (feelings, thoughts, etc.) when you first learned of the September 11th attacks?

Margaret: It was extremely devastating. I work in a high rise office building, and the effect on my coworkers and overall work environment was drastic. I have friends who lived in Manhattan, and it was just general fear and confusion. I was also sickened by the post-9/11 patriotism, and the refusal on the parts of most Americans to accept that the only people to blame for this were ourselves.

Interviewer: How do you think these events affected the anarchist movement as well as the larger anti-globalization movement?

Margaret: I think that the anarchist movement took a big kick in the stomach on 9/11. We now have to distinguish ourselves and our actions from those of terrorists, have to deal with heightened security measures, border patrols, and heightened sentencing for offenses. We are more likely to be subject to surveillance, which increases our security culture, but makes it so hard to reach out to new people outside our usual circles. You basically fear that everyone is a cop. This happened before 9/11, but it has increased dramatically since.

Interviewer: After the attacks 90% of the September D.C. actions were called off. Do you think this was necessary, or was it a mistake?

Margaret: I do not think was a mistake. I think that most of the actions, if carried out, would have been met with a much harsher police response, and much harsher potential consequences. It was just too big a risk, especially considering we were just a few miles from the Pentagon.

Also, the entire concept of a symbolic action is to raise awareness of a certain issue, to get some public attention to your message. After 9/11, this became impossible. No one would here anything other than "These terrorists (the anarchists) are trying to weaken

America at a time when we should be standing strong together." The entire purpose and effect of the actions would have been lost.

Interviewer: On September 28th you and many others still marched in D.C. What message did you hope to convey by being there? Was that message heard?

Margaret: The message that I hoped to convey was that it was still possible to criticize the US/WB/IMF policies and ask for change. I think that message was lost. It came too soon after 9/11, Peoples' minds were focused elsewhere and I think the anarchist movement would've been better served to focus on [the] anti-war [movement] and work with immigrant/Middle Eastern community groups to help defend those communities from rampant racism/discrimination both from the INS/Homeland Security and racist white people.

Interviewer: Can you explain what the mood and intensity level was of those present on that day?

Margaret: The mood was much more tense than other demonstrations I have been at. High levels of anxiety and uncertainty. Also a lot of confusion: "Is such and such action still going on," etc. It was four years ago, so my memory is a little hazy.

Interviewer: Since 9/11, have you seen a difference in the level of police repression experienced by the Black Bloc and the anarchist movement generally?

Margaret: Yes, absolutely. I think what went down in Miami is a good example of this, as well as general surveillance that many anarchist organizations have experienced, including the listing of ABCF on the terrorist listing, and the high sentences that ELF folks have received.

Interviewer: What initially drew you towards Black Blocs? Do you believe the motivation of others is of a similar kind?

Margaret: I feel that political action needs to come from all directions. You need grassroots community organizing, well coordinated, intelligent direct action and even some reformist efforts like rent control.

I feel that it is important to attack capitalism from all directions, and to draw to attention to issues in a variety of ways—one of them is through Black Blocs and direct action.

And, to be completely honest, in the anarchist milieu you need a certain street credibility. As a woman especially I felt a certain pressure to be able to talk the talk, so to speak. I consider this to be both a good and a bad thing—I want to work with people who know what they are doing, but at the same time I don't think this sort of informal peer pressure is healthy. I also believe that there are other, equally valuable contributions to the anarchist movement other than being in a Black Bloc. These contributions are often overlooked or minimized, in favor of the war stories.

Interviewer: How, if any, has your political work changed since September, 2001?

Margaret: I have moved more towards long-term grassroots community organizing. I feel that the Black Bloc approach has its uses, but at this point, considering the political climate, it is more costly than it is beneficial. The legal fees associated with arrest are astronomical, and when anarchist organizations are consistently trying to move

closer to an organizing model rather than a summit hopping model, to go and expend resources for a one-time symbolic action seems self serving and counter productive.

Interviewer: To what extent is the future of the anarchist movement married to or divorced from Black Bloc tactics?

Margaret: The re-born (post-Seattle) anarchist movement is always going to be married to the Black Bloc tactic. I am not sure this is necessarily a bad thing. What we need to do is rethink how and when we use these types of tactics. So far I think our choices have been poor.

Interviewer: It has been nearly five years since 9/11. Where do you see the anarchist movement in another fife years? What about in fifty years?

Margaret: I think the anarchist movement has grown up a bit, learned a few lessons, done a lot of reflection (in part through book projects like this) and is moving on a healthier path that is better suited to a long term revolutionary struggle, which is what is required if we ever hope to overthrow capitalism and build a better society.

As for in fifty years—I think that the anarchist movement is going to gain a lot of credibility when people realize the sad state that our society is in, and look to alternatives. If we have comprehensive alternatives established we can be a resource and offer real possibilities.

Chapter XVI
Against Columbus Day: AIM and The Black Bloc in Denver October 5-8, 2001

Overview

Columbus discovered America in 1492. That is how the history books read. But to discover something would seem to imply that others have not previously "found" it. And like it or not, Native Americans were living in these continents for thousands of years before any European discovered the written language, let along foreign lands. What Columbus did discover was that the millions of First Nation people living here were devoid of firearms. With that, him and his crew began an ugly and brutal process of enslavement and genocide that would last 500 years, and cost millions of innocent lives.

Today, Native Americans, divested of most their lands, are still struggling against the chains of an imposed poverty, institutional racism, and government oppression. Since the 1970s the American Indian Movement (AIM) has sought to revive and defend Native rights and culture. Their struggle has stretched from coast to coast, and has included such dramatic events as the 1973 armed occupation of Wounded Knee, South Dakota. Throughout the last three decades many AIM member have been killed during militant confrontations with law enforcement. What is more, countless AIM worriers, such as Leonard Peltier, still rot in government jail cells for no other reason then having the audacity to defend themselves and their community. The Eurocentric ruling class refuses to allow any threats to its continental dominance—not from the working class and not from the Indians. As long as they maintain an effective monopoly on force, Natives will not be permitted to determine their own social and political fate any more then other wage slaves. But after 500 long years of attempted genocide, the likes of which make Bosnia look like child's play, the Native American community and AIM are nowhere near defeated. They are a strong people. Like the Irish, who have fought British imperialism for 800 years, it is unlikely that there will ever be true peace as long as justice remains nothing but an empty word.

Given this history, it is no wonder that Columbus Day is considered a day of official insult to Native Americans. In 2001, AIM and other organizations called on Native Americans, other minorities and oppressed people to converge on the western city of Denver for what they coined "Transform Columbus Day." Between October 5th through October 8th (Columbus Day) AIM organized actions, teach-ins, and discussions across the city. Coming on the heals of Seattle, A16, and The Battle of Quebec, AIM made a point of inviting the Black Bloc whom they expected to lend physical solidarity in stopping the Denver Columbus Day Parade.

During two primary days of demonstrations (October 6th and 8th) the Bloc marched in formations numbering 75. As events would unfold, the march on October 5th numbered 500 people, slightly over 10% composed by the Bloc. Despite many tense moments, violence was averted, and only six people were arrested; none from within the Bloc. On the 8th, protesters, numbering 300, took their positions in the streets and prepared to confront the parade. The air was thick with anticipation. A feeling of impending violence reflected off the faces of the countless Denver police. But low and behold, word began to spread that they, the people, won this round with out taking a single swing. The parade was all but cancelled! The mere presence of these Native militants, along with their anarchist allies, compelled city officials to give in. Upon learning this, the assembled protesters rightly understood this to be a victory; a victory won not through respectable protest or liberal appeals, but through the implied threat of physical force.

In the end, these days of collaboration between the Bloc and AIM avoided clashes with the police. But even so, bonds were formed, respect earned, and besides, sometimes the honest possibility of action is enough to win the results that you seek.

Transform Columbus Day Oct 5th-8th 2001 Analysis on The Actions From a Colorado Anarchist
By an Anonymous Anarchist

Although a smaller convergence than we all had expected the transform Columbus Day events of Oct. 5th-8th turned out to be very amazing and inspiring. The first national convergence organized by mostly communities of color and first nation peoples drew over 2000 to Denver, Colorado. Among the many here were Indigenous peoples, Chicanos, Mexicanos, Afrikan-Americans, community activists, environmentalists, peace activists, labor, and of course the anti-imperialist contingent of anarchists.

On the first real day of action, the All Nations 4 Directions march, around 500 people converged at the west (black) convergence point. At about 10 a.m. we started

marching. Around 50 or so in a tightly nit "revolutionary anti-imperialist bloc" and 30 or so other radical types wearing black and masks marching outside the bloc, proceeded to march downtown. The march was filled with energy from the Mexican liberation contingent of the bloc, the radical cheerleaders ahead of us, and the drums and dancers at the very front. After about 45 minutes of marching we had gotten downtown to an intersection and where the whole march stopped for a moment. Someone started chanting "we're fired up, won't take no more!" and bouncing up and down, until soon enough the whole bloc was bouncing while watching to the gap ahead of us get larger. After a few moment of bouncing up and down everyone broke into a really energized charge and screamed as loud as they could! The bloc actually did this a couple of times. Probably a moment or two after this some corporate media, which had been annoying all day, tried to get some "candids" and after a demonstrator had warned him, got his camera lens written on with a marker. The media started to react and tried to hit the person, but AIM security stepped in and forced the cameraman away from the march. There were absurd amounts of undercovers taking pictures and even newly mounted cameras on sides of buildings. We finally reached the capitol, and saw the insane mass of police force that had come out just for us. The entire Denver Police Department was on call for overtime that weekend and it seemed like they were in the streets. We were informed by AIM security that if the bloc stepped away from the rest of the march at any time the police were going to try and arrest us all. There was very big feeling of paranoia, but everyone pushed on "inch by inch" until we finally made it to the capitol. Once we got there it was time to rest. Many of us stood and sat by and watched the feds on top of the capitol and in the crowd (I think it was the ear piece and mustache that gave them away...) and the speakers, who by the way were very rousing. My favorite being Ramona Africa. After we had been sitting there for at least 45 minutes we were informed that the police had a bus in the back and mass amounts of riot cops awaiting command. The feel of paranoia soon returned with a heightened sense to it. We had also heard earlier that someone wearing a mask had been detained or arrested at the porter potties. Everyone started trying to think of ways to de-bloc. After a while some individuals and affinity groups successfully did just that and tried to leave, later we were informed that 6 Mexicanos from the Mexican national liberation movement were (the only people) finger printed and detained. Along with 12 others who were harassed, but none had reported being arrested.

After the rally was ending around 20 or so people were still in Black Bloc and had no way to de-bloc. AIM security took it upon themselves to negotiate the police to get a city bus and bring it to the capitol. In a scene much like the integration times in the south, AIM security made a human wall between the police and Black Bloc getting on the bus. The ride there was a very tense but also really cool. Some police were in the front of the bus and other agencies were driving along side. Once everyone finally reached the Four Winds Survival Center they unloaded much the same way as they loaded and the Black Bloc was met with cheers and fists up from everyone waiting at

Four Winds. After the feds outside finally left everyone de-bloced and hung out for a bit then, went home, enthused and exhausted.

Sunday. Oct 7th.

This was supposed to be the big reclaim the streets, carnival against colonialism. But it seemed mass hysteria and paranoia ended any hope of this. The police had talked with some core members of TCDA and ensured that nobody would be fucked with on Saturday, but never made a clear statement about their plans for Sunday. Around 50 or so people showed up to the park where the carnival was supposed to meet at, all being from out of town, except a few. There were many reports of unmarked sketchy vans driving by and stopping. One of the houses where people were staying was being constantly harassed and monitored. The plan was made to call off the RTS because of the mass police paranoia. Nobody seemed ready for arrest and most agreed we would all need all the help we can get on Monday, if there was a parade. Later on that night there was an emergence anti-war rally/vigil at the capitol. Again the police took pictures from in their vans and undercovers roamed around. Also throughout the day there was a spiritual day of unity with speakers and music at the capitol.

Monday. Oct 8th. The day of the parade?

Around 300 people met at the capitol, ready and willing to try and stop the Columbus Day parade. After being out there for around an hour the speakers started. There was a lot of confusion over if there was to be a parade or not. At one point there was information passed around that they were defiantly going through with it and all the bloc folks started gearing up and moving close together. Then all of sudden Nita Gonzalez got on the mic and announced that there was 30 people at the parade which they were calling a procession. Everyone cheered and laughed and more speakers began. Every single person that got on the mic specifically thanked the Black Bloc. It was crazy. Never had we felt so loved and supported. Russell Means spoke about how he wanted to transform our society into one where "anarchists wouldn't be afraid to walk the streets." Glen Morris said that he was an anarchist and that all of his ancestors were too. Finally after all the speakers were done we again were trying to figure out how to de-bloc and get out of there. And again AIM got us a bus and we got another free ride to the Four Winds. When we got there and the pigs finally left from the outside, we all debloced and relaxed. Everybody was hugging and thanking everyone and I just sat back and smiled.

After the convergence. What's next? What really happened?

Although I think it can, and will probably be argued that because the Transform Columbus Day convergence wasn't large and wasn't specifically an anti-globalization

convergence, that it is therefore less important than other anti-capitalist/anti-authoritarian movements. Which is maybe why ChuckO [from Infoshop.org] put the anti-war convergence to D.C. up on his web site (Infoshop.org) but not Transform Columbus Day. But the reality that the few of us that did come out to Denver, Colorado realized, is that it was in fact very important. I think I must stress the American Indian Movement is an armed revolutionary group that truly understands the totality of the state. There was no debate from white liberals over property destruction or confrontation. And the fact that anarchists were specifically invited to come out for the transform Columbus Day weekend, should probably tell us where our real comrades are. The relationships that were kindled in Denver will be very hard to break. The fact that every single speaker on Monday thanked us, The fact that one of the main organizers said he was an anarchist should again reinforce the facts of where our true comrades lie. The TCDA will be working together still after Columbus Day to challenge and confront other forms of oppres- sion and colonialism that effects our communities, and also of course to mobilize for next year.

I must admit it was a tad disheartening not to see the streets overflowing with people, but all I can really hope is that everyone reads this and understands how truly powerful these events were, and prepares to come out next year. We are always talking about how we need to work with communities of color and how we want to attack our white privilege. Well, here is the chance to really walk the walk.

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Chapter XVII
The Battle of York
January 12, 2002

Overview

In 1969, York Pennsylvania, along with many other U.S. cities, was rocked with serious race riots. One of the victims was the unarmed daughter of a Black preacher. More the thirty years later nine white men were finally arrested and charged with her murder. One of these was former York mayor, Charlie Robertson. While many residents of this small (pop. 30,000) working class city were encouraged to see justice begin to prevail, a small fringe minority of racists saw it different. Seeking to exploit the old race divisions brought to the fore by these indictments, five national white supremacist organizations (the National Alliance, the World Church of the Creator, the National Socialist Movement, the Hammer Skins, and a faction of the Aryan Nations) collaborated on a plan to build an organized racist presence among the smoke stacks

and row houses that is York. Central to their plan in spreading their divisive hate, was the holding of a widely publicized meeting in the York Public Library. The meeting was called for January 12th. Upon learning this information Anti-Racist Action quickly began to organize a counter mobilization aimed at confronting these fascists. And like death and taxes, one could be sure there would be a clash.

By the morning of the 12th the streets of York were tense. The area around the public library was barricaded and surrounded by hundreds of riot cops. Soon fascists began to appear on the scene, with police acting as escorts. Anti-fascists as well poured into the area. A one hundred strong Black Bloc converged on the library. Three hundred more locals (mostly Black and Hispanic) also came out to confront the racists. The combined forces of the neo-Nazis numbered around two hundred. Early on members of the Bloc caught two isolated fascists in a pickup truck attempting to drive through the area. The truck had its windows smashed in, and the men were dragged from the vehicle and beat. This event foreshadowed what was to come.

For several hours the opposing crowds were effectively separated by the riot cops. As most of the racists met inside, a number of Hammer Skins remained outside, behind police lines, giving the Nazi salute to the angry local residents and the Bloc. Eventually the meeting began to let out; and that is when the fighting truly began.

As police lead the meeting attendees away from the scene, members of the Bloc (aided by locals) discovered a way to circumvent the police lines. Catching both the cops and racists off guard, the Black Bloc suddenly found itself in an alley along with 40 fascists. Using clubs and fists anarchists beat down Nazis. A number of Hammer Skins were reportedly knocked unconscious. The fascists tried to retreat towards an adjacent parking lot where many of their vehicles were located. The Bloc pursued, beating Nazis as they came upon them, and smashing in windows and slashing the tires of their cars and trucks. As the fight ensued, riot police moved in, using clubs and pepper spray, arresting a number of people. During the fascists' panicky retreat, one bonehead ran over an anti-racist woman (he was later arrested). In another instance, a white supremacist, being pursued by elements of the Bloc, pulled and fired a hand gun; no one was shot. Events moved quickly. As the enemy fled, anarchists teamed up with locals and scoured the area in search of Nazis who got away. On a number of occasions these scum were found and they and their vehicles were attacked. In the end there can little doubt that the racists were literally run out of town. The price? 25 antifas arrested. One woman broke her arm and another required medical attention after being struck by a truck. One Black Blocer was eventually convicted of disorderly conduct and sentenced to three months in jail.

Was York a victory against fascism? Some naive liberals would argue no. Why? Because of an ideological belief that by providing such hate groups with a stage (even if it is a stage which they are flogged on) helps get them media coverage, and hence membership. Such ungrounded assertions aside, let us look at the facts. In the wake of the beatings, fascists attempted to have two follow up rallies in York. One was organized by the neo-Nazi National Movement, on February 20th, 2002. The other was

organized by the Aryan Nations, on April 20th of that same year. In the case of the later, the organization's leader, Richard Butler, promised to turn out 350 supporters. Trouble, right? Hardly. The first drew a whopping six supporters, the second only twelve. In both cases these pathetic and isolated hatemongers escaped the large angry crowds only because of massive police protection. At both, ARA people were treated with respect and solidarity by locals. Area youth (not without humor) approvingly referred to the out-of-town antifas as "anarchist ninjas." All told, history and the facts seem to speak clearly for themselves.

Note: The Battle of York set a precedent for organized street fighting against fascists. From Baltimore to Maine to Valley Forge similar tactics would be successfully used against these nazi scum. On September 25, 2004, a Black Bloc of 75 repeatedly ambushed isolated neo-nazis on their way to a small fascist gathering within the Valley Forge National Park. Anti-fascists laid in wait in wooded areas separating the parking area from the rally site. During the course of the day many nazis were beat, some severely. The bloc suffered no casualties.

Call to Action in York!
By Philly ARA

As many of you may or may not be aware, the white supremacist group, World Church of the Creator and their leader Matt Hale will be coming to the Martin Library in York, Pennsylvania on January 12th. For more info on the WCOTC please visit: `http://www.onepeoplesproject.com/creator.htm`

The WCOTC is notorious for picking a town with a present or past racial conflict and exploiting the situation to gain new members. This time they are coming to York, Penn. because of a race riot that took place in 1969 where a black woman was killed in a hail of gunfire by white youths. The mayor, who at the time was a cop, is being charged with inciting white youths to "kill niggers."

Months before the Sept 11th incident, Anti-fascists across North America had noticed a distinct upswing in fascist organization and activity. After Sept 11th, many fascist groups began exploiting the attack to their own advantage and have actually had a dramatic increase in their ranks. Compared to the same time last year, the National Alliance membership has more than doubled!

Here in Philly and the surrounding areas, we have seen the effects of this growth. National Alliance stickers started appearing in racially mixed, working class neighborhoods in northeast Philly. Philly Anti Racist Action tore down most of the stickers and put up ARA stickers in their place. A bonehead by the name of Keith Carney was arrested in front of a Vietnam War Memorial after he, along with ten other fascists, were putting up National Alliance stickers. Over the summer, Hammer "skins" held a show in Harrisburg, Penn. with over 100 boneheads in attendance. In recent months, National Alliance affiliated boneheads and Hammer "skins" have been spotted at every

major venue, punk show in the city. A table with anti racist literature was kicked over by boneheads at a punk show in Dillsburg, PA. A few months ago, 2 boneheads were arrested in South Jersey for breaking into a black couple's home and beating them with baseball bats while they slept. Attacks have also occurred in Baltimore outside of shows. To put it simply, shit is getting out of hand!

Another alarming fact is that fascists such as the National Alliance have been able to mobilize nearly the same amount of people to their demos as Anti Fascists. In Wallingford, CT, the World Church mobilized not only people from their own ranks but klansmen, hammer "skins", and other fascist groups as well.

This should be a wake up call to Anti Fascists everywhere. The fascists are crawling out of their caves and from under their stones. We must be there to greet the World Church, pick up the stones, and send them running. Matt Hale cannot be allowed to have a platform to spew his racist filth and divide the working class. Keep the fascists on the run and never let them have the streets! Join us on January 12th!

Please forward this to all anti authoritarian groups. More info to follow...
So far this call to action is being endorsed by Philly ARA, Columbus ARA, Barricada Collective, and Tute Nere. If your group would like to endorse this action please contact Philly ARA at: Philly_ARA@yahoo.com
Phone: 215-727-0882 box #3

Anti-Racists Defeat Neo-Nazi Recruiting Drive
By ARA

Yesterday's events in York could only be considered a victory for anti-racism. Several white supremacist organizations had planned a meeting and rally in York to capitalize off of past racial divisions and tensions in the city. Hundreds of people with basic common sense from York and elsewhere successfully rose to the challenge and prevented the event from going off without a hitch.

Despite massive police protection, neo-Nazis, including the violent hate gang called Eastern Hammer Skins, were driven from the streets of York. After shouting across the street for hours at anti-racist activists and residents, the neo-Nazis turned and ran, and were still defeated in a nearby alley. Several Hammerskins were pummeled unconscious and sustained massive damage to their vehicles despite threats of bringing firearms and claims of Aryan fighting superiority." These kinds of people want to terrorize and murder millions of people under the name of 'racial purity,' but they like to hold these kinds meetings in public that are like spitting in people's faces, and then try and act like they're the victims of some unprovoked attack," said ARA member Susan Booker, "and we need to stop them in every community, not just York."

The white supremacists selected York as a place for them to build their movement, in part by exploiting the tragedies of the past and in part because they have local organizers in the area. The Eastern Hammer Skins and the World Church of the

Creator both have members in the York area. We know that after we leave, there will still be Nazis in York. There are local organizers on the ground, and they are supported by local officials and police. But we also believe that the York community is ready to confront and expose this cancer in their body politic. We want to support local residents in this struggle as much as we are able.

The entire community was out with us, despite the police and mayor's story that local residents "stayed home." Our estimate of the size of the crowd was over 400 York residents participating in the counter demonstration. It is clear to us that the people of York are angry that their community is being cynically used by neo-nazis to build their movement, and also that their city government couldn't have found any better way to handle the situation. Do the old "white power" politics run so deep among certain people in power that the city really HAD to let Matt Hale and his hateful followers hold their meeting? At what cost?

We were surprised by the blatant amount of brutality from the police. Even from our point of view, which is admittedly generally unfavorable to police officers, the violence of the York Police Department and Pennsylvania State Patrol against the counter demonstrators was shocking. The Police attacked one young girl after she was run down by a speeding pickup driven by a neo-nazi. Members of her family were beaten and arrested shortly after that incident. Another neo-Nazi, who pulled a handgun on protesters, was allowed to leave by police until he was chased for blocks by angry York citizens who demanded his arrest.

ARA intends to continue our ongoing work in the York community, to win the trials of our arrested comrades and the local residents who stood up to the Nazis, and to work with the York community to defeat the organized racists in the York area. This fight is long from over. While we won the conflict in the streets, the fight against white supremacy in the area must continue, and we plan to use every opportunity to continue our work to make York, Pennsylvania, and the entire country a Nazi-free zone. We have no intention of being intimidated by police brutality, and the neo-nazis have left us less than impressed.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: (717) 649-1714
Anti-Racist Action

Street Fighting For The Future
In Defense of Anti-Racist Action and The Movement Against Fascism
By Nicolas

York, Pennsylvania is a racially diverse city with large African-American and Latino communities, and with a history of racial violence and conflict. Matt Hale of the World Church of The Creator, a white supremacist, neo-Nazi group, decided to try to

capitalize on this by calling for a public meeting in the city. He invited members of the National Alliance, Eastern Hammerskins, Aryan Nations, National Socialist Movement, and other such pleasant characters, with the hopes of a repeat of the racial fighting that took place in 1969.

A Black Bloc of approximately 100 militant anti-fascists, many of them members of the international group Anti-Racist Action (ARA) assembled early in the morning and began taking action against the fascists entering the city. Hours later, hundreds of local residents where expressing their support for the bloc, making clear that the racists weren't welcome in the city. Their support was not only vocal either; youths from York guided anti-fascists around the city, so assisting them in making certain the fascists would be very hesitant to return. It was a perfect example of a community standing up and refusing to tolerate fascism.

Militant anti-fascists, such as those who work within the ARA network, are often subjected to all sorts of verbal, and sometimes physical, attacks from enemies who brand our tactics and strategies as anything from inefficient to criminal. These attacks are levied by from both the political Right (its extreme and moderate wings) and liberals. Critics are horrified by the facts that the ARA breaks the law and denies "free speech rights." Above all, they see militant anti-fascists as overzealous youth who fail to comprehend the true nature of racism and thus oversimplify the issue, to the detriment of good reason. Marissa Brookes tried to make this last argument in her article "Anti-Racist Action: The Kids Are All Wrong" in this January's Student Underground.

ARA certainly has more than its fair share of organizational problems and theoretical, as well as tactical, shortcomings - making it by no means above being criticized. I myself am not a member of ARA for a variety of reasons. But people like Brookes who take the liberal standpoint argument need to understand why militant anti-fascists feel there is a need for direct action, and direct, often violent, confrontation. They need to understand what role the extreme-right plays within the broader context of the capitalist system. And they need to understand how their own class and race privilege effect their perspective.

The most commonly heard liberal argument is that the use of direct confrontation and physical force to combat organized racism is not only illegal, but also needless and counterproductive. Many view it as an issue of free speech, and thus protected by the US constitution. To an anti-fascist, it is not an issue of free speech, but of self-defense. Fascists understand that, if they rule the streets, it marks the end of all grass roots level organizing and action for revolutionaries. The terrain is then open for them to present themselves as the only serious alternative to capitalism. Through attacks, fire bombings, beatings, harassment, and whatever else it takes, racist and fascist groups ensure that the streets are unsafe for anarchists and leftists. The fact is that ARA is largely composed of anarchists, people who question the legitimacy and necessity of the state and wish to replace it with a system of direct democracy, federalism, decentralization, freedom, and, in the case of class-struggle anarchists, worker-controlled industry and libertarian communism. Thus by extension, ARA questions the validity of

the laws which the state enacts. This is why the ARA mission statement makes it clear that militant anti-fascism does not depend on cops or courts. We do indeed seek to "outlaw" fascism, but not through any government and its laws because to do so would only allow fascists to paint themselves as the victims while setting a legal precedent for the silencing of opposition which could very well backfire on us as revolutionaries. Fascism needs to be outlawed by people, being in the streets and by demonstrating, both through education and direct confrontation. Fascism is simply intolerable and will be fought by any means necessary wherever it arises.

An understanding of race privilege is essential to participating in any movement against either fascism or capitalism. Even the most dedicated revolutionary, if he or she looks white enough, can still escape the wrath of violent racist gangs by trying to look "Aryan." However, for those who are of another color, or who speak another language, or who are disabled, or homeless, there is simply no escape from fascist terror once the gangs take to the streets.

In her article, Brookes implies that this is not something that commonly happens. One needs only to look at Eastern Europe, significant portions of Spain, Buenos Aires, parts of California, Atlantic City, and many other regions to see that this is simply not true. In all of these places, fascist gangs have taken the streets, and anti-fascists have been unable to oppose them. Once dominant, their confidence rises and attacks on minorities begin. When opposed in the streets in a coordinated and effective manner, they find themselves unable to develop their bases of support, and hence unable to grow.

All this is not to say that militant anti-fascists believe direct confrontation to be the only method to fight fascism. It is but one tool among many.

For example, ARA Toronto repeatedly "outs" racist and fascist leaders in communities where they reside unknown to their neighbors. Last summer, race riots against South Asians erupted in northern England. Anti-fascists organized to prevent the rift between white working class and people of color growing larger, exposing the lie that British workers and immigrants have conflicting interests. The ARA Research Bulletin, published by ARA Chicago, consistently outlines the ties between fascism, capitalism, and the state.

"The Kids Are All Wrong" fails to take into account the role of organized racism within the broader context of the capitalist system, and the class politics that are inherent in militant anti-fascism. In times of revolutionary turmoil, society quickly becomes polarized. Usually, this polarization is represented by a radicalization towards both the left and the right. Historically, when capitalism has found itself under serious threat from revolutionary forces, it has used fascists as its shock troops and fascism as a lesser evil.

In Italy during the 70's, the state allied with the fascists to discredit the immensely powerful movement of students and workers that threatened capital through murderous bombings that were blamed on leftists. In Spain, during the time of the civil war and revolution, the western democracies decided to maintain neutrality. The logic was that

a fascist victory was better than a social revolution, given that the revolution had the potential to spread beyond the borders of Spain.

Liberals often criticize ARA for the group's blanket opposition to the police. This just points out the lack of serious class analysis in the liberal viewpoint. The fact is, while it may be true that not all police officers are corrupt and violent, to us, this is a non-issue. We do not look at individuals, but rather systems and forces, and what interests those systems and forces serve. The police force is a force organized for the defense of the status-quo and the interests of capitalism. Therefore, it is in he best interests of our class, the working class, to promote distrust of, and defiance towards, police, as they are nothing more than class traitors serving the interests of the ruling class. It is not "brainless sloganeering," as Brookes put it, but rather a conscious, class-based, political decision.

Fascism is a complicated social issue. To us, militant anti-fascism is about understanding the clear and present dangers that organized racists present to the working class, to people of color, to people from other countries, and anybody who they deem to be unacceptable, and the role that it plays as a final barrier of defense for capitalism when challenged by revolutionary and progressive social movements. It is about understanding these dangers and adopting effective strategies to defeat them.

Of course ARA does not have all the answers, nor does it always adopt the most effective strategies. For one thing, an important distinction needs to be made between active and serious ARA chapters, namely Toronto, Montreal, Chicago, Columbus, Louisville, and Philadelphia, and those that are only punk kids with a P.O. Box.

When liberals attack ARA, they are really attacking all militant anti-fascism. It is a critique devoid of any class or race analysis. Class and race are fundamental aspects of an accurate historical analysis of the roots and workings of fascism, and hence fundamental aspects of an understanding of how to effectively combat it. Fascism does not begin with genocide and concentration camps-that is simply where it ends. In order to ensure that Fascism never again reaches that point, it must be crushed anytime it rears its head. Hitler once said: "we could only have been stopped if your enemies crushed us on the streets from day one." We intend to crush Fascism using exactly this approach.

Interview With A Black Bloc Participant at The Battle of York

Interviewer: I understand that you had a hand in organizing the antifascist (Black Bloc) demonstrations in York. What motivated you to do this?

Midian: This was built up to be a highly important event for the far-right. A number of previously antagonistic white power organizations (National Alliance, WCOTC, Aryan Nations, Keystone State Skins, etc.) were coming together for a common front

action to exploit the ongoing racial tensions in York, PA, and strengthen unity between their respective groups in the region. It was being promoted as a kick-off event for a general white power offensive in the Northeast. Disrupting this gathering and forcing dissension and disunity in their ranks was a priority for anarchists and anti-fascists.

Interviewer: The action itself saw numerous violent clashes between the Black Bloc and the locals on one side, and the cops and fascists on the other. Was this violence planned?

Midian: Yes. Absolutely. There were a number of militant groups (ARA, Northeast Antifascists, NEFAC, Baltimore Class War) who planned for confrontation to ensure that this event could not be claimed as a success by the organizers, and we managed to link up with angry youth from the community. From intercepted communications on white power message boards (post-York) it was clear that the beat-down the Nazis received led to all sorts of blame and bad blood between WP groups over botched security and under-estimating the anti-fascist forces. They haven't really recovered since.

It really was a nasty defeat for them: thousands of dollars in damaged vehicles, a number of Nazis sent to the hospital, others who got hit with heavy sentences (on weapons charges, attempted murder for trying to run down residents) and the humiliation of literally being run out of town by an angry mob of anti-fascists and residents.

Interviewer: In York, how did the locals react towards the masked antifascists?

Midian: At first apprehensive, but once it was clear we were there to fight the Nazis the locals warmed up quick. It worked out well for us.

Politically it was important for us to be able to link up with local working class youth and not only fight side by side them, but also to hear about local conditions and racial tensions. Talk politics, etc. Tactically we were led around by people that new every alleyway and short cut in the downtown vicinity, so we managed to head-off the retreating Nazis time and again, capitalize on the element of surprise and attack, and safely retreat when the police arrived on the scene.

Interviewer: What was the dynamic between the Black Bloc, and the police? What are the relations between organized fascist and the police?

Midian: The objective of the day was to disrupt this event, by any means necessary. We tried our best to pick our battles, and avoided the police whenever it was possible. There were some defensive clashes with the cops when they rushed us or tried to escort the Nazis to safety. But there was a conscious effort to avoid fighting two battles simultaneously. Basic guerrilla tactics requires you always fight from a position of strength, and never get drawn into a situation where your forces can be easily overwhelmed.

Interviewer: What, if any, is the relation between fascist organizations like the NA and WCOC and the right wing powers that be in Washington?

Midian: I don't know that there are any formal links. Right now, where social and economic conditions are not in a period of crisis, groups like these remain on the fringe. Just like anarchists or other far-left groupings are also on the fringe of society. However, any reading of history demonstrates that as objective conditions

worsen, politics become highly polarized. When social peace becomes more difficult to maintain, the forces of political moderation are pushed aside and often it is the fringe groups of the far-left and far-right who move to the forefront who fill the vacuum and fight for supremacy. So in a sense, confronting these groups while they are weak is an important strategy for revolutionary anti-fascists, because we truly believe there will be a period where more serious clashes will be necessary to suppress these groups. It only makes sense to hit them now before they are able to establish deep roots and influence in working class communities.

In the meantime, these groups also represent the vanguard of the rightwing. They are the foot soldiers who will push for extremes, and the center-right will capitalize on this by pushing through more "moderate" forms of conservative politics. You see this around a number of issues dear to the right, from attacks on abortion access to the criminalization of immigrants.

Interviewer: Was York a victory for antifascists, and if so how did this victory play itself out in the broader antifascist (anarchist) movement?

Midian: Absolutely. At least here on the East Coast. We managed to severely disrupt these group's organizing plans, and gave them a good kicking to remember us by. These groups capitalize on their ability to present themselves as strong, fighting organizations. This is how they attract new recruits (often disenfranchised, white working class youth). When they are able to successfully hold the streets, they can claim a victory. York was most definitely not a victory for them, which is clearly demonstrated by the continued fallouts and fractures that have plagued these groups on the East Coast since then.

Interviewer: Why do anarchists often employ Black Bloc tactics (masks, violence, etc.) at antifascist actions? Does this lead to anarchists essentially putting themselves on the same moral plane as those they combat?

Midian: The anarchist movement from it's inception has always had a proud tradition of fighting against reaction, particularly in the fight against fascism. Most anarchists are neither absolute pacifists, nor enthusiastic proponents of violence. But we do believe in the necessity of self-defense. Sometimes this means using a form of defensive violence to counter-act what we see as a greater, more oppressive form of violence enacted against us and the progressive movements around us.

It is at the core of the ideologies of most of these far-right groups to use violence as a means to suppress left-wing dissent and terrorize immigrants and communities of color. Whether or not they have the strength in numbers to carry out this program at the moment is beside the point. We consider it necessary to disrupt their ability to organize openly in order to ensure they are never able to fully root themselves in white working class areas and become strong movements of reaction. If part of this strategy of disruption requires a level of physical violence to be successful, so be it. We know our enemies and have no moral dilemmas in how we fight them.

Interviewer: Beyond York, have you participated in other Black Bloc Actions? How did York compare to those?

Midian: Let me start off by first saying that militant street posturing is no substitute for organizing around everyday struggles that affect peoples' lives. If we are to build a truly revolutionary movement in this country, we must prioritize our activity within broader working class struggles and social movements.

But there is a time and place for militant street actions. Often this is symbolic, a way to demonstrate a sense of urgency and outrage to a struggle. This is what a lot of the more militant anti-globalization protests of the past few years were about. I have fought alongside other militants in a number of anti-globalization protests: Seattle, Washington, D.C., Quebec City, and elsewhere. To varying degrees of success we were responsible for both major disruptions and international headlines. In many ways we helped reinvigorate the Left, by injecting it with militancy and radicalism, and we sharpened the critique of corporate globalization to an all-out attack on capitalist social relations.

There are other times when Black Blocs have been used as a more direct form of action. This is true with militant anti-fascism. If there is a public gathering of fascists and neo-nazis, we will fight to shut it down and run them off the streets. I have participated in a number of anti-fascist confrontations, York being the most successful in terms of achieving a planned goal and finding a broader combative voice in the community.

Interviewer: Since Quebec City in 2001, there seems to be a refocusing in the anarchist community more towards 'bread and butter' issue. Do you see a place for Black Blocs and community/workplace organizing to coexist, or are they mutually exclusive?

Midian: I wouldn't say they are mutually exclusive, although often there is an anarchist youth culture around these types of actions that seems to heighten an ongoing disconnect. Workplace struggles in particular often develop a militant component. Sabotage is more commonplace than people think, and fighting scabs has a long and proud tradition within the labor movement. There are certainly areas where anarchists can offer militant solidarity here, though it is crucially important to allow for the direct participants to outline the types of actions that should be taken. The same goes for community struggles, whether it is fighting gentrification or raising hell against a landlord.

Bosses and landlords have their own dirty tricks they use against workers or tenants, and often they have the law on their side. It only makes sense that the playing field should be leveled by adding a more covert, militant edge to the fight against them. Black blocs should be viewed within the same strategic realm as guerrilla warfare, and the same considerations should be taken when engaging in this form of militant activity. Particularly within social movements. Are your actions being used to strengthen a particular struggle towards a stated goal? Is their enough of a radical consciousness among the direct social movement participants to embrace a diversity of tactics and combat potential repression, or will these actions only serve to alienate them?

Interviewer: What defines your political beliefs? What drives you to risk physical harm and jail for them?

Midian: I am an anarchist. This is largely defined by my total objection to the capitalist society we live in, and belief in the need for the construction of new world based on egalitarian values. For me, anarchism is not some utopian philosophy. It is the recognition of social war, the active fight between oppressed and oppressor. Anarchism means nothing if it is not based within the struggles of the oppressed. For those of us who have consciously embraced these ideas, we have an obligation to be apart of these struggles. Even if that means risk of arrest or physical harm. We are apart of a proud tradition of people who have risked far more than this.

Interviewer: What do you do for a living?

Midian: Like a lot of people in this country I guess I would be considered lumpen proletariat. I have worked in factories, warehouses, the retail sector, office work, etc. I would rather not say what my current employment consists of for security reasons.

Interview with Imprisoned Anarchist and Anti-Fascist Activist Tim Fasnacht By Jack Diddley

(Originally Published in The Defenstrator, Philadelphia, PA)

I recently sat down and spoke with Tim Fasnacht, who's being held at the York County Prison on charges stemming from a January 12, 2002 visit by various neo-Nazi groups. He's serving a 90 day bid for disorderly conduct. Tim's a member of the Anarchist Black Cross Federation (ABCF) and Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). He was the only antifascist to do any real time from this incident.

J: Why were you in York on 1/12/02 and why do you feel its important to oppose public fascist rallies like this one?

TIM: I was in York on 1/12/02 to oppose Matt Hale and the World Church of the Creator, who was speaking at York Public Library. Having grown up in nearby Lancaster I felt it important to be there to support the people in York in their opposition to racism/fascism. I feel its crucial for antifascists to go wherever white supremacists hold public rallies, whether to physically shut them down or at least to cause as much disruption or harassment as possible. Fascists should never have a moment's peace or an inch of free space to spread their filth. If they go unopposed, it increases their sense of security and gives them more opportunities to organize and recruit.

J: Tim, from what I've read and learned from speaking with you and others, the charges against you are completely bogus. The cops basically snatched you out of a group of people during the fighting, and pinned a case on you. They initially had tried to nail you with assaulting a police officer. Relate some of your experiences that day.

TIM: I wouldn't say my charges were completely bogus. There was a lot of confusion that day. The pigs accused me of perpetrating an assault on an officer at a location where I wasn't present. I had no knowledge that the assault even occurred until days later. I was arrested after a Nazi skin from Baltimore, Rick Desper, in an attempt to escape from the antifascists, drove his truck into a crowd and struck a comrade from ARA, a cop, and a 12 year old African American girl. In the ensuing chaos, the girl's aunt got into a verbal, then physical, confrontation with a state pig. I saw the cop assaulting the woman, choking her from behind. I tried to pull the pig off of her. I was immediately tackled to the ground and cuffed. Afterwards, I learned that other militants had tried to intervene and unarrest me. While at the prison, the police approached me several times, asking why I was arrested. Obviously I said that I didn't know. They released me on a disorderly conduct/refusal to disperse citation. When we went to trial, they brought out a cop who claimed that I jumped onto his back and beat him about the head and neck while he was arresting a comrade in a location where I never was. Ironically, at my hearing and following appeals, the pigs could never find this person I supposedly "assaulted" to testify. I appealed to the Superior Court in Harrisburg, but lost. So after two years of fighting it, I finally had to do the 90 days and pay $300 in fines.

J: I know that you had a lot of problems with your case and your lawyers, and that it eventually, through a series of appeals, made its way to the Pa. Superior court.

TIM: There was some hassle with my lawyers in the fact that when we lost the appeal last November, I didn't learn of the decision until mid-January of this year. My York lawyer received notice, but assumed my primary lawyer would tell me. For some unknown reason, the court never notified him. I basically only had a couple of weeks to prepare before I reported to York County Prison.

J: Do you feel like the state was trying to make an example out of you?

TIM: I definitely think that the state, York district attorney and courts wanted to make an example out of us, hitting us with the maximum jail time and fines. They made it clear from the start that us "outside agitators" would pay for coming to York and kicking the fascists' asses. To them it was an embarrassment, but to the people of York and anti-fascist, it was a smashing success. Over the last few years, we've been seeing the state making examples by imposing stiffer sentences for anti-capitalist and antifascist militants. Look at the cases of Sherman Austin and Rob "Ruckus" Middaugh in California; Robert Thaxton, Free and Critter in the Northwest. As the resistance on the streets grows and intensifies, they want to make sure we know the consequences if we step beyond the "business as usual" passive protests.

J: Have you received a lot of support from your comrades and others?

TIM: Yeah, I've received some excellent support from comrades, both financially and morally. My long time comrades in the IWW, ABCF, NEFAC, and ARA have really shown what solidarity is all about. This support has really made this time in prison a lot easier!

J: How has this whole experience been so far at the prison? Has it been better or worse than what you expected? It must be strange, going from doing prisoner support to being on the other side of the bars.

TIM: So far my time here in prison has been relatively "easy." After a brief stint in processing, and then the maximum security block, I got sent to minimum security/ work release housing. One of the perks of county jails is that you can get work release. I got hooked up with a job in nearby Lancaster, which gets me outside during the week, and makes the time definitely easier and go a lot faster. As to the second part of the question, having been involved in PP/POW support for the last 10 years through my involvement with ABCF, it is somewhat ironic that I'm on the other side now, although being an anarchist, it should never be a surprise when one lands in prison for resistance to the state and their fascist cohorts. As Ojore Lutalo has always said: "at some point, you have to honor your commitment to the struggle with a prison term."

J: What do you feel is the state of antifascism in the U.S. today? How has it changed since York 1, and what do you feel we should focus on in 2004?

TIM: The state of antifascism today in the U.S., from what I can see and read, seems to be in somewhat of a down period. I think after the victory at the Battle of York, its been hard to keep the momentum going. People come and go, which is typical for U.S. activists, so as long as the core militants maintain a presence and tighten up on their skills, especially in the self defense area, we'll be okay for the future. In this post-9/11 repressive environment, we need to step up our work around defense of immigrants, specifically those being detained indefinitely. York County Prison houses about 800 ICE detainees right now and is making a lot of money as a result of this repression. Also, revolutionaries need to expand on organizing around the state and its security apparatus. Cops and prison guards are killing and brutalizing more people of color than any of the WP scum ever will. We need to be more proactive in addressing these atrocities that go on every single day.

J: Anyone you want to shout out to?

TIM: My sincere Revolutionary Greetings to all those who stepped up and extended solidarity to me over the last couple of months. Also, solidarity to all Political Prisoners/POW's in the U.S. and worldwide!

J: Tim, thanks for talking with us, and we'll see you on the other side in April!

TIM: Venceremos!! [Victory!!]

Chapter XVIII
Out With The Rich! Anti-WEF Protests in NEW YORK CITY January 31-February 4, 2002

Overview

Under the shadow of confusion and fear following the destruction of the World Trade Center on September 11th, 2001, many questioned the popular resolve to resist the onward march of global capitalism. Many were concerned that the growing U.S. anti-globalization movement would be set back decades. The period from 1999 through 2001 saw unprecedented growth in this movement. For the first time since the 1930s, a mass movement was underfoot in the United States which challenged the basic precepts of capitalism-not just a particular war, or a particular injustice. But could this movement sustain the blinding calls for national unity under the leadership of the ruling class? Could this movement resist the public fear that foreign terrorists stirred up? Could it take a stand against the massive bombardment of nationalist-capitalist propaganda orchestrated by the elite and made manifest through their media conglomerations? The holding of the World Economic Forum (WEF) in New York City (January 31-Febuary 4th, 2002) would be the first serious test of the movement's resolve.

The WEF is an international organization funded and composed of representatives of the wealthiest and most powerful corporations in the world. Their purpose is to influence elected and dictatorial governments, as well as the WTO, in order for their global agenda to flourish. What is this global agenda? Free trade, cheap labor, and the eradication of basic environmental standards. Implied by these goals is also the weakening of national governments in favor of the international plutocracy. Previous to 2002, this organization met annually in Davos, Switzerland. However, for years now their meetings in Davos were met with ever increasing, militant, counter demonstrations. Therefore, their temporary relocation to the Big Apple was in part an attempt to avoid the growing protests. Would it work? The 15-25,000 people in the streets would argue "no."

Protests were held January 31st through February 4th. On Thursday, January 31st, a cyber attack effectively shutdown the WEF website for the next ninety-six hours. The

main day of anti-WEF street action took place on Saturday, February 2nd. On that day thousands marched through the streets in the direction of the Waldorf Astoria, the site of the WEF meetings. The march included a Black Bloc, numbering around 100. Within the Bloc, a number of affinity groups were armed with makeshift shields intended to fend off police attacks. As the protesters proceed, the police (who were out in force) attacked the crowd without provocation. Some accounts state that their apparent goal was to separate the large "Critical Mass" contingent from the larger march. Others contend that their primary target was the Black Bloc. Either way, these attacks lead to a fight between the Bloc and the pigs. In the face of police batons and liberally used pepper spray, the Bloc suffered many arrests, and many anarchist were disarmed. However, they were able to regroup, quickly forming defensive counter lines. As the police pushed into the crowd, the Bloc pushed back. While by no means were the cops routed, the Black was able to hold their ground, and the march continued undivided.

After weathering more police attacks, arrests, and attempts at corralling, the protesters reached the secured area round the WEF meetings. Despite having a permit to rally in front of the Astoria for 8:00 PM, their way was blocked by more then 4000 police assigned to the immediate vicinity. The crowd held a final rally where it stood, then dispersed for the evening. In the coming days additional protests were held, but nothing approaching the numbers witnessed on February 2nd. All told, more then 200 people were arrested; many being anarchists. The WEF meetings, unfortunately, continued as planned.

One of those arrested was anarchist Sherman Austin. Austin, a resident of Southern California, was initially booked for disorderly conduct. Soon after being taken into NYPD custody, the FBI stepped in and orchestrated additional Federal charges stemming from an anarchist website the Sherman allegedly ran. This website entailed information on the construction of basic explosives. Austin was portrayed to the media as a terrorist, and subsequently jailed.

Was the anti-WEF protests a victory or defeat for the anti-globalization movement? If judged in comparison to Seattle, A16, and Quebec, it was a failure. Its numbers were a fraction of previous demos, and no effective direct actions were carried out. The meetings were not delayed, let alone shutdown. The Black Bloc, for its part, seemed unprepared for the police attacks, and seemed to suffer from indecisiveness. Even so, viewed in correct context, the fact that more the 10,000 people were brave enough and committed enough to voice public decent with the ruling powers shortly after 9-11 is remarkable. Most realistic anarchists and leftists pessimistically expected the numbers to be significantly lower then they turned out to be. These demonstrations in New York City sent a signal to the movement, and the world that the resistance witnessed in Seattle was not ready to slide back into silence. While it would take sometime to rebuild where Quebec City left off, the anti-WEF actions illustrated the resilience of working people in opposition to their wage slavery.

Anarchist Mobilization Against The WEF
The Call

When/Where: Saturday, February 2nd, New York City
Assemble at Anti-Capitalist Convergence March
Look for NEFAC Banners/Red & Black Flags

> Before the spirit of revolt is sufficiently awakened in the masses to express itself in violent demonstrations in the streets or by rebellions and uprisings, it is through direct action that minorities succeed in awakening that feeling of independence and that spirit of audacity without which no revolution can come to a head."

—Peter Kropotkin, The Spirit of Revolt (1880)

The Northeastern Federation of Anarcho-Communists (NEFAC) is calling for a united front of revolutionary anarchists to take to the streets of New York City on Saturday, February 2nd, as an organized bloc within the Anti-Capitalist Convergence mobilization. We invite all revolutionary anarchists to participate fully by bringing their banners, flags, presence, and messages to this march in order to make it as large and successful as possible.

We will demonstrate to the corporate and ruling elites of the World Economic Forum that we refuse to let their actions go unnoticed. We will hold them accountable for their greed, exploitation of working people, their disregard for the environment, and their plundering of the world's resources. We are not interested in discussion or compromise. We are interested only in a complete eradication of global capitalism. A better future is possible!

SAME NEW WORLD

Not only have the events of September 11th not changed the fact that we live in a racist class society, they have reinforced the ability of the US ruling class to further dominate, oppress, exploit and control not only those of us who live within the borders of the empire, but also those unfortunate enough to reside in countries that the US deems to be dangerous.

Additionally, following these tragic events, the Bush administration was quick to exploit the fear and blind patriotism of the American public in order to push through "fast track" authority to negotiate trade agreements (which will be used to accelerate the expansion of NAFTA to the rest of the Western Hemisphere through the FTAA, and to promote a new round of trade negotiations through the WTO). It was argued in Congress that if the president were to be denied this supreme authority, it would show a lack of support for his administration in a time of great crisis and thereby "send a terrible signal to the rest of the world". Needless to say, the bill passed. Who says that there are no direct parallels between globalization and the current "war on terrorism"?

In the last four months, the class contradictions that exist within the US have only become clearer, and thus, the reasons to take to the streets and resist those who benefit from this unjust and authoritarian system have become clearer. The transnational corporations and financial institutions that line their pockets with the blood and sweat of the oppressed and exploited of the world are all clearly identifiable, and, in yet another provocation towards those who have already suffered so much, some of the most heinous characters of these entities will be meeting from January 31-February 4, at New York City's Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, under the banner of the World Economic Forum.

WHY SMASH THE WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM?

The World Economic Forum is an exclusive, invite-only organization composed of political leaders, trade ministers and corporate CEOs from around the world. Incorporated in 1971, the WEF acts as a 'think tank' and driving force behind the global economy. The WEF's summits allow the richest and most powerful corporations in the world to mingle with trade representatives from nations, and with each other, to make business deals and determine the global political and economic policies. The economic and political elites who come together at the WEF are neither elected public officials nor concerned philanthropists looking to aid the poor and disadvantaged of the world. They are capitalist scum looking for new markets to exploit and faster ways to turn a profit, completely unaccountable to the public.

DISRUPTIVE PROTEST IS ONLY THE BEGINNING...

While a massive presence in the streets of New York City is important, we are very much aware that disruptive protest is only a start. Reform of the World Economic Forum is out of the question, and outright abolition is not enough. We are not petitioning for the capitalist ruling elites to grant us anything, nor are we vying for a place at their table. We do not seek a "civil society" where reforms are politely made through our negotiated submission and obedience to the system. We refuse to be complicit in our own oppression! There can be no mediators in the class struggle. We are in total opposition to everything that they stand for, and therefore we must undermine their system in every way possible, by any means necessary. We will defy their laws and take our struggle into our own hands.

As revolutionary anarchists, we must be involved in all the struggles of the working class that serve to undermine the power of the ruling class and further the development of a revolutionary dual power. The power of struggle from below provides the necessary seeds for the future anarcho-communist society. A society freed from the oppression of both class and state, markets and wage systems; a society where industry is owned and managed by the workers themselves and in the interests of society rather than profit. A society based on the principles of self-management, direct democracy, decentralization, freedom, mutual aid and socialism.

We are only now beginning to understand the power that we-the exploited, oppressed, and disinherited of the world-possess in our collective refusal of the misery of global capitalism. We are approaching a new dawn, where the ruling classes of the

world will be forced to dance to the beat of our drum. We look forward to the revolutionary upheavals on the horizon that will bring a violent and abrupt end to the capitalist social order and open a path for an anarcho-communist future. We stand uncompromisingly for a new world. We will not fail. The future will be ours.

Northeastern Federation of Anarcho-Communists (NEFAC)
http://flag.blackened.net/nefac
Federation des Communiste Libertaires du Nord-est (NEFAC)
http://www3.sympatico.ca/emile.henry/nefac.htm

When wearing a mask is a revolutionary act By Chuck0

The Associated Press is reporting today that the New York Police Department will arrest any group of 3 or more protesters who wear masks at the upcoming anti-WEF protests. This is part of the city's ongoing efforts to eliminate public activism and otherwise render the city a corporate-sponsored police state. This falls on the heels of a successful prosecution of anarchists who were arrested wearing masks at a demonstration last year.

Their crime? Not smashing a window or throwing something at a cop. Wearing a mask and participating in the long American tradition of anonymous political speech.

We can talk all we want about tactics used by members of the anti-capitalist movement, but the NYPD has issued a fundamental challenge to us. There announcement that they will not permit anonymous political speech is an insult to all of us, and to the citizens of New York City. If there is anything we can collectively agree on, it's that our right have to be asserted, not petitioned from the state. Either the streets are "our streets" or we live in a fascist republic. The best way to assert those rights is through nonviolent civil disobedience in the streets, I'd like to issue a call for all protestors attending the Another World is Possible march on Saturday to wear masks in solidarity and as a visible example of our intent to fight for our rights despite new fascist laws like the PATRIOT Act. I've been in touch with the more militant elements in the movement and I get the impression that there is widespread agreement about abiding by the guidelines for the AWIP march. This is to be expected anyway, since the more militant folks prefer to do their activities away from "green zone" type activities.

This challenge by the NYPD has to be answered by the anti-globalization movement. At the very least, mass civil disobedience in defiance of this law will show that we aren't going to be pushed around by petty, arbitrary anti-activist laws. The NYPD should be publicly ashamed of themselves for insulting the long American tradition of anonymous political speech which started with revolutionaries like Thomas Paine. We need to collectively show the NYPD and the people of New York that the era of Giuliani fascism is over. These are our streets and we'll do what we want on them in a

cooperative, creative, and spirited fashion. All of the state's security cameras, snipers, crowd control technology, and brute force from the "blue bloc" are going to deter us from exercising our fundamental human rights.

Wear a mask to protest the rich meeting at the WEF. Wear a mask in solidarity with the Zapatistas and the billions of people in the Global South who are harmed by neoliberalism, capitalism, and the imperial ambitions of the American state. Wear a sports mask, a muffler, a papier-mâché head, or whatever you need to say "basta" to this petty interference with our rights. Wear black, red, green, yellow, paisley, plaid, or polka dots.

See you in New York. With a mask on.

Chapter XIX
Anti-Fascism in DC and The Baltimore 28
April 24, 2002

Overveiw
In The Streets of Washington DC

April 24th, 2002 witnessed the largest fascist demonstration in the recent history of the U.S. Capital. 400 neo-Nazis took to the streets, calling for Americans to embrace an overtly anti-Semitic world view. The march was organized by the National Alliance. While 400 Nazis may give folks a moment of pause, one should take pride in the fact that the best they can manage to do is well under 1000. Never forget that us on the left have consistently mobilized 100,000s in order to resist globalization, the war in Iraq, and the neo-conservative programs of the current ruling clique. And again, were the Nazis managed 400, we turned out 500 militants in order to remind them whose streets they marched through. Of those 500, one hundred were organized into a Black Bloc.

In the Capital, the Bloc initially focused their attention on a parking garage where the fascists were to assemble. Despite a massive police presence, counter-demonstrators were able to effectively take over one entrance to the garage, and therefore succeeded in turning away a number of Nazis who sought to meet up with their fellow scum. In time, the cops redeployed their forces and regained control of the entrance, allowing the fascists to assemble.

Under heavy police guard, the Nazis eventually left their concrete enclave, and marched towards the Israeli Embassy. Counter demonstrators from numerous organizations including the Arab Anti-Nazi Bloc, the Progressive Labor Party, Left Turn, the International Socialist Organization, Anti-Racist Action, and NEFAC shadowed their every move. Out numbered, the fascists were no doubt happy to be flanked by hundreds of riot police. On a number of occasions the Bloc attempted to break through police lines in order to decisively deal with their advisories. At one point police barricades were overturned, and the crowd nearly reached the enemy. Unfortunately the cops were able to reassert their lines, and maintained the forced separation.

The militant presence of the counter demonstrators compelled the Nazis to relinquish their street presence one hour before their official protest permit was up. As the crowd began to disperse, a number of isolated fascists, were roughed up by members of the Bloc. Two Black Blocers were arrested. Our side reported no injuries.

Meanwhile in Baltimore...

Earlier in that morning a more serious confrontation took place at a fascist meeting place in Baltimore. Through certain intelligence channels, it was learned that the enemy would be concentrating at a Baltimore 'park and ride' before converging on DC. There, two dozen black clad militants arrived in time to witness a bus full of boneheads. With no police visibly in the area, the bus was immediately attacked. The windows were smashed out, the tires were slashed, and the passengers were prayed with pepper spray. The few boneheads who dared exit the vehicle were severely beat. The attack began and ended in a matter of minutes. The bus in question was utterly immobilized, and was unable to continue on to DC. The black clad attackers, suffering no arrests or injuries, quickly disappeared back into wherever they came.

Shortly thereafter, another 28 black clad anti-fascists arrived on the scene. By this time the cops were present in significant numbers. Although many have speculated that these 28 intended on converging simultaneously with the previous attackers, these folk had nothing directly to do with the previous actions. Never the less, they were quickly surrounded, and arrested by the police. The cops and the courts attempted to hold them responsible for the attack, and initially charged them with numerous felony and misdemeanor charges; charges that represented a combined potential for 1177 years in prison. Bails were set excessively high (many between $10,000 to $25,000). Even so, after only 24 hours, friends and allies were able to secure the bail, and the prisoners were released.

In the end, the DC and Baltimore actions blackened the eye of the white supremacists. Their best efforts at mobilizing still resulted in them being out numbered and out muscled by the left. And again, Black Bloc anarchists demonstrated that the streets are still the domain of the people-not the stomping grounds for the fringe element of the far right. Tactically the combined actions of the day demonstrated an advance for the Black Bloc. It showed that the Bloc is capable of ascertaining, distilling, and acting on intelligence information. April 24th witnessed the Bloc effectively dividing its forces between two cities-hitting the enemy at a week point, while challenging the enemy where it was strongest. And again, the attack in Baltimore directly resulted in the fascists' primary forces being thinned in the Capital. Statistically, the Bloc suffered 28 arrests in the process of demobilizing 70 of the enemy. Given the overall numbers, this must be viewed as a tactical victory.

<verbose>*</verbose> As of print, none of the Baltimore attackers have been apprehended, and those wrongly charged with the action have all had their cases dismissed.

THEY WILL NOT PASS! SHUT DOWN THE NEO-NAZIS IN D.C. AUGUST 24!

Smash the National Alliance's racist rally and concert!

On August 24th, the National Alliance is planning "Rock Against Israel": a demonstration of white supremacist Hitler-fetishists protesting against the white supremacist U.S. government's support of white supremacist religious nuts in Israel. (Confused yet?) They plan to rally at the Capitol building from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm, and then meet for dinner and a white power concert in the evening.

The National Alliance, probably the most organized and sophisticated white-power group in North America today, is calling for what they claim will be 'the largest gathering of white nationalists at the U.S. Capitol in history.' Obviously that's not true. Congress has a few more people in it than the National Alliance can pull out and they've been meeting there for more than a hundred years. But August 24th will probably see the largest gathering of organized, self-confessed white supremacists since the mass Klan marches of the twenties.

While any time recently the Nazis have tried to organize publicly in angry working-class towns, they have been shut down and chased out, so far they've been given a free pass in DC. Over the past year they've held three rallies at the Israeli embassy and two at the German embassy. Their last rally had over 200 people with little to no organized opposition. This has to stop. August 24th will be a turning point.

We are committed to planning a strong, militant, and well coordinated response to the fools this time around. We're tired of seeing fascist movements keep growing because many don't take fascism and the possibility of its emergence seriously. Sure they're a long way from taking over the country, but three hundred boneheads coming out to demonstrations, building bombs, dreaming about gas chambers and ethnic cleansing, is three hundred too many. Different fascist groups are now strategically orienting their rhetoric towards some of the struggles the left and revolutionary forces have been organizing against for years, like fighting corporations and globalization, supporting Palestinian resistance, anticolonialism, and we're really bothered that they can get some credibility doing that because many of the people involved in those issues won't take a stand and shut them down.

We will be organizing in several different contingents with various risk levels and levels of political and tactical unity. But the unifying thread is that we all recognize the need for a physical resistance to fascism. It should be clear to people that we're not going down there because we support Bush's government or the Israeli government or any government for that matter. We're organizing with one purpose: to drive the Nazis off the streets and undermine their confidence and ability to organize, or even go out into public without getting a boot to the head.

We call on all who agree with this purpose to endorse this call and begin planning in their affinity groups for August 24th.

Contact: bmoreantifascists@hotmail.com

Signed,

East Coast Anti-Fascist Network, D.C. Anti-Fascist Network, Baltimore Anti-Racist Action [ARA], Anarchist Black Cross Federation-Lancaster, Claustrophobia Collective-Baltimore, Roundhouse Collective (NEFAC)-Baltimore, ARA Philly, Firm!, Baltimore Anti-Fascist Action, Femme Fatale Collective-Boston/Baltimore, Open City Collective (NEFAC)-New York City, New Jersey ARA, Toronto ARA, Columbus ARA, Aurora ARA.

Fascists, Anti-Fascists And The State By Flint, Roundhouse Collective (NEFAC-Baltimore)

> "The totalitarian vision of fascists often resonates with the many statists who wish to unbind their hands from the pretense of 'democratic' government and civil liberties."

—Call for a Revolutionary Anti-Fascist Bloc

Over the last two years, the neo-Nazi National Alliance (NA) has held a variety of public demonstrations. The NA is the largest, most well-financed, white supremacist fascist organization in North America. The most successful venue for them has been Washington, D.C. On May 11th, they had their fifth demonstration. The May demonstration outside the Israeli embassy, the largest public display of fascists in the U.S. in decades, numbered over 300 hundred fascists.

After the May 11th demonstration, an east coast anti-fascist networking conference was held in Baltimore to plan for the next time the NA would march. As soon as details of the next NA action were known, several calls to action began to circulate-in particular NEFAC's call for a Revolutionary Anti-Fascist Bloc. Other calls came from Anti-Racist Action (ARA), and an Arab Anti-Nazi Bloc. The Open City Collective in New York City held a teach-in, as well as publicly responding to crypto-fascist Israel Shamir attempts to spread disinformation to the Palestinian solidarity activist community.

Responding to the NA's increasing presence, local activists formed the D.C. Anti-Fascist Network. People went door to door in North East D.C. Posters were wheat pasted throughout the city, and flyers were handed out at metro stations for months before the action. There was also a concerted effort to outreach at the Reparations march in D.C. the weekend before August 24th.

Leading up to the action, ARA groups did public outings of local neo-nazis in Ohio, New Jersey, and Maryland. The outing in Maryland was particularly interesting, as it exposed Steven Smith, owner of the Nazi paraphernalia online store SS Regalia. Smith

was attempting to use an elementary school in Edgewater as a meeting location for carpooling and busing to D.C.

With the Edgewater location outed, the NA chose the Baltimore Travel Plaza for its meeting location outside D.C. Once again, the location became known to anti-fascists who distributed flyers door to door in the O'Donell Heights neighborhood—warning that the fascists were coming to town and calling for a demonstration at the Travel Plaza on Saturday morning. It became common knowledge that the fascists were not only meeting at the travel plaza, but had rented several buses for Saturday.

About an hour before the scheduled demonstration, a bus load of neo-nazis from Detroit pulled into the Travel Plaza. Varying reports describe what happened next: a small mob garbed in black charged the neo-nazis. Only a few boneheads had gotten off the bus, and those that did were attacked. The bus took most of the damage, having its windows smashed, tires slashed, and the interior pepper sprayed. As quickly as they came, the attackers fled the scene, leaving behind a banner that read "Smash Hate." Eventually the neo-nazis left their bus, and were joined by other neo-nazis from a nearby hotel. Cops swarmed the Plaza, trying to understand what had happened. One cop reported to the media that it had been a fight between rival neo-Nazi gangs.

Later, anti-fascists arrived in a nearby parking lot for the counter-protest that had been previously announced. They got out of their cars, saw the scene over at the Travel Plaza with its confusion of fascists, police and a downpour of rain, and debated whether to continue or head on to D.C. They crossed the street. Twenty-eight of them were arrested. They were held for an hour in the rain, while neo-nazis were allowed to photograph them, before being taken to central booking and held for twenty-four hours before receiving their papers. When they were finally allowed to see commissioners, some of the twenty-eight were released on their own recognizance while others received bail amounts upwards of $10,000. Twenty-six were charged with three counts of aggravated assault, possession of a deadly weapon with intent to injure, malicious destruction of property, rioting and disorderly conduct. Bizarrely, some of them had a "hate crimes" enhancement on their charges. The only minor arrested was ludicrously charged with an additional 20 counts of assault. Even the lawyer that accompanied them was arrested with the charge of failing to obey an officer.

Meanwhile, things were getting started in D.C. The NA was meeting at the top of the parking garage of Union Station. The police had erected small barricades around the south side of Union Station's exit ramp, complemented by hundreds of riot cops, horse cops, squad cars and armored cars. The hum of the police helicopter remained constant through out the day.

The Revolutionary Anti-Fascist Bloc (RAFB) was forming up at Stanton Park at Maryland Avenue and 4th St NE, including NEFAC and ARA. Their meeting location had been publicly announced, and was also attended by a dozen marked police cars. Once the RAFB had gathered enough participants, they headed up 4th Ave towards Union Station. The bloc, however, didn't turn directly towards the phalanx of police. Instead, they headed further north into North East where anti-fascists had previously

gone door to door. The police held their positions and didn't follow. Eventually, the bloc reached H Street, and then quickly marched up the H Street overpass to the north side entrance of Union Station parking garage that was "guarded" by a single squad car. The bloc deployed itself thinly across the entrances to the parking garage. A few neo-nazis had already made it into the parking garage and looked over the edge at the black clad anti-fascists. Several vehicles of suspected fascists were turned away from the garage. Eventually the police redeployed and riot cops marched up the overpass ordering the bloc to disperse. The bloc headed down the hill and headed towards the police barricades on the south side.

A large crowd had gathered around Columbus Circle. Where there had been plans for several distinct blocs, such as one for the D.C. Anti-Fascist Network, another for the Arab anti-Nazi bloc, and another for the Youth Leadership Support Network; everyone merged into one mass. The Progressive Labor Party's megaphones led the chants of "Death to the Klan." Perhaps five hundred anti-fascist demonstrators were there, six times as many as were at the May 11th demonstration. While this was a real improvement in the size of counter-demonstrations in DC over the past two years, it was only as large as similar counter demonstrations in York (Pennsylvania), Richmond (Virginia), and Wakefield (Massachusetts). Most of the demonstrators were part of leftist groups like Left Turn, International Socialist Organization (ISO), and Anti-Capitalist Convergence (ACC). The lack of spontaneous participation by locals was disappointing-in many smaller towns, there typically is larger participation from unaffiliated locals, as well as more participation from liberals groups like the NAACP, or church groups.

One group needs particular mention, the Arab Anti-Nazi Bloc that was formed by Palestinians, Arabs and Muslims. The NA was attempting to hijack the cause of Palestinian liberation through their "Tax Payers Against Terrorism" and turn anti-Israel sentiment, to anti-Semitism, even boasting that there would be Arabs in attendance supporting them. There were none who came to support the NA, but many who came out to oppose them. Organized by participants in the Committee in Solidarity with the People of Palestine (CSPP) and Stop U. S. Tax Aid to Israel Now (SUSTAIN), their message was opposition to both Israel's treatment of Palestinians, and opposition to anti-Semitism.

The NA was able to assemble about four hundred fascists, even with one bus disabled in Baltimore-however they were also an hour late. The RAFB had deployed too early to actually block the buses of the fascists. Typically, the NA march was exclusively white, overwhelmingly male, and mostly boneheads and some older suit & tie fascists. The entire time, they were guarded by police who kept the counter-demonstrators away. Whenever small groups or individual Nazis left police protection, they were harassed by counter-demonstrators to the point of fleeing back to behind police lines.

The counter-demonstrators followed the Nazis along their entire route. By the reflecting pool, counter demonstrators tore down some barricades to get closer to the fascists, but were effectively kept separated from the fascists who were "sieg heiling" on

Capitol Hill. At one point, the NA demonstration lost cohesion as boneheads slipped the leash of their suit & tie masters to be so "brave" as to shout insults at anti-fascists behind a fence, a wall, and a small army of riot police. The NA left Capitol Hill, forty minutes before the permit was set to expire. While counter-demonstrators dogged the NA march back from the Capitol, there was little confrontation as the sheer number of police left little opportunity. There were a few scuffles with Nazis departing the area in personal automobiles. There were only two arrests of counter demonstrators for disorderly conduct in D.C.

The NA headed north, returning to Baltimore. The most successful technique for the NA for increasing participation at public demonstrations, has been by combining them with hate core music shows at a venue near to the protest. In exchange for going to the demonstration, the suits bribe the boneheads with a racist concert. The venue was discovered by anti-fascists, who followed the Nazis back to Baltimore.

Several anti-fascist groups met in a show space in Baltimore, the Bloodshed. Discussion ranged from jail solidarity for those already arrested, to plans to counter the concert. Police presence in the neighborhood was unusually large, and the anti-fascists decided to change location. Shortly after they left, the building was raided by police conducting a warrant-less search. There were no arrests. There were several reports that throughout the evening after the protest in D.C., that anti-fascists in the Baltimore area were pulled over by the police and questioned, some at gun point.

The remaining anti-fascists had decided that the best course of action was to expose the controversial location of the Nazi concert-an active duty National Guard Armory in White Marsh, Maryland. To do so, they went to the Progressive Action Center (PAC), home of the Baltimore Independent Media Center. As they gathered at the building, police began to arrive there as well. All of the anti-fascists entered the PAC and locked the door. A police chopper was overhead, along with marked and unmarked police cars. Eventually the police came to the door demanding entry. Lacking a warrant, they were denied. The PAC is an old public library in the residential neighborhood, and a day care center is in it's basement. Perhaps it was the more public nature of the location, with curious neighbors looking on from their porches, that deterred the police from conducting another raid. While some anti-fascists worked the phones and the internet to expose the hate core show, others negotiated outside with the police. From the roof, a banner was dropped reading "Anti-Racists Under Siege." When the corporate television media arrived on the scene, the police withdrew. After an exclusive interview with television news, the anti-fascists left the PAC for yet another location to plan jail solidarity for the arrested.

There were anti-fascists who made it to the National Guard Armory. Some conducted surveillance, others quickly organized a small protest. According to neighborhood residents, police had been training outside the Armory for days, for exactly what they were doing that day-guarding the neo-nazis. Over thirty police vehicles, including a helicopter, and a large group of riot police protected the Nazi show. The police set up a road blocks in the vicinity of the Armory, using them as checkpoints for iden-

tifying and interrogating drivers. Unlike D.C., the National Guard Armory is in the center of several residential neighborhoods, about fifty neighbors came out to see the commotion and spontaneously joined the counter-demonstration against the neo-nazis. There were no confrontations at the concert, and no arrests.

Though there was some mild harassment by police of the picketers outside the jail solidarity vigil in Baltimore for the Twenty-Eight arrested that morning, there was far more support-ranging from the recently released and their visitors, neighbors, passing motorists, and even cops who would honk their horns in support. The defense committee began raising bail. With such high bails, however, a bondsman had to be used, which still meant raising a thousand dollars for each prisoner bonded. The solidarity picket was maintained continuously until everyone was released by Monday morning. One example of the continuing patriarchy of the state is that women prisoners could not released at night, even if their bail had been posted-though men could be release at any time.

The trouble for the "Parking Lot Twenty-Eight," as they called themselves on the inside, didn't stop there. Most of their names, descriptions, ages, addresses and phone numbers found their way from the police-into the hands of fascists, who gleefully publicized that information as on their websites and email lists, along with several violent threats. Not only information from the defendants, but also information for many anarchist and activist spaces in Baltimore and Philadelphia were distributed. Then, the hang up calls started. Later, anti-fascists at their home in New Jersey found National Alliance stickers on their door and literature in their mailbox. In Pittsburgh, the fascists were bolder, three of them showed up to the home of one of the defendants armed with a baseball bat and knives. However, they were confronted by three unarmed anti-fascists-the fascists didn't go beyond talking. Eventually the police arrived and sent the fascists home. So far, none of the defendants in Baltimore have had any trouble from fascists.

Was the march by the NA a victory? Was it a victory for the anti-fascists? It seems inconclusive. Unlike May 11th, anti-fascists were considerably better organized. There were more counter protesters at the demonstration, which have been slowly increasing in diversity. While it didn't achieve the spontaneous popular participation that made York and Wakefield interesting, there was more potential for that when the Nazis venture out of such a secure "official" venues as Capitol Hill, and into the neighborhoods. The events of around the NA march were the lead story on all local television stations as well as CNN and many newspapers, many with stories sympathetic towards the anti-fascists.

The only time the neo-nazis didn't have police protection, is the only time they were decisively attacked. The confrontation at the Travel Plaza certainly disrupted the NA, caused them to loose a bus and arrive late. All of the NA's security culture for meeting locations was repeatedly, and visibly compromised.

Since that time, cracks have continued to develop in the unity of the fascist milieu in North America. Bill Roper, deputy membership coordinator of the National Alliance,

who had been the driving force in organizing these demonstrations-was fired from his position and expelled from the organization. Roper is now calling for others to follow him in founding a new organization-a move that may further divide neo-nazis. There have also been a number of public arguments about the NA suit & tie fascists disrespecting their bonehead supporters. For now, the Baltimore Hammerskins are throwing their support behind the National Alliance, not Roper. After another fiasco in Wakefield, many fascists are also questioning the behavior of Matt Hale of the World Church of the Creator, who led the NA into the disastrous (for them) situation in York. Gliebe, the new "CEO" of the NA, seems to be distancing himself from public protest and illegal action, while Roper might lack the support to continue his public demonstrations. One thing is certain, continual opposition to fascist gatherings by anti-fascists, does little to bolster the morale of fascists, and much to discourage them.

Most of the problems for anti-fascists have come, not from the fascists, but from the state. The state protected the fascists for the entire day. The government protected the fascist meeting points in Baltimore, escorted them through D.C., and guarded their racist concert. The state provided an active duty National Guard Armory for the concert, despite public outcry against it. The state went beyond merely protecting fascists, to actively repressing anti-fascists by arresting counter-demonstrators, and framing them. The police continued to harass anti-fascists by raiding their meeting locations, and attempting to disrupt their media work, counter-protests and jail solidarity. The message was clear, "state protection for fascists, state repression for anti-fascists."

<verse>*</verse> As of October 8th, the majority of the Baltimore Anti-Racist Twenty-Eight defendants have had their cases dismissed.

Statement from Baltimore 28
August 29, 2002

This is the statement that the Baltimore 28 wrote and would like distributed far and wide. People are also encouraged to make this into a double-sided flyer... Please Distribute Widely

Support The Baltimore Anti-Racist 28!

On the morning of August 24, 2002, twenty-eight anti-racist activists went to the Baltimore Travel Plaza to protest the neo-Nazi organization "The National Alliance." Some two hundred racists were gathering there to meet before caravanning to their march and rally in Washington, D.C. later that day. As the activists entered the parking lot of the Travel Plaza, it began to storm and the group was confronted by several police cars. The twenty-eight attempted to return to their cars when suddenly they were surrounded by dozens of police cars and wagons. Held in the pouring rain for nearly an hour, they were eventually cuffed and brought to the Southeast District police station. After hours of shivering on the floor of a conference room without being charged,

they were transferred to Central Booking and held for almost twenty-four hours before receiving their papers. When they finally were allowed to see commissioners, some of the twenty-eight were released on their own recognizance while others received bail amounts upwards of $10,000. None of these twenty-eight activists had committed any crime, nor were they told what they were being charged with until after they had been interviewed. Bail was raised and all activists are now out of jail, but the legal battle is just beginning.

Later that night...

Baltimore police carried out a raid on a community center, the activists were using to coordinate jail solidarity, without a warrant. They confiscated pamphlets, magazines and other literature. Immediately afterward, police surrounded a progressive activist center and they attempted another warrant-less search. The activists inside refused to talk to police and instead called the media. The police left the scene when the media showed up. Police then followed and pulled over cars traveling to and from these locations without providing reasons for the stops. Several people were pulled over at gunpoint for trying to reach these safe spaces. The Baltimore Police Department is going forward with their trumped up charges. Once again the police are protecting violent racists over the interests of our communities. In addition to funds, the Baltimore Anti-Racist 28 are also in need of legal support. Any legal resources you can provide will be greatly appreciated and are desperately needed. It is clear that the charges against the Baltimore Anti-Racist 28 and the harassment of the Baltimore Anti-Racist community are part of a larger attempt to silence the voices of committed activists. Due to the scale of media coverage and the various regions represented by the defendants, this case is important to everyone continent-wide who is opposed to racial and other Nazi prejudices. Accurate information on the charges and the police tactics and response to anti-racism must be disseminated. Corporate media accounts are based on the statements by the police and the National Alliance. Please spread the true message as far and wide as you can. Flyers, benefits, teach-ins, demonstrations, etc. are needed to assist the Anti-Racist 28 through their court cases.

The Results:

Twenty-six activists have each been charged with: One count of rioting (unlimited penalty) Three counts of second degree aggravated assault (punishable by up to 10 years in prison and/or a $2,500 fine) One count of possession of a deadly weapon with intent to injure (punishable by up to 3 years in prison and/or a $1,000 fine) One count of malicious destruction of property valued over $500 (punishable by up to 3 years in prison and/or a $2,500 fine) One count of disorderly conduct (punishable by up to 60 days in prison and/or a $500 fine) The twenty-seventh activist, a minor, received the same charges plus an additional 20 counts of Second Degree Aggravated Assault. The twenty-eighth activist, a representative of the National Lawyers Guild, was also arrested while he attempted to protect the rights of the activists. He was charged with one count of failing to obey an officer (punishable by up to 60 Days in prison and/or a $500 fine). The National Alliance claimed to police that they were

confronted by anti-fascists in the morning. If so, they had been there and left well before the twenty-eight had arrived. The police decided to round up anyone in the parking lot and are attempting to pin any real or imagined crimes the National Alliance racists complained of on these innocent activists. These anti-racist activists need your assistance as they are facing a combined total of about 1,177 years of jail time. Please donate to the Baltimore Anti-Racist 28 Legal Defense Fund. Many thousands of dollars will be needed by these brave and dedicated activists to fight these bogus charges. Much thanks to all of the great people who sent money for bail, but the serious costs will begin now. Every little bit counts.

Please send legal support donations to:
Black Planet Books
1621 Fleet Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21231-2931 USA
Phone: 410.537.5005 E-Mail: antifalegal@hotmail.com.
Personal checks or money orders should be made out to Black Planet Books.
If sending cash, please conceal it well.
Please note in envelope that your donation is for the Baltimore Anti-Racist 28 Legal Defense Fund.

In solidarity,
The Baltimore Anti-Racist 28 Defense Committee
Silence Is Approval!
Demand Justice Now!

Support The Baltimore 28!
August 28, 2002

On August 24th 2002, Anti-Racists and Anarchist protestors came together against the march of the neo-Nazi, white power group, the National Alliance in Washington D.C. In solidarity with the demonstrations in D.C., protestors in Baltimore went to the Baltimore Travel Plaza to confront two bus loads of neo-Nazis on there way to D.C. in the early hours of the morning. Upon the arrival of anti-racists activists, an alleged confrontation broke out between protestors and neo-Nazis. The alleged confrontation apparently lasted only a few minutes before the protestors departed and the neo-nazis ran on to their hired buses.

The Result of this alleged melee was the arrest of 27 anti-racists activists as well as the Anti Racist Action Lawyer, and zero National Alliance members. The 27 arrestees and the lawyer were taken to Baltimore Central Booking and held 16 hours, and 14 hours, respectively, before being informed of their charges. The lawyer, the first to be released, was charged with failure to obey a police officer. The rest as of Monday night

have all been either bailed out or released. All 27 face multiple felony charges including: 1st degree assault with a deadly weapon, possession of deadly weapons, inciting a riot, aggravated assault, and participating in a hate crime. Not only do these anti-racists face multiple felony charges, but multiple counts of each specific felony charge. One arrestee was deprived of her insulin during her entire stay in Central Booking-despite her becoming ill. The one juvenile arrested was handed the harshest charges, as well as separated out of the group with a different court date.

Bails ranged from $10,000 to $25,000—all the money for bonds, a total of nearly $28,000—was raised by Saturday night around 10 pm to get these people out of jail. When fellow anti-racists returned to Baltimore from the DC protest—to figure out what they could do to assist our people on the inside-the police decided to once again target anti-racist and anarchist community spaces. A group of police and FBI raided a warehouse, entering without a warrant (thanks to the USA PATRIOT ACT), searching the space, and collecting flyers, newspapers, and magazines. Immediately afterwards a progressive center was surrounded by police and anti-racists inside barricaded the doors-refusing to talk to police, they began to bombard the media about the situation-as more and more media began to show up, the police eventually left. Police followed and pulled over cars going to certain or leaving from certain places, with out explaining or giving reasons for the stops. Since 7 pm on August 24th, Saturday—jail solidarity for our fellow anti-racists inside was kept up- 24 hours a day until they were all released today.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!!! The $28,000 of bond has left many people both those arrested and those anxious to get them out, with no money, and some people with in the prison lost their jobs for missing work. The court process is going to be a long one-with travel and lawyer expenses!

ANY HELP OF ANY KIND IS APPRECIATED!!!

PLEASE CONTACT THE BALTIMORE ANTIRACIST DEFENSE FUND FOR MORE INFORMATION AT:
bmoreARDF@ziplip.com

The First Court date for the 26 of those arrested is September 26th, 2002, the second court date for the juvenile arrestee is September 30th.

ANTIFASCIST ALWAYS!!!
SOLIDARITY
THE BALTIMORE ANTI-RACIST DEFENSE FUND

COPS, NEO-NAZIS FAIL TO PREVENT SUCCESSFUL ANTI-RACIST BENEFIT CONCERT
By JERSEY ANTI-RACIST ACTION, OCTOBER 18, 2002

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

On Friday, October 11, New Jersey Anti-Racist Action (NJ ARA) successfully held a benefit show for the Baltimore 28, despite the heavy police harassment, attempted repression and credible threats from local neo-nazis, the chapter and its supporters faced during the weeks leading up to the show.

Although some last minute problems arose and the show had to be moved twenty minutes away from its scheduled location, people still attended and the Baltimore 28 added over $100 to its legal fund.

Originally, the show was scheduled to take place on October 12, at a café in Montclair, NJ. On Sunday October 6, the owner of the cafe was visited by two people who identified themselves as FBI agents. They told him that they planned on placing undercover agents at the show and proceeded to question him about the show and its organizers, as well as his connection to the Baltimore 28 and NJ ARA. They specifically wanted to know who was a member of the local ARA chapter and who was the main organizer behind the benefit show. He informed them that the show had been cancelled as the headlining band had pulled out.

The show was then rescheduled for Friday, October 11 at a house in New Brunswick, NJ. Unfortunately, the Feds found out about this venue as well and contacted the local police department, who in turn called the landlord of the show space, who coincidentally is also a New Brunswick police officer.

The landlord notified his tenants that if they proceeded to have the show they would be evicted. He explained that the FBI informed him that the house would be under heavy surveillance during the show because they were looking for specific individuals, and that there was a good chance that everyone attending the concert would be arrested. Along with these standard COINTELPRO intimidation tactics, the feds also said that they were interested in the show because they had received a specific death threat against an ARA member, and that they were going to be present to protect the show from violence. These are the same excuses the police used in Philadelphia to surveil and harass a benefit show last winter in Philadelphia, where that local ARA chapter was holding a benefit to help those wrongfully arrested in York, Pa.

The landlord went on to tell his tenants that in the future they were prohibited to have any shows, even though there had never been any previous problems.

Late Friday afternoon, the show organizers were able to secure another location for the show. ARA posted people at the house where the show was scheduled, as well as at a meeting point that had been established to greet out-of-towners coming in for the show to redirect people and to deal with police repression.

The show was able to continue, with neither the police or neo-nazis ever finding out the new show location. Despite this, local police, no doubt assisted by federal agents, were present at both the meeting location, a local pizza parlor, and the house in New Brunswick, watching and taking pictures of innocent activists redirecting people to the show.

At the same time the police were trying to shut down the show other officers were intimidating ARA members. For example, an undercover officer visited the workplace of one New Jersey ARA member early last week watching her and a co-worker lock up at the end of the day.

From workplace harassment to wiretaps, New Jersey ARA members have been the target of attempted government repression. Several ARA members have been watched, followed, and had their residences bugged within the last couple of weeks. However, rather than allowing these obstacles prevent the show from taking place, they worked to ensure that the show went on without interference and that the Baltimore 28 received some money.

As we enter this time of heightened government repression it is vital that we do not let the coercive forces of the State silence the voices of dissent. We must not let them prevent us from doing our work. As seen this weekend in New Jersey, despite the obstacles the government may place in our paths in hopes of preventing us from continuing with our work, we can and will succeed.

Poetry for the Baltimore 28
by Anonymous

November 13, 2002

storm drains running full
commuter buses no where to go
when the squad cars
roll into the square
dozens on 28 just ain't fair
shivering on the station floor
i'm gonna be late for my date
the rain is running down the door
louisville is farther from baltimore then you think
the storm outside is pouring again
baltimore's finest outside

trying to force their way in
national alliance street thugs
racist lies spread thin
shivering on the station floor
i'm gonna be late for my date
the rain is running down the door
louisville is father from baltimore then you think
there's a trampled flag in the gutter
red and black cuts and bruises
inconsequential evidence of state abuses
washed clean with moral absolution
silence is approval
28 reasons to
demand justice now

Chapter XX
Boston: Convergence of Struggles
May 5, 2002

Overview

The Convergence of Struggle March (May 5th) took place after a week of actions and anarchist cultural events termed the Festival Del Pueblo. The location for the festival was in and around Boston. Originally purposed by the now defunct Barricada Collective, it was organized by many individuals and collectives throughout the Boston area. Coming on the heels of major anti-globalization protests, and under the shadow of the recent insurrections in Argentina, May 5th was billed as a potentially heavy day of conflict against the state. The march hoped to draw attention to poverty, lack of affordable housing, and the evils of the prison industrial complex. Initially it was to be divided in two; one section extremely militant, the other less so. Endorsed by over 50 organizations and collectives from across the U.S. and Canada, including many groups with a powerful reputation within Black Bloc circles, it was thought that it could open a new chapter in anarchist street protests. And again, the May 5 march was an attempt for anarchists to break out of the abstract confines of anti-globalization. Here, the idea was to turn the movement's attention back solidly to community and class based issues which have an obvious and daily impact upon people's lives. This plan also had the distinction of being the first time in the history of the North American Black Bloc where a "tactical team" was formally created in order to develop the finer points of the day's action, as well as to help hold the Bloc's formation and movement together as events got underway.

The tactical team was empowered by the Festival's general assembly. This assembly was composed of the volunteer organizers of the week long events. It met regularly in the months preceding the gathering and it operated according to directly democratic principles consistent with anarchism. Some speculated that the May 5 Black Bloc was to serve as a kind of test run for certain organizational frameworks that, if proven effective, could be utilized at larger demonstrations.

The days immediately before May 5th were marked by miscommunication and secrecy. The assembled Black Bloc affinity groups held a formal meeting where general plans were discussed. However, miscommunication resulted in a number of organiza-

tions failing to take part in the process. This, right or wrong, had the negative impact of compelling certain collectives to opt out of the action. Even so, come May 5, several hundred anarchists converged and formed a very well organized Bloc.

Still, for a variety of reasons the large number of non-Bloc participants failed to materialize, and the militant anarchist contingent was itself smaller then had been expected. Therefore, all march attendees were effectively merged into the Bloc. And again, given the relatively low numbers, it has been rumored that the tactical team toned down the action. Even so, as it got underway, they stayed in tight formation, behind large banners. The front banner read "Homes Not Jails." Moving through the Black, working class, streets of Roxbury, many local residents offered a fist in the air as a symbol of solidarity. At one point a faction of the Bloc split off and forced their way into an abandon building. Once inside they dropped banners from the second floor reading "Evict The Rich For Change." Bloc members managed to hold the squatted building for the remainder of the day as a symbolic action bringing attention to the city's housing crisis.

The protesters soon moved on to the upper middle class Newbury Street shopping district. There some windows of a corporate chain store where smashed in. However, the police seemed to be unprepared to physically challenge the anarchists. In the end, the Bloc spilled out into the Boston Common. No arrests were made.

While considered an overall disappointment by the organizers, May 5 carries a degree of historical significance never the less. First, it influenced the emerging focus of the anarchist movement back to the bread and butter issues of poor and working peoples' lives. Second, it proved the effectiveness of democratically empowered tactical teams (i.e. "tacs," "tactical facilitators," etc). The fact that the Bloc maintained a tight formation, did not debate direction at intersections, maintained a healthy pace, and generally turned corners, was a contributing factor in avoiding arrest. If, as is sometimes the case, the Bloc degenerated after the first act of property destruction, or if it lingered too long after the building take over, the chances that the police would have been better able to grasp the situation and move against them would have been greatly increased. The tactical team along with the strong internal organization of many participating affinity groups made such situations avoidable. The recent history of street protests seem to support the claim that the more internal structure the Bloc has (while remaining true to anarchist democracy), the less likely it is to be corralled, dispersed, shutdown, or selectively incarcerated. This is a lesson the anarchist movement should take to heart.

Boston, May 5th, Take to the Streets!

... Because the cost of living in our neighborhoods continues to rise while our wages shrink.

... Because we are tired of greedy landlords raising our rents and driving us out of our homes

... Because we must stop police brutality and racial profiling

... Because we can no longer watch as our sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, are

sent off to prison for the crime of being born poor or the ***wrong*** color
... Because the fact that we are immigrants does not make us terrorists or mean that we do not have rights
... Because we want freedom for Colombia, Puerto Rico, and all of Latin America
... Because we refuse to waste our youth and old age in the indignity of dead-end jobs
... We Unite Our Voices To Better Our Lives!

On May 5th those of us who are sick and tired of being cold all winter, of living on too little food, too much work and too little pay; of being harassed for being of color; those of us who are tired of struggling just to survive will come together in Boston in a struggle to truly live! In this spirit, we come together for:

- Affordable Housing For All
- Universal Health Care For All
- Amnesty For All Immigrants
- The US Out of Latin America; Puerto Rican Independence; and an End to Plan Colombia
- An End to Police Brutality
- The Dismantlement of the Prison-Industrial Complex
- Women's Reproductive Rights and An End to Sexism
- Sexual Liberation and An End to Homophobia and Transphobia
- A Sustainable Ecology; An End to the Poisoning Of Our Communities and the Earth
- Community Empowerment, Resistance, and Freedom

This demonstration and day of action will be an opportunity for all to express their anger at the conditions we are all forced to endure, using a diversity of tactics. However, in the interest of ensuring the widest possible participation and respecting the safety and wishes of others, the day will be organized in a manner that allows for each individual or group to choose their level of risk and specific tactics. We also encourage everyone to organize their own autonomous actions while in Boston. More information to come.

If you wish to endorse this demonstration and day of action, please contact Festival del Pueblo at:

FestivaldelPueblo (at) hotmail.com
Festival del Pueblo
POB 73
Boston, MA, 02133, USA

Boston's Festival Del Pueblo: A Critical Analysis By Nicolas, Barricada Collective

Introduction

As we write this, Boston's Festival del Pueblo, held between May 1st and 5th, is already five months behind us. Yet, for us at Barricada, just as with the many other people who devoted so much time and energy to the project, we can only just now begin to gather our thoughts, re-gather strength, and analyze the event in a calm and collected manner.

The fact is that, just as we find it important to highlight the times when we are involved in projects which we consider to be successes, it is as important, if not more, to highlight our failures and shortcomings, as well as analyzing the concrete reasons for them.

Let's be clear. In our opinion, the FDP was, short of a total disaster, clearly a resounding failure. This is not to say that it was without its small successes and victories (which are discussed later on), but on the overall scale, it fell pathetically short of what it was intended to be, and the form which it took was not at all what we had hoped for. For what it turned out to be, i.e. a five day primarily social gathering of anarchists, it was perfectly enjoyable and pleasant [*Unless you happened to be an organizer, hadn't slept in days, and wanted nothing more than for the whole miserable experience to end already. Ed.*]

However, it was not for a gathering of hundreds of white, middle class, crusty, traveler kids that so many of us sacrificed six months of our lives. We put the energy and commitment into it that we did because we felt it was an important experiment with latent potential to start to break the isolation of the anarchist ghetto and harmonize a mass anarchist presence, analysis, and tactics, with the daily struggles of the communities of Boston. It was an attempt to put our theories (outlined in Beggar's article "Towards the Creation of an Anarchist Movement" in *Barricada*, April 2002) into practice.

So, with that said, we would like to now enter into our analysis of the reasons why this project failed like it did, what we see as valid criticisms, what we don't see as valid criticisms, what is truth, what is lies, what is simple misinformation, and what lessons we draw from this experience as we look towards future endeavors. However, before we begin, there is one misconception which we feel it is important to clear up before continuing.

We often hear of FDP referred to as a "Barricada Event", with all the subsequent congratulations and criticisms directed solely at us. This is untrue, and above all, unfair to the many non-Barricada people deeply involved in the project. While the original idea did indeed come from members of Barricada, dozens of other anarchists and anti-authoritarians from the Sophia Perovskaya collective, the Sabate collective, BAAM,

and others were instrumental in giving the project shape and making it a reality. Furthermore, over 70 groups and organizations signed on to endorse the project.

What We Did (But Not Enough of...)

The principal objective of the FDP was to build links between anarchists and communities in struggle of the city of Boston. In order to accomplish this, several things were done during a period of six months. First, we decided to prioritize four specific areas to focus our intervention around. These were immigration, housing, police brutality, and prisons. Our next step was to approach as wide of a variety of community groups and individuals as possible. We undertook this task not from a vanguardist "Here we are, here we come" perspective, but rather with the acknowledgment that these community groups have been doing work around these struggles day in and day out for years now. We went to them asking: A. is our presence welcome?, B. If so, in what capacity?, and C. How can we best ***complement*** the work that you have already been doing? We reached out to the maximum number of groups possible given our limited numbers, resources, and time. At several general assemblies, all present volunteered to contact a certain number of different groups, thus assuring that outreach was everyone's responsibility. A partial list of groups contacted would include SEIU unions, Jobs With Justice, Harvard Living Wage campaign, Dudley Street Neighborhood initiative, Alternatives for Community and Environment, Vida Urbana/City Life, *What's Up* magazine, the Legalization coalition (a pro-Amnesty for immigrants coalition), Spontaneous Celebrations, Critical Breakdown, Student Labor Action Project, AFSC members, and many, many others.

We did not reach out to more due to a simple lack of time and resources, not will. The reactions we received varied. Some groups did not even return our calls, sometimes we were greeted with nearly open hostility, sometimes indifference, and sometimes enthusiasm. In some cases, we managed to set up appointments to meet face to face with group representatives or attend group meetings (Vida Urbana, Legalization Coalition, SLAP, What's Up, Critical Breakdown, JWJ). Again, the results varied from meeting to meeting. From relatively negative scenarios, where hidden sectarian influences were clear or where it was obvious that the will to work together in a principled manner was not present; to mildly positive meetings where it was clear that the organization in question could not, for a variety of reasons, come out publicly in favor of the actions we proposed, but did indeed feel it to be a positive thing that somebody do them and open up those paths; to some very positive meetings that led to steady cooperation and what we hope will be significant long term working relations, most notably with Spontaneous Celebrations and City Life/Vida Urbana.

Anybody who was even mildly involved in the organizing process for the FDP knows that for many of us, this type of work was clearly priority number one. Not only did we call and meet with just about every single minimally supportive organization we could, but, because we do feel that oftentimes it is these organizations that are the

safety valves utilized to tame the anger of the oppressed and which serve as social mediators for capital, we also tried to reach out via other cultures and more aggressive street level agitation.

FDP organizers contacted literally dozens of hip-hop labels and acts, went to hip-hop shows, attended Critical Breakdown regularly for months, organized joint hip-hop/hardcore concerts, reached out to reggae artists, folks artists, and even went so far as to organize not one, but two, free jazz concerts (one during the FDP itself and one as a fundraiser).

We produced and distributed literally tens of thousands of fliers, brochures, and posters. We mailed them to people, attended every minimally relevant event we could think of, distributed them at T-stops, organized flyering groups in different neighborhoods, and even went as far as to distribute them door to door in neighborhoods which we thought to be of particular importance. Hundreds and hundreds of posters addressing the issues of housing and prisons were posted up by different FDP outreach groups all over the city.

There is always more that can be done, and with the benefit of hindsight it is always much easier to point out errors made in outreach strategies. However, those who accuse the FDP of prioritizing the usual anarchist and leftist circles over community in our outreach are speaking simply out of ignorance. The work done was neither glamorous nor exciting, and as such not known to those not in the organizing process, but the undeniable truth is that it was there.

All this being said, it would take a total political imbecile to fail to realize that there were indeed shortcomings, and something did indeed go terribly, terribly, wrong. Unfortunately, we have been unable to answer what exactly that is even to ourselves. If we possessed these answers we would already be busily undertaking the next FDP and doing it correctly this time. But unfortunately, we don't have any answers, only speculations.

Barricada comes from a political context and experience which is significantly different from the US social and political context. We are usually very candid in admitting that we do not feel at home in the U.S. political context, and that this feeling extends itself to anarchist circles as well. We come from a different reality, and most often what we try to do is adapt the strategies, tactics, and outlooks which we bring with us to the U.S. context. We have done this with our propaganda, our political analysis, our anti-fascist perspectives, and with our street tactics. FDP was the same, with the only exception (and what an exception that is!), that this time the lessons which we learned where we were formed politically were, quite simply, not valid.

We come from societies with strong resistance cultures and strong street cultures, where people do not hesitate to take to the streets when they feel wronged or are defending their interests. Thus, in our minds we thought that if we succeeded in tapping into what the people of Boston were discontent with, centered our agitation around that, and provided an anarchist discourse and practice which held relevance to people's

daily lives, we would then succeed in bridging the gap between anarchists and the communities of Boston.

Evidently, we oversimplified the question and thus overlooked significant barriers to effective organizing and agitating in the North American context. Not only did we overlook significant divisions which keep us from effectively working with certain sectors, but we also underestimated the extent to which a large extent of the US working class is pacified. This is not to minimize our own, extensive, mistakes, but merely to assert the reality that resistance and street culture, the culture that says you take to the streets when angry, is very weak in the US, exploding only when a crisis reaches it's boiling point (the L.A. insurrection, the Cincinnati riots, etc.)

The city of Boston is clearly not yet at this boiling point. Again, we say this not because the Festival del Pueblo failed to trigger any sort of mass discontent, as assuming that this would happen merely on our prompting would be incredibly arrogant, but rather because we have seen what the reaction is when the working people of Boston are seriously wronged, such as with the recent police shootings. Not even one hundred people take to the streets. The anger is clearly there, simmering under the surface, the task now is to tap into it through well directed and long term campaigns around particular issues. It is this that will allow for the building of a broad based, class conscious, and multiracial movement which will allow us to respond properly to the attacks of the ruling class on us.

May 1st to May 5th, Five Days that Changed Nothing

The sad reality is that, as far as the working class of Boston is concerned, nothing special happened between May 1st and 5th. So profound was our failure that, aside from being seen at our two marches, some Latin presence at several concerts, and a presence at the Amnesty rally, the FDP might as well have been billed as some sort of "anarchist only" event. For this reason, our analysis of this particular section will not focus on the particular events, as there is not a whole lot to say. Instead, we will use certain examples of what occurred, what we saw, and what we heard, to reveal what we feel to be some of the serious flaws with North American anarchism. So serious in fact, that we have now for months been very open about our desire to distance ourselves from large sectors of the anarchist "movement".

With Anarchists Like These

Some of the things we saw and heard during the five days of the Festival del Pueblo really went a long way towards challenging our faith in anarchism (or better put, in anarchists, as the best examples of anarchism in action these days seem to be coming from people who don't use the term).

- During the "Cultural Gathering" on May 2nd, for which we had an incredible space thanks to the generosity of the Arlington Street Church, we noticed several "anarchists" spitting at the several hundred years old portraits on the walls. While many of these did indeed depict old white aristocrats, the Arlington street church has always been a progressive institution where, among other things, the first draft cards were burnt during the war in Vietnam. If this is the respect anarchists intend to give people who help us out, then the anarchist movement is in a sorry state indeed.

- The issue of basic responsibility and anti-social behavior was actually a constant problem during the festival, particularly at the time of concerts. On the very first night, at one of the hip-hop, punk, and folk concerts held at a downtown night-club (Buzz) we encountered repeated problems with club security due to a group of 15 to 20 people who refused to stop drinking outside and clear the sidewalk area. This however, was a minor incident. A much more serious one occurred at the all punk concert held on Friday, May 3rd at the Berwick in Roxbury. For some background, the Berwick is (was?) a DIY arts space located in a black community that regularly lent itself to various anarchist related events. However, given the precarious nature of the establishment, as well as the location, the show was to end at a certain time and we asked that people refrain from hanging out and making noise on the sidewalk too much. Of course, as with all our concerts (except the one at Buzz), drinking was not allowed.

  At the conclusion of the concert, upwards of 100 people were to be found hanging out outside, several of them drinking. To make matters even worse, one very intoxicated young man was passed out, in the middle of the street of all places. All this is not terribly surprising at a punk rock concert. However, what is surprising and a little much, is when organizers are being accused of being "authoritarians" and what not for trying to clear the area. For the record, to our knowledge, the Berwick no longer hosts concerts.

- During the Anarchist Soccer tournament, which 16 teams participated in [*and the glorious Guardia Negra squad triumphed. Ed.*], we caught the following brilliant piece of conversation during the course of one game:

  Player A: "You can't pick up the ball with your hands, it's against the rules."
  Player B: "I'm an anarchist dude, I'm against all rules."
  Player A: "Yeah, just kidding, we do what we want."
  Player B: "Yeah!"

  It was some of these same people who later demanded that their entire team be allowed to play at the same time. They also confided that they never had any intentions of abiding by the guidelines set up by the tournament organizers and intended to "play what we want, when we want, when we want."

While of course, an anarchist soccer tournament is certainly not an event of great importance, the incredibly weak grasp some people have on anarchism, and not to mention the principles of mutual contracts, voluntary association, and basic respect, is a very serious manner indeed. If it is these sorts of characters who accuse us of being "authoritarians" for trying to uphold these principles basic to our anarchism, then we can only feel flattered.

- All of the above, while symptomatic of what we feel to be large ills, are clearly relatively minor issues. However, what most bothered us about the festival, something which we have been speaking out against for quite some time now, is the re-occurring phenomenon of the anarchist spectators. Anarchists who seem to fail to grasp the fact that anarchism is about self-management and personal initiative. Many people came to the FDP with the same mindset one would expect to take to a cruise vacation. We had people complain about their housing because "there is too much work going on and we can't relax." We had people refuse to help with dismantling rooms and events, and so on and so forth.

  Most disturbing is that, despite receiving a few complaints about certain types of activities not being included in the program of the FDP, aside from the stellar work done by the BALM medics and Indymedia (and some Crimethinc individuals) there was not one single activity of any sort organized during the five days of FDP from outside the general assembly. From the very beginning we made it clear that for us the FDP GA was meant to be an umbrella that others could use to organize their own autonomous actions and events during the course of the five days. For many of us, the overwhelming sensation was that we had organized a five day birthday party for 600 punks.

Catch 22s of North American Anarchism
Trusting Local Organizers vs. "Tell Us The Details Or We Leave"

If anarchists in North America are really serious about changing the character and image of our "movement" (if we can even be called that), then there will need to be some very serious re-evaluation of some of the dogmas that we hold, which are completely opposed to the direction which claim to be wanting to move in. The Festival del Pueblo provided us with numerous examples of this.

First, and probably most important, is that we often hear of the importance of trusting and respecting the work of local organizers. One such instance in which we hear talk of this, and we agree, is when it comes to large mobilization and actions, such as what we intended to do during the FDP. However, for obvious reasons of security and effectiveness, when we carry out precise actions around specific issues that are intended to be truly direct rather than symbolic, not everybody can be privy to all the

details of what the exact target is. Trusting local organizers means that one is made aware of the general nature of an action (which was made very clear in numerous fliers and propaganda handed out during the five days) as well as the issue or issues that the action is trying to either A. bring attention to (in the case of a symbolic action) or B. directly influence (a direct action).

The strategy that the FDP organizers involved in planning the direct actions were trying to implement is not a new invention, neither is it born of a vanguardist secrecy, as some have implied. It is, for example, the way which the anarchist anti-deportation collective in Paris (the Collective Anti-Expulsions) operates. The collective decides on an issue around which to do an action. These are usually to bring attention to deportations, to denounce and pressure companies that collaborate with deportations (such as particular hotels or airlines), or to directly attempt to stop a deportation in progress. In all of these events, once the decision of what the action focuses on is made, an action group is formed to work out the logistics of the action in question. This group knows all the details of the action, but others are informed on a need to know basis, with the only information that is made 100% public being the issue the action is centered around, and the time, place, and date. Needless to say, the action group rotates individuals between actions in order to prevent the creation of an "action hierarchy." This strategy has been effective for years in allowing for mass occupations of buildings, preventing deportations, and so forth.

Clearly, if the goal is to go on a mindless romp through the city, then we can yell it to the four winds. However, if we are to have strategically oriented and serious direct actions, there will have to be a balance reached between democratic participation, accountability, and security culture. Demanding to know every detail of an operation under threat of packing it up and heading home (which many did) is not where that balance lies. Because of this, the action planned was scrapped for some other occasion. Hopefully, in the future more anarchists will trust local anarchist organizers and these actions will become possible.

Breaking out of the Ghetto vs. The DIY Dogma

A particularly fascinating phenomenon which we noticed during the festival was the glaring contradiction between people who, like us, see the need to break out of the anarchist ghetto, yet at the same time refused to take one single solitary step out away from the "anarcho-activist-DIY-dogma." The fact is, what is seen as "correct" or "proper" in our little anarcho world is not always what will allow us to best build relationships with other cultures and communities.

The first example, was the small scandal raised by several individuals over the fact that the first concert of the festival was held at a downtown nightclub. Allow us to state the painfully obvious: Most people, not already like-minded, do not hang out at the local infoshop, and they do not attend punk concerts. They go out to nightclubs. The fact that we were able, after much effort, to have a concert at a nightclub, was a

positive thing, despite the fact that we lost almost $1000 on the night. Why? Because a fair amount of people entered the club, simply because they were looking for a place to have a good time, and ended up being exposed to a night of anarchist music, culture, and ideas.

We will cease to be a counterculture by infusing our politics into the rest of society, not by retreating to the comfort of the infoshops.

Yet another example of this catch 22 involved the controversy over the price of admission to the FDP concerts. First and foremost, it is important to note that every single event at the FDP was 100% free of charge (except the soccer tournament), including housing, vast amounts of food, speakers from all over the country and beyond, and so forth. However, seeing as we have not yet abolished money and established a classless society, all of this came at a price, and not paying back the money we owed was simply not an option. Even most simple conferences ask for 25 to 40$ for a weekend, a total of 25$ for over 50 musical acts over 6 concerts did not seem extravagant to us.

Above all, most of the costs incurred for the concerts centered around booking many hip-hop and free jazz performers. These are both cultures where artists expect to be paid for their performances, whether we like it or not. If we are to have diverse shows with something other than local punk acts playing for free, there will be expenses. So again, the choice is easy. Shell out a few dollars, or limit ourselves to organizing anarchist only events for young punks. We choose the former.

Youth Rebellion vs. Respecting Our Allies

Sometimes, we feel forced to make clear things so basic that it is almost embarrassing to have to be writing them in a magazine. However, some of the behavior which we saw at FDP truly makes us wonder whether people realize this.

If "anarchists" think it is intelligent to spit at paintings in a progressive church, get progressive spaces closed down, alienate our allies, and generally act in ways that can only be described as being wholly anti-social, then clearly, breaking our isolation and establishing meaningful ties with other groups and communities in struggle is going to be a difficult task indeed.

It is already difficult enough to get people to overcome their fear of the word anarchist, but working with other groups begins to become next to impossible when we have to go into meetings apologizing for actions that are more worthy of a garden variety hooligan than any person with serious political convictions. Again, respecting local organizers means respecting where they live and who they work with, and behaving yourself when at large events.

None of this is to take any attention away from the fact that serious mistakes were made in the strategic aspects of the organizing of FDP, the way outreach was handled, the steps we tried to take to involve new people, and in general with our expectations of the event. However, the fact that we, as organizers, committed faults in no way exempts others from also taking responsibility for their own actions. We have accepted

ours, and are now looking to work in different ways in the future, avoiding the mistakes of the past. We hope fellow anarchists will do the same.

Positive Aspects

While we have already made abundantly clear our feelings about the FDP on the overall level, it is important to state that there were indeed some successes and victories. These were dampened by the overall reality of the failure, but noticeable nonetheless. To name but few:

- While it is true that the bookfair was dominated by anarchists and anarchist tables, there were several non-anarchist tables, such as City Life/Vida Urbana, Harvard Living Wage Campaign, *What's Up* magazine, and others. This is still very few, and far from where we would like to be, but certainly more than at most other anarchist bookfair events.
- The presence of the legendary Peruvian rock band "Los Aeropajitas" at two of the FDP concerts brought out many people from the local Peruvian community, who many of us had the opportunity to interact and exchange contacts with.
- The Community Carnival, held in conjunction with the Wake Up the Earth festival was a huge success, and without a doubt the event that best embodied the goals of the FDP.

As a note of closing, most importantly, despite the great amount of effort put into what turned out to be a deception, many of us learned a great deal of important lessons to apply to our future organizing work. Furthermore, we established a great deal of long term relationships with groups that have been doing work around the issues we seek to focus on for years now. It is these relationships that are now allowing us to have a toe, if not a foot, in the door for future projects in the city of Boston. In some odd way, it could even be said that, at least in this sense, the FDP accomplished what it set out to do: It helped us lay the groundwork, establish the links, and build the base for a long term, concerted intervention in the class struggle of Boston. It is now our responsibility to apply the lessons learned, and move forward.

Nicolas
—Barricada Collective

Why Not Pink?
By Molotif

I agree... Some steps have been taken I think at this Festival, but we still have a long way to go... I think some of the people who attended still are in the process of learning about the whole movement, which is not to say that they don't have time...

The problem with the culture, when it comes from such a strong anti-everything subculture image network, is it becomes really hard for the rest of the world to connect to our struggles, and the struggles that we supposedly support... For instance, when we were on Newbury St. yesterday, I was paying close attention to the shopper's responses.. First of all, they had no idea what we were all about, they kept on asking me... I heard one woman say .. "That's what happens when they listen to too much Marilyn Manson..."

That just blew it over the top for me.. Do we really want to be associated with that juvenile shit... I wish we were more colorful and creative, less alienating, and still fucking shit up in a more interesting way, like the housing occupation, that was beautiful....

As for the outreach into the ghetto, that was much more successful than I had thought it would be... The general response seemed to be of support, rather than "who the hell do those white kids think they are..."

They definitely connected to the idea of giving people places to live before locking them up, but they couldn't get much more out of the whole thing... I stayed behind to talk to these people, and they were impressed but confused... They asked me where the organization was, how they could help, and I was rushing, trying to get words out... "Just go to Lucy Parson's...."

After talking to this immigrant in a wheelchair, he followed or actually lead the front of the march the whole way with his fist in the air!!!!!

We really need more outreach... There wasn't one person handing out flyers!!!

And the war against the cop thing.... Yes, the cops were strangely too nice, suspicious, but I think they just had never dealt with these kind of tactics before, and saw people with video cameras etc and didn't want to make themselves look bad...

One blocer dropped his walkie-talkie when he was jumping over a car, immediately after the window cracking... A cop picked it up and the kid yelled to get it back, and the cop quickly handed it back over... The kid then thanked the cop.. "Thanks big guy.."

It was so hilarious and great to see everyone working together.... Some kids tipped over a fancy motor bike by accident and they rushed to pick it back up... The Wake the Earth march was somewhat of a success too. If more of the kids who were too punk to march with a bunch of community groups had actually participated it would have been amazing...

We were communicating with the little tykes at the festival, getting them pumped, but most of the rest of the public were just bewildered by our squat-like presence...

I hope there's more great community collaborative efforts to come.. It is moving...

We have to smash down ALL WALLS !!!!

Chapter XXI
Bush Not Welcome in Portland, Oregon
August 22, 2002

Overview

Doing the one thing he is good at, un-elected President George Bush showed up on the West Coast to raise a couple million for his rich Republican buddies. I for one, always get that warm feeling in my heart whenever I lean that our President is willing to go out of his way to do all he can for our struggling rich people. After all, the working class are too busy working to spend any more money, and the poor? Well, fuck the poor. At least that seems to be the message of the national Republican Party. So yes, our self appointed King blessed the city of Portland with his presence in order to generate a few million for U.S. Senator Gorden Smith. The location was the Hilton Hotel. The Date was August 22, 2002. In response over 2000 local subjects, err, residents took to the streets to show what most folks in this Northwestern feel for our exalted leader. And what pray tell is that? Well, in view of the events of the day in question one word comes to mind; contempt!

The protesters, including a Black Bloc, began their demonstration in a downtown park. Taking to the streets, these good citizens made their way in the direction of the Bush event. Unfortunately they were not the only ones parading that day. A massive contingent of police shadowed their every move. Even so, the demonstrators managed to block the planned route of the President's motorcade for an extended period of time. Eventually the pigs forced the crowd back, allowing Bush and his Secret Service boys to slip passed the angry mob. Even so, the pigs neglected to keep open a corridor for the wealthy Republican attendees of this shameful event. These foolishly brave rich folk were compelled to walk through the crowd to reach the Hilton. They were met with nothing short of righteous, red blooded American abuse.

Throughout the remainder of the demonstration, cops repeatedly attacked the crowd using pepper spray, batons and rubber bullets. The Bloc stood their ground as best they could, but were occasionally forced back.

While Bush was able to make his appearance, it was good that the people resisted his presence. It is nice to know that the people of Portland were able to delay the arrival of our head asshole. Like LBJ and Nixon during the Vietnam War, it should be expected that the people will shadow every move of the President, making our resistance to his continuing wars known to the world. Citizens of Portland, keep up the good work!

Black Bloc Call to Action (August 20-22)

Attention Anarchists, anti-capitalists, anti-authoritarians and activists of all types, this is a call for a Portland demonstration and Black Bloc in response to President Bush's scheduled visit to Portland on Aug. 20-22. Portland has shown time and again that we will not sit idly by when corrupt and power hungry politicians come to our city. Now we have been given an opportunity to show our defiance to these war mongering criminals in an effective and noticeable manner; by doing everything in our power to shut their leader and figurehead out of our city. We must come together and make Portland a city free of corrupt politics (and politicians) if we hope to further our revolutionary ideals and make anarchism, anti-authoritarianism and anti-capitalism significant portions of Portland's culture. We call upon you to help organize and affect this resistance. It's time to take back our streets, take back our city and take back our lives.

We encourage all people to come out and stop Bush from invading our town. Although we think that it's easier and more effective to do this by using more militant, direct action tactics while confronting the police state and Bush we encourage all forms of protest to come out and help us. Look for indymedia for more info on others. Here are some of the reasons that we would like to see, specifically, anarchists making an appearance:

1. To show that Anarchists can achieve their goals. First in lessening the power of the state (stopping Bush from coming to parts of the country he says he rules over) and then in destroying the state and creating the revolution that we're seeking.

2. We believe that stopping politicians from coming to Portland is a step in the right direction for a strategy of producing Anarchism in the United States. By shrinking and destroying the authority that the U.S. puts on its people on a daily basis and filling that power and authority with communities based on self management, self sustainability, mutual aid, and anti capitalist, anti oppression, and anti state ideals we can and will produce anarchy in the U.S. Its like this. If we take bits and pieces out of Bush's or the governments power, than it will get to the point when the government is small enough that we can easily overthrow it. One of the ways that we can take power from the government or Bush is to

not allow him to go to certain parts of the country that he says he was elected to. It's a step in a lot of steps to overthrow this government.

3. With an Anarchist Black Bloc to stop the power of the state in the streets, using direct action, we believe that it will help raise the consciousness of the work- ing class in areas of anti capitalism, anarchism and the general revolution.

Do we believe that this demonstration/direct action will create revolution? No, but we do think that keeping politicians out of our communities is a start. We believe that with a program and a strategy we can make Anarchism an apparent and readily sought after goal by the working class. If we stop authoritarians from having control or domination within our lives and within the lives of our fellow people then we can also start taking that power back and make these dreams that we imagine into realities.

Chapter XXII
Anti-Fascism in MaineAnti-Fascism in Maine
January 11, 2003

Overview

On January 11th, 2003, a mass contingent of anti-racists squared off against the forces of irrational hate as encapsulated in the Midwest based, neo-Nazi, World Church of the Creator (WCC), and the West Virginia based National Alliance (NA). The WCC and NA targeted Lewiston for recruitment following racist public statements by the city's mayor aimed at the local Somali community. The confrontation took place on the outskirts of the working class city of Lewiston, Maine, in front of a National Guard Armory. There, 500 anti-racists pushed themselves through police barricades in order to stand witness against the 30 or so fascists meeting, under heavy police protection, inside the armory. In addition to this protest, an estimated 5000 Lewiston residents partook in a "diversity rally" across town.

Of the 500 protesters at the scene, 50 marched in a tight Black Bloc formation. While the Bloc itself, primarily composed of NEFAC and ARA members, may have been relatively small, it served an indispensable role in the overall action.

In the days leading up to the confrontation the Lewiston police, with the backing of local government officials, announced that the area immediately surrounding the armory would be off limits to all persons not sympathetic to the WCC. Instead, an isolated "park and ride" approximately a half mile from the armory, would be designated as the protest zone for anti-racists. Even there, police announced that protesters would have to pass through check points where they would be required to present ID, be searched for weapons, and where no face masks/bandanas would be allowed. In addition, cameras were to be outlawed as "they could be used to hide explosives." According to the talking heads from within law enforcement, such measures were to be implemented in order to avoid any violent confrontations.

On the night of January 10th, in an old farm house outside of town, dozens of representatives of ARA and NEFAC collectives met in order to discuss the following day's strategy. There it was reaffirmed that a Black Bloc would in fact march on

the armory itself; police ordinances be damned! It was also decided to march in lines (organized by collective), and to elect Tactical Facilitators (representing each side of the bloc) in order to better guarantee fast, fluid movement, and to better maintain the Bloc's formation.

On the morning of the 11th, the Bloc set out for the armory. As it approached the designated protest zone, it came into conflict with the first of two police barricades. Staying focused and moving fast it quickly overcame the obstacle. In its wake hundreds of other protesters, many from the Progressive Labor Party fell in line and together marched on the second barricade. Again the Bloc pushed through, and again hundreds followed.

Upon reaching the heavily guarded armory, the Bloc faced off with hundreds of police armed with riot gear. Here a stand-off ensued for hours. At one point police allegedly spotted weapons in the ranks of the anti-fascists. However, a sergeant directed the cops to maintain their lines, but not to provoke the still regimented Black Bloc.

The Bloc maintained their positions, waiting for the neo-Nazis to exit the building. Eventually it became clear that police secretly escorted the racist scum out of the vicinity through a back entrance. The chance to physically deal with the Fascists had past.

As a side note, a small number of Black Bloc anarchists (no more then four) earlier managed to locate a parking lot where fascists were planning on concentrating before the meeting. There, anarchists welcomed a truck full of racists with a number of punches to the jaw. The racists made a hasty escape in their vehicle.

All told, the two stories worth telling in Lewiston is 1. the massive show of public resistance to Fascism (and conversely, the weakness of organized fascism in northern New England), and 2. the utility of tighter Black Bloc organizational structure. While the Bloc did not engage the cops or racists in any serious physical confrontations, it, by enlarge, was able to quickly surmount police barricades by staying tight, maintaining their perimeter, and marching in lines. In turn, these achievements had to do with the election of the Tactical Facilitators who worked hard to maintain the structure and movement in the Bloc. It is possible that the Bloc avoided a degree of violence with the police due to their overall confidence as it emanated from their effective structure. If the Bloc did not come off this way it is possible that the hundreds of other protesters would not have followed in their wake, and in turn, the police would have attempted to better limit the movement of a disorganized mob. But on this day the Bloc was no mob, the people did follow, and the cops thought twice before forcing a confrontation. No arrest were reported, and no anti-fascists were physical injured.

In the end the actions of the Black Bloc, other leftists, and the local residents had the effect of making the neo-Nazis feel unwanted and under siege in northern New England. For every one fascist there were over 180 people in the streets and at the diversity rally publicly proclaiming opposition to their far right agenda. The effort at racist recruitment failed miserably, and they left town with their tail between their legs. Chalk another victory up for our side.

Call To Action in Lewiston, Maine
By The Green Mountain Anarchist Collective

On Saturday January 11, 2003, the World Church of the Creator (WCC) plans to rally in Lewiston, Maine—a move Matthew Hale, their leader, said will "help spread the group's message of racism throughout New England." Seeking to capitalize on racist statements made by Lewiston Mayor Laurier Raymond in regards to the recent influx of Somali refugees to the area, Hale plans to deliver a speech entitled "White Power or Ruin." The speech will urge residents "to make sure that the Somalis feel unwelcome", and to "drive [them] out of Lewiston!"

As WCC, as well as the National Alliance, continue to piggyback off of local controversies, we must continue to stand solidly against the spread of racism and fascism in our communities. This strategy, of dividing the united force of the working class along ethnic lines, is historically used by the right wing as a means of consolidating the power of the status quo (the bosses), and has the effect of strengthening the power base of fascism. In New England, where once the right played the Irish against the Italian immigrants, and the Quebecois immigrants against both, now, in Lewiston, it uses the recent immigration of Somalis as a lever to divide the natural solidarity of the working people in this Maine town.

They tell us that immigrants are taking our jobs. But the fact remains that Maine's economy, in general, has been destroyed by plant closings, capital flight, and the loss of a manufacturing base. Lewiston, like other parts of the state, actually saw its population significantly decrease between 1990 and 2000 in part because it is really difficult to find good paying jobs. This is just one example of the relationship between capitalism and community—the more flexibility the corporations have to move to the cheapest labor markets, the more insecure working people become in their daily lives.

The WCC and the National Alliance seek to exploit an artificial divide in order to gain support for their neo-Nazi program. But we, the working class, know racism and fascism is antithetical to our class struggle aimed at our own emancipation as human beings. As Adolph Hitler was driven to commit suicide, and as Italian workers executed Mussolini, we intend to stand united against the threat that fascism poses to the freedom, safety, and continuing struggles of our co-workers, communities, friends, and families.

We call on the people of New England, Quebec, and beyond, who strive to eradicate such racist leeches as the WCC from our communities, to show unity against racism not behind closed doors, but out in the open streets of Lewiston. Wherever preachers of racist ideology travel to spew their garbage, they will be met face to face with the fire of working class solidarity. Wherever they try to construct racial tension, we will dismantle them the only way that has proven to be effective: up front and in person. The people of New England have no tolerance for fascism or racism. We will meet WCC with steadfast opposition and we intend to win!

Working Class Power, Not White Power

Green Mountain Anarchist Collective (NEFAC supporter)
greencollective@chek.com
For logistical information contact GMAC via email
Endorsed by: New York City Anti-Racist Action, Sargassum Collective, R.O.S.A. Collective, Desiderada Collective

STOP THE WORLD CHURCH OF THE CREATOR, NATIONAL ALLIANCE, AND MAYOR LARRY RAYMOND! NO TO FASCISM IN LEWISTON, MAINE!

By East Coast Anti-Racist Action

This is a call to action from East Coast Anti-Racist Action (ECARA) for all to converge on the city of Lewiston, Maine, on Saturday, January 11th, to shut down the World Church of the Creator's (WCOTC) speaker presentation featuring Matt Hale, the white supremacist leader of the group. This is also a mobilization against the National Alliance's (NA) racist campaigns to divide the working class of Lewiston through advocating an anti-immigrant agenda.

It is imperative that we do not forget the gross violation of security dealt to the Somali community in Lewiston by Mayor Larry Raymond, with his racist requests to the group, and his apathy towards burgeoning xenophobic and anti-immigrant hysteria in the city.

The WCOTC has been linked to dozens of violent hate crimes, including a shooting spree by one of its members, Benjamin Nathaniel Smith, which resulted in 2 deaths, 8 injuries, and Smith taking his own life. The group's pseudo-religion preaches that biracial children have no souls, and that Jews are the spawn of Satan. The mass deportation of all nonwhites from the United States is advocated by Matt Hale's teachings, and the group uses the same eugenic theories used in Nazi Germany to convey their beliefs on the supposed "superiority of the white race."

> "When we come to power, we will execute all race traitors."
>
> —Matt Hale, 12/12/02

The National Alliance is currently the largest and most active neo-Nazi organization in the United States, with an ever-increasing Canadian presence. Since the group's birth a plague of dozens of violent crimes, including murders, bombings and robberies, have been linked to NA members or have been inspired by the group's propaganda, such

as the Oklahoma City bombing. At the same time, the organization has experienced major membership growth, with its numbers more than doubling since 1992.

> "Let's face it, to the Jews all of America is just too darn White. Too darn GENTILE. They don't feel comfy. Jews seem to think that our purpose in life is to make them feel as comfortable as possible. It isn't. Just say no to the Jews."

—National Alliance

Since his October 1st, 2002 letter to Lewiston's Somali community, Mayor Larry Raymond's racist sentiments have fueled prejudice and encouraged the covert campaign of racial hatred being carried out by the NA. His lack of concern for the well being of all Lewiston residents, and his inactivity in combating organized racism in the city, has resulted in a tragic manifestation of racism in Maine, which has not been seen since the massive Ku Klux Klan presence in the state during the 1920s.

> "This large number of new arrivals cannot continue without negative results for all. The Somali community must exercise some discipline and reduce the stress on our limited finances and our generosity. We have been overwhelmed and have responded valiantly. Now we need breathing room. Our city is maxed-out financially, physically and emotionally."

—Letter to the Somali elders from Mayor Larry Raymond

The fact that fascist scum such as this believe that they can exploit the current racial tensions in Lewiston to further heir own racist agenda is disgusting. Lewiston has better concerns to deal with, without having to combat a racist Mayor Larry Raymond, Matt Hale, the NA and their parade of white supremacists marching through proclaiming their "racial purity," while casting slurs and prompting violent attacks on innocent Lewiston residents of all backgrounds.

We are calling upon all anti-fascists, those in solidarity with the struggle for the rights of immigrant communities, students, labor activists, human rights advocates, and in general, all working class people of Lewiston and abroad, to band together on January 11th, and from that day forward, in order to stop any intended racist organizing and intimidation within Lewiston, on the part of the WCOTC, NA, municipal government, and all other bigoted groups and individuals.

We ask that those who support and heed this call respect a diversity of tactics approach by any who are in attendance on the 11th. Through this method, we believe that maximum success can be reached in our goal of halting any activity by the WCOTC through promoting community self-defense with the empowerment of the people. If our range of opposition techniques will be at its highest point of diversity under an umbrella of anti-racist ideological unity, there are no limits to what we can accomplish on January 11th, or anytime else in the future.

THEY SHALL NOT PASS!
ALL POWER TO THE PEOPLE IN OPPOSING THE WORLD CHURCH OF THE CREATOR, THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE AND RACIST MUNICIPAL POLICIES!

Hitler was ignored during the rise of the Third Reich. History ignored is history repeated.

For more information, please contact ECARA at: eastcoastara@canada.com

ANALYSIS: ANTIFA BLACK BLOC, LEWISTON MAINE
By Lady, GMAC

WCC (World Church of the Creator), who surprisingly worked with NA (National Alliance) on this one, picked a good town to stir up racism in. It is no surprise that the WCC is trying to channel attitudes toward the recent influx of Somali residents into racist ideology. When city officials (i.e. Mayor Raymond) make blatantly racist statements against the Somali people, and the Lewiston police department participates in their own hate crimes against local Somalis, it makes it easier for people in the community to think that being racist is normal and the answer to the city's problems.

There were enough locals riding the fence that came out to the National Guard Armory (yeah, the State protects Nazis) on Saturday to make us feel that there was much dialogue needed that day and beyond. Some of the questions raised by locals, who came to see if racist ideology was the answer to the economic problems of Lewiston, included: "Why can't I get a business loan? A Somali can just move here and get one, easy," "I need more food stamp money. Why do they get our food stamp money?," and "We need housing. We were here first. Why do they get places to live?" These are all relevant and pressing questions to be asked within the community, wrongly assumed and misdirected of course, but nonetheless, onto something. And you can imagine what the dialogue consisted of-the conclusion being, "So, what you're saying is you're really pissed at the government." The point is, the people who showed up on Saturday asking these questions really didn't want to walk away with racism being the answer to their economic despairs.

Racism is being fed to these folks as an answer, like it is in other cities facing similar issues. It felt good to able to dialogue with locals who came out on Saturday, and begin erasing the racist connection being made by fascist groups such as the WCC, NA, and the State, to immigration and poverty within the US. The ability to do this is always hindered when you have a contingent of people who are seen as outsiders (out-of-towners), and militants nonetheless, coming to expel racist groups from a city they don't live in. All in all, we were productive.

We were expecting the rookie (in regards to having previously dealt with a specifically fascist vs. Antifa rally) pig force of Lewiston to be able to utilize their special

training for our arrival, and the following precautions were to be employed by them: the confiscation of flag or sign poles, backpacks, cameras that weren't given previous press clearance (because you know how terrorists like to hide bombs in cameras?!), and random searches. No protesters were permitted to be in radius of the National Guard Armory, and were going to be directed to two 'park and rides' half a mile down another street. Roads were going to be blocked off, and ID's checked upon rerouting traffic to the park and rides.

The following is what (we believe) we did successfully on Saturday January 11th:

Deciding to use Black Bloc tactics was an advantage on our part. With this situation at hand, the contingent of Antifa decided to employ Black Bloc tactics (it is specifically important here that we decided to march in formation, and elected a tactical facilitation core). We would like to suggest that those interested in carrying out Bloc tactics read the pamphlet *'A Communiqué on Tactics.'*

By wearing black, masking up, and marching in a tight rectangular formation with banners on all sides, we looked intimidating to the pigs. The first road block consisted of three cop cars and six or so pigs. All but one stood there staring, while the "ranking officer" approached us. The banner was lifted right over his head, and wouldn't you know-he found himself right in the middle of the Bloc. Piece of cake. (Here, this worked well. In another situation, where the police are our primary combatants, we should never allow an enemy in our midst except to physically deal with them.)

The next barricade consisted of two city dump trucks and a few cop cars. It looked tough and could have been, but we never paused and just kept moving forward. The drivers of the trucks were working people. One driver waved to us, while the other backed up just a little. We moved on through.

Momentum and attitude. Deciding to wear masks can work against a group if it wishes to appear friendly. But we did a good job of being conscious of our visual appearance. When we passed the protesters who were stuck at the park and ride, we enthusiastically invited them to join us. A Bloc of only 50 quickly turned into about 300 when seemingly everyone from the two park and rides joined us!

It should be noted that the diversity rally had 5,000 attending! This is remarkable for a New England town of 30,000+.

Deciding that talking to the media was an autonomous decision. This decision proved worth it in this type of situation. Talking to the media sparked conversations with locals who were standing right next to us. Our openness to talk, and the dialogue that followed, helped to dispel the myths built up around our arrival. We are not trouble making hooligans! We believe in direct confrontation when it comes to Nazis attempting to organize, we go where they go, and will never let them have the streets.

Community outreach. Without doing the community outreach necessary, we all could have very well been unaccepted by the local activists. It is absolutely necessary to make this a priority BECAUSE we intend to win. Without going to Lewiston, we would not have learned first hand of the economic and social situation in the area, nor would we have been able to distribute our agitational literature properly. Also, without

this connection, organizers in Lewiston may not have felt comfortable keeping us up to date on planning information, or taken us seriously for that matter. Questions came from both sides of the organizing, and our ability to work together, and share as much information as possible helped alleviate some concerns organizers were facing.

Broader outreach. The call to action GMAC put out was done so in a timely manner, which allowed for an extensive email dialogue to occur between us and others interested in opposing racism who were not in ARA / NEFAC.

The following are constructive criticisms of what (we believe) we could have done better in Lewiston:

More community outreach. As always, more people could have gotten involved in community outreach. Flyering and door to door outreach are always time consuming (and very cold when it's January in Maine), but necessary to personalize our position regarding Nazi and fascist organizing. Also, a flyer should have been made for the Bloc to hand out during the rally.

Translation. All of the documents we handed out should have included a Somali translation. French translations would have been helpful too in Francophone neighborhoods. Years ago, the Quebecois were being targeted in Maine similar to the ways Somalis are now. Lewiston locals told us that there still are French speakers in the area, who may relate to this if we put out some French text prior to the action.

Literature should travel with the Bloc. 'Why we wear masks,' and 'why we believe in directly confronting fascism' are two flyers that come to mind.

Preparedness for the next step. We were so ready for not being able to achieve our goal without an intense clash with the pigs (ending up in front of the armory, where we try to disrupt from outside and would wait for the Nazis to exit) that we did not prepare for the next level. So...what do we do now? We should have planned for the next level. Such planning would have been a little abstract, as it turned out that the boneheads had a choice to be escorted out the back door with the WCC keynote speakers and the ashamed local attendees (avoiding ARA & NEFAC) and they choose this over confronting us.

A question: Should we have confronted the first Nazi that came to us? GMAC had the front, and the capabilities to do so. Did we do the right thing by shoving him, and moving on?

All in all, we believe we were generally successful with the circumstances at hand. There is always room for improvement, but given the numbers we had we sure did do an amazing job at tearing through the streets. Good work everybody!

WORKING CLASS POWER, NOT WHITE POWER!

WHAT HAPPENED IN LEWISTON, MAINE ON JANUARY 11TH?
By East Cost ARA and NEFAC Members

Tens of thousands of dollars spent to protect neo-nazis, who complain there is not enough money for the public.

This was the scene in Lewiston yesterday-inside the Armory there were 30 neo-nazis. Outside there were about 100 cops helping them organize by providing transportation and helping them recruit. After the cops bussed the World Church of the Creator (WCOTC) to the Armory the police walked outside and said "who is here for the World Church of the Creator?" and then allowed only those supporters in, while the community was left outside in the freezing cold.

Of the 600 community members there were a variety of opinions. Some members of Anti-Racist Action and NEFAC were there to directly confront the neo- nazis while others were there to simply state their opposition. There were also people present who did not agree with the wcotc, but also said they agree there is a Somali problem; failing to realize their line of thinking is directly in line with the racists.

People are missing a very important piece of information; this is not a race issue, but a class and economic issue. The problem is the system we live in where a minority of rich people control the majority of the wealth and resources. This directly effects EVERYONE! 5% of the population controls 95% of the wealth. It is a shame that everyone, no matter what color or race they are, cannot get social services. It is not the fault of one community, it is the fault of the system we live under. Instead of fighting with each other and blaming each other we should Unite to change the system and work for a better Lewiston. Talk to your neighbors, whomever they may be, and organize together.

While we give credit to the Many and One diversity rally, we ask why do community events only happen when racist events happen? They should be happening all the time. Ignoring racist organizing whether it is by an outside organization or local residents, only helps to make them grow we must confront racism in all forms, internally and externally!

Against ALL forms of Racism and Fascism.
In solidarity,
Members of Anti-Racist Action & NEFAC

Interview With Lady Concerning The Lewiston Black Bloc

Lady, 25, is currently a member of NEFAC-Vermont, and was a longtime member of Columbus ARA (Ohio). She is a veteran of numerous Black Bloc actions, and has been

influential in the class struggle anarchist community for many years. She was born and raised in Columbus, Ohio, and moved to Vermont after the Quebec City riots in 2001. She works as a waitress in a diner.

Interviewer: You, as a member of the Green Mountain Anarchist Collective, where one of the primary organizers of the Lewiston Black Bloc. Can you tell me why you took on this project on?

Lady: Vermont does not currently have any white supremacist groups that are organizing publicly. When we heard about Maine and their situation, I was approached by a womyn who was formerly interested in ARA, I immediately knew that I could be an asset. People tend to think that Vermont and Maine are a lot a like, and they aren't. So I was eager to jump into this one, not only because my boots were getting dusty, but because I didn't want those boneheads to come towards Vermont.

Interviewer: To what extent did you find support among the locals in and around Lewiston?

Lady: There was a group of political communal living kids who called themselves the J.E.D. collective who were eager and supportive to try new tactics. They hadn't done this type of organizing and they were surprised that they now had to. As far as the other townies were concerned, there were three types: 1. the people who were preoccupied with the peace rally that was being organized (liberals, police, religious folk) 2. Somalian people and were cautious but definitely aware of who was coming to town, and 3. Working class people who weren't effected in their daily routine.

Interviewer: How do you think the overall action would have gone if there was no Black Bloc?

Lady: It's usually not the case that I say this, but some community members would not have heard about this. We got information out days before the protest, as well as flyering a follow up the day after. I honestly believe that the three Somali men, a few independent media types, and at least 20 local kids, that were with us would not have come out to where the National Alliance was recruiting that day.

Interviewer: Peace rally? Is that like a protest to the white supremacists?

Lady: At every anticipated fascist hoopla, where the police think a good amount of attention will be drawn, these rallies are organized. They are always away from where the white power dudes are, and almost always in a closed off building. Two things right away should key you in to the fact that this is an attempt to pacify people: 1. The police and liberal groups work together, and; 2. A closed off building (i.e. no traffic or pedestrians notice you, and you can't get outta there very easily). They are organized in good spirit, but distract from the real problem. The issue at hand that day was not the peaceful people in the gymnasium, but the white supremacist organizers hovering at the end of the neighborhood trying to pick off some welfare white boys who agree "Yeah! How come the Somali's get all the jobs and food stamps?! I'm hungry! I can't find work!" White power organizers become powerful because people pray inside closed doors when they have public rallies.

Interviewer: You where also present in York, Pennsylvania, during the street fighting with the Hammerskins. How did Lewiston compare to your experiences in York?

Lady: Lewiston was a lot more focused in terms of outreach to the community. Because York had previously seen this sort of thing happen, and had a deadly history with white supremacists, we took for granted that people knew what was up. But we should have, as always, done more community outreach in the way of flyering and perhaps door knocking. York was constant defense and offense. Hammerskins are street thugs, and we stepped to that in York. There's always penis' hanging to the grounds who are game to jump in the mix, but the kind of dialogue we got going among townspeople in Lewiston took effort. The kind that anyone can do, no matter what age or size. Some of the conversations I had with people were amazing. Don't get me wrong, we need skinheads and random thugs to roll with us on the street, but there ain't many who are material to talk to community members with me. I think they prefer it that way, so it all works out.

Interviewer: What other Black Blocs have you marched in?

Lady: WTO (Seattle) in 1999, DC-IMF 2000, Boston-Debates 2000, Cincinnatti-TABD 2000, Quebec City 2001, York-2001, Lewiston-2002, and about ten in between of smaller, non-memorable blocs.

Interviewer: In your opinion, what are the differences between Black Blocs at anti-fascist actions compared to broader, larger, anti-globalization actions?

Lady: They make so much more sense to me. Hello? I want to, like, win and stuff. I've had to fight so much of my life, that I don't exert the energy unless I know I can make a difference somehow. After Quebec City 2001, I finished my anti-globalization stride. It's not that blocs can't be effective in these type of demonstrations, but after 9-11 I seriously question if I'm gonna make more of a difference joining in against the 40,000 well equipped New York City pigs, or sitting in my local bar talking to the fat republican dude on the barstool next to me. I seem to have more luck with the fat dude. After the Black Bloc is a tactic, I just don't have enough macho angst to throw random rocks anymore. I like to hit people with them! Blocs have been so much more useful (and by blocs I mean variations of them such as maybe they all just have black on and have a plan) when it comes to antifa street work. That's how they started out anyways. It's a tactic—use it but don't over-use it.

Interviewer: What makes for effective Black Blocs?

Lady: I don't really know how to answer this question. You have to believe in what you are fighting for. You have to put petty political differences aside and realize what you agree on, and you have to have a plan that is not only realistic, but collaborated on by at least a few experienced people.

Interviewer: What is the relation between the struggle towards anarchism and militant street actions?

Lady: You can't believe in anarchism if your only efforts are reading and writing about it. That's great to have your head straight on the subject, but you don't have your heart in it if you can't integrate the belief into your everyday life, as well as notice

what already exists around you. I never started reading about anarchism until about 5 years ago, but I've been involved in local street work for at least 8, hell my family was a local struggle. Usually, but not always, it's the poor kids who live the struggle and rebel against the class system, while others read about it. And ultimately, it's those who really make a difference that you see willing to interact with the general public, and not just the AK Press catalogue. Don't get me wrong, I'm not putting down reading, it's just a lot more valuable to figure out how to integrate the ideas into conversations with people at work, grocery stores, Taco Bell, and the bar. Because those are the people who would get out on the street with you, not the intellectual types.

Interviewer: How do you see Black Blocs developing in the future?

Lady: Honestly, I'm not sure. Unfortunately, I see some of the calls that get put out and some of the people involved and I worry that youth are misled into believing that black makes them invisible. It is a tactic, a dangerous tactic, and it is not always appropriate. On the other hand, I see anarchists bashing it because of the violence it can entail, and how people tend to take on leadership roles. These people have usually never been in one, do not know that they work sometimes, and do not see that violence is being used as a tactic. Because of this, it should be seen as a little brigade where, naturally, a few make facilitate connections with the group. But all bloc'ers go into a Black Bloc with this presumption. It is not the absence of order a street crew desires or its pacifism that will accomplish the goals set out by the bloc. A certain amount of trust is necessary, but I am certainly glad a few step up for duties at every action or it wouldn't work.

Interviewer: I understand that you have been involved in a number of labor/union struggles both in Ohio and now in New England. Can you elaborate on this?

Lady: Because I am a class struggle anarchist, I am realistic in understanding that to make any headway I need to work within pre-existing unions and agitate for democracy. So, I have always worked with labor unions on a local level. I've done everything from stocking food pantries for locked out steelworkers in Mansfield, Ohio, to agitating for unions in a city-wide campaign.

Interviewer: Do you believe that there is a place for Black Blocs on union picket lines?

Lady: Absolutely. If you think about it, the most effective picket lines are organized like so. They do not wear black nor are they very obvious about breaking laws, but much is the same. You got a person who is always yelling in the bullhorn and seems to get the rest of the people riled up, you got a plan before hand with specific goals, and you got police on the other side. You got signs, and, depending on the picket, several people ready to throw down if necessary. They want their jobs back. They want to keep the scabs or delivery trucks from getting in. They also, like Black Blocs, need to convince the community to get behind them on their issue.

Interviewer: To what extent is community organizing (i.e. anti-war, unions, etc.) important to the overall social movement, and to what extent are Black Blocs and

other forms of militant street protests important for the overall social movement? Are they mutually exclusive or complimentary?

Lady: The most successful Black Bloc will be complimented with community organizing. However, the most successful community organizing does not mean deploying a Black Bloc. Like I keep saying—it is a tactic to be used when other means will not be effective by themselves. There has to be a willingness to fight for what you believe in (literally) but people have their strengths and weaknesses. Community organizing is as simple as encouraging a dialogue between you and your neighbor about what's going on in the world, and saying something that sticks and gets repeated. A combination of dialogue and willingness to fight in public are essential qualities to anyone who believes in contributing to social change.

Interviewer: What personally draws you to Black Bloc actions?

Lady: What currently draws me to them is other people's belief in me as a political womyn. I offer help to anyone who asks me for it, but other than that, and my uppity nature, I am drawn to them when I believe they are necessary to achieve the goal at hand, or when I think other people are overlooking it as a possibility.

Interviewer: What sort of environment did you grow up in? What is your class background?

Lady: There were 5 of us kids in a 2.5 bedroom house in the Midwest. I grew up in a community that was 50% white and 50% black and 100% working class. Poor people were always looking for the next poor sucka to rob. We weren't a loving family—it was traumatic—but we agreed on the things we thought were wrong with the world. The pigs, lifestyles of the rich & famous, and not having health care. And we agreed on the things that made life easier too: bicycles, waterparks, *Married With Children*, and pot. My mom wasn't affiliated with any political name badge. She never registered to vote in her life because she thought it didn't matter. She understood the dichotomy between upper class and lower class though, as most working class people do. She just wasn't strong enough to be a mom and stay alive for the toils of work as a poor womyn. I can't blame her. My class background is still the same today, but now I send money home to support my sisters and mom.

Interviewer: What will it take for working people to overcome capitalism?

Lady: Are you serious? Um, world peace? Well, I don't think working people will ever overcome it, even if I wake tomorrow and the revolution is here. There will always be greedy people in the world. But when the social system has changed enough here to quell some of the every-person-for-themselves attitude, then we can begin to re-learn what was common to communities before capitalism became so advanced. These social system changes have to include the basic necessities such as food, health care, childcare, education, housing, and transportation. When these necessities are spread out more, we will see a drop in working class people pitted against each other, things like theft and drug related casualties (whatever it takes to get money and whatever misguided acts of violence used). We can begin to shift from a competitive (we will still have sports of course, working people need sports!) to a nurturing and more sharing way

of community life. Only then can we begin to see a shift in the effects and thought patterns on capitalism. I've always said that revolution is what I want in this country, but it won't happen in any of our lifetimes. Success in making a complete change in our economic system (that is, capitalism to socialism) will occur in steps. I can agitate for those steps every day in my life, and am realistic about the outcome. I might kick racist organizers out of my neighborhood, I might keep a Starbucks from opening, I might help unionize my workplace, I might pass out literature every chance I get, I might give someone something I don't need, I might have children some day and pass on my wisdom and convictions; it's all about taking steps—it's not a sprint, but a marathon. Sometimes people can't see the miles in front of them.

Note: Since Lewiston, Matt Hale, founder and leader of the white supremacist the WCC has been imprisoned for attempting to have a judge murdered.

Chapter XXII
J26: Black Bloc & Buccaneers Win!
January 26, 2003

Overview

The stage was set. While the Tampa Bay Buccaneers prepared to face the awesome power of the Oakland Raiders, another match up, of equal proportions, was materializing in the City of Steel. Taking the field on that cold windy January afternoon were dominating legions of riot cops and their underdog opponents, the unpredictable anarchist Black Bloc. The Bloc, 100 strong, was supported by 5000 anti-war protesters. The cops, by batons and pepper spray. As this epic battle of opposing teams unfolded, many anti-war fans cringed at the thought of their hometown Pittsburgh fighters facing off against one of the most formidable ensembles of police state power the Super Bowl would ever see. One thing was sure, if the Bloc were to have a chance, their defense would have to hold the line, and along the way score some points. The cops, for their part, brought with them their explosive offense which had overwhelmed countless opponents in present and past seasons.

If Terry Bradshaw was calling this pregame show, it would go as follows:
"It's like this John, you have the police lining up here. For them it's all about shutting down the opposing offense. Over here you have the Black Bloc. These folks need to dictate the tempo. They can't let the police play their game. They need to confuse the defense, and go long. If they don't put any points on the board, the game is as good as over."

On this chilly Super Bowl Sunday, that's just what the Bloc did. They ran a screen play of sorts. First they marched with the larger anti-war crowd. These folks numbered upwards of 5000. This provided the cover they needed. The main rally centered around the Software Engineering Institute, which is under contract with the government to produce "smart bomb" technology for the war machine. The police focused their attention on this crowd. However, the Bloc soon lead a fast breakaway march from this site and quickly enclosed upon an unguarded Marine recruitment center. Before police would react to the situation, the Bloc attacked the office. The windows were smashed, paint bombs were sent flying in the building, and thousands of dollars in damage was done to this parasitic outpost of U.S. imperialism. The Bloc escaped with no arrests.

Here it deserves mention that this march against the looming invasion of Iraq was the largest of its kind in the city for more then thirty years. Final score: Black Bloc 7, Pigs 0. All this, and it was over in time to get home, have a beer, and watch the Tampa Bay Buccaneers win their first world championship against the Oakland Raiders 48 to 21.

Note: The Black Bloc would make a second appearance in the city of steel on April 19th, 2004 in order to counter an appearance by Bush at a Republican fundraiser. As usual scuffles ensued between the bloc and police. 6 protesters were arrested.

Anarchist Call to Action! For January 24-26th in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
By Western Pennsylvania Anarchists

> "My mind is my general, my heart my captain, my morals my code of conduct, my body my weapon, and my comrades? They are all as I, and we are an army united in the idea that the world shall be free."

This is a call to action to all anarchists and anti-authoritarians to come and join us for a weekend of joyous resistance on January 24-26th in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. That weekend will witness the largest mobilization against war in this area since the Gulf War. At the center of this mobilization is recognition of the need to take direct action against war.

War is the latest word on everyone's lips, so perhaps we should explain what war(s) we're referring to in this call. We're talking not just about the possible escalation of war with Iraq, not just the wars the media distract us with, but all the campaigns and acts of institutional violence and oppression that are occurring. Pundits will endlessly pontificate about when war will begin, but we are already bombing Iraq.

War is already upon us in every sense of the word; the millions locked up every year by the criminal in-justice system, our friends who are wounded and killed at protests, the wondrous areas of nature that no future generations will see, a discriminatory education system, the millions of animals whose pain and suffering few can hear from tiny unseen cages—all of these are part of this war. We are not being "led" to any kind of peace. This system is killing its way to a never-ending cycle of violence and retribution. Money and Power, those are the reasons that millions are made to suffer and die. At the center of this problem is the system of Capitalism and its corporate manifestations.

It is with these wars and the systemic reasons behind them in mind that we will gather January 24-26th in Pittsburgh. There will be the normal events that surround these types of convergences: Teach-ins, trainings, and educational events during the day, followed by concerts late into the night. The major thrust of the weekend will be

numerous efforts to disrupt war related institutions in the area. Along with a mass march and rally, Sunday's focus on blockades and occupations will only be successful with the support of hundreds of people prepared for this purpose that have the support thousands of others. Sunday night will be a party to celebrate our collective success. Tactically we support the call for an active disobedience bloc at the marches and actions; however it's important that people bear in mind the context in which each event is occurring. We must put our trust in each other that people will think about when and where to engage in potentially confrontational actions. This includes we anarchists who sometimes view diversity of tactics as a one-way street that legitimizes more militant approaches but not more symbolic actions. Some of the events for the weekend are being planned for those who do not seek or cannot risk encounters with the state and we should try to respect this.

This will not be the largest convergence you've ever attended. It won't be the best funded, or most watched. What it will be is an important event for us and our allies that contains a lot of potential for breaking out of the bounds ANSWER and NION have set for large anti-war events. We feel the convergence is being done in a way that breaks new ground in Pittsburgh and we hope in the rest of the country in terms of opposition to war. During the last couple months our area has been undergoing an activist transformation that is for the first time being reflected in the planning of a major local event. For the first time there seems to be broad consensus about the need for a diversity of tactics in affecting positive change. There are now solid alliances between peace and justice groups in the city. Anarchists are active in most of these local groups and perhaps the most encouraging development for us has been the solidarity that has been extended to anarchists. Of the three major groups involved neither POG, the Thomas Merton Center, nor the Pittsburgh Anti-War committee are anarchist groups, but we feel welcome at their meetings and events. The same can be said for the other groups who have begun to join this process. Our participation is being welcomed and our input sought out in determining how events progress. This has opened up a continuing dialogue in the progressive milieu on strategy and tactics.

These developments are exciting and may produce a convergence that has an unusual amount of solidarity and mutual aid between groups and approaches. We anticipate that the State will escalate attempts to split these coalitions apart. We must fight against this by keeping communication open with and between the organizing groups. Most of all, we must not have inter-movement dialogue taking place via the filter of the corporate media. Personal relationships and mutual respect will hold us together.

As with any large convergence, free housing will be available. A revised version of this call will be out in three weeks with updated info on organizing and events of particular interest. See you on the barricades, Against the War, Against the State! For a society based on mutual aid and voluntary association!

From deep inside the rust belt, Western Pennsylvania Anarchists
Link: www.organizepittsburgh.org

Communique from the J26 Anarchist Black Bloc

It is estimated by UNICEF that since sanctions were imposed on Iraq that Iraqi children are dying at twice the rate that they were 10 years ago. This statistic is also confirmed by the Middle East Research and Information Project, which states that the infant mortality rate has gone down by 160%. The same report cites the devastating bombardment of southern Iraq by American forces, where most of Iraq's water is taken from and sanitized, also having led to an increase in disease. With medical supplies blocked from sanctions and a devastated infrastructure, the people of Iraq are dying by scores.

The Bush Administration is now prepared to launch a full-scale invasion of the country, which will undoubtedly lead to an enormous humanitarian disaster and the risk of escalating the violence. The policies that brought the American public to horrific incidents such as the September 11th attack are being reinforced and expanded upon.

All of this is over oil. It is estimated that Iraq contains 115 billion barrels of petroleum reserves, which makes them second only to Saudi Arabia in the region. And only because of three decades of western intervention and turmoil has there not been an attempt to exploit resources in 55 untouched oil fields.

We put forth the simple principle that we, the American and Iraqi public, are not cannon fodder for oil wars! We also are willing to take whatever means are necessary to assert our rights as human beings and remove ourselves from the special interests that dominate the American state and its policies. We are no longer willing to ignore the responsibility we have in the crimes against humanity that are being committed in our name.

At the J26 march in Pittsburgh, an anarchist Black Bloc contingent broke away from the rally at the Software Engineering Institute and marched to the Marine Recruitment Center on Meyran Street. There we smashed in the door of the office and threw paint bombs inside with the intent of causing as much economic and infrastructure damage to the office as possible. Glass was shattered and paint was splattered all along the inside.

Many anarchists think that the state of affairs in the U.S. is of such that if the public is to have any rights at all, we must begin to take political action outside of the official framework. No evidence of this analysis could be greater then when George W. Bush virtually bullied himself into office. The electoral process is run and dominated by corporate interests. It is failing to be democratic in any way, and that is not only reflected in its process but also its policies. The American socioeconomic system has not changed much since September 11th. And, the anarchist approach to the system has not changed much since November 30, 1999.

There is an increasingly dominant feeling within the anti-war movement that if we are going to be serious about securing human rights, here and abroad, by stopping the invasion, we are going to have to find new ways of political action. It is a privilege

to not act upon the most direct means at our disposal. Many of us in the anti-war movement feel that it is also time to abandon this privilege.

Many anarchists feel that the only way to stop the invasion is to raise the domestic costs for the state to pursue it. We can do this through various forms of non-participation and economic sabotage. The Marine Recruitment Center has no right to exist. That institution exists primarily for the purposes of recruiting politically marginalized people into the ranks of the Marines, who then enforce the policies of America's corporate state through murder and violence. Its sheer existence is an affront to human rights.

We encourage everyone in America to refuse to participate in the invasion and find how he or she can directly change the profitability of the war. It is also vital that there is support for those who are engaged in non-participation and direct action. With these two strategies put into practice, we can potentially avert a humanitarian disaster.

The anarchist position has never been something we have been hiding or are ashamed to make public. We want social revolution. We want the creation of direct democracy in our politics and economics and the destruction of authoritarian social institutions. We stand in defense of inalienable human rights and will struggle for these principles by any means necessary.

"NO WAR BETWEEN NATIONS, NO PEACE BETWEEN CLASSES!"

Chapter XXIV
The People Say No To War!
February 15, 2003

Overview

On February 15, 2003, demonstrations were held against Bush's proposed war with Iraq in more then 600 cities across the world. 150 of these demonstrations were held within the United States, despite the Bush administration's dubious upgrading of the national terrorist alert to "code orange." The largest US protest occurred in New York City where more than 500,000 people took to the streets to oppose the war. In New York, people from all walks of life, including thousands of trade unionists and veterans, joined together in common cause in what turned out to be one of the largest demonstrations in U.S. history. Large protests were also held in Seattle (60,000), Los Angeles (75-100,000), Philadelphia (10,000), Minneapolis (10,000), and Chicago (6000), to name but a few. On the following day, February 16th, more than 200,000 demonstrated in San Francisco. Black Blocs and anarchist contingents were present in dozens of U.S. cities.

Many of these protests were marked by violent clashes between police and protesters. In New York City, police attempted to prevent tens of thousands of people from reaching the main protest site (several blocks from the United Nations). Law enforcement set up barricades across a number of streets and avenues in order to control the movement of people. In the process, 311 arrests were made, while an untold number of people, including the elderly and children, suffered injuries due to billy clubs, chemical agents, and being trampled by charging police horses. A number of pigs were also injured at the hands of Black Bloc'ers; some requiring medical attention. Similar confrontations occurred in L.A., San Francisco, Colorado Springs, as well as in other U.S. cities.

In Other Parts of the World

Huge demonstrations occurred on every continent. In Europe, 1,500,000 marched in London, putting serious pressure on Prime Minister Tony Blair's Labor Party to back down from its commitment to take part in the planned invasion. This was the largest protest in the long history of that city. Likewise, several million protested

across Spain, with the largest demonstrations occurring in Madrid (2,000,0000), and Barcelona (1,000,000). In Italy—where the conservative ruling coalition also officially supports the war—more than 2,500,000 took to the streets of Rome in opposition to "blood for oil."

In Paris, 800,000 marched in support of the French government's opposition to the war. Likewise, in Berlin, Germany, 500,000 demonstrated.

Massive anti-war demonstrations were also held in Montreal, Australia, Mexico City, Tokyo, Buenos Aires, India, Johannesburg, South Africa, and Damascus, Syria. In Athens, Greece, protesters battled police for hours with Molotov cocktails, as well as in countless other cities. Black Blocs appeared in too many cities to begin to name in this brief overview.

All told, an estimated 11 million plus people, on every continent, demonstrated their opposition to the proposed war. While history would prove that Bush and his warmongering collaborators (Tony Blair and the center-right governments of Spain and Italy) would forge ahead with their twisted plans of blood and imperialist conquest, history will remember February 15th, 2003, as the largest global demonstration against war and the interests of the wealthy elite that humankind has thus far seen. The combined protests in the U.S. and Canada, on that one day, would surpass the total number of combined protests and protesters discussed in this book up until this point. This is an amazing feat, and paints a changing future, one where the right wing will face challenges to its power which they have never experienced in the history of struggle. Only time—and blood—will tell.

As a final note, the reader should note that the following calls to action and other documents gathered from the Black Bloc should not be seen as the definitive outline of their activities. The reader should keep in mind that only a tiny fraction of organized Blocs produced any written record.

A month later—on March 15, 2003—mass anti-war protests again rocked cities across the U.S. Major Black Bloc actions occurred in San Francisco and D.C. In D.C. a contingent of the bloc broke away from the larger march, and managed to storm the World Bank building. Inside, windows were smashed, and thousands of dollars worth of damage was done. This grouping managed to fight their way out of the building, at which point most were able to make an escape.

February 15: An Anarchist Call for Global Action Against Capitalism and War

The ongoing war between the United States, the United Kingdom and Iraq is only one component of a global struggle between the rich and powerful and the billions who are oppressed for their benefit. Blair and Bush, like bin Laden and Hussein, use

the politics of international war as a diversion from their wars against the poor, the excluded, and the Earth.

From the West Bank to the West Side, and from the rainforests of Colombia to the farmlands of Great Britain, the ruling class maneuvers to extract the maximum profits from the Earth and its people. International war is one more tactic in this class war, for the acquisition of natural resources, the elimination of surplus populations, and the consolidation of patriotic unity between the oppressors and the oppressed.

On February 15, 2003, millions around the globe will march in opposition to the escalation of this war. We call on all who seek a world free of the oppression of authoritarianism, capitalism, ethnic hatred and religious fundamentalism to participate in this unprecedented mobilization, through convergences in Amsterdam, Antwerp, Aotearoa, Athens, Bangkok, Barcelona, Belfast, Berlin, Berne, Brussels, Budapest, Cairo, Cape Town, Copenhagen, Dublin, Edmonton, Glasgow, Helsinki, Istanbul, Jakarta, Johannesburg, London, Lisbon, Madrid, Manila, Montreal, New York, Oslo, Paris, Prague, Ramallah, Rome, San Francisco, San Juan, Sao Paulo, Skopje, Stockholm, Sydney, Tallinn, Tokyo, Toronto, Vienna, Warsaw, and anywhere else, and to escalate this component of the struggle against the ruling class through direct action, including strikes, sabotage, sickouts, occupations, civil disobedience, and the mass reclamation of public space. Let's make our resistance to war visible in as many ways as possible!

From London and New York to Cairo and Ramallah, our resistance will be as global as their oppression. On February 15, to the streets! And to the barricades!

No war between states! No peace between classes!

Endorsers:
WOMBLES (white overalls movement building libertarian effective struggles)
The No Subject Collective (Connecticut)
Infoshop.org
North-Midwestern Psychogeographic Workshop
el periodico el libertario de caracas (cra-ait) (Venezuela)
Emergency Mass Action
Kontrapunkt

New York City: February 15th Anarchist Red & Black Contingent

An Anarchist Red & Black Contingent is being called for by the Workers Solidarity Alliance (W.S.A.), NY-NJ collectives of the North East Federation Anarcho-Communists (NEFAC), the New York Branch of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) and the Libertarian Book Club (LBC). We will march with the broader labor contingent at the New York City February 15 anti-war march. All are welcome. Meet

at the main United for Peace & Justice convergence spot. Look for the red and black flags.

Convenors:

WSA: wsany@hotmail.com
NY NEFAC: opencity45@hotmail.com
NJ NEFAC: skip@nefac.net
NY IWW: iww-New York City@bari.iww.org
LBC: roberterler@erols.com

Los Angeles: Black Bloc Call to Action

As the rising tide of fascism and capitalist domination continues to gain momentum and strength, the time for direct action against the oppressive state and capitalist structure becomes all the more urgent.

As anti-authoritarian anti-capitalists of all stripes, we send solidarity to the sisters, brothers, mothers, fathers, and friends who are out in the streets protesting against the coming slaughter of innocent civilians in Iraq.

For this reason, and to open up new avenues of resistance and add vitality and strength to an already growing movement of conscious individuals across the Los Angeles area, we are calling for the mobilization of all militant anti-authoritarian anti-capitalists, anarchists, and like minded individuals to converge during the Feb. 15th March in Los Angeles, CA. We have been silent far too long, and will join in the demonstration in solidarity with the oppressed of the world and against the illegal, fascist regime of King GW Bush.

BASIS OF UNITY

We do not accept power games being played at the expense of working class people, humanity in general, and all life on earth.

We do not endorse any individual, institution, or state of mind that seeks to dominate and place itself above the people.

We recognize the right of all people to engage in resistance at different levels that are suitable for them, but we also recognize that no one particular tactic should come to dominate an entire movement of resistance.

We recognize that the fundamental diseases that afflict humanity are hierarchical forms of society based on domination and exploitation. From this follows, but is not limited to: racism, sexism, hate, murder, fascism, etc.

We recognize the urgency to set forth an initiative in a city renowned for its violent police, that this convergence will be a demonstration of resistance and the beginning of

an ongoing presence within Los Angeles without being afraid of standing up for what we believe in.

We recognize that warfare is a systemic problem, and that the only way to rid the earth of this problem is to remove the structures of capitalism and authority.

The Black Bloc is called autonomously, and comprised of groups of autonomous affinity groups, but who will be marching concurrently with the "mainstream" demonstration called for by the Coalition for World Peace, Not in Our Name, and Interfaith Communities United for Justice and Peace. For more info on that march:

MARCH TO STOP THE WAR ON IRAQ!

SAT., FEB. 15 at 1 PM HOLLYWOOD AND VINE

March to the Military recruiting station.

or visit www.coalitionforworldpeace.org

<verbose></***verbose***>***THE ABOVE MENTIONED ORGANIZATIONS ARE NOT SPONSORING THE BLOC, AND ARE ONLY MENTIONED FOR PURPOSES REGARDING THE TIME AND PLACE OF THE MAINSTREAM DEMO***<***verbose***></verbose>

HEY YOU! ANTI AUTHORITY? LIVE IN LA? ENDORSE THE CALL!

To endorse this call, please add the name of your group to the bottom of this message and repost/resend everywhere.

Currently Endorsing:

ENEMY collective (02/03/03)

Ghost of Durruti (02/06/03)

LA Situationists (02/06/03)

Chicago Anarchist & Anti-Capitalist Bloc

Join the Anarchist & Anti-Capitalist Bloc on February 15 at the March against War and Racism in Chicago's Pakistani Community, 12 Noon, Saturday, February 15th Devon & Damen (main march starts at Devon & Leavitt). The thundering of war grows louder. The storm is nearly upon us.

It seems certain now, that within a few weeks the United States empire will begin raining death down on the people of Iraq. A lightning invasion and full-scale, indefinite U.S. occupation are planned to follow.

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Under the clouds of war the people of Palestine will likely face increasingly genocidal attack from the U.. backed Israeli occupation. Chechens, Kurds, Afghanis, and the people of the Ivory Coast and Chiapas, Mexico may also endure increased assault from armies of occupation while the world's eyes are pointed elsewhere.

In the U.S., immigrants, especially Arab, South Asian, or other Muslims will see stepped-up harassment, frame-ups, and detentions. And for the broader working-classes, civil liberties and living standards will continue to come under attack.

But the winds of resistance are blowing as well. On February 15th, across North America hundreds of thousands—well over a million people—will come out to protest the U.S. war on Iraq. In many cities, anarchists and other direct action, anti-capitalist forces are organizing contingents, blocs, or breakaways to expose the capitalist basis for this war, and promote mass direct action as the only real way to stop it.

In the past few weeks, anarchist organized anti-war breakaway marches have pushed past police, taken the streets, and carried out direct action against corporate, government, and other war related targets in Ohio, San Francisco, Pittsburgh, and Michigan.

These contingents have brought a spirit of defiance to the movement, a sense that we need to raise the costs of this war, and an understanding that this war is not simply bad policy, but a product of the capitalist system's endless quest for profit and power.

Here in Chicago we hope to initiate a tendency within the movement that has as it's goal not only mass direct action to end the war, but a revolutionary anti-authoritarian movement against the system as a whole. Connecting the war abroad with the war against the working classes, people of color, women, queers, and youth right here.

It is not clear that Devon Avenue offers much in the way of the Military Industrial Complex as targets. We understand this march to be a show of strength and solidarity, especially for the Pakistani community of Chicago. So we are not organizing any direct action for this occasion. We will be present with our defiant spirit, flags, banners, and literature-looking to hook up with those who share these goals and attitude.

Anarchist & Anti-Capitalist Bloc
February 15, Noon, Devon & Damen
Against Capitalism, Patriarchy,
White Supremacy, and the State
For a free humanity!

For Anarchy!

BRICK anarchist collective
brickcollective@ziplip.com
Member of FRAC, the Federation of Revolutionary Anarchist Collectives-Great Lakes Region
nightvision@ziplip.com

COLUMBUS, OHIO - CALL FOR MILITANT CONTINGENT

by Anti-War Action - Columbus

WEAR YOUR HEART ON YOUR SLEEVE AGAINST CAPITALIST WAR!
Show your LOVE for humanity and freedom!
Express your DISGUST for war and repression!

Saturday, February 15th, 2003 (Valentine's Day weekend) Meet at Goodale Park in the Short North (Park & Buttles) - Columbus, OH.

March to the Federal Building (200 N. High Street) and the Air Force Reserves Recruiting Center (20 E. Long Street).

> "If there is a country that has committed unspeakable atrocities in the world, it is the United States of America."

—Nelson Mandela, International Women's Forum, 1/31/03

Mandela has definitely got it right. During the last century, the United States has made numerous excursions into other sovereign nations. It has always done so under the guise of national security or liberation for that country's population. In reality, however, it is always for the same reasons—to gain a voice in the way that country operates that will benefit the US, and of course, to exert its own power. And it always occurs with the same result-numerous casualties, many of them innocent civilians now being oppressed, repressed, and killed by not just one illegitimate government, but two.

And now the US hopes to do it again, with an escalation of the war against the people of Iraq. According to president Bush in his State of the Union address, he plans to do this with or without support from the United Nations and other allies in the European Union. Not only that, but he plans to do it in one of the most aggressive displays of force imaginable (other than an all out nuclear attack). According to reports from the Pentagon, the United States plans to use a strategy known as "Shock and Awe," in which 300 to 400 cruise missiles would be launched on Iraq each day for two consecutive days. If this happens, it would be more than twice the number of missiles launched during the entire 40 days of the 1991 Gulf War.

On February 15th, people will be out all across the country and all across the world to protest this unjust and illegal war. Here in Columbus, Ohio during Valentine's Day weekend, we will also be out on the streets, voicing our LOVE for humanity and freedom, while showing our DISGUST for war and repression. We are coming out not to just voice our opposition to this war, but to all wars, and to capitalism itself, the cause of the never ending war machine and the military-industrial complex.

Everywhere we look today, we hear about another war-a war against terrorism, a war against Iraq, a war against immigrants, and a war against the poor. We are

opposed to all of these so-called wars: WE WILL BE WEARING OUR HEARTS ON OUR SLEEVES TO PROTEST ALL OF THESE INJUSTICES!

Over the past several months, it has become obvious that there is huge opposition to any escalation of war with Iraq. But does the government care? NO! Bush & Co. are going right on with their plans. Hundreds of thousands of people can come out right in Bush's backyard, and still he doesn't care. Demonstrations and rallies can be held in cities across the country, and yet the war drums keep beating, getting faster and faster as the US prepares for eventual war.

There is an increasingly dominant feeling within the anti-war movement that if we are going to be serious about securing human rights, here and abroad, and to stopping the invasion, we are going to have to find new ways of political action. It is a privilege to not act upon the most direct means at our disposal.

Many of us in the anti-war movement feel that it is also time to abandon this privilege. It is time to up the stakes, time for more drastic action. As we've been clearly shown, simply talking and marching isn't stopping the Bush regime's desire for endless war against all peoples of the world. Therefore, we feel that the only way to stop the invasion is to raise the domestic costs for the State to pursue it. We can do this through various forms of non-participation and economic sabotage.

We are calling for all those interested in turning up the HEAT on Bush and company to join us for a creative and rowdy display of disruption of business as usual on February 15th in Columbus, Ohio.

We encourage any interested groups to plan creative and disruptive acts against the capitalist military machine that threatens us all. We are not interested in just fighting this specific war, but fighting the entire capitalist system that causes such wars. We want to put an end to the social problems that support militarism, exploitation, and repression.

We are encouraging people to organize in affinity groups, and come to Columbus with their own ideas for actions. Some ideas include blockades, lockdowns, costumes, street theatre, graffiti, banner drops, puppets, a die in. Anything and everything you can imagine! Diversity of tactics will be respected!

We will be meeting at Goodale Park at 11:30 to the Air Force Reserves Recruiting Station on East Long Street, by way of the Federal Building at 200 N. High Street. We will be marching as a contingent within the Columbus Not in Our Name Peace March.

"NO WAR BETWEEN NATIONS, NO PEACE BETWEEN CLASSES!"

Against Repression and Racism,
For A Society Free of ALL Wars!

See you on the Streets...

In solidarity,
Anti-War Action-Columbus

If you are interested in endorsing this call, please send us an email at: antiwaraction43201@ziplip.com

STAY IN COLUMBUS FOR A BENEFIT SHOW FOR ARA COLUMBUS THAT NIGHT!
Email aracolumbus@antiracistaction.us for more info on the show!

Anti-Capitalist Feeder March, Philadelphia, February 15th, 2003

Who: Anti-capitalists, Anti-imperialists, Anarchists and Revolutionaries
What: "Feeder" march from West Philadelphia to Center City.
Where: 37th and Walnut
When: 10 a.m. February 15th, 2003

The Anarchist Communist Union of Philadelphia has called for a feeder march to leave from West Philadelphia at 10 a.m. on February 15, from 37th and Walnut. The march will move to Center City to join the rally and march organized by Philadelphia Regional Antiwar Network (PRAWN). The Anti-Capitalist march will hilight radical opposition to US policy abroad and also the war being waged against poor, immigrant, Muslim, Middle Eastern and South Asian communities inside the United States. We echo the words of anarchists organizing in Oakland: "This is not a war between the people of the US and the people of the world. It is capitalism—a war on the poor."

For poor and working people in Philadelphia, the threat is not from Iraq or nuclear terrorism and our immediate enemies are not Saddam or North Korea. We are threatened by the police and imprisonment, by detention and deportation. Our enemies are our bosses and landlords, and the slimy politicians who represent them. Our lives are a struggle to survive made up of shit jobs and unemployment, of insane rents and homelessness. For us, capitalism does not just cause wars, it is war, every day of our lives.

Through all the talk of weapons of mass destruction and axis' of evil, the war against poor people has raged on in Philadelphia and around the country. Home-lessness, evictions, gentrification are on the rise. The harassment of Muslim, immigrant and South East Asian communities has been on the increase for months. Initiatives like "Operation Safe Streets" have given the police increased control of poor neighborhoods while the harassment and jailing of youth, most of who are people of color, rises each month. It is as clear now as it has ever been that the United States is not a country built for us, but a country built on us. To quote one Philadelphia housing rights activist,

"We must engage in militant struggle at home to cripple the social and economic base that this system stands on. We must shake capitalism to its very roots."

Anarchist Communist Union of Philadelphia

Northeastern Federation of Anarcho-Communists Represents
Against The War!
By NEFAC

In New York City, the Open City (New York City), Desiderata (NJ), and Roundhouse (Baltimore) collectives of NEFAC, along with the Workers Solidarity Alliance and the Industrial Workers of the World, marched as a "Red & Black contingent" in the huge labor portion of the march which totaled half a million people. The Red & Black contingent spent the better part of the day disassembling repressive police barricades with the assistance of fellow workers in the labor march. NEFAC members also distributed the flyer "Anarchists Against the War" written by Open City. Two NEFAC members were among the 311 people arrested by the New York City Police.

Meanwhile, the Anarchist-Communist Union of Philadelphia (ACUP) organized an anti-capitalist feeder march from West Philly. Marching under the banner "Let the rich fight their own war" the feeder march highlighted radical opposi- tion to U.S. policy abroad and also the war being waged against poor, immigrant, Muslim, Middle Eastern and South Asian communities inside the United States. The feeder march met up with the main anti-war march of 10,000 people, which ACUP members also helped organize and spoke at.

In the Canadian cities of Quebec City, Montreal, Toronto and Guelph NEFAC distributed about 2500 leaflets articulating our position of "No war between nations, No peace between classes" in both English and French.

In Toronto, NEFAC helped promote and marched with the "No One Is Illegal" (NOII) contingent as they kicked off the NOII campaign in Toronto. NEFAC members also distributed "Class struggle against the work/war machine" by the local "No War But The Class War" group that they participate in. The NOII contingent was a visible and dynamic presence in the 80,000 person strong demonstration.

In Montreal, NEFAC teamed up with the Comite Des Sans Emploi and the CLAC to form an anti-capitalist contingent. The contingent numbered 300 people with a number of banners and lots of black and red & black flags. Estimates of the Montreal march topped 150,000.

Quebec City militants of four different collectives united in an anti-capitalist contingent and marched together with 4 banners and about 30 people in a march of 7000 people, making it the largest demonstration in Quebec City since the Summit of The Americas in April 2001.

Anarchists Against the War
By Open City Collective, New York City

The following statement was distributed in mass throughout the February 15 day of actions in New York City by anarchist militants.

The U.S. government claims that its aggression against Iraq is part of a so-called War on Terrorism, which began after September 11, 2001. Actually, the rich and powerful of the U.S.—the ruling class—do not care about the deaths of nearly three thousand working people who lost their lives in the World Trade Center attacks. If they did, they could save the lives of many times that number in their honor, by providing universal health care, by enforcing safety regulations in work-places, among many other social advancements.

Saddam Hussein's regime has an interest in maintaining its ferocious domination over the Iraqi people and in increasing power in its region. But Iraq had nothing to do with the crimes of September 11th, not does it pose a significant military threat to the U.S. As everyone knows, it is the U.S. who is not only the main possessor of weapons of mass destruction in the world today but the main broker of these weapons to other countries. There is no dispute that Hussein is a cruel dictator. Unfortunately, the world is full of cruel dictators, most of them U.S. allies or lackeys. Hussein should be removed from power by the Iraqi people, who should also decide, for themselves, how they wish to live. There is no moral justification for the mighty U.S. to slaughter the people of Iraq on the grounds that the Iraqi state might someday be a danger. This slaughter is an act of international aggression.

The real reasons for the U.S. war are economics and power politics. First, Iraq sits on a huge supply of oil. Control of oil means control of the foundation of world industrial capitalism. Transportation of all kinds depends on gasoline. Food production depends on artificial, oil-derived fertilizer and pesticides. Almost every-thing else uses plastics or chemicals derived from oil. Yet oil is a limited resource, as well as one that pollutes, contributing to the greenhouse effects that have been ruining our planet. As long as we have industrial capitalism, big corporations and their states must not only control everything within their power but must continually exceed their existing influence and range. Corporations of the U.S. and other rich, imperialist nations strive to control the natural resources of poorer, oppressed nations. The people of the world must replace industrial capitalism with an ecologically-balanced, cooperative system of production.

Second, with this war, the U.S. wishes to demonstrate that it is the most powerful, most dominant state on earth, that its empire is the world. The U.S. openly seeks to dominate poorer nations to show that they must obey its will and not act on their own, as Saddam Hussein attempted after being a U.S. agent. With the collapse of the state capitalist Soviet Union, a struggle for dominance is also fought out behind the scenes with wealthy competitors, the imperialist states of Europe and Japan.

Capitalist states exist to wage war. Their international relations are battles for supremacy. Most of their budgets go for military expenditures. Their economies are intertwined with military spending. They direct national trade and foreign investment to profit from other countries. Big wars and small wars, hot wars and cold wars-this is how and why they exist. Together with their ecologically-unbalanced technologies, their nuclear and biological weapons threaten to destroy the all life and to further devastate the world's ecosystem. To limit their wars, we must put pressure on these states. To end their wars, we must end all states.

WHAT KIND OF MOVEMENT DO WE WANT?

A new anti-war movement has been growing in the U.S. and internationally. It is much greater now than at the same stage in the Vietnam war. Along with established left groups and peace organizations, the new movement includes neighborhood and church groups. It includes working people, as well as a growing representation from within organized labor. It includes Black and Latino groups and women's organizations. It overlaps with the anarchist-influenced movement opposing neoliberalism and working to achieve international social justice, notably the cause of Palestinian liberation from colonialism and political oppression.

A large movement is necessary, including a wide range of viewpoints and methods, operating in a democratic and pluralistic fashion. As anarchists, we are prepared to work in a united front of anti-war forces. But we also intend to work critically, to say what we think in an open and honest manner. We hope to win over as much of the movement as we can to our point of view.

We need a movement that does not rely on or work with the Democratic Party. Neither in election campaigns nor on the congressional floor, have the Democrats opposed the war or the government repression. Over the years, it was the Democrats who led the U.S. into war time after time, from two World Wars to the Korean and Vietnamese Wars, and a series of little wars under Carter and Clinton. If anything, the Democrats are more hawkish on the Israeli side in the Middle East than the Republicans are. A few Democratic politicians may make some pro-peace statements. However, their purpose is not to change the Democrats from a party of war but to fool the anti-war movement by diverting dissent to permitted, diffuse channels that won't upset the status quo.

We need a movement that does not have illusions in the United Nations or in multilateral action among imperialist states. The UN does not represent the people of the world. It represents governments, which represent their ruling classes. Relying on the UN is to justify the war, not oppose it. Regardless of what the UN says, we must oppose this war. Without supporting Saddam Hussein, we must clearly state that the U.S. has no right to intervene in other countries. We hope the U.S. is defeated in its aggression.

We need a movement that has real social power. Who can stop the war? The rank-and-file of the military can, by refusing orders. The near-revolt of the ranks in the Vietnam war played a big part in ending it and in the abolition of the draft. Today, the military relies on the 'poor draft.' which leads many working class youth into the dead end of military indenture and war. When the U.S. service men and women see that this war is not in the interest of working people, neither in this country nor in Iraq, they may stand up against it.

The multiracial, multinational U.S. working class also have the power to stop the war, by ceasing the production and transportation of war goods. Working people have the power to stop society in its tracks and start it up again. At the least, they can refuse to let pro-war concerns stop them from striking for their needs. Right now, workers with representation in organized labor are struggling for their rights. Their unions are relatively weak and top-heavy with bureaucrats. But a real class struggle program would shake up the capitalists and their state.

We need to make the ruling elite feel threatened that if they continue this war there will be increasing amounts of public and popular turmoil leading to mass radicalization. This will pressure them in ways they will understand, making them less likely to continue their military aggressions.

WHAT IS ANARCHISM?

The are many confused ideas and misconceptions about anarchism, or anti-authoritarian socialism. Anarchism is the most radical, participatory, decentralized and direct form of democracy. An anarchist world is one where capitalist corporations would be replaced by networks of self-governing worker and consumer cooperatives. Where armies and police forces would be replaced by popular militias. Where society would be managed by a federation of popular councils and associations. Where technology would be redesigned to function in balance with nature. Where creative, fulfilling, self-directed work would be the rule, not the exception. Where the poverty-stricken parts of the world would be helped to develop in their own way, by their own choice.

Such a world will not come about by itself. As we have seen in the attacks against the anti-globalization movement and in struggles for labor and human rights around the world, a dedicated, unified movement for social revolution will be fought aggressively, by the U.S. state and its wealthy competitors. But this is what we mobilize to fight for.

Statement of the OPEN CITY ANARCHIST COLLECTIVE of the NORTH-EASTERN FEDERATION OF ANARCHO-COMMUNISTS.

New York City
February 15, 2003

Chapter XXV
M-15: The War Machine Must Stop!
March 15, 2003

Overview

By March 15th, it was becoming clear to all that the Bush led U.S. war machine was forging ahead with the invasion of Iraq. Despite massive world opinion against such actions, and despite the largest demonstrations to ever occur in the United States prior to the out break of war, the capitalist preparations against the Bath'ist regime were not being quelled. As tens of thousands of troops prepared for conflict, the people once again tried to assert their united power in the streets. Like on February 15th, massive protests materialized across the continent and the world. Some of the larger U.S. demonstrations were in San Francisco, (1-200,000), Washington, D.C. (100,000), and Los Angeles (100,000). As before, Black Blocs raged like fire in dozens of cities. The two most militant Blocs stormed the streets of San Francisco and D.C.

In the capital, a small element of the Bloc was able to force their way into the World Bank building where they proceeded to cause thousands of dollars worth in property destruction. As police reinforcements arrived on the scene, anarchists were forced into a fighting retreat. Six were arrested.

In San Francisco, the Black Bloc lead a huge break away march of 2000 militants. This contingent raged through the streets of this west coast city, eventually suffering dozens of arrests. All told 175 people were taken into police custody.

Again, the big story with M15 was not any particular demonstration, or any particular Bloc, but rather the sheer size and scope of the demos throughout the United States and beyond. And in the coming days, the second part of this story would be the fact that the hundreds of thousands of protesters failed to stop the war.

This failure does not condemn the efforts of the masses or the Bloc. Simply put it further illustrates the need for us to go back into our communities where we can build a more comprehensive duel power in our neighborhoods and in our workplaces. Protests, even when they are millions strong, do not fundamentally challenge the capitalist status quo. For this we must build a powerful working class movement through

which we can shutdown production though a general strike. The general strike and eventual insurrection are the tools we must acquire in order to eventually bring down the capitalist ruling class and end their imperialist wars once and for all.

San Francisco Splinter March Report By BBB - Blanchardstown Black

Roughly 2,000 people initially went on the "unpermitted" march, which left Jefferson Square at approximately 2:40 p.m. The march was a mixture of Black Bloc, pink/ carnival bloc, queer bloc, and general hangers-on/observers.

The march went down Golden Gate Avenue, turned south down Van Ness, & headed towards Mission Street after turning off Market. I think it was in between 8th and 9th Street on Mission, the Police then gave everyone a verbal warning, saying the protest was unpermitted and anyone not standing on the sidewalk would be subject to arrest. This is where the first group of people sat down and linked arms, and after a tense stand off they were arrested and taken away. The march then moved back to Market Street, but was confined to the sidewalk.

The crowd headed back towards Market and was slowed down by a very heavy police presence at every step. An attempt to retake the street was made but police moved in on the 'dirt bike' white bikes very quickly cutting off people arriving, and the numbers of people trying to hold the street position were insufficient. It was back onto the sidewalk again (to chants of "Whose sidewalk? Our sidewalk!").

The cops were definitely a lot more organized than February 16th. They didn't bring any horses with them this time after they bolted when frightened at the intersection of 8th and Market on the previous breakaway march. There were also a lot more of them than F16.

The march went several blocks up Market, and people ran down different side streets in surprise attempts to take the streets again, but the sheer numbers of cops meant that every attempt was thwarted. At one intersection, on Mission, and 2nd (I think? There is a cinema on the corner), after another sprint, the cops caught up with 3 or 4 masked in black at the front of the charge, and threw them to the ground quite violently and cuffed them with the plastic ties almost instantly. This was well before the majority of the run arrived at the corner and I don't think any media or legal observers saw this incident.

After a few cat-and-mouse runs back and forth, the march was back on the side-walk on Market Street. Police were making it very difficult to move any way at all, splitting the march up as much as possible at pedestrian crossings.

left around 4:45 p.m., was knackered after all the running! Things seemed to be dying off at that stage, the lack of bodies meant it was proving difficult to do anything

constructive. I didn't see the mass arrest taking place, maybe someone else can write that up.

There was no property vandalism whatsoever, and as has been pointed out already, the cops arrested more people than any previous breakaway march. Next time lets fuck the shops over good and proper.

Today's march was a bit all over the place, definitely not as cohesive or effective as F16. There was a lack of communication and unity of purpose. When the first bunch of people sat down at Mission and 9th, nobody could see what was happening until they'd been corralled onto the sidewalk and could only watch and shout as the people were hauled away. Also the attempts at bringing the march back onto the street were frustrating as the crowd was spread out through people not keeping tight, and easily split or pushed back onto the path.

There was also a journalist present in the Bloc from the *San Francisco Chronicle*. He told me his name but I forget. I chatted to him at length about direct action and Black Bloc methods, and gave Rob Morse our love, asking him to come down in person again next time and we can have a discussion with him. It will be interesting to see if there's any report about it. Probably not.

Alright, time for bed, again.

San Francisco Breakaway Marches By Black Bloc

Thoughts on the Black Bloc
Some immediate thoughts about today's breakaway march

Unpermitted marches are now a permanent feature of Bay Area protests.

The recent breakaway marches that began late last year have accomplished their goal: changing the protest landscape just enough so people understand that an unpermitted march will happen at major demos. When random people began announcing the beginning of today's march, it was clear that no one group can take responsibility for these marches. Like in Europe or other places, San Francisco will now have acts of civil disobedience as a default complement to permitted shows of numbers. With the U.S. about to declare war on the world, it is up to us to stop our government. And, more broadly, to shutdown a system of global apartheid and capitalist destruction.

We need tight affinity groups who can work together as a spontaneous network.

Today's march was unique because the aggressive actions of the police forced us into at least 3 different segments which went in separate directions. Each of these segments was roughly divided along affinity group lines with many more unaffiliated people. With the understanding that unpermitted protests will almost always happen (given prior

announcements on mailing lists, Indymedia, etc.), we can create a protest culture which does not rely on centralization or any kind of "spokescouncil" or attempts to violate our security through formal organizing. Given this, we should all be tightening up with our closest comrades.

SFPD is running a red squad which is spying on us and openly attacking us beyond their law.

Aside from the fact that SFPD has been violating its own policy when assigning drug war thugs to be undercovers at our protests, recent articles on Indymedia and the S.F. Bay Guardian prove that political police are fully operational within SFPD, led by Richard Bruce. The more we begin to operate like a network of groups, the more confidence and numbers we will have. The police are lumbering and slow. And when they aren't lumbering and slow, they fuck up and brutalize random tourists who are shopping. It isn't that they are stupid-it is that our organizational structure allows us to win every time we do it right.

Another war is possible in San Francisco.

Today's demo was a sometime-awkward transition for the breakaway marches heading into the start of war. At least in the short term, we are heading into days of widespread civil disobedience and emergency protests. There won't be traditional "breakaways" happening but we have proven that something will happen. Someone will call a Black Bloc. Someone will bring a sound system. Someone will bring anti-capitalist banners and be ready with the rest of us to go outside of the protest cages. And many more of us will be organizing in tight groups with tight internal security, and we'll all understand what needs to be done. A destabilized domestic situation is a direct and immediate threat to Bush's plans of global conquest. Let's make history.

The Real Protest: WB Take-Over, D.C. By Michaelis

Bravo! to the members of the anarchist Black Bloc that managed to infiltrate the World Bank during the March 15 protest, the implications of which are more far-reaching than "liberal" solutions to the capitalist war-machine. The problem with "liberal" solutions to these problems, such as the D.C. convergence, is that they are forced to follow the rules and hierarchies of the very enemies we're trying to overthrow. They are told when they are "allowed" to protest. They are told where they are "allowed" to protest. While thousands of protesters marched down streets the State had designated as "permissible", the real sites of protest, such as the World Bank, were blocked off and excluded. THIS IS RIDICULOUS. Why are tens of thousands of people being directed, ordered about, and regulated by police they far outnumber? The protest was about as offensive as a Saint Patrick's Day parade. "But it's important that our voices be

heard!," many will exclaim. But that's the point; our voices HAVE been heard, and the administration will continue it's terrorist policies regardless amidst a cloud of rhetoric and propaganda. Why would they change their policies if they're not threatened? Let's not kid ourselves; this is NOT a democracy, a republic, or anything close. It is a fascist police-state, and all the most liberal protests can do is change the avenue/method of tyranny, not the source of tyranny itself. Oil companies and multi-national corporations will not bow down to a peaceful protest when their interests aren't challenged.

IMAGINE: Thousands of protesters march down their "legally permissible" route, when all of a sudden the ENTIRE MARCH turns down a blocked-off route and heads straight to the World Bank. Police are outnumbered; they also realize that any attempt of force will be greeted by an instant riot. Results? There are several. First, the nation is forced to focus on the role the World Bank plays in U.S. imperialism and global domination, as well as the economic role the US plays in the international arena. Second, the World Bank, one of the U.S.'s most powerful international institutions would be SHUT DOWN for at least a day, and an incredibly powerful symbolic statement would be made to the world. Third, the media will be forced to recognize the efforts of anti-capitalist activism. How many mainstream media outlets have and will recognize the World Bank infiltration on March 15? Little or none. How many would recognize it if thousands participated? A shitload more than none I'll bet.

Don't get me wrong; the thousands of people protesting on March 15 and before represent a positive trend. These liberal methods, however, are also potentially dangerous. Their focus on the government as a site for social change may disillusion many to more radical forms of activism and change. THEY OPERATE ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL LISTEN TO OUR VOICES. THIS HAS BEEN DISPROVEN TIME AND TIME AGAIN.

This is war. The US government has and continues to support murder and genocide across the globe, and something must be done. Many who oppose the US empire engage in liberal protests which give the illusion of "doing something" or "making a statement," when in fact these liberal protests only placate their revolutionary instincts.

Why do I refer to the anarchist Black Bloc as the real protest? Because they are the only ones who did not "protest" government authority while embracing the same authority everywhere else. An example of liberal protesting:

Protester: "Down with the US police-state!"
Cop: "You can't march down that street."
Protester: "On to the next street everybody!"

Anytime a form of social resistance is condoned and sanctioned by those in power, we should be suspicious. Chances are the rules they WON'T let us break will be far more important than the ones they do let us break. The Black Bloc refuses to recognize legitimate authority in ANY government order, making them their protest more involved and intense. If only more liberal reformists had the courage...

Michaelis

D.C. Bloc
By 1

I was there when this happened, and I am extremely proud of what we did. When we were charging down the street, it was a powerful moment for everyone there. When we got inside, there were chairs and tables everywhere, like they were getting ready for a banquet or something, and they got trashed. It's true, the doors were locked on us. When we ran in, security hit something that locked the outer of the two layers of doors. We were running around in there like crazy, looking for a way out, we ran down two dead end hallways and we had to beat the door out with a sign post, but I'm proud to say that in my affinity group, no one got arrested. We all made it out safely (one of us had minor cuts from the glass). All I can say is that this is an example of what we can do when we get down to business. We're about action, not talk and it's about time that we did something like this. On March 15th, we set a new standard, we showed that D.C. protests don't have to be tame marches that don't even fulfill their permits, we can DO something. I hope that this march in New York goes well and I hope that the IMF/World Bank protests this year are the best yet.

D.C. Communiqué
By John Doe

March 15, 2003 is a day to be remembered in the history of the Black Bloc, anti-capitalist, and anti-war movements. This is the story of the "fabulous five."

Throughout history we see the winning side in any conflict obscuring the view of what actually went on. We find what we look for; last Saturday I was looking for hope. We won, and I found it. This is the obscure and other wise unheard view I had.

None of us had any idea what was to come before us that morning. I showed up with a friend who was home from school and 2 first time demonstrators, I certainly didn't expect to see any bloc. Once we did we got people together and with the help of a veteran, through out some Ideas of what we could do with this amount of unexpected people, it came down a sit-in on the World Bank. I liked the comment on the IMC-DC message board about the connection between capitalism, the World Bank, and the anti-war movement, questioning why we would do that. Well everyone has there own reasons, that's the beauty of the Black Bloc, you don't have to prescribe to anyone else way of thinking, its more of a tactic then a movement, it just so happens that we often think the same things. Amongst us were hippie drummers, sharps, socialists, communists, and random muckrakers, along with the classic anarchists.

Why I did it:

1) The way I see it, the country's that are going to profit the most off this war are the same ones profiting from the exploits of the World Bank.

2) Wars are fought over power, for capitalist tyrants like George Dubya + Money = Power. If you shut down the international financial backbone, it's no longer profitable, i.e. powerful. No matter what George is going to war, and, in a scene, so are we.

3) This shows we weren't going to sit ideally by, this was more productive then walking around in a circle holding signs and listening to the same old rhetoric from people I can't relate to, People announcing their candidacy for president, Please! The last thing we need is another so-called leader. Donald Rumsfeld said he didn't care how many protesters where out there, which shows its all just part of the spectacle, a liberal circle jerk. ANSWER has done a great job putting up big numbers without doing much with them. One could shut down cities with such numbers. It would have been nice to shut down the bank with 150 people.

4) To my knowledge nothing like this has ever been done before, I've been to every D.C. World Bank protest since A16 and never got in the bank, I wanted to see if it could be done—it can.

Those are the reasons I can pull out my ass about why I played my part in it. Since everyone's reasons may differ, the fabulous five decided we would each write something about it, compile it and release it. This is my contribution.

Now for the details of the Bank itself—the third door from the right was unlocked on the outside. On the inside only the first on the right was unlocked. The security guards were unarmed. Nothing was spraypainted. There was a fancy lobby style stairway to the immediate right after the metal detectors. In the back left corner were elevators and stairwells. We had about a minute alone inside the bank. The doors were locked automatically. Security cameras everywhere! The rest is a blur. A battle to destroy the economic basis, which allows such tyrants to rise to power, has never felt so present to me. To qualify myself, I was the first one in the front door, second out the back. Those of you "liberals" out there that condemn our actions, simply do not understand The Fabulous Five is the name deemed to us by a homeless man when he asked for change and we all gave him everything he turned and said "you" all The Fabulous Five and so it sticks. Only two of us had ever seen each other before the march, yet from that moment on, we were brothers. I trusted my comrades with my life in their hands as they did. I regret that any of those who entered after me got arrested. I feel, almost as if I failed them, because I got away. I didn't learn of the arrests until the following day and I believe everyone knew the risks. Props to those who got popped, they sacrificed more then we did. Regardless, it was a success in the sense that some of us did get in and got out.

What this means for future demonstrations? Escalation? The blocs gonna be more hyped up and ready to go, The cops are going to have more under covers, better training/tactics and be more pissed off at us for embracing the shit out of them. The goals should be to stop whatever is the business of the day, to hold a sit-in in the building, find all the information possible on what goes behind policy making and "liberate it." The Bloc needs to be more spontaneous, which I believe was the largest factors in the successful entry this time. We need to find more innovative distractions for the

police, we need to hit the bank and the IMF at the same time just as hard, and have support (food, med. supplies etc.) For more then a day-long sit-in. Most importantly, we need rational and dedicated demonstrators. Every one did phenomenally well this time without a doubt, but when I ran down the street there were almost 200 people behind me—35 feet into the bank there were 20. Ninety percent didn't even try to follow us in—they stopped at the park. I can't blame them, but we could've used the help. I witnessed at least six counts of police brutality throughout the day which tells me, they're not gonna be any nicer next time. The full M15 communiqué will be released as soon as everyone has submitted there write-up and has had time to agree on it.

Till next time comrades,
Jon Doe

End Communiqué

Was Around, DC
By None Provided

I'm not going to say much about actions by the protestors once they were inside the building but I'll give some detail up to that point. About 100-150 of us broke off down 18th street (I think) towards the World Bank building, we walked past the police on the route, who did not follow us , ran down the street, to the World Bank building, this is where many people got left behind, apparently, while I was with the group of people who entered the building (the front door was unlocked and there were very few people in the lobby), my friend was well behind us and said by the time much of the group got their they had no clue as to what was going on. Getting inside was ironic, the doors were unlocked, we marched right in. From there many people dispersed, a few went back out to the street, but most stayed inside. We were inside for about a minute (maybe a little less) before the police arrived, at which time one protestor led us to the side door, and about 10 people linked arms to stop the police while the window was broken. After it was broken we ran out and managed to escape the oncoming motorcycles.

While inside, the police were fairly brutal, I have bruises across my arms and chest from where they tried to break the human chain. Several people were thrown against walls, stairs and statues.

That's about all. It was pretty intense, and the slight media coverage we did get (page A11 of the *Washington Post*) was mostly bullshit, many more than 70 people broke off, and many more than 12 went inside.

Chapter XXVI
When The War Started
March 19-27, 2003...

Overview

> "Jimmy joined the army cause he had no place to go. And there ain't nobody hiring round here since all the jobs went to Mexico... Now he's got a rifle in his hand, rolling into Baghdad wondering how he got this far. Just another poor boy off to fight a rich mans war."

—Rich Man's War, Steve Earle

On March 19th, 2003, the imperialist invasion of Iraq began. The U.S. and a small number of collaborators (chief among them being the U.K., followed by junior partners Italy and Spain) began one of the most devastating aerial bombardments in the history of warfare. More then 100,000 ground troops soon were crossing the boarder. Iraq fought back, but after a month of combat, its standing army would surrender, forcing the continuing resistance into a guerrilla phase.

As soon as the attack got underway, outraged people took to the streets in over 500 U.S. cities. San Francisco was effectively shutdown by hundreds of thousands of demonstrators. Within the next 72 hours police made a total of over 2200 arrests in that city alone. Anarchist Bloc Blocs made their presence felt at countless protests. Hundreds of additional anti-war demonstrations were held across the world, many numbering in the 100,000s. In the coming days and weeks these protests would spread. On March 22nd over 200,000 rallied in New York City. Across the nation financial centers ground to a halt as protesters took part in acts of civil disobedience. On many occasions Black Blocs fought with police and attacked capitalist targets. But despite this massive show of popular discontent, the state was soon able to regain control, and the war continued unimpeded.

To justify the war Bush claimed that Iraq was harboring biological, chemical, and possibly nuclear weapons. He also insinuated that the Baath'ist regime had ties to Al Quada. As I write this overview, two years has past since the outbreak of war, and no such weapons have been found, and no link between the Baath'ist and Al Quada have ever been reveled. 150,000 U.S. and allied troops remain in Iraq were they are the

constant target of guerrilla attacks. To date more then 11,000 American service man and women have been wounded, and over 1200 have been killed. The numbers continue to rise daily. This cost in human life has compelled a number of governments to pull their forces out of this desert nation. Spain is out, and Italy has announced its plans to withdraw. Increasingly the U.S. finds itself isolated, while our sons and daughters are shot down in the streets of Baghdad, Mosual, and Basra. Again, the majority of Americans oppose the conflict.

While it may seem bleak, one should take heart in the fact that the movement against the occupation is mounting. Already millions of domestic workers, through their unions (U.S. Labor Against the War), have come out in opposition. Every day more and more people are joining the ranks of the resisters. Even within the military, recent veterans and enlisted personnel are calling for the troops to be brought home. As the pressure mounts it should be expected that it will become harder and harder for the capitalists to maintain their presence in the Middle East. Even so, one must soberly recognize that the anti-war movement will face many more trials and tribulations before our victory is had. We would do well to squarely recognize the need to continue to build the anti-capitalist, anti-globalization movement as we continue the fight against the war. For our victory over the ruling class will not come with the simple withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq alone. Such a victory will only be had when we are able stand up, united, and shut down the entire capitalist machine for all its worth. We must organize not just in the streets, but in our neighborhoods and in our workplaces.

BRING THE WAR HOME! (THE DAY THEIR WAR STARTS-San Francisco) By Anti-War Action

In Afghanistan, the U.S. military has killed thousands of people. The US spends billions funding genocidal policies against the Palestinian people. In Colombia, the U.S. is escalating a civil war in which thousands of labor activists and peasants have been murdered. In Iraq, economic sanctions and radioactive weaponry have killed hundreds of thousands in the decade since the last war. The U.S. "War on Terror" keeps expanding, threatening millions around the world. This is not a war between the people of the U.S. and the people of the world. It is capitalism-a war on the poor. Investors in U.S. oil companies will get a new pipeline through Afghanistan and increased access to the Iraq's oil reserves (second only to Saudi Arabia). The weapons manufacturers will get new contracts and the U.S. politicians will have an excuse to increase their power. Meanwhile, the poor and working people of America will definitely not be better off.

We continue to live in a world of unemployment and minimum wage jobs, of racism and harassment, of surveillance and prisons, of impossible rents and evictions—a world not built for us, but on top of us. The brutal displays of the police in Oakland or L.A.

bring to mind images of the Israeli Army in occupied Palestine. The thousands of Arab and South Asian desaparecidos in the U.S. since September 11th recall the U.S.-supported fascist regimes of Latin America. Even the foot soldiers the government uses to expand its empire will come home, as they did in the last Iraq war, with diseases from depleted Uranium ammunition. For us, the poor and working people living in the U.S., the war is not in Iraq, Palestine, Afghanistan or Colombia. It is right here at home, against the rich.

The growing anti-war movement has called a number of demonstrations in the upcoming weeks and months. We will be there in solidarity. But we are worried that our protests have become nothing more than parades. Protest isn't protest if it doesn't threaten the established order or physically disrupt the functioning of the war machine.

So let's use our collective power to change things directly. Wear black in mourning for the victims of capitalism, racism, state violence. Let's stick together and watch each other's backs. Let's fight back.

Join us for a creative rampage.

LOOK FOR THE BIG BLACK "ANTI-WAR ACTION" FLAGS

BLACK BLOC—THE DAY THE NEW WAR ON IRAQ STARTS: Anti-war groups have called for a protest the day the new U.S. war on Iraq begins. The protest will meet at 5 pm the day the war starts at Powell and Market.

RECONVERGENCE POINT: We are calling on all people who missed the original 5 pm meeting point, or who just want to see the resistance continue in the street to meet at 9 pm at Powell and Market, to continue the protests.

For more information, contact antiwaraction@ziplip.com

When War Starts The World Stops! By NEFAC

The Northeastern Federation of Anarcho-Communists calls for an immediate mobilization following the initiation of brutal warfare upon the people of Iraq by the government of the United States. The day after the bombing starts we will fill the streets with an angry chorus of dissent. We will show the world that we do not support the murderous policies of the illegitimate administration which rules with impunity from the White House. There can be no business as usual when the military might of the world's greatest power is used to murder defenseless civilians in the pursuit of global hegemony. When we refuse to support the war machine, it will come to a halt. When the war starts, the world must stop! No war but class war!

The elite of the USA and Iraq, personified by George Bush and Saddam Hussein, are leading their countries and much of the world into a disastrous confrontation on the plains where civilization arose. The cost of this clash of powers will be paid, in

sweat and in blood, by millions of people across the globe to enrich the coffers of the sultans of industry, their executors of State, and officers of war.

In this struggle over petrochemical wealth we will have no share of riches, only sorrow. This war, and all future wars of nationalist futility, will never be prevented by appeals to those who would be our masters. Only when we, whose toil creates their wealth, cast off these murderous despots can we enjoy the peace and freedom which is the right of each and all.

The hollow excuses for this war cannot be defended. The tyrannical regime in Iraq, while a misery for its citizens and a threat to its neighbors, is to Western powers but an opportunity to introduce a greater military presence in an economically and geographically strategic point on the global chessboard.

Even as heads of State prepare for war against Iraq, they dance diplomatically around North Korea. Even as they demonize a despot in Iraq, they support monarchies and dictatorships around the world. They would wage war against Iraq not because they must, but because they can.

Unemployment, low wages, lack of education and decent housing in the USA are mirrored by outright starvation and continual warfare in Iraq. Our mutual suffering is for the benefit of the elite and the States they control. Taxes on U.S. workers fund the military that guarantees control of cheap oil for industry and the profits of its owners. For their pleasure we pay the State, in sweat and in blood.

The oil for which we toil and kill poisons the very earth itself. Instead of developing sustainable energy and managing resources for the benefit of all humankind, the energy most easily controlled is extracted and marketed for the profit of the powerful. These oil wars are not only wars against humanity, but against the earth itself.

The current economic crisis of overproduction, wage slavery, and rampant speculation in the financial markets cannot be solved by the gluttonous destruction of war. War will only increase the miseries of we who must pay for the pleasures of those who exploit the world for their own desires. Americans, and citizens of the world, must say no to Iraqnophobia and yes to freedom! No to the war on our fellow citizens and yes to war against the bosses and States! War will only end with the end of capitalism and nationalism. No to the war on our fellow workers and yes to war against all of the international ruling elite! NO WAR BUT CLASS WAR!

Northeastern Federation of Anarcho-Communists (NEFAC)

Protests:

Baltimore: War Memorial Plaza on Gay St. at 5 p.m. If the invasion begins before 12 noon EST, meet at 5 p.m. on the same day. Invasion after 12 noon, meet the following day at 5 p.m. roundhouse@mobtown.org

Boston: Copley Square at 6:30 p.m., day after the bombing starts.
boston@nefac.net

Montreal: Starts at Square Dominion Saturday after the war is declared at 1 p.m. Depart au Carre Dominion, le Samedi apres que la guerre soit declaree a 13h.
betenoire_mtl@yahoo.fr

New Brunswick, New Jersey: New Brunswick fountain, Livingston Avenue and George Street; If war announced before 5 p.m., demo will be that day. If after 5 p.m., demo next day). nbanarchistunion@riseup.net

New York City: Times Square at 5 p.m. the day the bombing begins or at 5 p.m. the next day, in the event the bombing starts overnight. opencity@nefac.net

Philadelphia: Day after the war starts at 4:30p.m., the Clothspin, 15th and Market. phillynefac@defenstrator.org

Quebec City: Saturday after the bombing start at 12h30 in front of the Joseph Franois Perrault High School (on Chemin Ste-Foy). nefacquebec@yahoo.ca

Toronto: Day the war starts 5 p.m. at U.S. Consulate, University Ave north of Queen. First Saturday After War Officially Launched: Rally, US Consulate, University Ave. north of Queen St. 1 p.m.

WHEN THE WAR STARTS, NO BUSINESS AS USUAL!

Call for a Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist Contingent

New Brunswick, NJ

Emergency Demonstration—Day Of/Day After War Escalates—5PM (If War Announced Before 5PM, Demo Will Be That Day. If After 5PM, Demo Next Day)

It's time to up the stakes!

For the past six months, we've been holding numerous anti-war demonstrations, with hundreds of thousands of people turning out to try and stop this war. Despite the size and diversity of this movement, the Bush Regime is still insisting on attacking Iraq. It is obvious that our so-called leaders do not care what we think-they have proven to us that the idea that this country is a democracy is just a sham, and that those "leaders" have no respect for the people they are supposedly representing. It has become apparent that no matter how large these protests grow, just holding signs and giving speeches will never be enough to end this war. Now that the new invasion of Iraq has begun, we must do everything in our power to stop it. We must rise up and directly interfere with the war effort. On the day after the war begins, there will be no business as usual in the City of New Brunswick. It is time for the people of this city to join together with people all across the country to bring the nation's war machine to a grinding halt.

Despite the fact that world opinion is obviously overwhelmingly against war-not just in the streets, but in the halls of world governments as well-the Bush Regime is still pushing forward and beating the drums of war. All this without clear popular support, the support of allied nations, and with no clear connection to the 9/11 attacks. This

war has no connection to the "War on Terrorism." It is not about protecting Americans, and the case for a link between Saddam Hussein and al-Qaeda is flimsy at best. These are all just excuses to justify the illegal unilateral invasion of Iraq. What this war is truly about is about expanding the American Empire and promoting the interests of the American corporate elite.

The war against Iraq has been going on for over 12 years, and while both President Bush and Clinton claim this is a war against Saddam Hussein, in truth it has been the people of Iraq who have suffered the most. With crippling sanctions, hundreds of thousands of innocent Iraqi citizens have died, many of them children. With this new invasion, we can expect many more civilians to be injured or killed by U.S. forces. According to Pentagon reports, the military plan for this war will be even more destructive. The United States plans to drop 300-400 bombs each day during the first two days of this current invasion-more bombs than were dropped during the entire Gulf War.

Let's take a minute to think back to September 11, when thousands of innocent American civilians were killed. How did you feel that day? How do you think the Iraqi people feel today, as U.S. forces are carpet-bombing their country, killing innocent people and destroying the infrastructure of their country? Is getting revenge against a country that had nothing to do with the September 11th attacks really what we need to be doing?

On the day after the war begins, it is time to shut this city down! There is an increasingly dominant feeling within the anti-war movement that if we are going to be serious about securing human rights, here and abroad, and to stopping the new invasion of Iraq, we are going to have to find new ways of political action. It is a privilege to not act upon the most direct means at our disposal. Many of us in the anti-war movement feel that it is also time to abandon this privilege. It is time to up the stakes, time for more drastic action. As we've been clearly shown, simply talking and marching hasn't stopped the Bush Regime's desire for endless war against all peoples of the world. Therefore, we feel that the only way to end this war is to raise the domestic costs for the State to pursue it. We can do this through various forms of non-participation and economic sabotage.

We are calling for all people who agree with this call to join us in the streets in a mass direct action against this unjust war. We will be supporting a diversity of tactics, and encourage any interested groups to plan creative and disruptive acts against the capitalist military machine that threatens us all. Please bring your affinity group and meet up with us at the New Brunswick fountain—at the corner of Livingston Avenue and George Street. Look for the big red and black flags. We need to send the Bush Regime a direct message that we do not condone war, and will do everything in our power to make it impossible to wage this war!

See you on the streets...

NO WAR BUT THE CLASS WAR!
In solidarity,
New Brunswick Anarchist Union

(If War Announced Before 5 p.m., Demo Will Be That Day. If After 5 p.m., Demo Next Day)

For more information, or to endorse this call, please email nbanarchistunion@riseup.net.

BLACK BLOC CALL TO ACTION: NEW YORK CITY M22
By A. Nonimous

The time has come for unpermitted direct action. After all, is Bush going to war with permission from the UN?

with permission from the UN? For those of you going to New York for the United for Peace and Justice rally/march on Saturday, March 22, all anarchists, socialists, communists, workers of the world, students, and any supporters will band together to form a Black Bloc of one. We will be meeting at Bryant Square Park at 11:30 (42nd and 5thAvenue-look for the black flags). From there, we will march to the main rally at 42nd and Broadway. It's time to escalate our actions as Bush and his warmongers are escalating theirs! We are planning a breakaway march to a symbolic location (TBA at meeting point. Decisions made strictly through consensus) where we will have non-violent civil disobedience or a sit-in. Once again, all decisions will be made through consensus.

Remember to come in black and bring your masks as we are to be a Black Bloc of one, showing solidarity, unity, and equality, but most of all, symbolic anonymity and anonymity to the police who use video and photo cameras to document protests and protesters.

If you can, try to make some flyers for this event-spread the word.

PORTLAND BLACK BLOC COMMUNIQUE MARCH 27TH 2003 - FOR IMMEDIATE USE

1. MASK UP. PROTECT YOURSELF. On Tuesday's protest, an Officer Kruder was making audio reports into a tape recorder, describing people's appearances for future reference and information gathering. Police in other cities such as San Francisco have been illegally gathering information on political dissidents—there's no reason why Portland Police aren't doing the same. Putting on a mask not only protects you when it

comes to surveillance, it will also block (somewhat) pepper spray from coming directly into contact with your nose and/or mouth.

Masks also are a mask of solidarity. Even if you don't intend on getting involved in any civil disobedience but support the idea, it helps those carrying out the actions from being picked out and arrested. If the police are looking for someone in a black mask, and they can see 10 people with black masks on, there's a good chance they will arrest the 10 people. If there are 400 people with masks on who look the exact same, this obviously minimizes the risk of large-scale mass arrests.

Masks are also a mask of identity. By putting on a black mask, you are not hiding your identity—you become part of a common identity. If we all wear masks, then our differences that others seek to divide us by—our skin color, our gender, our age—are all cloaked behind a common individual identity which unifies us in purpose and in spirit. By becoming a Black Bloc, we attempt to shed the divisions between us under one collective face and voice.

Don't have a mask? Get any old t-shirt, and put your head through the sleeve instead of through the neck. Place the other sleeve over the top half of your head. Twist and adjust as appropriate/necessary. Voila! You are now part of a Black Bloc.

2. STAY TOGETHER. STAY TIGHT. On the unpermitted protest in down-town Portland on Tuesday, March 25th, the police enforced the traffic rules to the absolute letter of the law. At various crosswalks, the crowd was split in two, and even in three in places. The protest continued on down the sidewalk, without waiting for those left behind.

If we are split up into different groups, this means the police will find it easier to pick people off and arrest them. There will be less support, both physical and vocal, to defend those who are suffering from police brutality and over-zealousness. If you are towards the front of the march, then slow down. If you are towards the back of the march, then keep up! Our unity of purpose will be our strength. The more organized our movements, the more successful our actions will be. Be vocal & encourage people to stay together.

3. TALK TO PEOPLE. STAY INFORMED. Keep the discussion among ourselves active. Let people know what is happening up ahead and back behind you. Inform people of any police officers that appear aggressive and willing to use chemical weapons. Try not to spread rumors or exaggerate what is happening-this will only cause confusion and panic.

Also talk to people who are not involved in direct actions/civil disobedience/Black Bloc and explain to them what you are doing and why. You may feel that certain methods of demonstration are less effective than ours, but we must respect them. "Liberal" and other strict/peaceful protestors are just entitled to their means as we are ours. We are all part of a movement against militarism, and even though we may not agree on the way to bring changes about, we should respect each others differences.

It is important to point out that it is not any protestors who are "spoiling" the peace movement. If 20 people get involved in a direct action, that DOES NOT give the right

to the police to pepper spray and baton charge hundreds, if not thou- sands of people. It is the police who are "spoiling."

Note: This was not the first time the Black Bloc fought in the streets of Portland. On August 22, 2002 George Bush descended upon this city to attend a Republican Party fundraiser. In response two thousand local people took to the streets, including a Black Bloc. Fighting ensued, and rest assured, Bush was reminded that he is increasingly unwelcome across the land that he claims to rule.

March 19th Breakaway March, New York City
Submitted by New York City

Several people were arrested and the streets filled with trash cans and barricades. A few hundred people gathered at Columbus Circle today in New York City to protest the bombing. The Youth Bloc, No Blood for Oil, New York City Radical Cheerleaders and several affinity groups of various anarchist type people and others gathered SEPARATE from the large rally (of thousands that ended up PENNED IN, LIKE ALWAYS) one block from Times Square. This break away march was led by a supported banner (That saved us many times. You should get one at your rally, hard cardboard, tubes or PVC piping in the front and sides and a banner made of tarp hanging from it, make it flexible with joints). We took the street just as we came into Times Square. We eventually were forced off of the street again as police tried to target individuals after a long push and shove conflict. We passed the MTV building and all the other attractions, freaking out the VJs and the workers inside (I believe it was filmed by MTV at this point) the police looked like jack asses as they shoved and hit people outside all of the live media institutions. Some people received band injuries from batons. Outside the NASDAQ building where live "Wall Street" filming was happening we pounded on the glass, causing them to freak out as the pounding was continuously aired on live TV.

The police used batons on several occasions, one woman was knocked unconscious. Later the police used pepper spray on a whole row of people and eventually forced people off a side street. This was their first big mistake. Everyone started running and dancing in the street, throwing every newsstand and metal trash can available, stopping all traffic and leaving the police in the dust. The police tried to jog and keep up, but at this point no one was nabbed and trash cans and other large debris were strewed down several blocs. We took the streets for blocks and blocks, having a good time.

We turned off then and back into Times Square, running and dancing the whole way. We took the streets again for a while, up more blocks. Making the police look like fools. In Times Square police caught up and mounted police officers as well. Several people here were arrested and beaten as we were all finally forced off the street. Some of us joined the cold, wet, bored, penned in people (several thousand) on the other side

of Times Square. They were listening to endless speeches as the Youth Bloc and others were taking the streets, making fools of the police and eventually some were beaten and arrested. There was no direct contact with the thousands of people only one or two blocks away as the leaders of the communist organizations quieted chants in the crowd of "Let's March Now" saying "We'll March Soon." Hopefully this Saturday people will not stand for being anywhere NEAR pens and police barricades and endless speeches and will take the streets like some of us did. Hopefully the communist organizers and authoritarian leaders and the police will be ignored and WE WILL TAKE THE STREETS! If those thousands had done the same thing that the breakaway march did it would have made international news and gone down in history! There is a WAR on! People are dying RIGHT NOW! This is a time for ACTION! As Americans we MUST put ourselves ON THE LINE for people who have no choice in the matter, these people are dying in OUR NAME!

TAKE THE CITY BACK MARCH 22nd!

Meet the Anarchist Anti-Authoritarian Breakaway March at 39th street between Broadway/6th Ave. We will be marching with the kick ass Youth/Students march.

New York City has a LONG history of targeting people for wearing black clothing. Today most all of us didn't have black clothing and it was amazingly militant. You can still do EVERYTHING a militant person does, but black clothing doesn't help. It is much more effective to wear really "Normal" clothing and have extra changes of clothing as well. (Of course bring many beautiful black flags and banners, and wear masks) It is really effective to not wear black clothing, other people who have never done militant actions but want to and are enraged by this war will feel more comfortable joining in and we can all be chummier. Of course people should wear whatever makes them happy.

Other groups meeting:
11:30 a.m. Assemble Broadway btw 36th/42nd St:

- 36th btw Broadway/6th Ave –> Kids contingent
- 37th btw Broadway/6th Ave –> Religious groups
- Broadway between 40th and 41st streets (in the middle.)–> The other call out for an Anarchist Breakaway March
- 38th btw Broadway/6th Ave –> Not In Our Name
- 39th btw Broadway/6th Ave –> Youth/Students and Anarchist Anti-Authoritarian Breakaway March
- 40th btw Broadway/6th Ave –> Greens
- 41st btw Broadway/6th Ave – Carnival Bloc (inc. Funeral Bloc)

- 37th btw 7th Ave/Broadway –> Labor
- 38th btw 7th Ave/Broadway –> People of Color Groups
- 39th btw 7th Ave/Broadway –> Students/Youth
- 40th btw 7th Ave/Broadway –> ANSWER
- 41st btw 7th Ave/Broadway –> THAW–Theatre Against the War
- [NOON Bike Block meets at Union Sq South Steps – Times Up!]
  LEGAL NUMBERS 212 679-6018 or 917 807-0658 carry photo id
  United for Peace and Justice http://www.unitedforpeace.org/New York City
  646-473-8935

Chapter XXVII
The FTAA: Blood in The Streets In The Town of Miami November 2003

Overview

What the protests in Miami lacked in sheer numbers (25,000, at most, in the streets as composed to perhaps 100,000 two years prior in Quebec City), it made up for ten times in blood. During the days of demonstrations (November 17th through 21st) this subtropical city operated, for all intense and purposes, according to martial law. Miami's new police chief, John Timoney, famed for his brutal leadership at the 2000 RNC in Philadelphia, cracked the whip of oppression in the faces of all those who dared to challenge the forces of capital. His minions: 9000 militarized cops, equipped with armored vehicles, firearms, water cannons, etc., patrolled the streets in phalanxes of 50-100. 8.5 million dollars in Federal money—earmarked for the continuing war in Iraq—went to arm these domestic traitors to the working class. In turn, hundreds of protesters were arrested or detained without charge, thousands (the bulk being nonviolent) were beat mercilessly, and multitudes of prisoners reported being tortured while in custody. One report has surfaced that a number of folk connected to the Anarchist People Of Color (APOC) contingent were separated from the general prisoner population and brutalized for hours by cops with night sticks and other weapons. These are the new realities in many U.S. cities in the post September 11th world. The so-called War On Terror has quickly revealed itself for what it truly is intended to be—a War Of Terror directed at those who dare to dissent. Miami was not a one-sided affair. On the side of The People, thousands of union members, leftists of all stripes, and the Black Bloc did what they could to make their dissenting presence known, and to defend themselves as best they could.

Miami: sun, beaches, Jeb Bush, and the Heat. This was the setting for the latest meeting of North, Central, and South American world leaders hoping to hash out the Free Trade Areas of the Americas (FTAA). U.S. President George Bush would be one of the few leaders not attending. He was in the U.K. meeting with British officials. While he avoided the demonstrations in Miami, he found himself greeted by tens of

thousands of angry people in the streets of London. He can't go anywhere these days without causing a riot.

As for the FTAA—this trade agreement is nothing more than a scheme by leading capitalists to dismantle national barriers preventing them from more fully exploiting the labor market of the entire Western Hemisphere. Modeled on NAFTA (which involves the U.S., Canada, and Mexico). One should have little doubt that its implementation will have nothing but bad consequences for the living standards of working people and the environment. To see how the FTAA would affect our economies, one need look no further then the results of the first four years of NAFTA. During this time, the Institute for Policy Studies reports that the U.S. lost nearly half a million good paying manufacturing jobs due to the relocation of factories to Mexico. Mexico for its part is reporting an 8% increase in persons living below the poverty line. Not everyone has been losing out. The wealthy capitalist class has been cashing in on our misery. While our pockets empty, theirs are overflowing with profits squeezed out of super-exploited workforces. If one wonders what effects the FTAA would have on our communities, try multiplying those figures by 34; that is the number of American counties (all but communist Cuba) that the FTAA seeks to wrap around the pole of radical capitalist homogenization. In other words, the FTAA would simply intensify the economic race to the bottom. Industry would go to nations were starvation wages and no environmental protection laws are the standard practice. To those that value equitable pay and more responsible regulations would go the freedom of mass unemployment. With all this in mind, it was no surprise that tens of thousands of union members, and other leftists converged on the streets of Miami.

Timed to coincide with the FTAA meetings, several days of diverse demonstrations were held between Monday, November 17th and Friday, November 21st. These protests ranged from migrant farm workers taking part in a three day march from Fort Lauderdale to Miami, to pissed off steelworkers, to your usual mix of anti-sweatshop activists. The largest day of protest was on Thursday, November 20th. That morning, at 8:00 a.m., protesters converged at a city park and the attempted to march through the streets. This contingent included anarchists, liberals, socialists, communists, and students. Among their numbers were elements of the Black Bloc.

The main body of the Bloc itself was small, perhaps numbering 75. However, the Bloc marched in tandem with the Anarchist People of Color Bloc, and other allied groupings bringing its combined strength to maybe 150. This grouping set out from the Miami Convergence Center as an independent feeder march. Their goal was to link up with the large protest contingent. However, from the start the march faced extreme police harassment. This contingent would be bloodied by the cops many times that morning. The simple task of marching the 30 or so blocks to combine with the other demonstrations was effectively curtailed by the well organized, and violent, tactics of the police department. It would not be until many hours later, well into the afternoon, that the Black Bloc would be able to link up with the primary demonstration.

As the main march proceeded, the police, armed to the teeth, quickly moved to blockade the movement of the demonstrators. The protesters found themselves flanked and effectively cut off from all obvious means of escape. Soon, the police moved in. For hours cops, in full riot gear, corralled, pushed, and clubbed protesters from one city block to the next. Anarchists and others sporadically fought back with bottles and fists, but were unable to reverse the tide—their efforts proved ineffective. By 11:00 a.m. the demonstrators found themselves in front of the ATT amphitheater; surrounded, and unable to move.

The amphitheater also served as the meeting place and starting point for the massive labor march that was scheduled to begin early that afternoon. It is believed that the police intentionally pushed the protesters back to that point in order to use them as an excuse for turning away thousands of union members. Estimates range from 280 buses and 10,000 total unionists who were refused entrance to Miami proper because of this orchestrated situation. How can police deny citizens the right to free travel? Road blocks and checkpoints. The cops stopped busses and ordered them to return to where they came. They were informed that they were not to be allowed to proceed into the city because of the confrontations currently taking shape at their intended meeting place. The cops blamed the protesters for this. Despite these attacks on our rights of free travel, free assembly, and free speech (rights that have been quickly eroding in recent years) 20,000 union members (including close to 3000 steelworkers from across the nation) were able to convene. As their numbers grew, the police temporarily relaxed their brutality.

With the coming of the afternoon, organized labor began their march from the amphitheater to the Intercontinental (site of the FTAA meetings). In their wake anarchists and others followed. Upon reaching their destination, police attempted to bar non-union members (as they arbitrarily defined them) from entering the permitted rallying point. Physical confrontations ensued.

The Black Bloc—whose main body eventually arrived on the scene—and police exchanged blows. As the situation deteriorated, a number of steelworkers came to the defense of the Bloc and other protesters. Towards the end of the rally, the Black Bloc and many steelworkers attempted to approach the security fence guard- ing the FTAA delegates. This too led to fighting with the police. Here it is worth noting that at one point a small number of protester (neither Bloc or Union members) managed to occupy the of the entrances to the security fence. This group held the fence physically open for several minutes. However, as the action was not coordinated with anarchist groupings (or any others for that matter), no force was prepared to storm the meeting center. The pigs soon ejected the activists from the area and the breach was closed.

Eventually the crowd thinned out, and those who were not jailed or hospitalized (one woman had her ear blown off by a police projectile weapon) faded back into the cityscape. The major conflicts were over.

It should be noted that on the following day, 300 people held a vigil outside a jail where hundreds of people were being held. The pigs, acting true to form, surrounded

and arrested the bulk of them. On a brighter note, the FTAA meetings themselves ended a day early, and resulted in major decisions being put off until 2010. Maybe our presence in the streets helped to achieve this limited victory.

When looking back at the overall scope of what occurred in Miami during these fateful days of 2003, several things deserve comment. First, while 20-30,000 people is a respectable number, it is still clear that the anti-globalization movement remains in a process of rebuilding. Second, as the neo-con rulers of the U.S. move to scrap the remaining democratic protections granted under the Bill of Rights, it is likely that mass dissent will be met with more brutality. People will die. We are not the only ones saying this. Leo Gerard, President of the Steel Workers Union, has publicly condemned the repression witnessed in Miami, and has called on authorities to launch a Federal investigation into related police abuses. With this said, we cannot blame everything on the State. The non-union organized actions of protesters in Miami displayed nothing short of a naive and mass failure. Ever since September 11th, we have seen the direct action element of the anti-capitalist movement fail to regain the effectiveness and sophistication that we witnessed in Seattle, A16, and in Quebec. Their tactics have been sloppy and ineffectual. Their overall numbers have been way down too. The Black Bloc, for its part, has also failed to recognize the need for tighter organization, as well as better, more realistic plans.

While still displaying unequaled bravery in the face of physical repression, the Black Bloc seems to lack the ingenuity and sheer bravado that once propelled it into the public imagination. All accounts of the internal organizing structure and process of the Bloc leading up to Miami paint a picture of confusion, inefficiency, and disorganization. Meetings were canceled, then haphazardly re-assembled. Those with real prior street experience seem to have either consciously steered away from the planning, or simply allowed the more naive element to manipulate the process. Either way, as soon as it become clear that there would not be a critical mass at a protest, and as soon as folks got the fact that the pigs where out for real blood, the Bloc should have been prepared to modify its plans. Some have argued that the Bloc should have delayed its appearance until the start of the labor march (where there were sufficient amount of people to give the pigs reason to pause). If they did this, and maintained a tight organizational structure (like at the May 5 FDP action, Lewiston, or, to a certain extent, at the 2001 inauguration), it is pos- sible that they would have been better prepared to defend themselves. Of course detractors of this position will argue that the Bloc had a moral/historical obligation to attempt to march with the more isolated nonunion protesters, as someone had to be there to give them physical protection. Maybe. Maybe not. Either was, the fact is that the Bloc failed to even link up with this group during the most critical hours. And this leads us to another point. The very idea of an independent Bloc feeder march was foolish at best and suicidal at worst given the ineffectual numbers that it was able to put on the streets. Feeder marches, or independent roving bands is a risky enough proposition when the Bloc is 500 to 1000 strong. To attempt to walk the streets as a minuscule grouping of well under 200 is

asking to be stomped by the numerically superior police forces. Here we should always be realistic in our tactics. There are times when it is smarter to converge on a location as small affinity groups and not to constitute ourselves as a obvious united force until we have the relative cover of larger numbers.

In conclusion, let us just remember that Black Blocs are not intended to be martyr brigades. We are anarchists, we are street fighters (when we need to be), and we intend on winning; not to be tossed to the lions in the vague name of justice.

Anti-Capitalist Bloc of the Americas (ACBA)

The Call

Greetings, from the Great Plains Anarchist Network (GPAN),

In 1994, the Organization of American States (OAS) met in Miami to discuss the prospect for a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). In 1994, we missed them, and so they held their meetings uninterrupted. On November 17th through the 21st, the corporate elite will return to Miami to pursue that which they have not finished...and we will be waiting for them. The FTAA was born in Miami, and so it will be buried in Miami.

The Free Trade Area of the Americas is an expansion of the failed policies of NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement), and the latest attempt by the rich and powerful to establish their dominance over the entire world. It is an institution to create a free trade zone over all of North, Central, and South America (except for Cuba), which will incorporate the largest free trade zone in the world. The FTAA will encompass 34 countries, 800 million people, and an unfathomable amount of GDP. In doing so, the FTAA will give an egregious amount of wealth and power to the upper capitalist echelon, while the common masses are left with little or no say in the very relevant issues that concern them. The corporate elite will use it to surpass any and all obstacles in their quest for total and complete hegemony. These obstacles, called 'barriers to free trade,' will include labor protection laws, environmental regulation, and basic social services. The FTAA will turn the Americas into a single market regulated by free trade, thereby undermining workers' integrity, diminishing natural preservation, and the privatization of necessary social infrastructure.

Miami is the main contender in acquiring the headquarters of the FTAA administration, and the city that likes to portray itself as the "Gateway to the Americas" certainly has a vision of where that "gateway" will lead. Beyond the Miami image of the indulgences of celebrities and holidays of the affluent, are destitute people living in poverty-stricken communities. One only has to look around Miami to observe the opulence and wealth of the privileged few presiding over extreme poverty and misery of the toiling masses. As the FTAA delegates meet in the luxurious high rise that is the Intercontinental Hotel, they will have a beautiful view of the impoverished neigh-

borhoods just a few city blocks away. The corresponding conference occurring right before the Summit is the Americas Business Forum, which reveals the true interests of the elite. Where is the worker's forum, the peasant's forum, or even the concerned citizen's forum? That is their agenda, and that is their end.

From November 19 through the 21st, a convergence of people and organizations will come to Miami in defiance against the FTAA. Many in the anti-globalization milieu would like to repeat the "success" of Cancun's WTO meeting, where several delegates from the poorer countries walked out against the attempted manipulations of the U.S. and EU. In reality though, these delegates are merely representatives of the entrenched abusive order, and are only interested in getting the best possible deal for the upper echelon of their respective countries. They are still capitalist countries using police states to enforce the inequality and disparity that they claim the FTAA will alleviate. We share no affinity for these governments regardless of what leanings they may profess to have. We seek to create a new world, one based upon the tenets of cooperation, participation, and autonomy in all aspects of life. We stand in solidarity with our brother and sister workers, peasants, and laborers throughout the Americas in bringing about that world, using mutual aid, solidarity, and direct action.

November 20th is the day of direct action in which all those who oppose the predatory policies of the capitalist elite will come together to not just voice opposition to the FTAA, but to engage in direct action to shut down the conference. Nothing short of total and absolute dissolution of the FTAA and neo-liberal capitalism will dissuade us. We are calling upon all anti-capitalist revolutionaries to converge on Miami, the birth-site of the FTAA, and turn it into the deathbed of the FTAA. We will form a Black Bloc, the Anti-Capitalist Bloc of the Americas, and use any methods necessary and all means appropriate. We must form our groups, we must raise our fists, and inscribe in our banners "Internationalism: YES! Globalization: NO!"

Because Capitalism Cannot Be Reformed!

All relevant information (Contacts, Meeting Times and Places, etc.) will be provided as it becomes appropriate.

Sponsors:
Great Plains Anarchist Cluster
Prairie Breaker Collective (Omaha, NE)
Kansans Against Capitalism (Lawrence, KS)
Kirksville Anarchist Collective (Kirksville, MO)

For information and endorsement, contact:
Miamionmymind@s-mail.com
please use s-mail (http://www.s-mail.com)

Anarchist People of Color Bloc Call to Action

From November 19 to the 21, the FTAA ministerial in Miami will bring together the transnational elite, who will seek to expand free trade policies to all of the Western hemisphere except Cuba. This means that half of the world will be regulated by a free market zone lacking in public health, environmental, and labor protections, while full power is given to privatization and to corporations. At the same time, the FTAA ministerial will bring together people fighting for global justice, at a convergence touted to be the largest of its kind on this continent since '99 WTO meetings in Seattle.

Those of us coming out of the Anarchist People of Color (APOC) Conference in Detroit this October are calling for an APOC Bloc to converge in Miami in resistance to the FTAA this November. We are opposed to all forms of free trade, capitalism, racism, classism, patriarchy, homophobia, hierarchy, and domination. Our ancestors and living relatives emerge from a history written by imperialists and colonialists. It is time for us to reclaim our history and our heritage, and to take a direct stand against the very institutions which allow our brothers and sisters around the world to continue to be oppressed today.

It is important for us to take the initiative, without white leadership, to resist the FTAA and what it represents. In doing this we join the powerful resistance that is growing across the "Third World," especially in Latin America. We are going to Miami to express and extend our peoples' global resistance to capitalism and its globalization. We stand with people across the hemisphere reclaiming control over their lives from governments, capitalists, landlords, and patriarchs. By joining them in revolution, we will make the Americas not an area of "free" trade and exploitation, but continents of human liberation.

Miami is not only being prepared as a new capitalist capital of a re-colonized Latin America, but also a living example of the workings of the globalization advanced by the elites who will meet in November. Beyond the sun and waves are fields of underpaid workers, ghettos and jails of the poor, detention centers for excluded migrants, and offices of those who negotiate the sale of their own countries. There too is resistance: sometimes patient building, sometimes defiant survival, sometimes explosive rage. We will join with this resistance symbolically and practically. In particular, we will participate in the farm worker-led march on Miami November 16 to 18, and be present at events hosted by the local coalition Root Cause (see www.therootcause.org).

As APOC, some of us are undocumented or legal immigrants, and as a result face different realities in the face of direct action, such as the threat of deportation and the increased threat of police brutality. To address the safety and legal status concerns of people of color, the APOC who were at October's Chicago consulta propose that the APOC Bloc stay together within a larger non-APOC Bloc, such as the Black Bloc or the Padded Bloc, as well as clustering together within mass direct actions. Within this larger framework of solidarity, the APOC Bloc will distinguish itself with brown armbands, banners, and other visuals. We hope to increase the comfort of people of

color in doing direct action by creating a safer zone for APOC to take part in militant direct action.

Anarchy in Miami
The 2003 Ministerial Meeting of the FTAA
By Ryan Hastings

On November 20, 2003, the trade ministers of 34 American nation-states (excepting only Cuba) met to hold a talk to ratify an agreement that had been reached some two and a half years earlier. It was an aggressive move to change the legal structure of all nations, to normalize the rules of international trade, standardize them according to the rules of the capitalist market economy. Rules that would ultimately benefit the plutocrats, but threaten the poor people of the Western hemisphere.

The agreement is so obnoxious that thousands of people gathered in the city to oppose it. Many opposed it by holding conferences describing problems with the free trade agreement, and alternative systems. Others opposed it by simply practicing alternatives: a garden was set up in the middle of the ghetto, and near that a "really, really, really free market" was set up where people appeared to share or give away valuable things. But when opposition manifested itself as a desire and will to hold an unpermitted festival in the streets that would involve the toppling of the fence, the ensuing battle as police appeared to prevent this made headline news. This gave volume to voices that might otherwise not have been heard. Unfortunately, the police brutality that has been following has been less newsworthy.

The free trade agreements have a number of problems. They involve the privatization of vital services, like water. Already experiments in privatizing water and power have met with failure, with skyrocketing prices and failed service. There was the infamous Chapter 11, which would allow corporations to sue governments for revenues lost because of a safety or environmental law. (California is currently being sued for banning MTBE in gasoline.) There was plenty of protection for investors and for intellectual property, but very little for workers or the environment. I could go on and on, but you can find these analyses elsewhere. I'm here to talk about what it was like to be in a police state.

My audience for this piece is the people who are interested in an inside story. Whether or not you agree with the content of these free trade agreements, this piece is for you. Even if you disagree with it, you may be curious to know more about the global justice (or as newspapers like to call it, "anti-globalization") movement. The riots are just the tip of an iceberg...and it takes more than the tip to sink the capitalist Titanic! The rest of the organizing, the positive aspects of the movement which are most often ignored by corporate media. How exciting is a community garden, anyway?

Would you more likely by a newspaper that talks about Molotov cocktails, or one that talks about planting cherry trees in poor neighborhoods?

1. Outrunning Tornados to Rush into a Police Riot

I set out from Austin in the late morning, Monday, 17 November. Shared a car with Patrick, an anarchist who operates the local bookstore collective, Darryl, a fireman, paramedic, and union man with progressive politics, and Maia, an earthy fair trade activist. The ride was far from uneventful. We narrowly missed a line of tornadoes in Houston, as it turns out-this because we chose a detour that Darryl suggested on a whim. When at first it appeared that the route would be too long, he apologized-but it kept us from seeing the twisters that closed the interstate.

Talking to local folks who had just come off the interstate or who had been watching the news gave us a picture of what was going on: The tornado-spawning line of thunderstorms was moving east and rapidly dissipating, but a new one was forming to the west, and approaching. We decided to head to Beaumont as quickly as we could, hoping to outrun the new squall line about which the radio was warning us. (Earlier in the trip, Maia had been talking to her grandmother, who was congratulating her on her engagement with Darryl...so "sensible." "Yeah, sensible," they joked, "outrunning tornados to rush into a police riot.")

Leaving the floodplains of Houston, late into the night we drove. Found a hotel in Baton Rouge, a seedy place with many late night comings-and-goings. By the end of the night on 18 Tuesday, we were in Miami. As we approached Miami, we read newspapers. Five protesters were arrested, adding to a number of other arrests. It's easy enough to spot protesters in a lot of cases, and the police were fabricating charges: if you stop and watch someone else getting hassled, you get arrested for "obstructing the sidewalk." If you're a legal observer from the National Lawyers Guilt, with a bright great hat declaring NLG LEGAL OBSERVER, and you ask for a name and badge number, then you're obstructing a sidewalk. "The idea that these are pre-emptive arrests is ridiculous," Police Chief Timoney said to the ***Miami Herald***. The idea that anyone should believe what Timoney says is even more ridiculous. People planning on protesting were targeted for arrest-and the excuse of the "violent protesters," so often used by the police, is hardly valid as there is absolutely no way of knowing what sorts of tactics a protester is going to use unless (a) you hear her planning them or (b) you see him do it.

Spotting protesters is pretty easy. We were the ones with the backpacks and water bottles, wandering downtown half-lost with our maps, trying to figure out what was where. Somewhere around Pensacola, at a rest stop, we met a carload of fellow protesters who had been riding for four days, from Flagstaff, Arizona. "How did you know we were protesters? We were trying to keep a low profile." As normalized as odd piercings have become among pop-stars, it's still wise to remove the eyebrow and lip

rings if you really want to maintain a low profile, I'm sorry to say. And cover those tattoos!

We stayed with a wonderful, older man named Tom. He was active in the local Green Party. As the sun rose over the ocean, on our first morning in Miami, he said, "The sun is rising!...from over Cuba!" Big fan of Castro, he was. The protests were good for him, in that he finally got to wear his Che T-shirt and beret-that would normally get his ass kicked by fascist Cuban exiles, who controlled a great deal of the politics of Miami.

Around 8am on 19 Wednesday, we made our way to the Convergence Space, or Welcome Center. This is an unused warehouse rented for the duration of the event, to function as a center camp for the operations council (the loose organi zation or collection of organizations supporting direct actions) and the various clusters, blocs, and affinity groups. There was an Indymedia center in one room, two bathrooms (one of which outfitted with a greywater recycling procedure), a Food Not Bombs kitchen outside. Tables with fliers and newspapers (***Slingshot***, the ***Independent***), and the walls were covered with schedules, announcements, and messages. Phones bore stickers that announced, "This Phone Is Tapped." Police cars, marked and unmarked, frequently drove by, and there was a near constant helicopter presence.

Reaching the Convergence Space, finally, reminded me of reaching Center Camp at my first Burning Man. The similarity between Burning Man or a Dead Show or some other kind of countercultural gathering struck me continuously. The presence of punks, hippies, and other freaky types certainly helped give this impression, but also the basic internal economics of the direct actionists was more like the "gift economy" Burning Man prides itself on having. Although security concerns kept people close-lipped about any plans they had (which proved to be somewhat detrimental), everyone was open about being helpful. Friendly, loving vibes permeated the mobs of anarchists, radicals, and other direct actionists who filtered in and out of the Convergence Space. And there were many opportunities to help with organizational support: security for the Convergence Space, kitchen help, help serving food, dish washing, cleaning. Everyone voluntarily did what needed to be done when it needed to be done-a model of anarchy. There is no "dirty work," there is only the work that needs to be done for things to run smoothly, and no one is above it.

Darryl and Maia left to check us in at a hotel that was much closer to downtown than Tom's place. We'd heard about the hotel through the Green Party—they had opened their doors to protesters, and were welcoming them with cheap rates. The hotel turned out also to be home to members of various vanguard socialist groups, like the International Socialist Organization (ISO) or the Communist Party, USA (CP). Patrick and I stayed at the Convergence Space, waiting for Missy to show up. While waiting, we attended a training on how to facilitate meetings, occasionally interrupted by the legal training (know your rights, jail solidarity) happening across the room. An announcement for a street tactics training was made.

This is the Convergence Space. Community, with workshops and trainings directed at direct action folks. What does "direct action" mean? Direct action is the most active of the various levels of activism. A direct action is riding your boat out to block the whaling ship, or placing your body in the path to prevent a meeting from happening, or tearing down the fence that separates the powerful from the disempowered. Direct action trainings deal with legal issues and tactical issues-how to respond to police violence and keep oneself safe. How to minimize the damage from their attack, how to most effectively block an intersection nonviolently, how to dress when you expect to be tear-gassed.

These are all nonviolent, defensive tactics. No one goes into a mass direct action intending to start violence (except for police, of course, whether undercover or uniformed). However, anyone going into such an action should be prepared for violence. Some go in prepared to respond with complete nonviolence (such as blocking the advancing line of riot cops), while others go in prepared to respond with tactics that border on violence (e.g., rock-throwing, which can be assured to be harmless against a riot cop, or tossing a tear gas canister back at the police). This cannot be emphasized enough: we do not engage in offensive violence, we defend ourselves against the police. The real news story should not be a rock-thrower, but rather the far harsher effect of a "rubber" bullet (that is actually made of hard plastic). If the cops would not hit us with tear gas and plastic bullets, you would see no rock-throwing, no fires in the streets, and no windows broken on corporate coffee-shops.

We met up with Missy after the facilitation training. The three of us decided to walk down to a Community Garden the Green Bloc (or Eco Bloc) had built. The Convergence Center, the Community Garden, and the hotel where we were staying were all in Overtown Miami. This is a desperately poor part of town, almost entirely African-American. I have walked through some of the nastier parts of the Mission in San Francisco, and live on the east side of Austin, but neither of those could prepare me for witnessing the extent of devastation wrought by poverty and the institutionalized racism of the American system (the cherry trees).

Across from the Community Garden was a police staging area: unmarked vehicles whose form had become familiar (big white vans and Suburbans), a bus for prisoners, and several marked police cars. Cops kept a suspicious eye, but I saw virtually none outside of their fence. Overhead, helicopters chattered in the distance-three total, two covering downtown, one over Overtown.

The report was that the Green Bloc did have local community support for the garden, although the only folks I saw near it were the permaculture hippie types common to the Green Bloc and Pagan Cluster. It was intended to help local people become freer, to grow their own food rather than rely on buying food from grocers. I hope this effort pans out-certainly, this provided a model for our future work: to help build the anarchic structures of self-sufficiency and autonomy, to bring people into our movement and to make it their movement, as well.

Another cool project in progress as we rested in the shade was the planting of cherry trees. Some thirty cherry trees, I believe, were planted throughout the ghettos. This is the fantasy of the edible landscape. Since food really does grow on trees, why don't we have food-producing trees lining every street?

After hanging out for a bit at the Community Garden, we decided to hoof it back to the Convergence Space, where the rumor was there would be a training in Magical Activism. Protests are great places to hold ritual and cast spells. It was on the walk from the Community Gardens that I got my first taste of how the poor African-American neighborhood dwellers felt about our presence. We passed in front of a store, where several men were hanging out. "Hey," they called, "we're with you." They cheered us on, they flashed us peace signs and raised fists, they thanked us for being there.

We walked back up North Miami Avenue to the Convergence Space. Occasionally an unmarked white van would rush by, sometimes slowing to watch us. We smiled and waved at new faces, people that were obviously playing for our team in this great game of politics. We failed to find the rumored Magical Activism workshop. We did run into other Austinites, who had come in with Root Cause.

The Root Cause group is well worth a mention, even though I spent very little time with them. They are a coalition of three groups. One is the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW). The CIW are the workers who pick tomatoes for Taco Bell. The last few years, they have gotten more organized. Many times already, the owners who kept them in deplorable working conditions have been arrested and prosecuted. Some of those prosecutions have been anti-slavery laws, yes, really, ANTI-SLAVERY LAWS from the 1860s. Slavery still happens in the USA, not that you'd know that from reading the newspapers. Along with the CIW, there is the Miami Workers Center (mostly Latino) and the Power U Center for Social Change.

Root Cause marched 34 miles, arriving in Miami on Monday. One mile for every nation in the proposed FTAA. From all accounts, it was an awesome time, with much jubilation and dancing. When they reached Miami, arrangements were made for the Black Bloc to do security (that is, protect them from the police). The Bloc joined them, without wearing the characteristic face masks, and even looking a bit clean. Riot cops also showed up, to "protect" them, not that a single person in the Bloc or Root Cause trusts the cops.

I suppose one thing I would like my readers to take from this, is that the protesters are NOT all white, middle class kids. There's this popular impression that's used to dismiss the global justice movement, that it doesn't represent the poor folks of the global south. Nothing could be further from the truth. The fact is, the white, middle class kids are there, and using their white, middle class privilege to help the more vulnerable black and brown folks, but that the real backbone of the movement is the working class, and genuinely oppressed peoples.

This seemed like a good time to go scout around downtown. "Never riot in a city you don't know," a friend once advised me. I knew there was the possibility that the police would attack (perhaps in response to some provocative action, I didn't know and

wanted to keep an open mind about it), and the possibility that we would be running through the streets and need to make a quick decision, so I wanted to see where we were running.

We walked south, down North Miami Avenue. But the police presence on this road was unnerving (unmarked white vans with tinted windows would slow down, or do quick U-turns near us or other clumps of activists I could see up and down the road), so we turned a few blocks west and then continued south. My feelings went from intimidated and unsettled to depressed and unsettled: the neighborhood through which we walked was the most bombed-out, desperate place I had even seen. I watched a man laying, fully clothed, on the side of the street, as though he had just passed out there. Yes, he's breathing. Oh gods, how could this happen? What kind of world is this?

A bit further south, and one of the helicopters was overhead. Most of the protesters were taking North Miami or Biscayne, roads to the east of us. Their concentration made it easy to monitor them. We were the only out-of-town activists in the area. But the helicopter...

This I found a little hard to believe, actually, and tried to pay close attention to make sure I wasn't mistaken. But the helicopter actually followed us. It was flying low enough that a few block's difference would place it at a different angle, even behind a building, if it weren't. We walked underneath awnings and trees, and still the helicopter hovered, maybe a hundred meters in the air, always overhead, pacing us from the sky. We came to an area where another helicopter seemed to be assigned, and it left. We were now downtown, and our presence was less anomalous than it had been in Overtown.

Eventually, we came to the Wellness Center. "Is this the medic station?" I asked. "It's the Wellness Center," the security punk answered. She had been sitting on a stool but jumped to her feet when we tried to go in. "So, does that mean it's the medic station?" I asked again. "It's the Wellness Center," she repeated. I'm still not sure whether or not the medics had a separate staging area, but it was a place to go for healing. There were massage therapists, reiki healers, as well as EMTs.

Around the corner, onto 6th Street NW, I came across the first sign of the police state. The line of padded and armed cops was thin, less than ten but more than five. The building they were protecting was not clearly marked on the map. It looked like a jail to me, although it was not marked on our map as a jail. The only name on the building was the name of a person.

We passed it, crossed a street. The police presence had increased. Uniformed cops on every corner. Darryl and Maia called us, and we talked with them. They had gone down to the fence first, where they saw a few thousand blue-shirted steelworkers holding some sort of rally. Now they rode the Metro Mover, a free rail system that circled downtown Miami. There was a uniformed officer on every car, and at every stop, two uniformed cops stepped onto the car, looked around for a moment, and stepped off. We were noting something similar.

On the university property now, at the end of one street were flashing lights on cars and a phalanx of bicycle cops. We decided we needed a break from the walking and the stress of police presence, so we walked up the steps of the main building of the university. There was an art exhibit about diversity, with some impressive banners and paintings. We sat here, we wandered for a bit. Eventually we came to the building itself, to refill our water and see what it was like in there (and because sitting on the steps in front of the building, we could see cops drive by and slow down to watch us, before speeding off).

The ground floor of the building was completely open: no doors or windows clearly dividing inside from outside. There were flags of all the nations on the walls, and messages about diversity and unity. The students looked mostly like African-American art students. Feeling comfortable, we decided to sit and look at our map.

No sooner had we sat down, when a security guard came up and asked if we were students. We answered no, and he went back to some sort of security window and got on a radio. He stayed over there, and shortly thereafter, a uniformed cop appeared in a line-of-sight of us, milling about.

Patrick went to ask the security guard where we might find some coffee, tired as we were. He told us there was a coffee shop by the bookstore. Like much of downtown, the coffee shop was closed. Protective cages had been lowered around all but one of the otherwise open entrances. We sat in the patio area, and looked again at the map.

"That guy in the camo is an undercover cop," Patrick announced. I had noticed the guy, too. "The three guys right behind me are also undercovers, and they are watching us." He was watching them in a pane of reflective glass. "He's their fourth." I wasn't sure; the camo dude looked fairly normal to me, like some kind of hunter type hanging out in the city. The three men were fairly nondescript.

The camo guy left the restroom and walked around the coffee shop. I watched for him to emerge from behind a column, and as he did, I caught his eye. He was looking right at us. He looked away quickly, walked around, and rejoined the three Patrick had pointed out. They walked around a corner, throwing glances our way. Two other uniformed officers, one with hundreds of plastic handcuffs ready, the other with a large rifle (tear gas? rubber bullets? I don't know), came from that corner and crossed the plaza. Don't get me wrong here, I'm not one-hundred percent convinced those four guys were cops, although I think it is quite likely; and in any event, I don't think they radioed the uniformed ones to come keep an eye on us. That would certainly have blown their cover! It's just that there were so many cops. Every other person was a cop, either uniformed or plainclothes.

We decided to move again. We went to the end of the street that had, moments before, flashing cars. They had left. As soon as we turned the corner, we realized we were facing a staging ground. More than fifty bikes were lined up on the side of the road, with an equal number of bike cops standing in a clump, hanging out, socializing.

We were hungry and still needed coffee, so we decided to duck into an Italian restaurant that served espresso, across the street from the scene. Patrick had a slice

of pizza, I had a double espresso. When Missy tried to order a cup of regular coffee, the workers scolded us in accented English: "We have no American coffee. Only Italian coffee," by which he meant, "only espresso." He was generous with the sugar and stirrers, but otherwise I couldn't read how friendly he was. Mostly he was sizing us up, to see if we were the dangerous anarchists the police had been telling him, and the rest of downtown Miami, about. We sat at a table, and CNN told us about bombings in Turkey. Three more activists walked in, one wearing a T-shirt with the circle-A and an Emma Goldman quote about what "anarchism" really means.

As we ate, an interesting drama unfolded across the street. Three female activists were stopped by the bike cops. Five or six cops surrounded them. The activists had a bike with a trailer on it. This was searched, as were their backpacks. They were carrying posters and banners about the FTAA made by the Beehive Collective. They were also carrying a long twig, and another stick. The cops confiscated these, and wrote them tickets. Presumably, the twig was a violation of the anti-protest ordinance passed earlier the previous week. The ordinance was a scaled down version of an original draft that outlawed gas masks, bandanas, body armor, water bottles, puppets and stilts; the final draft outlawed all signs that weren't made of paper or cardboard, and defined the maximum size dimensions of any sticks that might hold the signs, as well as making it illegal to hold a rock.

In front of the window of the eatery in which we sat, two other activists filmed the encounter. Indymedia, is my bet. When two cops walked from across the street, they backed off (what they were doing had become an arrestable offense in the previous few days).

This was what it was like downtown. Forty agencies were cooperating in what Mayor Diaz was quoted in the Herald as calling, "a model for homeland defense." Command centers had been set up, downtown bus stops had been shut down, barricades, ID checkpoints, and the cops were everywhere. More than 2500 cops could be on the streets at any given time, with a total of 6000 mobilized for the effort. For what? For political repression-to manage a crowd assembling for a peaceful but strong protest against a dangerous trade agreement, to provoke them into a minimal amount of violence and use that excuse for an even more violent suppression of them.

We walked to the fence, we walked up the street to the Government Center, the place where the mass direct action was called-where a thousand people would converge at 7 am. Government Center is a Metro Rail stop. In fact, it is the major stop for downtown. Every commuter who used the rail would have to walk through our rally. A brilliant choice, really.

The process by which the Government Center was chosen had taken more than a month. National conference calls had been set up, "virtual spokescouncils" where representatives of regions of the country argued over whether or not there should be a mass direct action, when it should be, and what the tactics should be. This combined with a dialogue with the AFL-CIO and other organized labor groups who had secured a permit for a march and rally from 12pm-6pm on 20 Thursday. Points of mutual

agreement were reached: direct actionists (not all of them, of course, but the vast majority of them) would not launch any direct actions from the space that organized labor had promised as safe. In these safe spaces, there would be undocumented workers ("illegal aliens" to the news media), children, and elderly retirees. Labor wanted to make sure that we wouldn't bring police attention into this space. Similarly, we wanted to make sure that labor would respect our tactics, and not engage in good protester/ bad protester games. Solidarity is our strength, and both organized labor and direct actionists realize this enough to want to be allies, to build bridges. Don't turn us into the cops, and we won't do anything that might bring heat into your rally and march—we'll even attend it and refrain from stepping out of bounds.

These sorts of concerns played into the decisions of many organizers of direct action groups. Ultimately, the call was made for a mass direct action at 7 am, on 20 November, the first day of the trade talks. The direct actionists would converge at the Government Center, and move out from there. That's the way autonomous (and anarchist) direct action works: a group or group calls for it, and then people in the group choose to do it, and other groups may join them. Several groups put out a call for direct action on that day, at that time: there was the Eco (Green) Bloc, the Pagan Cluster, the Anti-Capitalist Convergence (Black Bloc), the Free Carnival Area of the Americas, a call for a Stilt Bloc, a Padded Bloc, and many others.

The night of Wednesday the 19th was a spokescouncil meeting. The spokescouncil is composed of the "spokes," or representatives of all the different affinity groups. A few people from the affinity group might show up, but only one is supposed to speak in the open meeting. An agenda is decided, a facilitator or two chosen. The facilitator is not a leader and does not make decisions for the group; the facilitator is there to keep the discussion on task, and focused. The spokescouncil and affinity group model derives from anarchist organizing in 1920s Spain, as revived by 1970s anti-nuke activists. There is no hierarchy, and all decisions are made by consensus, never by voting.

The room was packed. A plan was outlined, identifying two intersections near the fence where high-risk actions could take place (like the attempt to take down the fence). Four more intersections, adjacent to the high-risk sectors, were identified as medium-risk: we would try to hold these intersections, reclaiming them for the people. This would provide an avenue of escape for the high-risk activists. One intersection, the site of the gathering for the People's March (the one organized by the AFL-CIO), was designated a "green zone," a low-risk area where low-risk direct actionists could be safe. In retrospect, the decision to make a zone safe or not safe was obviously not ours to make, and it was dangerously presumptive of us to assume such a power.

At the meeting, we were told this plan. Technical specifications of the fence were described. Reports from legal (Miami Action Defense), medical, and other groups were given-we were to write our legal information on the "intake forms," information like medical needs, name and date of birth. These forms were to be given to the support person for the affinity group, and that support person was to sign up on a list, to be called by the legal team if the legal team received a call from a member of the affinity

group. There was a local hotline set up for calls from jail. This way, if a person decided to engage in "jail solidarity," a form of direct action inside the jails intended to achieve demands such as Don't Separate The Queers Or The People Of Color From The Main Group, or Give Proper Medical Attention To Those Who Need It, and the tactic of jail solidarity was "Don't give identification," they could call the legal collective with their nickname, which would be given to the support person, without danger of a tapped phone line getting that information. Not giving identification was a request made by Autonomia, a group of anarchist people of color unaffiliated with APOC—an APOC benefited having been busted before it could even start a few weeks earlier in New York City; they circulated stickers that said, "I'm going to remain silent. I want to see a lawyer. I won't reveal my nationality," the idea being that if no one spoke, the undocumented people were at less risk of being identified by accent.

There we also learned the signals from a flag corps, who would be in touch through the communications collective and thus would be able to have a reasonable picture of what was really going on, where the police were etc. Those interested in the flag corps were instructed to meet at the Convergence Space at 5:45 am; at 6:30 or so there would begin a march from the Convergence Space to the Government Center.

The next morning, we woke a little late. I set my alarm for 6:15 am, but didn't wake up until 6:40, with a start when I realized the sun was shining through the drapes we had tightly pulled closed. We dressed in a hurry—I wore two T-shirts ("dress in layers," we were advised). Dumped out one of my army surplus back-packs, threw in food bars, apples, crackers, a gas mask, a long-sleeved shirt, my clipboard with a map, an extra bandana. We quickly walked to the Metro Rail stop near the hotel. Two stops south to Government Center.

We were directed by the police to the south exit of the Government Center stop. Every other exit was closed, almost every business in the mall at the Government Center closed-though we could still buy coffee! Out of the south exit, past cops-time to tie the black bandana around the face (for protection from gas and pepper-spray, as well as protection from being photographed by police intelligence units). Before us was a crowd of about a thousand people, with signs. No puppets. No flags. We joined the crowd, found another affinity group from Houston to double the size of our five-person Austin group, with the understanding that we would likely break-off at some point.

There was a brief rally—we circled around some newspaper stands, and people stood on them to give solidarity messages from allies through a megaphone. The steelworkers, messages from across Latin America (Argentineans promised to block streets if any of us were arrested), and many others gave messages of support. The puppets had been held up by the police, but finally arrived.

And the march began. The eleven of us locked arms and walked together. I still could not see the flag corps, nor were there but a few groups of Black Bloc. Through the empty streets we marched. Every business had closed, afraid of what the police had told them. All of downtown had been shut down. The march reached a police line

and turned. We reached one of the intersections we had planned to keep. The police lines blocked us from going any direction we wanted to go.

Missy and I followed the Houston kids up to the police line blocking the march's forward progress. As I approached, I smelled pepper spray. It's a pretty distinctive smell. This is way before any serious action had happened-even before the "scuffles" reported on the news. I don't know that anyone had been hit with it yet, but I do know that I smelled it.

An emergency spokescouncil was called in the street. As we huddled around and discussed options, the drummers from the FCAA led everyone down the street to another police line. Eventually we followed, although the decision had been made to move to the north. At this point, we held two of the intersections we had planned on taking.

And at this point, the police decided it was time for us to move. Downtown was shut down. If they wanted to keep it peaceful, and avoid any and all forms of violence, they could have simply let us stay. The steam was rapidly leaving the crowd, as we were confused and had little idea of what to do next. But that would not serve the police interests. The line of baton-wielding cops began using those batons to shove the crowd forward. They chanted some short, percussive word, like "Back! Back! Back! Back!" and the chant formed a rhythm that kept time with their force.

At this point, the resistance began. So far, there were three crimes that I could see: (1) graffiti (the Sun Trust Bank building had a green message added beneath its name: WE KILL COLOMBIANS); (2) unpermitted parade, but that didn't seem too serious an offense, as the police made sure downtown would be completely closed, so we weren't actually interrupting anything; and (3) and disobeying a cop, although we weren't really disobeying, as we'd never been told to move. But cops don't like being disobeyed. They think they are authorities.

A line of people, many of them Black Bloc (more had begun to show up), linked arms. More people linked up and formed other lines in front of the cops. I was at about the third line. We leaned in, we kept them from advancing. They paused, then came again with renewed force. They began to strike the people on the front-lines...jabs into ribs and backs. One shorter girl was held in some kind of grip as she was pushed forward; tears streamed down her face as she howled in pain, and we screamed at the cop to release her, that he was hurting her. He didn't care, and kept pushing us forward.

The counter-force of the crowd caused the police line to falter some. A line of reinforcements came. The snatches began—a cop grabbed one of the women on the front line. The Black Bloc and others initiated an unarrest.

The unarrest is really quite amazing to watch. Whoever gets snatched by the cops faces brutality, beatings and even sexual assaults in jail (both of which happened in Miami). Unarresting them is a valuable service, perhaps the most valuable thing the Black Bloc and their type can do. One or two cops grab a person on the front line, and then several arms reach out to grab the person and wrest them from the police

grip. I saw this done successfully several times, and each time it was a victory—the unarrested could then escape into the mob on the front-line.

The cops continued chanting, and continued shoving. A tall head got knocked twice, hard, with a baton. For a brief, nightmarish moment, I found myself surrounded by riot cops, and got a few shoves and thrusts. Dodging, moving with the force, I was safe, but it was frightening: the impenetrable line of cops pushed us through where a line had previously been—the early line thinned out, letting protesters through but leaving enough cops to give a few good whacks to anyone who was between them. A burst of pepper spray cut through the crowd and hit Missy.

I grabbed her, we ran out from the front-lines. I spilled water in her eyes. A friend came over and took us to the medics. We met then, and had to run ahead of the advancing police line. They squirted a water/vinegar mixture in her burning eyes, and suddenly they were cleared. (The medics were great out there!)

We turned a corner. The police had taken the intersections we had planned to take, and herded us all right to the area of the fence where the high-risk people had plans to take it down. Again, if the police had wanted to keep things peaceful, they could easily had kept us from ever seeing the fence. But no, what they wanted was to come down on us, hard. After all, what would people think if all this money was spent, and all these businesses inconvenienced, if there weren't a riot? So they took us right to where we planned to be—they, of course, knew our plans, as we are thoroughly infiltrated by undercover cops. Later I heard that two or three grappling hooks were on the fence, and nearly tipping it over. But at that moment, I knew nothing about why a concussion grenade had been launched into the crowd (along with several plastic bullets fired indiscriminately).

You can't help but jump and be frightened when you hear a concussion grenade. At first I thought it was tear gas, as some strange smell filled the area and bit at my nose, mouth, and eyes. It's hard to remain calm in these circumstances. My first instinct is to run, but every time the crowd started to run, there would be cries of, "Slow down!" or "Walk!" or "Stay calm!" Often these cries would come from the hidden mouths of the Black Bloc. It really did violence to my image of them as hot-headed and quick-tempered.

We met up with the Houston crew again. Those whom Missy and I knew well had decided to head back to the hotel, seeing a strategic impasse—a stalemate. Missy and I decided to head back up to the police lines. I felt quite nervous, though, and didn't want to get too close. We met with the Pagan Cluster, who had a group of drummers in the center of a spiral dance. Joined the spiral dance, and sang the spell with them: "The Earth cannot be bought or sold, all life shall be free. The army can't hold back the clock. No fence can chain the sea." Next to the spiral dance, fifteen or so Black Bloc had picked up the chant and were engaged in their own dance, a snake march that wound around near the spiral dance. The magical activism was enough to calm me, and ground me. After half an hour or so, Missy and I left the circle.

The excitement seemed pretty much over. In another twenty minutes, the park would open for the labor rally. After watching the police line advance a bit more, and not seeing much point in staying, Missy and I decided to head back to the hotel room for a nap. A rally would begin soon, and neither of us have much interest in watching a bunch of speakers say things we already knew. Back to the hotel room for a few hours, then to the 2 pm permitted march. (And, if we missed that, there was a plan for a 5 pm reconvergence, for the Witches and Anarchists Masquerade Ball. Starhawk promised us wonderful masks.)

Chapter XXVIII
Bush in Pittsburgh
April 19, 2004

Overview

On April 19th, 2005, President Bush made a special trip to the steel-driven city of Pittsburgh in order to prop up his Republican co-conspirator Arlen Specter, and to try and score some points with the local electorate in the process. The event was a Republican fund raiser in the Convention Center on 10th and Penn. Tickets to this gaggle of rich folk were several thousands of dollars a plate. While the average working person fights to get by, while the steel mills of this city fly south and west to more exploited labor markets, the wealthy, in all there obnoxious glory spend the equivalent of several months wages just to attend an elegant evening with their fearless class leader.

In response to this offensive scene, several hundred working people gathered out side the gates and tried to do the one thing that they could afford; be loud enough to let Bush and his kind know that they weren't welcome in this blue collar town. Among the crowd were a small but vocal Black Bloc consisting of several dozen area anarchists.

The Bloc, expecting trouble, positioned themselves between the police and the crowd. The crowd was gathered on the sidewalk, in front of the center. The cops, separating the two. When the people began to edge towards the centers entrance, the pigs charged, pushing the people back. As the night wore on, there were a number of minor altercations between the cops and the Bloc, resulting in 6 arrests.

Although this action was small, and although the Bloc did not inflict or receive any blows worthy of rock star treatment, this obscure action was significant for one reason; the Black Bloc was called for my elements who previously did not consider calling for or participating in such actions. When one reads their call to action, one can see the tension between their desire for nonviolence and their reluctant and masked realization that such tactics may be impossible. In such one can see the organic transition of idealistic young humanists into more serious, dedicated militants. And for them, it seems that they are not being brought to this position by abstract thought and ideologies,

but are rather compelled there by the brutality and ugliness of larger political events as they unfold in occupied Iraq and around the world.

In these peoples' reluctant militance, we can see the future of the anti-war and anti-capitalist movement across the country. Just as Black Blocs are spreading to every city and many small towns across this land, so to does the overall resistance to the way things are. Let us not draw the wrong conclusions; resistance is not growing because the Bloc is evangelizing. Rather the Bloc is spreading because resistance itself is growing. This is a force that cannot be jailed or stomped out of existence. It is a force which has the potential to spread like wildfire. And here the broader movement owes gratitude to the Bloc. For with the development of this tactic, many militants find a means to resist the increasing oppression of the state without feeling the need to project the movement into underground channels. Let us recall what happened in the 1960s and 1970s. As the war in Vietnam intensified, and as the Black, and Latino liberation struggles were met with increasing state violence, many good organizers felt compelled to retreat into clandestine armed resistance. While such modes of struggle may be necessary in certain historical situations, it always runs the risk of weakening the all important task of building a strong, above ground, mass movement. Today we still have pockets of the armed underground (i.e. Earth Liberation Front, as well as emerging anti-war groups) most of our people remain openly tied to their communities. This is good. The emergence of the Black Bloc has helped to allow this to happen insofar as it allows a means through which militants can strike out against the state, while retaining their roles within the broader movement. In this way the Bloc fulfills a psychological need within the anti-capitalist movement. Without this facet of struggle, one could speculate that many experienced anarchist organizers would have disappeared from the factories, from the unions, from the tenant groups and community associations within which duel power is truly built. This is not to say that groups like the E.L.F. shouldn't be supported. It is just to say that their role should not be overstated.

So, to the folks who organized the Black Bloc in Pittsburgh on April 19th... welcome to the fight.

April 19 - Protest Bush in Pittsburgh - Call for a Black Bloc/Direct Action Cluster
By The Pittsburgh Organizing Group

On April 19th President Bush is coming to Pittsburgh! He will be here to raise hundreds of thousands of dollars at senatorial fundraiser and attend a 5:30 pm rally taking place inside the David L. Lawrence Convention center. Bush is also coming because he believes that Pennsylvania is a key part of any chance he has for a 2nd term in office. In response to the visit from the "killer from Crawford," POG is calling for a Black Bloc (wearing all black clothing and bandannas)/direct action cluster of

individuals and affinity groups to gather as part of the planned protests. This cluster will begin assembling at: 5:00 pm at 10th and Penn Ave. (Downtown Pittsburgh) A plethora of other affinity groups and organizations will be gathering at that same location as part of the Thomas Merton Center's call to respond.

We categorically reject the man and his message. The "killer from Crawford", and his cronies are not welcome here and we intend to send that message loud and clear. How dare he come to our city, on the verge of complete financial collapse, to raise millions of dollars for those proponents of a neo-liberal ideology whose policies have been a major contributing factor to the city's crisis, while at the same time he continues an increasingly brutal occupation taking the lives hundreds of US soldiers and thousands of Iraqis. Pittsburgh's share of the war cost is estimated to exceed $100 million dollars. How dare he expect the citizens of this region to allow him "free speech" while he is responsible for taking away the rights and silencing the voices of countless millions through an increasingly repressive Government at home, and an increasingly violent and repressive military machine abroad. Those who are responsible for the deaths of thousands of innocent civilians are war criminals and should be reviled and treated as such. We are working for the liberation of the people in Iraq AND the United States because all people have a right to justice and self-determination.

We wish to put forth to the general progressive community our opinion on what the goals of the overall demonstration should be:

Overall Mobilization goals:

1. Mobilize large numbers of people from a wide breadth of the ideological and tactical spectrum to come together at the same time and place in opposition to Bush's visit and the continuing occupation of Iraq.

2. Make it clear to attendees, spectators, city officials, the media, and the public at large that Bush is not welcome here.

3. Encourage and support a diversity of tactics, and let a diversity of perspectives be heard.

4. Insist that the protest be within SIGHT and SOUND of the convention center and the people who will be attending it. Similarly, oppose any police attempts to put the protest in restrictive "protest pens," or to keep the protest farther away from the convention center than Bush supporters.

5. Support, with resources, statements, on the ground solidarity, the actions of anyone who attempts to take non-violent direct action, or engages in civil disobedience in protest of Bush's visit.

Tactical goals:

1. Non-violently disrupt the event as much as possible through the use of non-violent direct action and civil disobedience

2. Oppose any police efforts to target people or single out individuals based on their personal or perceived identity or characteristics.

3. Remain in solidarity with, and support the activities of, those who favor more or less confrontational tactics

4. Be prepared for the possibility of violent police repression by taking whatever personal safety precautions individuals deem necessary

Suggested attire is all black clothing and bandannas. As has been the case in the past, the Pittsburgh police may resort to violence. If so, we intend to meet their violence with equally determined non-violent resistance. We will not be intimidated, we will not accept being caged in protest pens, and we will not be silenced.

In solidarity and resistance,

Pittsburgh Organizing Group

Some people may be asking why POG has chosen to issue a more determined and angry call than usual. This is in fact our first ever call for a Black Bloc at an event. It is simply a reflection of our revulsion towards the effects of the policies our President is pursuing around the world. We ask anyone to look at pictures from blockaded Fallujah and not recoil in horror at what we, as citizens of this country, share responsibility for. As the atrocities of our government increase so too does our responsibility to resist, for WE ARE complicit in these atrocities.

Over a thousand Iraqi fighters and non-combat civilians, along with 72 US soldiers have died over the last 2 weeks. Tens of thousands more are dying in the US and around the world because of the exploitative system that this Administration embraces and is beholden to. Our hearts are sick with grief and rage over the almost incomprehensible death, destruction, and duplicity that this Government is engaged in on a daily basis. POG utilizes a variety of tactics that we feel are appropriate to the situation at hand. These decisions are based on what we believe will most effectively achieve our goals. We are not tied to any one approach. If, for whatever reason, you cannot or do not wish to participate in these protests we only ask that you understand where those who do are coming from and extend what solidarity you can. Any comments, suggestions, or requests for dialogue can be directed to pog@mutualaid.org.

Chapter XXIX
The March For Women's Lives
August 25, 2004

Overview

Women make up 51% of the national population. Despite being the majority, statistics tells us that they are by and large paid far less for the same labor as their male counterparts. The Republican, male-dominated Federal Government seems hell-bent on rolling back social services that millions of women—many single mothers—count on to make ends meet under capitalism. If George Bush and his cronies have their way, a woman's right to 'choose' may soon be in serious jeopardy as well. In the face of these increasing attacks, leading U.S. feminist organizations across the continent—key among them being the National Organization for Women—called for a massive display of female solidarity and strength in the nation's capital.

Answering the call were over one million people, making August 28th, 2004 the largest street demonstration in the history of the United States of America. The Black Bloc turned out in force to complement the mass cross section of protesters (from pro-choice Democrats to anarcho-feminists). The combined elements of the Anti-Fascist and Radical Cheerleader contingent numbered 1000. Not since the slightly larger anarchist contingent for A16 have we seen such a large Bloc.

During the day of action, the Bloc organized an independent feeder march which eventually merged with the main protest body. On several occasions militants confronted small groups of opposition from far right. These counter-demonstrators stood in visual opposition to, among other things, a woman's right to chose. During these confrontations, the Bloc quickly appropriated their offensive protest signs. A few rightwingers were pushed around—they were generally made to feel isolated and unwelcome. These counter-protesters were very few in number. Generally speaking, the Bloc's actions were largely supported by other demonstrators.

The only minor incident between the Bloc and the police was reported when the cops attempted to control their movement. The anarchists, true to form, resisted following sanctioned parade routes near the National Mall, instead marching down a parallel street. Initially law enforcement sought to prevent the Bloc from marching, but soon they gave way in the face of the militancy and numbers of the bloc.

Throughout the day, Bloc members distributed thousands of flyers, which analyzed various topics from a radical perspective. These included ARA's position on abortion rights and an anarchist history of the feminist movement.

While massive in size, this demonstration by no means turned the current tide of state-sanctioned sexism. It did however fire a warning shot across the bow of the conservative right. Fuck with the majority and you'll have millions to answer to!

CALL FOR AN ANTI-FASCIST BLOC AT THE MARCH FOR CHOICE 4/25 IN DC

by New Jersey Anti-Racist Action

Anti-Racist Action is calling for a visible antifascist bloc on April 25th in Washington, D.C. as part of the March For Women's Lives. When/Where: 10:00 am at Stanton Park (C St. between 4th and 6th, NE).

THIS TOO SHALL NOT PASS!

CALL FOR AN ANTI-FASCIST BLOC AT THE MARCH FOR CHOICE 4/25 IN DC

Anti-Racist Action is calling for a visible antifascist bloc on April 25th in Washington, D.C. as part of the March For Women's Lives. The climate of fear engendered in this country by the Bush administration's military aggression and assault on civil liberties has created an opportunity for the forces of the right wing to consolidate their power and work together to push through an agenda which is oppressive in many ways, one of the most visible today being the assault on sexual and reproductive freedom. This calls for nothing less than total resistance, and it is critical for anti-authoritarians to make our presence felt as part of this opposition.

As anti-authoritarians and anti-fascists, we work to build strong communities of families and inclusive support networks. We come from a position where we find our attempts at strengthening our communities under attack by state regulations in many different ways. We need to stand up for what we need: full reproductive freedom, access to birth control, acceptance of adoption as a choice, support structures for having and raising children, access to affordable prenatal and birth options, and free abortion on demand. Ultimately we want to care for ourselves and we believe in taking practical steps toward that—NOW.

Our call for an antifascist bloc allows us to raise awareness of the ties between fascism and the restriction of sexual freedom. Historical fascism was much more effective in its patriarchal redefining of gender relations in the "homeland" than in its more widely publicized racist outrages, and right-wing religious and nationalist movements today, from the Taliban to the Christian Right, similarly build their power first and foremost on state power over women as a class, and state regulation and social condi-

tioning of sexual and family relationships. Bringing up this oftenoverlooked connection keeps the struggles of women and sexual minorities from being marginalized.

This march, organized by mainstream and liberal feminist groups, will be the largest gathering in recent years of a broad spectrum of forces opposed to the current right-wing clampdown on sexual and reproductive freedom, and in the context of a presidential election season and ongoing legal and political battles in the fields of gay marriage and abortion rights, it will be highly significant in its own right. While we recognize this march as an important step towards fighting for the freedom of choice, we also identify the need for a greater focus in local work. There are many steps we can take to increase our presence and impact right where we live. We need to be shutting down fake clinics, providing abortion clinic defense, creating alternative and independent groups focusing on reproductive health, supporting sexual freedom, reaching out to youth with empowering messages about sexuality and choices, reinventing the family structure and organizing opposition to anti-freedom groups/events.

The March For Women's Lives begins at 12 noon at the Mall. The antifascist bloc will meet with the Radical Cheerleaders' Bloc Potluck at 10:00 am at Stanton Park (C St. between 4th and 6th, NE). We are calling for a bloc with banners having creative antifascist, women's liberation, and "freedom without compromise" statements. We encourage everyone to bring information on the organizing work being done in your own communities to hand out at the march and rally.

See you in the streets!

Baltimore and New Jersey Anti-Racist Action
mobtownara (at) hotmail.com
newjerseyara (at) ziplip.com
www.antiracistaction.us

Radical Pro-Choice Call To Action For April 25, 2004
by Radical Cheerleaders of DC

Feminists, radical cheerleaders, anti-authoritarians, anarchists and all those concerned with women's autonomy: join us on April 25th 2004 in Washington, D.C. for a highly festive mobile cheer bloc!

WHY:

There was a time in America's history when self-identifying radicals fought tirelessly to end government occupation of the womb—they succeeded. Many of us owe them our lives; all of us owe them our respect. But now, after spending 30 years ignorantly blanketed by the comfort of having the law on our side, the radical community gradually forgot that the freedom we consider a human right is seen by others as a "privilege." After winning Roe v. Wade, we moved on to new issues and failed to see that the

responsibility of our reproductive freedom was left in the hands of a few bureaucratic organizations. Such liberal organizations have come to depend greatly upon reformist action; placing all hope in expensive lobbyists and political campaigns. It has become clear in recent months that the bush administration has used these organizations' petitions as toilet paper—they are failing and the struggle needs our help.

As radicals we stand committed to an ideology, of whatever form, which shapes our identities as well as our actions. Because of this, we, as a movement and as individuals, face a constant unspoken struggle between owning our politics and actually living them. In a society that stands so far from the various utopian visions we may hold, it is difficult-and arguably dangerous—to altogether avoid reformist action. As feminists we must meet this realization with nothing less than complete solidarity. This is a call to action directed at the radical community who must now open its eyes to a new reality in which women's autonomy is under attack.

We are closer than ever before arriving at the day when the United States government will strip away women's right to access safe abortion services—a right so essential that its nonexistence has become almost unfathomable. At this pivotal time in history, the radical community must rise up. We must rise up against a tyrannical government which threatens to penetrate women's bodies with its laws, and we must rise up above our reservations with the liberal bureaucratic organizations that lead the pro-choice movement. We believe that this struggle will be won through solidarity and action; for this reason, we are calling for a radical contingent within a liberal march.

WHEN:

On Sunday April 25, 2004 (the weekend of the annual IMF/World Bank Spring meetings) tens of thousands of feminists will converge in Washington, D.C. for the end-all-be-all of pro-choice marches, coined "The March for Women's Lives", which has been organized collaboratively over the past year by Planned Parenthood Federation of America, the Feminist Majority Foundation, the National Organization for Women, and NARAL Pro-choice America.

WHAT:

We are calling for a mobile black/purple/pink noise bloc concentrated on radical cheerleading within this larger march. We are asking for people to learn the cheers at home, and come prepared with flags, noise makers and a festive spirit. Because the bloc will be mobile, radical cheering will take a slightly different form than most squads are used to; we envision it as being vocally based, thus allowing anyone to join in. We are calling upon any squads or individuals who have PRO-CHOICE cheers to send them to the contact information below; we will then compile a master cheer list and put it up on a TBA website.

We will hold a guerilla workshop/practice at the National Conference on Organized Resistance (NCOR) taking place in Washington, D.C. at the end of January, so if you'll be there, look for signs. Additionally, we will try to put together some practices on April 23-24 so we can learn the cheers together.

Aside from the cheering aspect, we feel the purpose of this contingent is to be as loud and as visible as possible. We want to show our commitment to tactical diversity while showing the government, as well as the pro-choice movement, that the radical community is as committed to the issue of women's choice as it is to anything else. We are encouraging creative direct action for this march, including: guerilla theater, drums/music, literature distribution, puppets, banners, etc. For the purposes of this march many of our common tactics will prove futile, therefore, as members of the D.C. community based upon our experience and knowledge of the area, we are discouraging property destruction and police confrontation as tactics.

HOWEVER, if you or your group has a strong affinity for property destruction and/or confrontation, we suggest channeling your efforts in creative ways. For example, we can guarantee that there will be anti-choice counter-protesters present throughout the city. Though angrily confronting such people is useless because they are irrational and will not listen to you, their demonstrations often rely heavily on visuals. These visuals are often put on the sides of mobile vehicles or set up behind a very small fence; either way a thick layer of paint could really compliment a bloody fetus picture.

The late term abortion ban which was recently signed into law is the biggest blow to reproductive autonomy that many of us have experienced in our lifetimes. Government imperialism into women's bodies is a radical issue and requires radical action. This struggle is time sensitive, we dare not lay dormant any longer and risk the overturn of Roe v. Wade before the end of Bush's term. Therefore, we must pool all available resources and face the government in solidarity. Join us.

Detailed information involving specific times, locations, and website info will come in the following weeks/months. Any groups wishing to endorse this call to action and/or aid in the organization of this event please contact us. All inquiries for further information and submissions of pro-choice cheers/songs, please contact us at:

The Radical Cheerleaders of DC:
RCDC (at) mutualaid.org

In addition, the specific organizers of this action can be reached directly:

Corie:
202-246-1822
corie@resist.ca

Michael:
202-213-3365
Michael@mutualaid.org

We're Pro-Choice and We RIOT! ARA Reportback From the Anti-Fascist Bloc at the March for Women's Lives

Chanting, "We're pro-choice, and we shoot back" members of the Anti-Fascist and Radical Cheerleading Blocs, numbering about 1000 people at this point, confronted a large group of anti-choicers near 7th and Constitution just as the March for Women's Lives was starting. Members of the Anti-Fascist Bloc were seen loudly confronting these pro-lifers, who were at first protected by only a handful of police officers. An impromptu kiss-in, led by some radical cheerleaders also took place. Eventually more police officers moved in and the Bloc moved on to join the main march. This group of anti-choicers, made up of mostly teenagers and college students, was the first of many pro-lifers we were forced to deal with that day.

Our day started at 9 am in Stanton Park, where both the Radical Cheerleaders and the Anti-Fascist Bloc were meeting up. People milled about the park—some greeting friends they hadn't seen in a long time, others preparing for the possibility of violence from the anti-choicers during the march, and others practicing their cheers. Food Not Bombs provided a pancake breakfast, and around 11 am the feeder march started.

In order to prevent confrontation with the anti-choicers who had already begun to gather around Pennsylvania Ave, the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) had shut down most of the Northwest quadrant of D.C., forcing the feeder march to first march south and partly out of our way. We went all the way down Independence Avenue, until we arrived at 7th Street, where we then joined the main crowd. This route limited our public visibility, as most of the route was through streets surrounded by gray government buildings, empty on a Sunday morning. Still, we had a festive and spirited march that was greeted warmly by the D.C. residents who did see us.

The police presence during the feeder march was interesting and worth mention. Aside from the motorcycle and bicycle cops that mostly rode ahead of the march, controlling traffic and our general movement, the only other noticeable police presence were single officers spread out on the sidewalk throughout the march. There were all a good distance from one another, and probably couldn't see their fellow officers amidst the crowd. This was surprising, at least to me, someone who has grown used to the hordes of RoboCops who are everywhere at anti-Nazi, anti-war, and anti-globalization protests these days.

Arriving at the Mall, we joined the huge crowd listening to speeches and getting ready for the march. Many of us spent our time handing out flyers, which ranged from ARA's perspective on pro-choice politics and our position on anti-choicers as well as Zabalaza's *History of Anarchist Women* flyer.

Eventually the Radical Cheer and Anti-Fascist Blocs made their way across the Mall in an attempt to join the main march. Scouts who already gone ahead to Constitution Avenue came back to report that there was a large group of anti-choicers on the corner of 7th and Constitution, largely unprotected by the MPD. We made our way, now as one unified radical contingent, to the corner, where the initial incident described at the beginning of this account took place.

For the first and pretty much only time of the day, there was a large and aggressive MPD presence around the Bloc as we left the corner of 7th and Constitution headed for the main march. Motorcycle cops tried to pull alongside and in front of us, and while several marchers attempted to block the path of these officers, they were summarily plowed into and almost run over. Not only that, but some liberals from the main march had decided to tag along, in an attempt to mute our radical politics. They were being overly confrontational with marchers, with one woman repeatedly riding her bicycle into people, while her friends on foot attempted to physically assault us. While most participants in the "March for Women's Lives" either welcomed our presence and militancy, or respectfully disagreed, there were some who were displeased that we were there and treated us accordingly. (See the Mobilization for Global Justice's "Open Letter to the Liberal Organizers of the Pro-Choice March" for a good account of such treatment: http://www.infoshop.org/inews/article.php?story=04/04/29/3191546)

After joining the main march, we carved out a space for ourselves by putting all of our banners in front of the radical contingent, and tried to keep people tight behind the banners. Several undercover cops tried to keep tabs on us, from both within and outside the Bloc. At least three undercovers walked between us and the contingent in front of us for most of the march route.

The anti-choicers, lead by Operation Rescue fundamentalist Randall Terry, did not live up to their promise to pack both sides of the march route. Instead, they barely had enough people to line one side of the street, and were interspersed by hundreds of vocal pro-choice supporters. There were, however, several blocks lined by Operation Witness—Terry's new group—and Army of God members. The police presence for the counter-protest consisted of a single officer stationed every 25 feet or so, giving the anti-fas ample opportunity for confrontation. While there was a lot of verbal confrontation and many signs stolen and destroyed, we were unsuccessful at physically confronting these fascists.

Now we have seen how minimal the police presence is at these types of demonstrations and how unwilling they are to get physically involved in a confrontation between the two sides. We have also seen how supportive most of the people in the main march were for our tactics. Now that we have experienced all of this, we will be better prepared next time to deal with those pro-lifers who support bombing abortion clinics and assassinating abortion providers; the same ones who are directly connected to prominent leaders in the white supremacist movement.

Just as we helped to destroy the National Alliance and the World Church of the Creator, so too will we destroy the violent elements of the anti-choice movement.

Anti-Racist Action is planning on having a counter-demonstration Against Operation Witness when they protest the Democratic National Convention in Boston and the Republican National Convention in New York City this summer. To get involved, or to find out more about ARA and our pro-choice work, please email newjerseyara at ziplip.com or mobtownara at hotmail.com. You can also visit us online at www.antiracistaction.us.

Radical Cheer Block at DC Women's March by tristan

We had a rocking feeder march to and at the DC March for Women's Reproductive Freedom!

When the Women Lead the Men Will Follow, When the People Lead the Politicians Become Irrelevant!

I went to the best march ever yesterday (4/26/04). There was a huge women's rights march and we had a Radical Cheerleader/Anti-Fascist feeder march. Many of us had come for the IMF/World Bank meeting protest the day before which was good and fun with about 2,500 people on a festive procession and entertaining rally/Really Really Free market in the Park. So today we gathered in another park. We had so much energy and the energy that often comes from women and it was amazing. There was no one demanding that women go first or anything, just those who jumped up to shake their bodies and shout funny rhymes took the lead, because that's what this march was all about. All the cheerleaders, anarchists, radicals and fun people were there. By 9:30 am several hundred people had gathered. Most were dressed in black, pink and a little purple.

At 10:30 am Food Not Bombs had a free pancake breakfast and we headed out with flags, banners, whistles, drums and pom poms. The energy and excitement were incredibly contagious. The cops were mellow and we marched and cheered and had so much fun. The founders of the Radical Cheerleader concept were dancing in the crowd. There were amazing cheers. Many people from mainstream groups such as Planned Parenthood Chicago joined in as women's rights activists filled the city. We soon reached the Supreme Court and a Bay Area (California) cheerleading squad did cheers about not shaving their armpits and a human cheer pyramid. Meanwhile boring cops (just doing their job) lined the steps and expensive but blank marble walls made up the backdrop while Roman symbols of cor- poral punishment and execution topped the Supreme Court building. Everyone could see we were more fun than executions any day. The Bay Area cheerleaders called for all those who knew one of the oldest cheers and about 25 people ran over and did a rousing version of "Kiss the backa my butt!":

SOUND OFF 1,2, SOUND OFF 3,4

Break IT On DOWN!!!!
My back is breakin' My belt's too tight
My Booties shakin' from left to right!!!
SHOUT IT OUT !!! REVOLUTION!!! SHOUT IT OUT !!! REVOLUTION!!!
Enuff is Enuff!!!! The poor must RISE UP!!!
Didn't eat today
No place to stay!!
Kiss The back of MY Butt!!! UGH!!
Kiss the back of MY Butt!!! UGH !!
kiss the back of my
kiss the back of my
kiss the back of my BUTT !

Yahhh! We continued and headed down Capitol Hill. A masked anarchist dressed in black darted out of the crowd, sprinted between the police motorcycles, in front of a police car. His gloved hand shot out and grabbed an object out of the gutter and hurled it towards the crowd. The bright pink beach ball flew over us just as a huge roar of our excited voices filled the air. More groups of women joined as we passed the U.S. Capitol building but that wasn't even worth looking at compared to our block.

We got to the Women's rally and many who had joined our march in passing peeled off. The cops tried to herd us into the park but we jumped around them and continued marching on a parallel street. The other participants cheered and took photos whenever we appeared. We stopped in the middle of the Mall, having so much fun and entertained everyone. "We are the Cheer Block, Couldn't be prouder, If you can't hear us, Shout a little louder!" The march started and we cut across, got split up, burned a flag and continued. The Black Bloc took the lead with "What's the solution, People's revolution, What's the reaction, Direct action." We all went and shouted at hundreds of pro-lifers gathered along the sidewalk. Same gender kissing also joyfully began. "Get Your Rosaries Off My Ovaries!" We also met some Pro-Life vegans that had marched with us the day before against the IMF but now had 'All Life is Sacred' shirts on and were on the other side. Police stood between, but we were having so much fun and were so happy that there was no need for confrontation that day.

We continued marching on a street parallel to the Mall. Soon police motorcycles tried to cut us off but they were blocked by the Black Bloc, who were maybe a bit macho. The Black Bloc let a bunch of cheerleaders get in front, and the police decided that to attack today was a bad idea. We were strong, so strong that we didn't need to do some of the more militant things we sometimes do just to make our presence felt. "Bush is pissed, 'Cuz he can't fuck this, So resist and raise up your fist." We continued and had to join the main march. Pro-lifers lined the other side of police barricades. We took the whole street-first came cheerleaders in bright, amazing outfits then came the Black Bloc all masked up and with a wall of banners at the front and everyone

else following. We shouted about birth control and masturbation, cunts and clits and taking the streets while the Black Bloc ripped huge signs of fetuses out of Pro-Lifers' hands. Passing a group of high-level clergy with a special police guard we shouted "Not the Church, Not the state, Women will decide their fate."

We continued and arrived back at the mall and rested in the middle of the street. Madeline Albright spoke and we all booed while cheers filled much of the mall. Many of our people began to leave while the march continued to arrive for over two hours. There were many good speakers against the war, and others said good things, as well. Chalk began to cover the ground "@ just do it" and "Pro-Choice and we riot." Soon a few of us played drums and whistles and noisemakers. More people danced and many marchers joined in. After a rest the drums began again-we danced up a storm of joy. Many other people joined the dancing and soon it was mostly students and others having a great time. The anarchists started things off, then let them take their course. I felt it was a perfect model of how things should be done. Women took off their shirts, a break dancer busted some moves, people banged stuff together, a saxophone appeared, a huge women's symbol rose above us, puppets came through, and thousands snapped photos or danced for a bit as they marched by. From the stage blocks away, Dolores Huerta spoke about immigrant women and Ani di Franco sang songs and spoke against capitalism to end the rally of 800,000 people.

Finally those left of us left, but stopped to have Ninja versus Pirates sword fights with tubes from pro-choice signs, and play freeze tag with passers by. On the way to the metro we ran into two Canadian women who called out to me for carrying a pink and black "No War" flag. They said the rally was awful, everyone praising the Democratic Party. We said that we agreed that it was bad that Hillary Clinton and other Democrats were there, and that many speakers encouraged voting and Kerry as the alternative to Bush. But for us we had had so much fun and made such a statement as our own block that we had found the march incredibly inspiring. That's what life is about. Finding joy in resistance and life, in spite of governments, politicians, police and religious zealots.

Chapter XXX
Valley Forge Battlefield: The Black Bloc vs. Nazis September 25, 2004

Overview

September 25th, 2004, on the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur, neo-Nazis had their ass handed to them yet again by the Black Bloc. On that day the fascist National Socialist Movement, dressed in brown uniforms, held a white supremacist rally in the Valley Forge Battlefield National Park in Pennsylvania. The Nazis mobilized 100. Anti-racists mobilized an estimated 200 at a counter rally located about a mile away in the same 700 acre park. Also confronting the fascists were a number of members of the New Black Panther Party.

The fascist activities were slated to take place between 1-4 p.m. Around noon, some of the more militant anti-fascists organized a welcoming ceremony of sorts for the Brown Shirts. At the park entrance 100 people gathered and proceeded to harass any racist trash which sought entrance. This visibly shook the Nazis, turning a number of them away.

The Black Bloc, composed of 50-100 militants from ARA, Red and Anarchist Skin Heads (RASH), NEFAC, and other allies strategically placed themselves between the parking area and the NSM rally. The geography of the land was hilly. This allowed the Bloc to take up a position between hills, in such a way that they could effectively ambush isolated fascists as they attempted to reach the main event. As the day continued, the Bloc succeeded in engaging and severely beating numerous neo-Nazis; some so bad that they had to be hospitalized. There was even word of a fascist being stabbed. However, as of print, this rumor has not been confirmed. The police intervened, on occasion, using pepper spray against anti-fascists. All told, one Black Blocer was arrested (three Nazis were arrested), and no antifa's reported any injuries. As for the NSM rally, it was forced to end an hour early at the request of law enforcement officers concerned about further violence.

The fact that this Nazi rally took place at Valley Forge is an insult to all those soldier-farmers of the Revolutionary war era who froze to death during the winter

of 1777-1778, or died fighting for democracy and against British imperialism on the battlefield. On a personal note, both of my grandfathers, and four of my great uncles served in the U.S. Army during World War II. X—the other author of this book—had a grandfather who was a member of the armed underground in Europe during that same war. X's grandfather was eventually captured and survived much of the war, despite being tortured in a Nazi concentration camp for political prisoners. In the end, the presence of uniformed Nazis on this hollowed ground of freedom should make everyone's blood boil. Did not an entire generation of working people risk and give their lives to rid the world of Hitlerites and their bigoted, anti-democratic ideology? Did our grandfathers die on the breaches of Normandy just to see fascists organize at home? No. For those reasons, and many others we should recognize the brave service that the Black Bloc performed on that day of September 25th, 2004. They took a stand where one had to be taken and they won! While some middle class liberals may frown at direct confrontation and violence, we must all soberly recognize that it took violence to defeat Hitler and Mussolini during WWII, and it will only be through similar means that we will maintain our victories against fascist at home. As a final word, let us not forget—fascists don't always wear brown shirts!

Call To Action: All Out For Valley Forge! By Philadelphia Anti-Racist Action

September 25th, 2004
Valley Forge National Battlefield
Valley Forge, PA

With the Bush administration firmly entrenched in power, true fascists-an assortment of neo-Nazi and other far-right groups-are no longer afraid to organize publicly, far from their home base of support. The National Socialist Movement (NSM) is planning a large public demonstration on September 25th in Valley Forge, PA. The NSM, who refer to themselves as "America's Nazi Party," feel no need to hide in their homes in Minnesota, and have instead chosen a location on the East Coast less than half an hour from the very multi-racial and multi-cultural City of Philadelphia. We in Anti-Racist Action are planning a counter-demonstration to oppose these fascists and are inviting all those who believe in freedom and equality to join us in sending the NSM a strong message that fascist scum are not welcome in Pennsylvania!

While it may appear that the NSM is just a fringe group, especially here on the East Coast, and that it is not worthwhile to oppose such a group, it is important to note that there is currently a power vacuum in the white power movement. With Matt Hale, the leader of the World Church of the Creator in jail, and the death of William Pierce, the founder and head of the National Alliance, other fascist scum are feeling lost without any strong leadership. Other white power organizations like the NSM

realize that this power vacuum exists and are attempting to fill it. It is for this reason that the NSM will attract fascists of all stripes—in numbers—to their demonstration in Valley Forge. Neo-Nazis are currently seeking organization, structure, and public organizing—all of which they will be looking to the NSM for on September 25th.

For this reason alone, it is of utmost importance that anti-fascists show a huge amount of opposition in Valley Forge. This is not a time that we can we can sit back and ignore the organizing fascists are currently engaging in. We CANNOT give the neo-Nazis any room to organize and recruit. We must not allow the existing power vacuum to be filled. We must be there on September 25th in Valley Forge to take away any illusion of organization and power the NSM is trying to present. We must stand up and join together, sending a clear message that such activity is not welcome in our communities.

Please join us in opposing the NSM rally in Valley Forge. Let's send these neo-Nazis home knowing that their behavior will not be tolerated here in Pennsylvania, or anywhere else. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend.

For more information, please contact Philadelphia Anti-Racist Action
philly_ara@yahoo.com

In solidarity,
Philadelphia Anti-Racist Action

The Battle For Valley Forge! (Sep 25, 2004) ALL OUT FOR VALLEY FORGE!

On September 25, 2004, the National Socialist Movement will be holding a rally on the historic Valley Forge battleground. Anti-Racist Action is organizing a massive counter-rally to oppose these fascists and send them packing.

The NSM is expecting numbers in the hundreds, and we're planning to out-number them at least four to one. We need your help to make this a reality, so here is how you can help:

- Organize a group of people to come to the counter-demonstration. Bring anti-racist posters or flags, or wear an anti-racist t-shirt.
- Contact your nearest ARA Chapter and let them know that you want to help organize for this event.
- Promote this event by putting a link to this page, (www.aranet.org/forge), up on message boards, on your personal website, or anywhere else you can.
- If you're near Philadelphia/Valley Forge, it would really help if people could flyer the nearby towns. So, download the flyer, print it out, and go flyering.

- Contact Philly ARA if you're interested in helping out with organizing at all.

CALL TO ACTION - Here's the Call To Action that was written for this event. Forward it around far and wide!

FLYER - Here is the NEWEST ARA FLYER that you can download and distribute. (en español)

POSTER - We now have a PDF POSTER (11x17) version available for download and printing. (en español)

MEETING POINT - The meeting time and point has been set for 11:30 am SHARP! at the Valley Forge Convention Center, located at 1160 First Ave. in Valley Forge, PA. Look for a large Anti-Racist Action banner.

This is an event you won't want to miss! Bring everyone, because this one's going down in history!

Interview with Three Black Bloc Militants Concerning The Battle of Valley Forge

Interviewed here are three persons who took part in the Black Bloc action against neo-Nazis during the Battle of Valley Forge. Chris Bastard, age 19, lives and works in Philadelphia and is a member of the anti-fascist Red and Anarchist Skin Head organization. Grace is also a member of Philly RASH, ARA, and is a co-founder of SPAR. Jared is a member of ARA-New Jersey.

Interviewer: From all reports the Black Bloc kicked the crap out of a lot of neo-Nazis. How many were you, and how did you achieve such success with out suffering any more then one arrest and no apparent injuries?

Chris: I'd have to say there must have been between 30-35 of us if not more. For the most part, the cops kept their distance, only interfering with us when we tried to walk past the barricaded area and after the one bonehead had suffered a pretty bad beat down. Before the beating of the one Nazi we had unleashed hell upon the various fascists that drove in or out of the park and a few even had to take their vehicles off-road to escape. After that the cops must have been a little annoyed and tried to corral us in, but we managed to be one step ahead and eventually chose to leave.

Grace: I'm not sure how many of us actually showed. I would like to say well over 100 of us and, yes, we did kick the crap out of the Nazis (and their cars!). As far as "no injuries", as one of the medics there, I have to say that there were some injuries, but they were "minor" as far as these things go-some people got pepper-sprayed and knocked around when the cops intervened as we were beating the shit out of a couple of Nazis that had walked into a group of 50 of us with the bright idea of throwing out heils as they were doing it. We all had the idea going in there that we wouldn't

leave anyone behind no matter what. The time the cops intervened, spraying up with pepper-spray, there were a couple of people that got hit pretty directly. A bunch of people, including me, dove into the spray to get them out because with the shit in their eyes, they were effectively blinded. It was like that all day. If there was an issue, we handled it as a group.

Jared: I would disagree with Chris, and say that our numbers as a Bloc were much higher; more like 90-100 once we were all together and ready for the demonstration to begin. I feel like the main reason we were successful was because the police were inexperienced and not trained well for the tactics we were prepared to use (we got to watch and laugh while many officers in riot gear literally fell out of the van they were in because they didn't know how to maneuver in all of their gear, and take a good 15 minutes to get up and get themselves situated, and deployed), and because many participants in the anti-fascist bloc were experienced in dealing with the police in similar situations. Our biggest success, as Chris detailed, was confronting the fascists' cars as they arrived at the park. We were lined up on both sides of the entrance that they were using, which forced them to go through us to park their cars and get to the rally. The psychological effect of having to do that, and dealing with a very angry crowd of antifas hurling insults at them, not to mention the damage we caused to some cars, set the tone for the day. Some cars had to drive on the grass to avoid us, and several others just left without ever coming to the park for the rally.

Interviewer: Is there anything that makes Valley Forge unique in comparisons to other clashes with neo-Nazis? Is there lessons to be learned for the future?

Chris: Most of our other clashes, at least in my experience, have been street based confrontations where we happened to be in the same place at the same time. Also, the number of people each side had was much larger than what it normally is. As for lessons to be learned...well we're always critiquing our actions to see how we could have been more effective and what we can do next time.

Grace: The police presence. At one point, I had a police helicopter land not 50 feet from me. It was so surreal. There were all these cops in full riot gear there to protect the Nazis from the protestors. The time we got pepper-sprayed, it was an African-American cop that was spraying us. It was so ironic that under any other circumstances, the people that had cried for this cop's "protection" would be crying for his lynching.

Also, there were the barricades. I'm not sure if it was to keep the nazis in or the protestors out. But if you wanted to get close to where the stage where the speeches and stuff were going on, you had to walk through these gates and down this path that was lined with metal barricades. Once you got to the stage area, there was a separate "pen" for protesters that was divided from the stage area. We had made the decision early on that UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES would we go through that gate. That proved to be a good decision, because once you went through those gates, you were effectively reduced to standing there and yelling at the Nazis.

All in all, the police presence there and the measures taken to keep the Nazis separate from the protestors was just amazing. It was unconscionable that all this "protection" had been set up for people that seriously just deserved to get the shit kicked out of them. We learned that if you don't get them before they go in, you're not going to get them at all. But it's all good—we got a good amount before they went in.

Jared: The biggest difference is also the obvious difference—this was in a huge national park, and not in a city or suburban area. Most, if not all of us, are used to dealing with these situations on city streets. Being at a park presented new challenges and obstacles, as well as just generally a much bigger area for the police to use as a security zone and to keep the two sides separated. I think that we can generally learn from the entire experience, and use it in the future. It looks like at least the National Socialist Movement is going to continue with this tactic of having rallies in the park, with Yorktown scheduled for a few months from now. The State seems to think the police in Valley Forge did a good job, and are planning on using it as a model in Yorktown.

Interviewer: I saw the photos of the Nazi scum who made it through your lines. They looked utterly absurd in their brown uniforms and pot bellies. Do you think these people really believe that they have snowballs chance in hell of building a powerful national movement?

Chris: As far as I see things they know they don't have a chance in hell of ever achieving a fascist state. They're more like the increasing kamikaze attacks on U.S. warships in the Pacific theater during WWII...they know they don't have a chance in hell, they're just happy with inflicting as much damage as possible. This makes the fascists all that much more prone to create rogue followers who are willing to kill and be killed for the chance of becoming some sort of twisted martyr.

Grace: They do, and it's sad. But it's also dangerous. The Nazis today are not the goose-stepping, swastika-wearing ones of the WWII era (although there are still morons out there who do that kind of shit). Nazis today are blue and white collar family men. They have kids in the public schools, wives, jobs. Their hate is not the "lets exterminate 6 million Jews" type—it's way more subtle. They pick people that already might have some prejudices and they slowly work on them, making little statements here and there, maybe inviting them over for dinner. They are smart and can articulate their beliefs. And people fall for it. They let the little things pass, and, before you know it, they are saying the same things, holding the same beliefs.

Jared: I think neo-nazis and other assorted fascists are definitely a threat, and need to be confronted at every opportunity. At the same time, I don't think the most extreme people have that much of a chance to build a movement that will gain power. What they do have the chance of doing is terrorizing our communities, and being the foot soldiers for the suit-and-tie fascists that are in power and will continue to gain power. And with more fascist policies being implemented every day [in government], the more extreme groups will feel that they can organize publicly without much opposition.

Interviewer: Our grand parents knew how to deal with Nazis. They bombed the hell out of them in fascist Germany during WWII. How is it that self proclaimed Nazis can walk the streets in this day and age without facing a similar fate?

Chris: It appears to be a double-pronged problem: Apathy from within society and the State's capitalist system solidifying a relationship with extreme right-wing fanatics. Outside of alternative communities such as the punk rock music scene, and the [New] Black Panthers (not to say that the [New] Black Panthers are the best of groups out there) not too many people were interested in militant physical confrontation with the fascists. The other protestors who showed up allowed themselves to be herded into a pen which could have easily been used against the people inside. Also, over the past 5 years we have seen a rise in oppression from the right such as the erosion of civil rights and civil liberties of Muslims and anyone of Arabic origin, the ever increasing attack on women's reproductive freedoms... the list goes on. The attempts to stifle dissent by State force have also taken a dramatic rise as we have seen arbitrary arrests at anti-war protests, Critical Mass bike rides in New York City, more arbitrary arrests and police brutality at the political conventions this past summer. To top it off we have pundits like Ann Coulter, Sean Hannity, Rush Limbaugh who earn huge salaries from blaming this country's problems on liberals, the GLBTG community, immigrants, and taking cheap shots at minorities.

Grace: Damned if I know. It's not something that we, as a community, should allow. Shit, I'm a 115 pound girl and I have gotten into confrontations with people almost three times my size. The Nazis know me, they know my face, and they know that I won't put up with their bullshit. That's how it should be. They should know and fear the face of every fucking antifa out there.

Jared: People don't see them as a threat. People have told me many times that Nazis don't exist anymore, and then I'll show them pictures of the National Alliance getting hundreds of people out to a demonstration in Washington, D.C. Then they start paying attention. People are also really apathetic-since they perceive a small threat from neo-Nazis, if one or two people are around, like at a show or something, and are "behaving" themselves, people think it's wrong to kick them out. We, as anti-fascists, need to stick to our beliefs and keep organizing, even if the face of other people thinking our work isn't important. We also must educate other people, so more people realize the threat and support us and work with us.

Interviewer: What is it going to take to eradicate fascism as an organized force in North Americas?

Chris: I think the general population needs to be shown how dangerous these groups are. Furthermore, we in the anti-fascist community need to take up a serious dialogue of how to revive interest in the goal of eradicating fascist ideas. The lines of where people stand are all too often very blurry and that's something that needs to be changed. Once people get off the fence and take a stand we'll see where we're at and how to approach the situation from there.

Grace: The activist community needs to stop dividing itself. A lot of times, we get too caught up in the "politics" of everything. This "organization" has an issue with that "organization" or whatever. It all needs to stop. We're all fighting for the same goal in this case. If the community spent half as much time fighting the fascist trash as they do deciding on what groups they are going to put themselves in, we would all be a lot better off.

Jared: I agree with Grace—there needs to be more solidarity throughout the activist community. We also have to make connections with communities that are most affected by fascist organizing and fascist government policies, working with them and letting them take the lead, since they know exactly what happens when fascist scum get any kind of power.

I also feel like we need to be making connections between the big picture—State fascism—and the blatant views of neo-Nazis, and do work on both issues. That is a criticism I know ARA always gets—we don't fight institutionalized racism, or that we're not paying attention to what the government is doing. I think we need to show people the connections between the two, and also do work around all kinds of fascism—not just neo-nazis.

Interviewer: What appeals to you all the most about Black Bloc tactics?

Chris: Direct Action. Black Blocs and those involved take matters into their own hands when it counts and get things done. Actions taken by the Bloc are done with the consensus and approval of most if not all people involved. Participation is left entirely to the individual, all actions are autonomous from other groups (though other groups may participate in said action) and its ever evolving...taking whatever shape it can given its resources at any given time.

Grace: Definitely the solidarity of it all. There really is a sense of "no person left behind." It doesn't matter if you have known the people you are working with for years or if you've just met them five minutes ago. You're all in the fight together. There are no petty divisions based on class, race, sex, sexual identity and all the other stupid things that you find out there in the world and, sometimes, even in the activist community. When everyone has that mask on, everyone is equal, everyone is fighting for the same goal and that is a really amazing feeling.

Jared: Exactly what Chris and Grace said. The militancy of the Black Bloc, and the solidarity of its participants. People in this country are way too into the standard get-a-permit, march around and go home and feel good about yourself demonstration. No one is going to listen to us if that's all we do, and the Black Bloc takes things further by engaging in direct action. It makes our target pay attention to us, and brings more attention because something different (and interesting) is actually happening. In terms of solidarity, everyone has your back when you're together on the streets in a Black Bloc. It's just a really great feeling.

Interviewer: Besides trashing neo-Nazis what do you all do for fun?

Chris: I like to play hockey and paintball, going to shows and hanging out with area anti-fascists is always fun as well. Although it's rare, I like to travel. Other times, a

quiet night with someone special is where it's at. At the end of the day it's all about "havin' a laugh and havin' a say" as the old Oi! motto goes.

Grace: Fun? What is this fun you speak of? Hah...No, kidding. I am a total computer geek (the revolution needs us, too!) and I recently helped to temporarily take down the NATVAN website. I spend a lot of my free time involved in pro-choice and sexual freedom work. I have a girlfriend that I love with all my heart. We've been together for about a year now and we're currently doing the long-distance relationship thing, so I put a lot of time and effort into that. As for work, I don't have a "real" job-being an activist, street medic and professional fuck-up is my job. I get money by selling things that I make—jewelry and stuff—although, I might have to go and get a slave job soon. I volunteer at the Wooden Shoe (anarchist bookstore in Philly) and that's about it.

Jared: Like Grace, I spend a lot of time organizing. I'm working part-time and in my free time, I like to just hang out with my girlfriend and my friends. Going to shows, going to the movies, just stuff like that.

Chapter XXXI
Inauguration Day: J20 II
January 20, 2005

Overview

The 2005 U.S. Presidential elections ended with George W. Bush and his neo-con allies claiming another dubious victory over the Democratic Party. Despite massive voting irregularities reported throughout the nation, and regardless of a possible miscount in Ohio (which was certified as a Republican victory by the Republican Secretary of State), Bush supporters claimed that their man won 50.73% of the ballots. This amounted to 62,040,606 votes. Democrat John Kerry, former head of Vietnam Veterans Against the War turned hawk, is said to have captured 48.27% of the popular vote. Independents and third party candidates combined for the remaining margin. This not so resounding victory was declared by Bush to represent a mandate from the people to stay the course of war; i.e. the imperialist occupation of Iraq and the slashing of social services at home. However, before we get carried away with ourselves it is important to point out that the population of the United States is 290,809,777. Of that population 228,769,171 did not vote for Bush. 107,700,456 did not vote for either of the major candidates from the capitalists parties. The figures represent less of a mandate than a basic indictment of the Tweedle-dee, Tweedle-dum democracy we live under. Even so, these results were certified as official by the Federal Government, and the Republicans made plans for their second victory parade in as many elections. In response, the Left and the Black Bloc made their own arrangements to welcome our not so popular leader.

Bush's victory march was countered by well over 10,000 angry demonstrators primarily organized by the D.C. Anti-War Network (DAWN). Protests were also held in dozens of other U.S. cities, including Atlanta, San Francisco, and Portland, Oregon. Cities across Europe and Asia witnessed anti-Bush demonstrations as well. It is estimated that more then 25,000 Americans participated in such actions, making the counter-inaugural protests the largest of their kind in U.S. history. In D.C. the Black Bloc put 700 militants on the street. Bush for his part, mustered a police force of 6000, and called in 7000 combat ready military personnel to face off any challenges to his power. This was the first time since 1973 that an inauguration utilized military forces

to maintain security. And like four years ago, any people wishing to gain access to the parade route were required to pass through police/Secret Service/military checkpoints. However, unlike four years ago (when the Black Bloc smashed through such a barrier) the immediate area around the route was ringed with ten foot fences.

Leading up to this action, many believed that the Bloc would have to be in very good form—larger and better organized then four years ago—in order to avoid a humiliating defeat. After all, there can be no doubt that the police and military have studied the events that took place last time around and modified their game plans accordingly. The pigs would be ready. Would the Black Bloc? Many signs were present that would imply otherwise. The mobilization was marred with indecision and lack of structure from the start. The first call to action was made available to select groups then rescinded. Then another call came from New York City. Then another from ARA which seemed to compete with the first. Some influential anarchists were calling for smaller decentralized actions instead of a Bloc. One contingent absurdly argued that the Bloc should refocus its energies on a pro-choice action later in the week. The unfolding situation was confused at best. Yet through such tribulations J20 would see one of the largest, and most effective North American Black Bloc in years.

The Bloc got moving shortly before 12:30 p.m. Its goal was to break through the security perimeter and occupy the parade route—therefore stopping the Bush motorcade in its tracks. To help facilitate this process, key affinity groups worked as counter-intelligence units. Police radios were monitored to keep tabs on enemy movement and scouts reported back to operatives with the main body. Armed with this information and the confidence of numbers, the Bloc boldly set out through the city. The first police barricade it faced melted before its approach. For a moment it appeared that its goal was within grasp. But then an internal dispute over which direction to go at a key intersection slowed its pace enough to allow riot police to rationally redeploy its forces. Conflating matters, the Bloc began to move in a direction counter to recommendations emanating from the scouts.

As the Bloc approached the larger DAWN protest, riot police launched a lightning attack against the anarchists. However, this did not occur without a fight. Pacifica Radio reported the Bloc, at this time, numbering upwards of 1500 militants. Other eyewitness reports put the Bloc at well over 2000. In view of the fact that no Bloc organizer or participant claimed numbers to be above 700, it must be assumed that their ranks temporarily swelled with sympathizers as the fight intensified. Even so, this strength would prove short lived. The Bloc was forced into a tactical retreat. After regrouping it launched a counter offensive against police lines. This charge was also turn back, and the Bloc was forced to withdraw.

By 2:30 p.m. the anarchists assembled what forces it retained and again set out for the security fence. Successive charges resulted in the opening of a hole in the barrier. The pigs answered the challenge by beating the crowd with large metal whips, resembling elongated antennas. The anarchists were not able to exploit the breach.

The Bloc, now utterly on the defensive, withdrew from the area. As a result of the day's actions a small number of individuals were arrested.

If the story were to stop here, we would be left with no more then a good old fashion story of the Black Bloc fighting cops at a mass demonstration. But surprise, the story doesn't end here.

Later that evening a Black Bloc reconverged following a cultural/political event in the Northwest section of the city. Sometime after 10 p.m., 200-300 militants, armed with torches, began to march on the Republican sponsored "Constitutional Ball" at the Hilton on Connecticut Avenue. Under the slogan of "Bring The War Home" this contingent sought to reach the Ball, and teach the rich a lesson about the human will to resist. Along the way something happened. Capitalist tend to call it hooliganism. Many working class and poor people call it revenge. Bank windows were smashed in, a cop curser had a brick tossed through its windshield, a police substation was trashed, many other corporate targets were attacked. For twenty minuets the march continued unimpeded. Riot pigs, as should be expected, responded in force. This time the Bloc was scattered and would not reconstitute itself. 78 people were arrested, and $15,000 in damage was done to capitalist targets.

What makes the latter part of this action interesting is that the Bloc's immediate objective became the destruction of capitalist private property, not fighting the police. Historically, East Coast Black Blocs have maintained relatively good relations with the larger, more moderate left, because they have prioritized direct struggle with the police. In this capacity, they often come to the physical aid of nonviolent protesters that are being attacked by the pigs. Capitalist property destruction—while always present in lesser degrees—has never been their main purpose. Such destruction, while completely justified from an anarchist or even socialist perspective, rarely sits well with the more liberally-minded demonstrators. Of course this tactical orientation has been observed as the norm during many West Coast demonstrations (most notable in Seattle). Could it be that we are witnessing a new phase in regional Black Bloc tactics? This possibility cannot be discounted as many of those who are in the front lines of Blocs today are not the same militants of five years ago during A16 and Quebec City. Many former street militants have refocused there energies on labor struggles, tenants' unions, and other community organizing projects. While most are still supportive of Black Blocs, such formations are no longer their principle mode of resistance. A new generation of anarchists are on the verge of wielding the Black Bloc tactic according to their own inclinations. The future of the Bloc is as malleable as the changing context of those groupings behind it. Many things are possible, both good and bad. The Black Bloc as a tactic, cannot be defined in an absolutist way devoid of the broader social reality. The ever developing anarchist movement should consciously allow itself the diversity of tactics and experimentalism that will make victory possible. We should strive to be the most militant and the most relevant organized force in the broader class struggle. While this may make some of the older guard nervous, one would do well to recall the worlds of Ralph Waldo Emerson: "Consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds." And

comrades, in the fields that we play in, consistency is the friend of the enemy and is therefore akin to death.

The Parade Must End
A call for an Anti-Authoritarian Bloc for the January 20, 2005 protest of the Presidential Inauguration in Washington D.C.

In August of 2004 the Republican National Convention came to New York City. Hundreds of thousands of people from all over the country marched peacefully and followed the law. This did not stop the police from illegally arresting people en masse while the Bush administration ignored one of the largest marches in New York City history. In January, if the police again attempt to forgo their own laws and arrest demonstrators, we will defend ourselves against this unlawful state repression. It is not enough to merely demonstrate against Bush or the war in Iraq. We must take action against the everyday war that is the system and for a new one based on mutual aid and cooperation.

We will act in support of all who want to be in D.C. and demonstrate against the system and its transgressions against freedom, whether in the Middle East or here at home. A space will be made for people to exercise their First Amendment rights whether the police allow it or not. We will not submit to illegal arrests, unlawful searches, or checkpoints.

Four years ago, hundreds of us opened the parade route to those who believe no one should be forced to submit to searches by the Secret Service. While Bush supporters in their fur coats and cowboy hats waved their American flags, we burned ours and hoisted the black flag high above them all. The only way we can lose is if we do nothing. Our greatest enemy is our own fear.

Meet at 12:30 p.m. in Logan Circle. Look for black flags and a large banner and don't forget to bring your own!

Washington, D.C. is our chance to voice our opposition to the old corrupt order, and more importantly, to voice our support for a new one without rulers.

Look for updates as the time approaches.

New York Counter Inaugural Cluster

Endorsers: (to endorse, email j20AAbloc@lycos.com) · D.C. Anarchist Resistance · Baltimore Anarchist Union · New York Anti-Racist Action · The Infoshop.org Collective · The RNCNotWelcome.org Collective · The New York City R.A.T. · The Hubbub Collective · The North Carolina Youth Liberation Front · Downward Mobility · Lost Film Fest · Evil Twin Booking · TJS Underground Network

CALL FOR A MILITANT ANTI-FASCIST CONTINGENT AT THE COUNTER-INAUGURATION

Mobtown ARA

On January 20th, 2005 as the Emperor is re-crowned four days of militant anti-fascist action will commence. Blinded by militaristic nationalism and sedated by the opiate of religious fundamentalism, the people of this country have allowed the fascist ideology of neo-conservatism and their culture of fear to seize the day.

We say no longer.

On inauguration day the forces of the far right, from anti-choice fundamentalists to plutocratic capitalists to racist war mongers, will stand in awe to witness the coronation of their leader. We cannot allow the enemies of freedom to have the day without a challenge from those who oppose fascism, authoritarianism, and capitalism. We as anti-fascists must defend liberty in the streets in an autonomous, militant, anti-fascist contingent of the counter-inaugural demonstrations.

We will tell Bush and his supporters that we reject his authority and agenda while we prepare to confront the shock troops of fundamentalism, fascism, and patriarchy today, through their anti-choice march on January 24th and beyond, until victory or death.

Meet in Malcolm X Park for the D.C. Anti-War Network (DAWN) rally (starts at 9 a.m.). Look for the red and black flags!! March leaves at 11:15 a.m.!!

Mobtown Anti-Racist Action (ARA)
mobtownara@hotmail.com

Endorsers:
Nemesis Anarchist Collective (Baltimore NEFAC Supporter), Stelton Anarchist Collective (Jersey NEFAC), Mid-Atlantic ARA Network: Philadelphia ARA, Philly RASH, Philly SPAR, New Jersey ARA, North Jersey ARA, New Paltz ARA, Baltimore Anarchist Union

THEY HAD BETTER BE PRAYING! CALL FOR AN ANTI-FUNDAMENTALIST BLOC AT THE COUNTER-INAUGURATION, JAN 20

This call to action was rescinded before it was made widely available to the public. Organizers claimed that it failed to generate positive movement interest.

Since the Reagan era, the Christian Right has described its strategy as one of cultural war. For too much of that time, the anti-authoritarian movement has ignored this front. We have been content to struggle against the religious right in the context of single issues-reproductive freedom, women's rights, free speech-without recognizing that the gains of fundamentalism in any sphere are inevitably our losses. The irrational cults of moralism and authority promoted by religious programming is the false consciousness that leads working-class people to reject their own freedom and fear their potential autonomy.

The marriage of Christian fundamentalism and neo-conservatism has provided U.S. imperialism with a massive propaganda machine to sell its profit wars to a population which otherwise would be deeply skeptical of its government's motives. And in the third world, the marriage of Islamic fundamentalism and anti-imperialism (promoted and engineered by those same neo-conservatives) has stifled the threat of any liberatory alternatives to capitalism, leaving in their place only quasi-fascist movements that promise even more repressive societies than the current U.S. model. Meanwhile closer to home, "marriage" itself has become the watchword by which the right-wing vows to destroy any power and autonomy the women's and gay movements have made over the past generation.

We see the success of the right wing's "cultural war" in the powerlessness of the liberal left. After running a failed campaign whose only selling points were the attempt to present themselves as more militaristic and better able to use white supremacist code words than the Republicans, the Kerry camp pathetically folded their tails between their legs and quit. And after the elections, the only analysis Democratic Party strategists could make is that they needed to add more religion to their platform.

The liberals can't fight this battle, and without winning this battle they will keep losing all their other programs. And while we have no desire or intention of being shock troops for the liberals, we as anarchists need to step up for the sake of our culture and our future. While we were fighting the neo-liberal trade agreements, the religious right was building a power base strong enough to just sweep them aside. While we were fighting rear-guard battles to crush petty fascist threats, a larger and more sophisticated fascist movement was coalescing in front of us.

The anarchist movement has seen real growth and activity since Seattle. We have moved from a marginal subculture of malcontents and intellectuals to something of a community that can pose real challenges organizing in neighborhoods and workplaces, that can defend our cultural space, and can grow from criticism from and dialog with other movements. We can't afford to give up these efforts. At the same time, we need to coordinate ourselves for an organized attack on the forces of religious fundamentalism. Lets open up a new front in the culture wars. We are calling for an anti-fundamentalist bloc to take actions during Bush's send term inauguration to make visible our commitment to this fight. We call on the movement to begin discussing this idea in collectives and affinity groups, to sign on and endorse this call with us, and to begin organizing ourselves for effective resistance—on J20 and beyond.

For a World Without God or Masters!

Report from Anti-Authoritarian Bloc at Inauguration Protests in DC
A Group of Activists From West Michigan

The Anti-Authoritarian Bloc assembled as a part of the "anarchist convergence" at Logan Circle north of the route of the inaugural parade. After waiting for numbers to increase, a Black Bloc of approximately 300 led a larger anarchist march down 13th St towards the route of the parade. The noisy march chanted "No more presidents," "What's the solution? People's revolution," and other chants as they followed behind a large banner painted with the slogan "Right Wing Scum, Your Time has Come." As the march progressed along 13th, a few affinity groups within the Bloc pulled out shields of various kinds and picked up debris along the road in order to aid in the coming push through the security checkpoints blocking the inaugural parade route. The call for the Black Bloc was published under the banner "The Parade Must End" and the group was prepared to confront the police who would inevitably be blocking the parade route.

After evading the police for about half an hour, police finally moved in at 7th and D just as the Bloc was about to join up with the larger rally and push towards the parade route. Police used pepper spray and batons to prevent the anarchist march from joining up with a larger group of protestors, estimated by the corporate and independent media to be at least 10,000. As the police attacked members of the Bloc through snowballs and various pieces of debris at the police, who in turn took the leading banner and used the PVC piping holding it together to beat back protestors who surged forward after the initial confrontation. Participants from Michigan reported being hit by PVC piping and pepper spray as the bloc retreated down 7th St with police in pursuit.

Following the dispersal of the first anti-authoritarian bloc, a re-convergence was called for at 2:30 p.m. near the parade route. The Bloc, considerably smaller than the first, was almost immediately followed by police. Some members pulled debris into the streets to block police vehicles and small barricades were created using materials pulled from construction sites. As the Bloc approached 13th and Pennsylvania a large number of riot and mounted police appeared, but quickly backed off. Pausing near the intersection of 12th and E the group held a small street party as they waited for numbers to increase. After about five minutes, the group march towards the security checkpoint at 13th and Pennsylvania and after counting down from 10, rushed towards it in an attempt to push towards the parade route. Despite significantly rocking the fences, the charge was pushed back by a large amount of pepper spray. Following the charge riot cops were brought out to reinforce the barricade and protestors moved to another area closer to the parade route where a small attempt was made to knock over security fencing and flags were burned. The flag burning gained considerable amount of

media attention and the flames and noise caused a large number of parade spectators in the bleachers to turn their heads and watch the group. Following this bloc there was a 5:00 p.m. re-convergence at Dupont Circle, but the march was poorly organized and followed by a significant police presence.

Tactically speaking, the two blocs utilized during the afternoon were of limited success as they failed when it came to stopping the parade or opening the security check points. The Bloc lacked the coordination and cohesion necessary to "crash the gates," however; the Anti-Authoritarian Bloc did manage to shut down two security checkpoints denying access to hundreds of Republican parade-goers.

A later, seemingly more coordinated Black Bloc, marching under the banner "Bring the War Home" took the streets around 11:30 p.m. As fireworks went off at 11:40 p.m. a banner was dropped from the roof of a Starbucks that read "From Iraq to D.C., with War Comes Resistance!" at which point the Bloc smashed windows at a Citibank, Riggs Bank, Taco Bell, and KFC, all of which were strate- gically selected based on their respective human rights abuses. According to independent reporting, this bloc was more coordinated and disruptive than the earlier blocs—resulting in $15,000 in damage to corporate property. However, where arrests were limited to a few targeted arrests by undercover officers earlier in the day, at least 78 people were arrested in the evening bloc.

The Kids Are Alright
Report from Inauguration Protests
By The New York Counter Inaugural Cluster

The inauguration of 2005 was a $40 million spectacle that paid for incredible security measures such as 10-foot riot fences and well-fortified checkpoints, not to mention thousands of police officers from across the country. Despite these measures, an anarchist march several hundred strong marched in the streets without a permit, broke through police lines, made it to the fence at the parade route, and made successive charges nearly making it on. This is an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses, what was done right and what mistakes were made. We are from the New York Counter Inaugural Cluster who made the call for this march and organized some of the infrastructure for it.

We had constructed a reinforced banner that had an exoskeleton of PVC pipe with a banner stretched onto it. It was 5'3" high by 20' long. The center of the banner had a flaming skull with monkey wrench crossbones and circle-A eyes. The text read, "Right Wing Scum Your Time Has Come." It was modified so it hinged in the middle to form a 45 degree wedge for more leverage. It's size made it impossible for the police to see what was behind it (except lots and lots of boots) and it gave courage to us at the

front who couldn't always see what was in front of us. We all thought it was pretty bad-ass and intimidating as fuck.

In addition to the banner, we also had a communications network set up to not only filter the publicly released text-messages to those relevant to our march, but also to be in the streets keying us in to weak checkpoints, low-policed streets, etc. With these two components and the strength of hundreds of militants, we figured the possibility of forcing access to the parade route could be quite real and discussed what could be done after we were on it.

The day did not begin without problems. Our banner was transported and ready in plenty of time for the 12:30 p.m. assembly time. We figured we would bring the banner to the meeting point at Logan Circle at 12:45 and leave at 1 p.m. (the original meeting place was Franklin Square, but upon learning that this square was to be a police staging ground, D.C. Anarchist Resistance changed the location to Logan Circle). A few minutes before 12:30, we received a call saying that the march was beginning. We had to run with the banner to catch up to those who had begun to lead the crowd out of Logan Circle. We caught up to the march more than a block south of Logan Circle, missing a crucial first turn where we would have secured something that could have challenged the fences between us and Pennsylvania Ave. This early departure also left many behind, including our marching band-the Rude Mechanical Orchestra, who were on time or slightly late for the meeting time. A friend of ours reported that at 12:45, he met up with at least 40 anarchists back at Logan Circle who were wondering where the march was. Despite these early shortcomings, we were marching forcefully south, 5-700 strong chanting, "What's the Reaction? Direct Action!"

Our comms informed us how to snake through the streets to avoid impassable barriers. At one point a line of motorcycle cops impeded our way. As the banner approached, menacing as it was, they backed off and we pushed through. As we neared the parade route, there was a slight delay in deciding upon a direction at one intersection. Then we finally got a report there was a weak point to the west, so we should turn right. As our comms shouted "Right!," others in the bloc shouted "Left!" drowning out our people and causing this turn which had disastrous effects. After snaking further toward the parade route, we came to D and 7th Sts., where a dense crowd of people street-wide were waiting to get through a checkpoint. We were a block from the parade route and we at the front had no idea if these were republicans or liberals (we later learned it was a mix of both). At any rate, it was no use trying to force through them. We tried to cut across the corner to confront the checkpoint, but a line of police attacked, ripping and stepping through the fabric of the banner, beating upon the PVC until it broke, and then in the ultimate irony, picked up the pieces of the banner itself and began beating us with it.

We reassembled quickly, counted-down from ten, and made another charge. This was met with much pepper spray. By this time, reinforcements had arrived and we were forced to retreat north and west. Without the banner and somewhat dispersed, we resigned to reconvening at a previously decided time and place.

At 7th and H, we met with about 100 other anarchists who were ready for another action. The time was shortly before 2:30. There was an impromptu spokescouncil happening and riot police were starting to appear from the west. As a crowd, we took the streets and started heading south. We snaked back down to a checkpoint, this time at E St. and 13th Sts. At this checkpoint we were at first repelled by undercovers who were threatening violence. We counted down from 20, and at zero, charged the fence. It did not budge and we received a incredible blast of pepper spray. Shortly thereafter, we regrouped on the other side of the checkpoint, forced an opening in the fence and received even more of the pepper spray that most of us tasted that day. By this time, the motorcade had made its way to the capitol and further actions did not manifest until late into the evening. We had made our presence known, but surely things could have gone better.

One of the main problems leading up to the action was that there were two calls for militant marches on that day. We were in contact with people in the D.C. area and we were told that a call for an Anti-Fundamentalist Bloc (read Black Bloc) was going to be made by the Baltimore Anarchist Union one week after the D.C. general call to action for the inauguration. Two weeks later, this call was retracted before it was ever publicly released due to "lack of interest." Already preparing for the inaugural actions, we decided it was upon us to write acall for an Anti-Authoritarian Bloc. After drafting it, we sought endorsements, but received few responses. Six days before the inauguration, a call for an "Anti-Fascist Contingent" was made by Baltimore ARA (Anti-Racist Action). This was to be a militant faction of the liberal DAWN march and was endorsed by ARA chapters up and down the east coast who never endorsed our call for the Anti-Authoritarian Bloc. This came as a total surprise to us and quite a blow that they would not try to coordinate or communicate with us in any way before the call was made. After much critique of the timing of this call and the seeming divisiveness, the authors claimed that their intention was to break away from the DAWN march to meet the Anti-Authoritarian Bloc. As events unfolded, it became clear that the authors of the Anti-Fascist contingent wanted the Anti-Authoritarian march to forego our objective of gaining access to the parade route and instead provide support and a diversion for an action they had planned.

The late call for a militant march before ours, the departure of the march before people were assembled and we were there, the shouting of "Left!" by unknowns at the front (the weak point we were trying to exploit was to the west, their target to the east), and the attempted hijacking of the reconvergence to support their Plan B showed that whether purposely or not, the Baltimore crew was undermining the coordinated plans of New York City and D.C. anarchists and putting everyone in the streets at unnecessary risk to make their own actions feasible (which never materialized). Our purpose here is not to shit-talk other activists or blame others for our shortcomings, but to draw attention to a pattern that we think is counter to anarchist process and principles. A public call was made for one objective—to make it on the parade route. Everyone there, it would be assumed, was there to support that objective and we

took a lot of the responsibility to provide the infrastructure and materials to make it plausible. It was very frustrating to have so much in place that either did not get used, or was not exploited to its fullest. It will never be known if we would have made it on the route if we had re-reinforced our banner on the way and acted on information from our comms to the Achilles Heel of our homeland's security, but it couldn't have been less effective than our actions that afternoon.

For tactics, we think the reinforced banner and our comms network were important facets to the action. Though the banner did not last long against police violence, it did get us that far without much impediment. A stronger banner could be made out of different material such as insulation boards, and we could have used better fasteners than plastic zip ties, which we used because they were quicker and thought they would last. As for comms, we would like to have more people in the Bloc who were empowered to interpret information from comms and determine direction. We at the front could have also been more patient and held our position since we were for the most part in no immediate threat. Instead, we always felt compelled to keep moving. Either of these precautions could have prevented marching toward the Navy Memorial, which was taken by the anarchist march last inauguration and was the most heavily fortified area this time around. Finally, when meeting resistance from the police, we found that the use of countdowns are very effective for our morale at mass actions. When we made our charges, we would count down from 10 or 20 depending on the situation. This had an incredible effect of steeling our courage and banding us all together and getting us ready for what we all knew we were going to do. When all we could hear is people shouting, "4, 3, 2, 1," we felt nothing could stop us. And one day, they won't be able to.

While we never met our objective of accessing the parade route, we are not dissatisfied with our show as a vibrant, growing militant anarchist movement. In an environment of domestic war and increasing repression of dissent, we came and confronted the power of the state and dared to act for what we dream. This was the first successful unpermitted mass action since 9/11 reinvigorating a culture of direct action and moving away from liberal coalitions that are content with sign-waving in pig-pens. Despite the gallons of pepper spray and repressive tactics of the state, most participants came away from the action feeling positive about it. We also solidified connections within our cluster and between groups from other states strengthening all our resolve to bring this system down. We proved to ourselves that the state is not all powerful and we have the power to challenge it. Finally, the actions later that night showed that militants here will not be intimidated and that we are thinking clearly when we target corporations and institutions of power that drive imperialism and oppress us all. The anarchist movement is alive, kicking, and growing with every mobilization and in-between—the kids are alright.

What Happened in Adams Morgan on Jan. 20: Report Back
By The Circle A Brigade

A Brief Report

After a long and somewhat defeating day in the streets at Bush's inauguration, there was a small but joyful sense of victory late on Thursday, Jan. 20th, when approximately 200-300 people took to the streets in an energetic torch-lit march through the Adams Morgan neighborhood of northwest Washington, D.C. The march of punk rockers, anarchists, and passersby who joined them, was headed to the nearby Constitutional Inaugural Ball being held at the Washington Hilton on Connecticut Ave. where Bush had made an appearance earlier that evening.

The march followed the Not My President: Punk Rock Counter-Inaugural Ball—a benefit show with the bands Anti-Flag, Q and Not U, 1905 and Del Cielo. The show featured speakers from Iraq Veterans Against the War; a group of soldiers who have returned from Iraq and are working to end the occupation, as well as Empower D.C., whom the show was a benefit for. Empower D.C. is a grassroots organizing project whose mission is to enhance and improve the self- advocacy of low income and working people in D.C. to bring about sustained improvement in their quality of life. The show was also a fundraiser for the legal and street medic support effort for protests against the inauguration.

The march started down Columbia Road towards 18th Street, loud, spirited and charged with no police presence for the first 10-15 minutes. Participants led chants, banged on drums, waved black flags and danced in the streets. While chanting "Iraq is not Alone-Bring the War Home" and other similar sentiments, rocks and other projectiles were sent through the windows of multinational corporations including Citibank, Riggs Bank, KFC, McDonalds, and a police substation. One police cruiser tailing the march also had a brick break its windshield. Clearly, the property destruction was done in protest of businesses and institutions responsible for exploitation and oppression and as a statement against the ensuing police repression. The *Washington Post* and police estimate $15,000 of property damage was done to corporate and police property.

As the march passed a Starbucks at the corner of 18th and Columbia, a large banner was dropped from the building reading, "From D.C. to Iraq, With Occupation Comes Resistance," accompanied by the sound of firecrackers. Others spray-painted slogans and barricaded streets with newspaper boxes and dumpsters. A worker at a local Ethiopian restaurant raised his fist and shouted "Down with Bush! We have to shut this city down!" as the bank windows shattered and dumpsters were pulled into the street. As the march drew closer to the Hilton Hotel, a large contingent of riot cops had shown up. Police in full riot gear chased down protestors, helicopters shone spotlights on the ground below, and unmarked police cars wheeled around corners at breakneck

speeds. Some people had already left the march in order to not put themselves at risk of arrest and police brutality, others panicked and the majority of the march escaped through alleys or left quickly down the sidewalk. There were some scuffles, in which the police used pepper spray to gain the upper hand. One person was viciously attacked by several police officers while sitting on the curb talking to friends after the march was split up. He was sent to the hospital with a broken nose. And while all this was going on, parties at the convention center began to break up, limousines waiting curbside, tuxedoes and cocktail dresses waltzing through the night, full and happy.

Although the majority of the march escaped repression around 70 people were trapped in one or two alleys by police, they were arrested and forced to kneel handcuffed in the snow in below freezing temperatures for 2 hours, being told by police that "this is their punishment." There are also reports of people being pepper-sprayed while handcuffed. Everyone was charged with parading without a permit and a few minors were charged with breaking curfew, as well as one or two people who were handed additional trumped up charges. Everyone was released by the following afternoon. The J20 Legal collective and other activists worked through the night to support those arrested and will continue to support those still dealing with charges.

What Was Accomplished?

For many, the report above of the march and all that transpired along with it will speak for itself as a success. Many will draw their own varying positive and negative experiences from what went down. Each experience is valid and circumstantial. Personally, we are inspired by what we see as a positive, visible resistance to empire on the night of the Inauguration of one of the most hated U.S. presidents in history.

In a city fortified with thousands of police, federal agents and National Guard to suppress any protest to the Inauguration, hundreds marched freely and demonstrated with autonomy and self-determination as they were moved to do. We caused our enemies inconvenience, cost them money and otherwise interfered with their misdeeds. We created a much-needed spark, at least among ourselves, one of the many needed to light the fire burning in our hearts for a better world. Hundreds were empowered to act and enjoyed the liberating experience of taking on the powers that be. Through their heavy handed and brutal tactics the police also helped to further reveal the capitalist state for what it is. Many gained the experience of learning how to act and apply power in anti-authoritarian masses, an experience that will strengthen our movement and effectiveness in the long run.

We were able to communicate with "the world" through mass media because of the coverage the march drew, presumably as a result of the more militant tactics that some employed. Our messages quoted from banners and chants in the press as well as the news of our presence alone provides a starting point for those whose interests were sparked by the march. In the heat of the action, we communicated with locals about the issues and received enthusiastic support both from those who joined and those who

cheered us on from sidewalks, automobiles, and storefronts. We showed solidarity with those abroad who resist daily in very concrete ways, including with many who were long ago forced to escalate their tactics and are patiently wondering when people in the U.S. will rise up with them. We showed solidarity with those struggling against oppression here, by refusing to be silent, and by showing a presence in the streets.

What Went Wrong?

The stated goal of the march was to create a festive and energetic atmosphere that would give people an empowering and positive protest experience. Those intentions were made clear from the stage and in the show's program about what kind of protest was envisioned to take place.

The march did go differently than the show organizers, the bands, and others involved had envisioned. Things ended in a more confrontational way than was planned, and the march did not reach it's destination. However, what ensued resulted largely from the determination of the participants, who acted as they saw fit. Many problems can arise if there are differences in goals in a situation like this. During the march, no one seemed to have any objections to the actions taking place around them. From talking to other participants and organizers, it seems that most people are comfortable with the direction things took, even though the original intentions differed.

In situations like this it is important that unnecessary heat is not brought down on people who are not comfortable with certain risks. It's also important that people are not intentionally misled into a situation that is different from what they are told they're getting into. Fortunately, it was very easy to tell when the tone of the march changed, a full five or more minutes before the police arrived, and at least ten minutes before any arrests were made. People had a large window of opportunity to leave the area if they were not comfortable with the escalation in tactics and consequently increased risk of confrontation with the police. Within this time between the escalation and the arrival of the police, many who were not comfortable with what was going on took the opportunity to leave; we hope that no one who was uncomfortable with the situation continued to participate. Those who were arrested were released quickly with minimal charges—most were able to post and forfeit and be done with the matter immediately, without the trouble of a court case and without a conviction on their records. Overall, we hope that as certain protesters seized the moment to carry out more risky actions they thought about the comfort level of those around them and hope that everyone will analyze and learn from their experience in the march and the critiques of it.

Backlash And An Anarchist Response

Already some backlash from the march has surfaced. Criticism has emerged publicly from City Officials such as Jim Graham, a local city-council member, and Metropolitan Police Chief Charles Ramsey. In addition there has also been marginal criticism from

local activists including "self-described anarchists." This internal critique has mainly taken shape on posts to Indymedia websites, email lists and the online journals of local activists, as well as in conversation. It's really important for there to be dialog and critique of tactics and actions like this, but hiding behind the impunity of the internet is not a productive means of contributing to dialog. Tokenizing the neighborhood and disempowering the majority of those involved while scapegoating a handful of individuals has been central to this marginal but disturbing criticism.

As D.C. residents and organizers whose politics are rooted in an opposition to both capitalism, the state and all forms of domination, and as revolutionary anarchists who believe in a diversity of tactics and a commitment to confrontational and direct action as well as community building, we have found much of this criticism off base. It is important to us to clearly respond to some of the more troubling statements that we've heard in response to Thursday's march—some of it we've already touched on in our statements above.

Criticism From The State

In the *Washington Post*, D.C. Council member Jim Graham (D-Ward 1) criticized protesters for damaging property in "an area of town that is largely liberal and diverse." He went on to say, "Adams Morgan is not associated with the Republican Party," he said. "We are not the home of George W. Bush."

Over recent years, Adams Morgan has increasingly come under attack by gentrification. Longtime residents have been forced out because they can't afford property tax or rent increases, largely due to upscale development projects occurring all over NW, encouraged and brokered by Graham and other local politicians. Besides the remaining poor and working class people who are barely holding on to their homes and businesses, the rich have largely occupied the neighborhood. The corporations that were attacked in Adams Morgan are multi-nationals that are there for the sole purpose of reaping as much profit as they can, and have no interest in the well being of the neighborhood. If you veer off 18th Street or Columbia Road, you will find the homes of the middle to upper class and extremely wealthy, with price tags of millions of dollars.

If you follow Kalorama Rd. just barely over the Adams Morgan border, you won't find the home of George W. Bush, but you will find that of war criminal Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. A little further down Connecticut Avenue, you'll find the Washington Hilton, which was host to one of the Republican Parties decadent balls that night—hence its choice as the original destination of the march. It's no secret that many of those attending the balls also went out to nearby posh hot spots in Adams Morgan for drinks and dancing. These businesses—while some are independently owned—cater to people with disposable income and leisure lifestyles. The residents of Adams Morgan who make the area diverse have little access, other than as service employees, to these businesses which thrive on the excesses of capitalism. Marching through this area with an anti-capitalist presence was a direct affront to the wealthy inauguration—

celebrators who like to keep their opposition out of sight and out of mind. It's also worth noting that no privately owned businesses were targeted by participants in the march.

The diversity that does exist in Adams Morgan, made up of the people who live and work there—just means all the more that it is impossible to categorize or generalize how or even if residents are responding to the march.

Police Chief Charles H. Ramsey also told the *Post*: "It is just ridiculous how some people conducted themselves, It's not a reflection on all demonstrators. But a hard-core group came to town and caused damage to property...You can't let them destroy the city. Nobody has a right to do that. They are just thugs and hoodlums who did that..."

First off, let's make it clear that it's the Metropolitan Police Department that flew in hardcore thugs and hoodlums from out of town. Police officers from New Jersey, Oregon, Ohio, and a host of other cities came to D.C. to provide "security" at the inauguration. Fully equipped with both lethal and "non-lethal" weapons, full body armor, and the impunity to use as much force as they please. It's pure speculation on whether march participants were local or from out of town, one could safely assume that it was a mix of both but it's on record that the police force on Thursday was largely composed of out of town officers. Furthermore, it is the role of the state to discredit and dismiss all forms of credible resistance in this fashion because they know the dangers posed by strategic, confrontational resistance.

While this may be a question for another article, it is worth challenging the idea of what can "destroy a city." We would argue that massive displacement of immigrants, people of color and working families, under-funding of public services while massively funding tourist-geared entertainment projects (i.e. new convention center, baseball stadium) and generally putting the whims of the elite before the majority of the population of the District is destroying the city. The protest in Adams Morgan, for some participants and no doubt on-lookers, was as much a challenge to these priorities as it was to the Bush government.

Criticism From The Movement

This criticism from City Officials is pretty predictable. Perhaps more troubling is that of other activists including one who uttered, in response to the quote above, "I'll have to agree with Ramsey on this one." Though limited and marginal in comparison to the support surrounding the event, comments like these are troubling and need to be addressed—not to stifle disagreement or critique within the movement but to at least create more understanding and respect. Dialogue and communication are key. We hope that this article can contribute to that and bring us closer to a point where people with divergent views on these issues can talk and listen with mutual respect-be that through community forums or just talking one-on-one.

One criticism going around was with the march occurring on a work night in the neighborhood that it did. This is probably one of the weaker arguments, and sounds simply paternal. Let's entertain the argument for a second; Adams Morgan is a center of nightlife in D.C., heavier on the weekends for sure, but lively on "work nights" as well. Thousands of people storm Adams Morgan, piss drunk and totally obnoxious multiple nights a week creating a much bigger disruption than this brief protest did. A ten-minute mobile march, never disrupting a block for more than a minute, can't in actuality have been all that disruptive, and is nothing compared to the nightly commotion around 18th Street. The spots where the police busted the march and made arrests were in the alleys of primarily wealthy homes around Belmont Street and between 18th and Columbia Road behind businesses—this can hardly be described as disrupting the working class on a "work night."

Other criticisms declared that the march was simply "white boys" abusing their privilege doing things others of less privilege would not be able to get away with. It is not right to project that the whole of the march on Thursday was white or male. These kinds of assumptions are disempowering and disrespectful to the non-white and/or non-male people that participated and fully believe in and support what happened and who acted of their own accord. It is another example of white people ignoring and marginalizing the voices and actions of all others to strengthen their own position. The same goes for projecting that all or most non-white people oppose what happened on Thursday. It's true that the majority of people in the march were white but the fact that they have relative privilege can be looked at as a reason they should take more risks in fighting to tear down inequality and oppression.

Blaming or crediting any one individual or group falls into a trap set by the police and other authorities who are looking to pin responsibility onto a select few and therefore claim success in finding the culprits and carrying out "justice." The powers that be want us to believe their authoritarian ideas. They want us to believe that we cannot all be equally responsible for our own actions, that we need leaders (preferably white and male) because we are not smart enough to make decisions for ourselves. We know this is not the case. The organizers of the march merely provided a place and time that brought people together. Participants took it from there, each deciding for themselves what their acts of resistance would look like.

A few have argued against the breaking of a window at the Latino Police Liaison Unit Sub-Station at 18th and Columbia Road because it was a concession won by the "Latino Community" after the 1991 Mt. Pleasant Riots.

First, it is wrong to assume that the concession to create the Latino Liaison Unit or support for it speaks for the "Latino Community" at large. Within any large grouping of people there are as many viewpoints and stances as there are people. To imply that one voice, particularly one that has negotiating power with City officials and police to win such a concession, represents the whole community is a dangerous generalization that threatens to negate the voices of those with less official political power. Support for a Latino Liaison Unit doesn't imply complete support of the Police Department

and doesn't negate opposition to their racist, murderous presence in almost every neighborhood in every city from here to Baghdad. Though the MPD might be better off and more humane with this unit, the Latino Liaison unit is still just another division of a corrupt police department whose sole purpose is to enforce the will of the state on the people, with that enforcing poverty, oppression and racism.

A few have proposed that Positive Force D.C., who organized the show that the march followed, issue an apology to the "Latino Community" for the march occurring in Adams Morgan. This idea is patronizing and paints the "Latino Community" as one solid entity, projecting one response onto everyone of that demographic. When in reality it is like any other community, diverse and contradictory. Given that, even if there is anything to apologize for, who exactly would one apologize to? We also have to wonder why it is only the Latino community that supposedly needs apologizing to. Why not apologize to African American communities or African immigrant communities in Adams Morgan?

In Defense Of Confrontational Resistance

Many arguments can be made for the property destruction that occurred on Thursday night. Much of this issue is a matter of individual tactical and political leanings: whether you oppose the systems at the root of oppression and want to eradicate them, or simply want to decrease oppression with minor reforms. For those who reject all forms and systems of domination, we must recognize the necessity of bold and militant actions against capitalism and the state, especially at such a critical juncture within this culture of occupation; war against people and ecosystems raging across the planet.

The state cannot be wished away. If we are to oppose the corporate domination of the world and the wholesale slaughter of life on earth we must understand the need for a militant and confrontational movement against the power structure. This is not to say that everyone needs to take up militant tactics, but we need to cultivate a respect for a diversity of tactics and a respect for those who engage in more militant tactics, no matter how controversial. We need to regard tactics as tools, and be open to flexibility and to utilizing different tools at different times. We need to develop a sense of urgency-these are urgent times. We need to build a revolutionary movement and a culture of resistance.

The corporations that were targeted as well as the police are occupying forces in neighborhoods from Adams Morgan to Buenos Aires. They are not upstanding community institutions. They are responsible for the destruction of the environment, the brutal exploitation of both human and non-human animals, and of perpetuating and enforcing sexism, racism, and rampant inequality all over the world. In any sane, just world, such institutions would not exist. Breaking their windows is only one step—let them be broken each day, again and again by every person who desires a better world, until no ones bothers to repair them again. If we oppose these corporations, we should ask ourselves: should we permit them to exist? If we feel their existence

is destructive, then how can we allow this destruction, this injustice? Breaking their windows and thus costing them in material terms—those being the only terms they understand—is a good first step.

Many overseas believe only a strong and militant response from within this country, in conjunction with the same abroad, can really stop this empire from its invasions and occupations. This sentiment is growing here. The march was an example of this. While demonstrators in developing countries around the world have inflicted property damage on U.S. based multinationals they have looked for solidarity from anti-capitalists in the United States. Could it be that activists in the United States have been less likely to attack the symbols of capitalism because of our privileged relationship to them? When people who have relative access to or receive relative benefits from institutions like Citibank begin to attack these very institutions it sends a strong message of solidarity to other people who have no access to and receive no benefit from these institutions. It sends a possibly even stronger message to the powers that be that we are giving up this privilege—or at least that we are not afraid to give it up. That our opposition to these institutions is not merely rhetorical, it is physical.

The Need For Dialog And Critique

As anarchists, we feel we need to be constantly asking questions and considering new perspectives, not stuck or rigid in our own ideology. Critique is crucial and necessary for our growth as a movement, but our critiques must be constructive and make use of common sense. Critiques of tactics, message, and time and place are all crucial, but the arguments against these must be concrete and cannot be based on scapegoating or on speaking for others.

We offer this statement as a contribution to this dialog, in defense of our tactics, and our politics. We look forward to healthy discussion and an increase in all forms of resistance even those that differ from our chosen tactics.

Onward!

As participants we very much appreciate all the help and moral support we received from hundreds of residents, including the voluntary support of medics and the J20 legal collective and those doing similar work. We understand that the police brutality the march experienced is just a small slice of what poor people and people of color deal with everyday. We recognize this system is racist. We are dedicated to smashing racism and the system behind it. We are against the entire greedy corporate-military-police-war machine that oppresses life. We are for community empowerment, self-determination, justice and total liberation.

In Struggle and Anarchy,

The Circle A Brigade
thecircleabrigade@hotmail.com

Chapter XXXII
Organization and Tactics

A Communique On Tactics And Organization To The Black Bloc
From Within The Black Bloc.
By G-MAC, and People Within The ARA
Second Amended Edition
July 2001, from Somewhere in the Midwest

The edition which you are currently holding is the product of extensive conversations between folk from within the ARA and GMAC. Through these conversations, consensus was reached regarding certain principles of revolutionary organization. Key changes were made to the sections proposing the use of reserves, affinity groups, the tactical facilitation core, as well as minor changes throughout the document. We feel these changes make for a stronger proposal. We, of course, welcome further discussion and amendments where necessary.

Introductory Notes

The following document is presented with the intention of furthering the basic effectiveness of our movement by advocating various tactical practices that we hope will be adopted by the Black Bloc as a whole. The inspiration for this work comes from our complete love for the creative ability/potential of humankind and our uncompromising dedication to social revolution. Portions of this work tend to take on a militaristic tone. This tone should not be misconstrued as a back door justification for arbitrary hierarchical models of organizing. Rather, the reality of our militant struggle necessitates the language used in order to most accurately depict our objective circumstances and the methods we must employ in order to come closer to victory. Here it should be pointed out that under no circumstances do we advocate any organizational model that in essence is not compatible with those utilized democratically by Anarchists and revolutionary workers as practiced during the Paris Commune (1871) and the Spanish Civil War (1936-39). In order to put this work together, we reflected on our own collec-

tive experiences as well as looked to history to learn what works within an anarchistic framework and what does not.

It is our intention here to present an accurate, yet brief, analysis of the present state of the movement generally, as well as the steps we (the Black Bloc) must take in order to further the cause. Also, the below proposals are directly intended for Black Bloc incorporation only. For any across the board Anarchist adaptation of the more militant proposals (such as found in the section Preparations For Increased State Repression) would lead to the weakening of the all important above ground community organizing efforts. We view these efforts as primary to the general cause in that it is through them that the wider populace is brought over consciously to the Anarchist Left. Our struggle must be conducted at all levels.

Lastly, we encourage you to read this work and discuss it within your collective and/or with other folk within the Black Bloc anarchist community. It is our hope that such collectives and interested people connected with the Black Bloc will sign their names (not necessarily their given names) to this and implement the tactical proposals suggested below. In the likely case that the below document is partially unacceptable to our community of struggle, it is our hope that such points of contention be discussed, debated and amended as necessary in order to reach Black Bloc consensus. We here ask that the various Anarchist newspapers and periodicals open up their letter sections for this purpose.

-Anti-Racist Action, -GMAC

Our Movement Grows

During the course of the past year and a half (since the Battle of Seattle) we have been witnessing/participating in a maturity of the larger social protest movement as well as the smaller (yet growing) revolutionary Anarchist movement. This is a result of eight basic reasons:

1. The experiential emptiness of intensified neo-capitalist commodification of pseudo-reality and its necessary results of mass alienation, anxiety and Boredom.

2. The continuing failure of the present system to alleviate material deprivation (poverty) amongst certain sectors of working class and poor.

3. Overt attempts by leading neo-capitalist powers to homogenize world economy/culture through elitist centralized organizations such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and World Trade Organization has triggered a populist backlash and motivated the usually dormant trade unions.

4. The reconciliation of previously splintered counterculture (urban "punk," rural "hippy," etc.) has allowed for a wider base from which shifts in popular social consciousness are disseminating.

5. Increased communications abilities throughout the populace have resulted in organizational/mobilization advances amongst the social protest and revolutionary Anarchist movements.

6. Experience gained by organizations throughout the last decade has vastly increased the practical ability of the movement as a whole.

7. The generational maturity of the children of the 60s and 70s has now come to full fruition. This is a fact that should not be overlooked as we intend to build on and further destroy where our mothers and fathers left off.

And finally,

8. Police repression as experienced throughout the United States and Canada during the course of this last year and a half has had the result of radicalizing 10,000s of previously Liberal demonstrators from one coast to the other and back.

Anarchism and the Broader Movement

While the broader movement has affected some important practical and consciousness building victories, it is still too malleable and indecisive to put an uncritical trust in its visual organizations (as encapsulated in the Direct Action Network).

As revolutionary Anarchists we must continue to support and encourage its participatory and directly democratic currents while steering it away from its unconscious tendencies towards spectacular abstraction and Liberal capitulation. We must continue to do this through the dissemination of revolutionary Anarchist theory as well as by DIRECT example, both of the kind on the streets, in community organizing efforts and in regards to our lifestyles. This must continue to be a priority both at demonstrations as well as within the particularities of our local communities.

In this capacity we must be vigilant not to limit our dialectical interactions with the movement itself. In a word, we must continue to reach out to the yet included masses. For it is only through their direct participation that the present system of oppression will be forever disintegrated and thrown into the wastebasket of history.

The Development of the Movement

For all of the above reasons, this past year and a half has been marked as a progressive stepping-stone towards the continuing resurgence of the revolutionary Anarchist movement. This in spite of certain painful setbacks such as the demise of the Love and Rage organization. The objective historical situation, as well as our newfound practical abilities, has resulted in us moving two steps forward for every step back. However, before we become full of conceit, let it be said that we have many, many dangerous steps to traverse before we reach the end of this epic.

Our Local Communities

It is in our specific communities that we (Black Bloc and Anarchists generally) are able to push the evolutionary Anarchist movement forward through diligent and relevant community organizing throughout the ranks of the disenfranchised.

Here we must continue to do this by forming workers' cooperatives, community centers, newspapers, the creation of Anarchist art as well as by direct political action when ever possible. At the large demonstrations we are able to push our movement forward by the organizing and subsequent action of our Black Bloc.

At Demonstrations

It is by virtue of the uncompromising militancy of this (our) Bloc that Liberal demonstrations are transformed into insurrectionary happenings. By physically defending ourselves against State (police) attacks, we add a serious dimension to an otherwise timid movement. By effectively defending non-violent protesters against the assaults of the police (such as at the A16 action in DC) we demonstrate the extra-symbolic power of the people while increasing the relative effectiveness of the overall action. By attacking and destroying Capitalist private property (such as in the Battle of Seattle) we go beyond rhetoric and actually inflict real material damage upon the urban out-posts of the oppressive and totally uninteresting commodified empire of the new Capitalists. By our method we transform indecisiveness and restraint into REAL action.

Those upper middle class Pacifists who clamor that we are wrong by virtue of our demonstrated principles should be reminded that the only legitimate goal of mass demonstrations is to effect relevant social and revolutionary change for the benefit of the working class, poor, and declassed peoples. It is not, nor never should ever be, to be arrested and brutally beaten for the sake of some vain association with Gandhi or Martin Luther King Jr. Furthermore, let us all reflect upon the fact that India today is presently in shambles due to continued Capitalist exploitation, and the American blacks are still treated as second-class citizens by the State apparatus and plutocracy alike. These are travesties that only a genuine and victorious international revolutionary Anarchist movement, utilizing both violent and non-violent methods, will be able to fully rectify.

It is in this very real context that we fight. We will not, nor should we, compromise our hatred or love any more then we will compromise our goal of complete social revolution, Anarchy, and the dream of all of humanity unshackled from the chains which are both seen and unseen.

We make no apologies

The Necessity Of Increasing Our Tactical Abilities

However, the forces of the State (specifically the FBI and police) have been studying us for some time. Hence it is absolutely necessary that we further develop our tactical understanding and practical street abilities if we are to maintain, in fact increase, our militant capabilities.

In this regard there are some basic steps that we must take in order to meet this challenge:

1. Increased organization of street fighting force
2. Regular physical training in between actions
3. Facilitation of pre-emptive strikes
4. Preparation for eventuality of intensified State oppression and the shifting of the movement of social protest into that of direct social revolution
5. Increased internal social and political education between actions and development of theory

At the present time, the mobilization of our forces is done in such haphazard manner that our ability to combat well-trained and disciplined State forces is limited. In fact it is only by virtue of our revolutionary dedication and iron constitutions that we have been able to combat these forces with the level of relative success that we thus far have. They (the forces of the State) fight out of hatred of diversity and free expression and for a paycheck. We fight out of hatred of oppression and love, and simply because it is the just thing to do.

However, as the agents of the State modify their present tactics, based on their direct experiences and vast intelligence reports from Seattle to Quebec City, they can be expected to achieve a further level of effective superiority over us in the near future. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary that we begin to reorganize ourselves in such a way as to again bring certain advantages to our side.

Increased Organization Of Street Fighting Force: *The Formation Of An Elected Tactical Facilitation Core*

Our experiences over the course of the last year and a half have taught us a lot regarding the actual and potential effectiveness of Black Blocs during large demonstrations. A16 demonstrated the effectiveness of a large Bloc when used in tight conjunction with non-violent, direct action oriented contingents. It showed us how the combined tactics of physical self defense (from the Bloc) and non-violent lockdowns can, at this historical juncture, result in effective occupation of large sections of the city-scape. J20 showed how a tightly knit Bloc, lined with defensive banners around its perimeters,

can help foster confidence and act as a more substantial deterrent to targeted police arrests. A20 showed how even a relatively small Bloc (as on Saturday, the 21st) can become a substantial fighting force when the physical and mental commitment is there. However, our experiences have also illustrated certain shortcomings that we thus far are yet to overcome. Specifically our lack of a democratic tactical command structure has hindered our abilities to act with more punctuating speed and tactical ferociousness. In certain circumstances this failure has resulted in us becoming bogged down in indecisiveness (specifically regarding movement), and hence has put us in danger as well as led to arrests (i.e. on the Monday of the A16 action). Therefore, we contend that we need to develop a democratic tactical command structure that heightens our mobility while simultaneously not compromising our Anarchist principles.

In regard to this, we propose that the present use of elected affinity group spokespeople be expanded to that of acute tactical facilitator (a-tacs). The role of this person should be to help facilitate the organized movement of their immediate section as recommended by the general tactical facilitation core (*to be discussed below). In addition, each affinity group should also elect an alternate in case the first is incapacitated due to injury or arrest.

Following the general meeting of the Black Bloc, at which the broad plans for the day's action should have already been discussed, debated and then decided upon based on consensus, all such elected a-tacs should meet in private (such privacy here is recommended as a security precaution). At this meeting a general tactical facilitation core (g-tacs) should be elected, again by consensus. These g-tacs should act as the facilitators of Bloc movement in such a way as it complies with the general plan of action as defined at the prior open meeting. The identity of the g-tacs will be made discreetly known to all trusted affinity group members through their elected spokes/ a-tacs as befitting following the conclusion of the closed spokespeople's meeting. Any affinity group which has had their a-tac elected to the tactical facilitation core should elect a new a-tac.

In cases in which the Bloc is expected to be large and to march en masse, affinity groups should be made responsible for specific positions within the Bloc; specifically the front, right side, left side and rear (this should be done at the general open meeting). This would essentially create four main perimeter clusters within the Bloc. (Note: the use of clusters is further discussed below.) In turn the elected g-tacs should number 12 persons. These persons should emanate out of the perimeter clusters, which they will be responsible for (this will be further discussed below). These twelve should be further divided into four groups of three. In turn these three should be positioned as such:

1. A person at the specific perimeter cluster, which they will be directly responsible for (front, rear, left or right).

2. A person near the middle of the Bloc where they will be together with the representatives of the other perimeter clusters.

3. A person to act as a runner between their perimeter cluster g-tac and the g-tac group in the middle.

In general, all time sensitive decisions specifically regarding movement should be recommended by the consensus of the central g-tac core based on information emanating from the specific perimeter tacs, and reliable reconnaissance information.

In addition, these g-tacs should also entail certain role-specific support persons in order that they are able to function efficiently and safely. Hence, all g-tacs stationed at the perimeters should be equipped with two persons from their affinity group or otherwise, one of which should be responsible for maintaining radio communication with reconnaissance teams and/or other important constituents. The other should be present in order to watch the tac's back. We must be aware of the fact that these folk will quickly be identified by the forces of the State, and therefore will likely be singled out for arrest. Likewise, the central g-tac core should also be equipped with a few persons on radio, and a few persons concerning themselves with security.

Also, the specific roles of the various gtacs, be it runner, perimeter person or core group, should be rotated as the day's action ensues. Again, such a rotation is to limit any developing trend aimed at a psychological tendency towards authoritarianism amongst the central g-tac core. And again, it should be reminded that the function of these folk would primarily have to do with Bloc movement (i.e. which road to take, which way to go at an intersection). They will not be playing the role of generals or abstract leaders in any way.

Here it is important to stress several things. First, we do not advocate the creating of a permanent officer clique. These elected positions should only last as long as the action at hand. If the action lasts more then a single day, then it would be good to elect new tacs for the different days. Also, their positions should be revocable by the general whole at any time.

Lastly, the influence which they shall wield will not be beyond the role of facilitators of a general plan adopted to the general meeting of the Black Bloc. Any steps they may attempt to take beyond these perimeters would be grounds for dismissal. And of course, we are not advocating the formalization of any authoritarian army structure. It must be made clear that all participants in the Bloc innately reserve the right to disobey tac suggestions as well as to desert. In this the adoption of such a structure would be consistent with Anarchist principles of organization. The Anarchist militias recognized the need for such structure during the Spanish Civil War and so should we.

Individual Affinity Groups

Affinity groups, generally numbering between 3 and 10 persons, should organize themselves in ways in which they see fit to reach their goals in the specific action at hand. Determining the focus of your affinity group in relevance to the specific action allows for the creation of a specialized affinity group.

Within these affinity groups, it is suggested that there be one person who carries a skeletal assortment of first aid equipment (saline solution, vinegar, lemon peels, water in a squirt bottle, rescue remedy). Furthermore, it would seem a very sound suggestion that every person involved in the Black Bloc take a basic first aid course, or have general knowledge of protestrelated first aid practices. Like physical training, being trained in first aid would heighten our overall combat abilities.

It should be decided if the affinity group must use a radio/cell during the action. Radio/cell use may be needed in certain affinity groups, but by no means is it necessary to overflow the streets with unneeded communication devices. Communication can in turn be lost by the trampling of channels and untrained use. More radios will never be the answer to organization and information, but the strategic placing and use of these devices will forever enable our effectiveness. Roles of the other persons in the affinity group, in addition to the aforementioned role of the medic and possible use of a radio/cell operator, depend upon the type of affinity group (function). The affinity group should solely decide this themselves.

Types of specialized affinity groups include, but are not limited to, a front line (defensive), offensive, reconnaissance, property related, medic, support, noise, and pre-emptive.

A front line affinity group would contain shields and/or heavy body armor. This type of affinity group would potentially oversee the formation of the front line. They would motivate and call for other shields from within the Bloc, in aiding the formation of a solid line. This affinity group would provide a rally point to help provide the Bloc position. They would not be a part of a charge line, but instead hold as a point to retreat back to if the charge proves faulty. In addition, this affinity group is at the correct position to oversee the building of barricades.

An offensive affinity group should be highly mobile and enthusiastic. These affinity groups should be prepared for confrontation. The offensive affinity group can also come prepared to fill specialized tactical needs. Creativity is encouraged. The definition of this group will be left at this.

A reconnaissance affinity group operates outside of the Bloc, gathering information. Communication is held closely with the larger Bloc, keeping them informed of police movements and numbers. When State weaknesses are detected, this affinity group should inform the Bloc of opportunities for advancement.

The Bloc should have their own medic affinity group. For optimal coverage, medic groups could split to cover all sides of the Bloc as a whole. Having our own medics does not mean that they help only Black Bloc members, but ensures their movement with the Bloc.

Property-related affinity groups also exist in our movement. The roles of these people should not be known to anyone who is not in that specific affinity group. In relation, information on affinity groups who form for pre-emptive strikes against the State should also be held from the Bloc. Any information on the plans or existence of these two groups will only weaken their security.

There are also support affinity group roles. One idea is an affinity group dedicated to dealing with panic situations. This group would number no more than a few groups per cluster/side (the use of clusters is explained below).

There could also be a supply and networking affinity group responsible for carrying food, water, and handing out communiques to neighborhood people and non-Black Bloc protesters. The carrying of water also has a dual purpose of use for eye washing if necessary.

A noise affinity group is useful in keeping enthusiasm and drive in tiring situations. The sound of music can create sudden drives of energy and joy within the Bloc where none exists, and can send a contradicting message of power to the enemy in battle. Creativity is also encouraged in this area; i.e. Black Bloc bagpipe players would bring immense courage and enthusiasm to many, as does radical cheerleading to others. We should continue to embrace, and forever elaborate, on this humanistic approach to battle through music and cheer. For this is in our favor, and the State is forever unlikely to employ such an emotional tactic.

Clusters

An affinity group should strive to be a part of a cluster of 5-10 diverse affinity groups. Each cluster should have its own flag to serve as a rally point. These flags, distinguishable by different patterns or colors, would be used as markers. The purpose of these markers is to serve as a point of retreat, or simply as a visual aid if a person(s) is severed from an affinity group. Each cluster should be able to function as its own entity. To facilitate this, affinity groups should strive towards communication prior to attendance at the action.

Clusters naturally form based on trust relationships between diverse individuals and collectives, and should continue by these means. This being said, the general meeting of the Black Bloc should still be used as an opportunity for practical networking; such as what specialized affinity groups are needed to complete the offense, defense, and support of a cluster, enabling the cluster a fully functioning body. When a pre-organized cluster decides that it is lacking in certain of these categories, and when that cluster feels comfortable incorporating a relevant at-large affinity group into their fold, then by all means they should do so. Here, the more balanced and self contained we can make the various clusters the better. And, the more affinity groups are connected with larger functioning clusters, the more effective and secure the overall action will be.

Each cluster should take responsibility for certain aspects of the Black Bloc as an entity. The basic options for a cluster to choose from should be 1.) perimeter clusters, 2.) at-large clusters and 3) reserve clusters (*reserve clusters are discussed below in the section titled ‘reserves’). The organization of the clusters into the above roles should be done at the general meeting of the Black Bloc, before the spokes/a-tac meeting.

These perimeter clusters must take responsibility for maintaining a tight line of security around all edges of the Bloc as a whole. Specifically, they should concern themselves with the section which they are directly situated (front, rear, left, right).

It is also desirable that the various defensive and offensive affinity group's and persons of each perimeter cluster work in organized conjunction with each other during times of need. For example, if the Bloc finds it necessary to retreat from a given position, all persons from within the effected perimeter cluster and all non-cluster/ at-large cluster folks carrying defensive equipment such as shields should maintain a position in the rear, facing the enemy, in order to cover the retreat from rubber bullets, bean bags, etc. Likewise, during offensive maneuvers, all persons equipped with the relevant offensive gear should place themselves in the front, as should a limited number of shield bearers in order to limit the effectiveness of the enemy baton. When necessary, relevant reinforcements from the other perimeter clusters should be prepared to move into the fray. However, this should only be done when absolutely necessary in that it is always desirable to maintain a strong defensive perimeter around the Bloc as a whole. This is all common sense of course.

At-large clusters should maintain positions within the space created by the formations of the four perimeter clusters. They should act according to their own direction, yet be prepared to reinforce the perimeter clusters, if attacked. Also, a major task for the at-large clusters should be the organization of charging lines prepared to go over and through police/military defensive positions when and if desirable and/or necessary.

Towards this goal, it may prove desirable to utilize tactics previously practiced by (among others) German black blocs. Namely that the interior of the Bloc be organized by straight lines (from right to left), each line being one or two affinity groups. In turn, affinity groups forming an at-large cluster should consciously position themselves in successive lines. Such lines make for tighter internal security, while clearly allowing for the Bloc to conduct sustained and successive charges against the enemy if and when such an action becomes necessary.

Property related affinity groups, be they connected with an at-large cluster, or independent, should be allowed free access in and out of the body of the Bloc by the relevant perimeter clusters as necessary.

The organization, or rather ability to call for the practice of such above discussed maneuvers, should often be expected to emanate from the g-tacs as manifest through the cooperation of affinity groups. For it will be the g-tacs who are generally most informed about the overall combat situation, and positioning of the Bloc. This is a tactical practice that the g-tacs should be prepared to responsibly facilitate.

All and all, the further incorporation of the above cluster model can be expected to result in ourselves achieving a higher level of immediate situational tactical ability than we currently possess. In addition, the demonstration of such abilities can be expected to frighten and demoralize the enemy.

Reconnaissance and Communication

It is necessary that the Bloc contains a sophisticated system of combat reconnaissance and communications. Reconnaissance should be conducted by pairs and/or affinity groups on bicycles equipped with radios and/or cell phones. In turn, the general tactical facilitation core should also be in possession of radios and/or cell phones. Throughout the action, reconnaissance teams should be scouting out all possible avenues of Bloc travel and consistently be reporting back to the g-tacs. This way, the mobilization of the Bloc will be able to be conducted with a reasonable level of educated decisiveness.

Other elements of the reconnaissance folk should be operating in action zones not immediately in the vicinity of the Bloc. The purpose of these is to keep the Bloc informed on the general situation of the broader action, and in turn, be able to notify the g-tacs of potential hot spots where Bloc presence is required.

Individual affinity groups who are in possession of radios should be informed as to the channels on which such communications will occur. This way the Bloc as a whole will be generally informed in regards to the broader situation.

Also, non-Black Bloc affinity groups involved in acts of civil disobedience should also be informed as to the channels of radio operation as well as the numbers of the relevant cell phones, so as to allow them the ability to call in for assistance when and where necessary.

Finally, as alluded to above, persons directly involved in reconnaissance should be expected to emanate out of the various clusters. However, a more desirable method would be for a whole affinity group to converge on the action prepared to act as a specialized cell in and of itself. Preferably this group would reside in the city in which the action is taking place, in that such persons would be in a better position to scout such already known urban terrain. In addition, those who choose to act in a communications role need to have radio skills. Various codes and channels to use should be discussed only with other Bloc members who hold radios. There are several tactics which can be used when doing communications. Each cluster should arrive to the action with methods for communicating internally.

Reserves

Historically many battles have been won by the situational deployment of reserves as a tactical force. This tactic has traditionally been practiced and proven successful by the United States military and police departments. The use of a reserve force is not currently a tactic adopted by the North American Black Bloc. It is important that we consider this tactic as one that could potentially enable us to better combat the brawn of the State.

The State has always had the advantage over us when it comes to brute force. Their ability to use reserves, bringing in busses full of fresh, new, geared up soldiers,

will always be a threat to us. We, on the other hand, spend hours/days fighting with the same gear and little, if any, relief from our strains. In all fairness, we must study the military tactics employed by State forces and adopt those elements which are relevant, effective, and consistent with our beliefs as Anarchists.

The potential use of Black Bloc reserves could prove empowering for several reasons. One being that the use of reserves has historically proven to be successful. Second, imagine the psychological effects this somewhat sophisticated tactic would hold over minds of the State. Both these points being said, this does not mean that reserves should always be used when a Black Bloc has presence at an action, it is only to say that such possibilities can be discussed during the general meetings of the Bloc. Deciding whether reserves will be used should occur in planning, before the acute manifestation of the action at hand.

When a reserve force is organized at an action, they can be used when the larger Bloc is surrounded by police. In this circumstance, the reserves are called in to fight a police line from the other side, resulting in the police being surrounded by the Bloc as a whole. In addition, reserves can be used to hold a location for the larger Bloc to later use as a destination for retreat. Sending in a smaller number of reserves could also be ideal for added force to push through a police line or barricade.

The U.S. Army holds one third of their people back as use for reserves. This is an ideal number for a fighting force that can make a strong push when an optimal battle point is reached. With this in mind, when the Black Bloc reaches over one thousand, it would be desirable to hold 300 or so in reserve. This number should change with proportion. If the Bloc reaches two thousand, numbers held in reserve should reach about 600. If the Bloc is less than one thousand, no reserve should be posted. With such small numbers, a reserve force would only result in the general weakening of the Bloc when we need all able bodies for immediate release on the streets.

There are pros and cons for our Bloc to discover when and if there is a decision to use a reserve force. These must be recognized, and therefore it is important that options be discussed. City-scape (i.e. are the roads narrow or wide?), Bloc/police size, and the situation of the action on hand (are large portions of the city occupied by non-violent lockdowns or are police/national guard free to roam the urban ter- rain?) must be weighed. This should all occur at the general meetings of the Bloc. The details of forming a reserve, if any, and means of communication should be discussed after the election of the g-tacs at the spokes/a-tac meeting. Following the election, such sensitive information can be worked out at a g-tac meeting where only those with an immediate interest are present.

This meeting should establish the location of the inactive reserves, as well as radio/ cell communication procedures. This reserve force should maintain radio/cell communication with the body of the Bloc by communicating with the gtacs. Decision to mobilize should be placed in the hands of the g-tacs. Note that the g-tacs receive their information on the seriousness of combat and the need for reserves from cells of the larger Bloc. The g-tac's decision to mobilize a number of inactive reserves is given

when groups within the larger Bloc call for backup. Relying on this is important in order to consider the many needs of the active members of the Black Bloc.

Deployment (where and how many) of the reserves should be left to the g-tacs. Specifics of how to meet this deployment through which streets to take, etc., should be left to the affected affinity groups. When speed becomes an issue, the elected a-tacs within the effected affinity groups should be prepared to make educated suggestions (which those affected are free to adopt or not). The exact location of the reserve forces should not be revealed to the Bloc as a whole. The only people who should be informed of their exact location should be the gtacs. It is also suggested that location of the reserves are formally decided upon at the last moments, when the position is soon to be held. This is necessary in that the common knowledge of their location would expected to result in this information leaking into police hands through common infiltration techniques. In turn, this knowledge would almost certainly result in the State (police) attacking our isolated forces.

All reserve forces should be divided into reserve clusters of roughly fifty persons each and be strategically placed around the action zone. Reserve clusters of fifty would be desirable in that such a number is small enough to maintain optimal mobility and non-visibility (to the searching eyes of the State), while being large enough to maintain a minimum of self contained fighting ability. Such a reserve cluster would be large enough to fight their way through a regular police line if necessary (one row deep 24 across or two rows deep/12 across each), to reunite, when called for, with the larger Bloc. Dividing these forces into such smaller, more manageable reserve clusters, allows for them to be called in as needed. It essentially skips the step taken to divide numbers of the reserved Bloc, and allows for greater security in the event that reserve locations are discovered by the State (where it is possible that one cluster is uncovered by the State, it is unlikely that all will be).

As alluded to above, it is not always necessary when reserves are needed, to call all of their existing numbers. The further division of these reserves into smaller clusters allows them to be called in based on geographic proximity and/or required force, and will result in optimal mobility.

When a relatively large number of reserves is called in, say three clusters of fifty, they could converge on the acute scene of battle from several directions. When properly utilized, such tactics could be expected to confuse and stifle the State's comprehension of the developing combat situation. It is also conceivable that such tactics could be coordinated so as such enemy forces are effectively flanked, thereby forcing the enemy into retreat, or routing them entirely.

When the reserve force is inactive, a low profile must be maintained. They should keep a distance that places them away from acute attack, while being close enough so that the police cannot easily break their reemerging with the rest of the Bloc. The distance the reserve clusters fall back from the larger Bloc could be just a few city blocks, but nonetheless should be decided by the reserves clusters themselves, with g-tac input.

Lettering of the reserve clusters would be beneficial for g-tacs to better manage the location of these reserves. For example, reserve cluster B resides on the East side of the larger Black Bloc, and the g-tacs know this. The g-tacs are then able to call for reserve cluster B, (simply by referring to 'cluster B') without giving an extraneous amount of directions and information over the radio/cell, therefore resulting in less information for the State to get their hands on. We should assume always that there are infiltrators leeching around us, and the word 'reserves' should never be used when communicating in public.

Prior to the reemerging with the Black Bloc, combat with the State should be avoided by these reserves, unless in self-defense, or unavoidable. Maintaining a low profile is vital. It is desirable that the reserves de-Bloc and become 'regular.' Black Bloc clothing should be worn underneath 'regular' clothing. This enables the reserves to blend in better and become less distinguishable as members of the Black Bloc to police helicopters and informants of the State. When they are called for by the g-tacs, the reserve cluster(s) should remove their 'regular' clothing to reveal their true colors underneath. The 'regular' clothing could be discarded and thrown away. Keeping a change of clothing on your person for later use is, of course, a personal decision. However, anything which is not of absolute necessity, should not be carried.

The absolute condition necessary for reserve effectiveness is deployment speed. Without this, they may be prevented from reemerging with the larger Bloc and/or fail to reach the scene of acute action at a time when their force can swing the immediate struggle in our favor. For this purpose the reserves should be organized as a sort of light infantry. They should possess only the minimum of riot gear to refrain from their being weighted down. This means that they should eliminate gear which would obstruct quick lightweight movement, such as helmets, shields, heavy body armor, or large backpacks. They should be equipped only with gas masks or vinegar-soaked bandannas, and a minimum of offensive gear (as individuals and affinity groups see necessary). The only exception to this should be the medics, who should carry a skeleton assortment of related equipment. It would be ideal if all reserves were equipped with bicycles so that the greatest level of mobility could be reached. Such bicycles can be used for offense and defense, and must be discardable. However, in the absence of such bikes, reserve clusters should be composed of affinity groups/individuals who are in good cardiovascular shape. These forces must be prepared to run up to a mile at full speed, and then immediately engage in battle. This is something to keep in mind when such forces are being initially organized.

When and where this reserve is utilized correctly with speed and strength, it can be expected to cause surprise and demoralization among the ranks of the enemy. The very fact that we demonstrate these fairly sophisticated maneuvers can be expected to result in the enemy questioning their personal security and apparent tactical superiority. It is just such objective and subjective shifts and developments at the acute scene of conflict that can and will lend itself to the swinging of fighting momentum to our side. Of course, this positive development can and will only be sustained if the Bloc holds

fast in the face of the increased police ferociousness and brutality in the conflict at hand. This situation should be expected to occur in direct relation to police feeling that they are in real danger due to our utilization of serious tactics. Here, one should recall that all animals are most dangerous when they are backed in a corner and sense their own demise.

Additional Security Precautions: Maps, Radios, IDs, Names, Etc.

While it is sensible that all affinity groups (all persons for that matter) have a detailed map of the area of operation, it has been proven that such maps must absolutely be marked only in code. During the R2k action in Philly, at least two Black Bloc individuals were arrested in a pre-emptive strike approximately forty-five minutes after a Black Bloc meeting (at which they were in attendance) and an hour and a half prior to the demonstration proper. On their persons were maps of the downtown equipped with penned-in locations of the various Black Bloc emergency convergence sites as well as areas where the Bloc intended to focus their activity as well as locations where they planned on marching in order to accumulate material for barricade construction when and if the day's developments demanded.

These maps were not encrypted, and therefore, by detaining, searching and subsequently recovering these maps from these individuals the police achieved the advantage of knowing the intended movement of the Bloc before it happened. It is impossible to know exactly what effect this intelligence had on the day's events (as it is also difficult to surmise whether or not the police had informants at the prior meeting as some have maintained), but regardless, this mishap represented a major slip in security. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary that from now on all such maps be encrypted so as to avoid this slip up.

In addition, all radio communication should be conducted with the use of preplanned codes and frequencies where and whenever possible. All such codes and frequencies should be made known to all parties who have a legitimate interest in maintaining radio communication with us.

Also, it should go without saying that nobody, under any circumstances, should carry any form of ID or personal contact information. If you get arrested with this information it will only be used to fuck you.

Lastly, do not refer to yourself or others you know by your real full name while in the vicinity of the action. The less we make public our actual identities the better off we are regarding possible legal action and State harassment.

Communiques

It is important that all Black Bloc actions be followed with a comprehensive communique, which is whenever possible composed by a large representative volunteer

committee from the various affinity groups. This communique should discuss the action in terms of why it occurred, why specific conflicts/tactics developed and how this immediate struggle is connected with the broader Anarchist movement towards a liberated and creative world.

To achieve this, a post action meeting should be arranged at a secure location. The details of when and where it will be held should be decided upon at the pre-action meeting of elected a-tacs/spokespeople (after all other issues are resolved) or at the general pre-action meeting of the entire Black Bloc (also after all other issues are resolved.

Such communiques are important in regards to reaching out to the broader populace, as well as in debunking the demonisation of our activities as can be expected to emanate out of the corporate press (and also often from the Liberal Left and orthodox/ conservative Communist press).

In addition to a post-action communique, it is also important that separate communiques be composed prior to the action and distributed during the action. These should also discuss the reasons why we take to the (our) streets the way we do as well as address the broader social issues which brought us to the action at hand. The individual affinity groups should facilitate these. In turn the affinity groups and/or relevant support persons/support affinity groups should take the responsibility of distributing them during the action to the public and the Left-independent media as they see fit. All such communiques should be signed with the name of the responsible affinity group or individual as to maintain accountability. All anonymous statements must be assumed to emanate out of the bowels of State, with the purpose of discrediting us.

Anarchist Principles of Tactical Leadership

The idea of setting up such a democratic chain of command is not to diminish the free spontaneity of the Bloc, but is simply to increase the general mobility and fighting ability of the Black Bloc during time of need.

The primary functions of the above discussed general tactical facilitation core (g-tacs) will simply be to guide the direction of Bloc movement and the ability to call for the deployment of reserve clusters. In regards to the former, this would minimize regrettable time consuming debates as to "which way to go at various intersections." The more we can avoid such time-consuming indecisiveness the better, as such slowdowns carry with them the potential to put the whole Bloc in danger of police surrounding and subsequent immobilization. And given the forces of the State's advantage in weaponry, immobilization is akin to defeat. Such was the case during the A16 action on Monday, where shortly thereafter the tail end of the Bloc (who was then immersed with non-Bloc elements) was cordoned off by police and subsequently arrested.

In regards to the latter, such ability to call in reserves at relevant times could be the difference between immediate victory or defeat. And in this case it is necessary to place this ability in the hands of the elected g-tacs in order to guard against any

misuse brought on by agent provocateurs, and/or to prevent general time-consuming tactical debates which the heat of direct conflict does not allow for.

With this proposed organizational model, a relatively small Black Bloc (containing no reserves) numbering roughly 200 would have the effectiveness of twice that number in regards to our present abilities. And likewise, a larger Bloc numbering 700, with a reserve force of 300, would dramatically gain in tactical ability.

Physical Training In Between Actions

In between actions it is of vast importance that we increase our physical abilities through the practice of regular exercise, muscle building and self-defense training. At present, the Black Bloc is considerably lacking in certain of these compartments. This is true to the point where individuals who possess muscle tone are sometimes distrusted as potential police agents.

The fact is, if we are going to defend ourselves against the forces of the State, we should take our physical conditioning at least as seriously as our enemy does, and preferably more seriously. The reactionary police and military are aware of the importance of this in regards to their own effectiveness, and so should we.

Pre-emptive Actions

The forces of the State are regularly known to take pre-emptive measures against demonstrators prior to their actions. They regularly infiltrate us and make arrests before any general demonstration or acts of civil disobedience begin. They also start their tactical mobilization long before the sun comes up prior to the demonstrations on any particular day. In order to neutralize this advantage, limited elements presently engaged in Black Bloc actions should independently take countermeasures. Here sabotage of police (and when necessary, National Guard) equipment is our best bet.

If one of the primary advantages of the forces of the State is their mechanized mobility, then we should strike out against these repressive tools by effective, clandestine means.

Separate affinity groups under their own direction should voluntarily coordinate such actions. These groups should number very few in relation to the broader Bloc, and should not take part in any subsequent above ground actions thereafter during the day's events. In addition, the intent and identity of these groups should obviously remain absolutely secret to the Bloc as a whole.

There can be no chain of command between them and the rest. They must operate completely on their own, voluntarily, and by structural models of their choosing (as long as they are consistent with Anarchist principles of organization). Such clandestine activity, if performed effectively, holds the possibility of considerably disrupting the abilities of the enemy, and therefore can substantially place new advantages with the Black Bloc.

Preparations For Increased State Repression

The stronger our movement becomes, the more likely it will be that the State will more thoroughly criminalize Anarchism, specifically of the Black Bloc variety. As we speak, we must assume that the FBI has already compiled a dossier on many of us. We must also assume that many of our local Anarchist organizations and collectives are already being watched and that infiltrators are working on penetrating our ranks; in certain cases we have no doubt that they already have.

In addition, as our movement progresses into more serious phases, we must anticipate a much more violent State reaction against us. This clearly occurred in the late 60s and we must fully understand that it will happen again. This tendency is already developing a clear trajectory. The shooting of three demonstrators at the Gothenburg protests, and the killing of Carlo in Genoa illustrates this as an undeniable fact.

As committed revolutionaries of practical mind, we must prepare for eventualities. This is no game. In such we must form clandestine networks wherein we can maintain the ability to exist as an underground fighting force if and when the circumstances demand. Such an underground force must entail, among other things, access to alternative identification, known and trusted safe houses, friends in strategic positions, access to materials of necessary subsistence (i.e. food, medicine, etc.), an underground means of communication, ways to pass unseen through international borders and the know-how to continue our militant activities underground.

The fact of the matter is, when our above-ground activities draw the response of police shotgun blasts, the mass long term incarceration of our militants, or when it all becomes a socially acceptable farce within the blanket of the spectacle, then we must be prepared to meet the challenges of the State by other means; still militant and concrete, yet underground.

Furthermore, it must be understood that when extreme crisis situations occur, the kind which would force us underground, there will not be the time to organize the basic means of such an existence. Likewise, when the greater social breakdown of the presently dominant system occurs, there will not be time to organize a solid popular fighting force. Therefore, we must prepare now for that which we recognize as an inevitable outcome of our revolutionary activities.

We must and will attack the leviathan head on, then from the shadows, and then again face-to-face. The only result can be social revolution.

Here we would like to remind you that firearms are still legal, as of print, and easily attainable in the United States.

Development Of Our Social and Political Understandings

Lastly, we must practice self-discipline in regards to our continuing practical and theoretical studies of social and political ideas during the times in between actions. For the Anarchist movement, as stated by Bakunin, is driven by "the instinct to rebel," but

it is also done so by the conscious emergence of a revolutionary people. The folk who make up the Black Bloc should be examples not just of Anarchist fighting courage, but also of Anarchist awareness. We should study the histories of the Paris Commune, Revolutionary Ukraine, Kronstadt, Spain, as well as the Paris revolt of '68. In addition we should read the writings of Bakunin, Kropotkin, Mahkno, Emma Goldman, Meltzer, Guy Debord, and Bookchin to name but a few.

In a word, we must expand our relevant understandings in order to completely transcend the oppressive indoctrination that the State has perpetuated on us since the time of our birth. We must exercise our capacity for understanding in order to realize our creative consciousness. And finally, we must strive to further develop Anarchist theory in directions directly relevant to the contemporary modes of neo-Capitalism; namely that of radical commodification and consumerism.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this communique is put forward with the intent to spark the constructive development of our revolutionary abilities. It is not meant to be authoritative as much as it is intended to facilitate a positive internal dialogue. However, it is our hope that at least some of the above suggestions are seriously debated and then adopted by our fellow Black Bloc Anarchists.

We encourage you to replicate and distribute this communique however you choose (as long as it is not done for Capitalist profit).

In Solidarity,
-Anti-Racist Action
-GMAC

Reforming The Black Bloc: Tactics And Ideology Severino For the Barricada Collective (NEFAC-Boston)

Excerpt from March 2002 issue of Barricada, Agitational Monthly of the NorthEastern Federation of Anarcho-Communists.

The following is our response to issues raised by the "Open Letter to Those Involved in the Black Bloc", printed in Volume 2, issue #12 of Willful Disobedience (http://www.ainfos.ca/02/feb/ainfos00513.html) , as well as to a lot of criticisms and issues that arose on the Infoshop.org newswire discussion around this letter. The response is not as complete, or necessarily well structured, as we would have hoped, due to time constraints, but we do feel that it goes a long way towards correcting some of the

misconceptions around our idea of what Black Blocs should be, what purposes they serve, when they are of use, how they should be organized, etc.

The Black Bloc is Outrunning its Effectiveness

This is a claim that we are starting to hear very often in anarchist circles. The reasoning behind it tends to vary, but is generally limited to that Black Blocs are vehicles for purely symbolic action and confrontation, that the police are too on top of it, or that it does not serve to empower people or encourage community involvement and self-organization.

Many of us, coming from European traditions of autonomism and places where Black Bloc actions are bolder, better organized, and much larger than in North America (not to mention have been occurring for far longer than in North America) are quite honestly a little insulted by these claims. Anarchists in North America seem to have a tendency to want to abandon tactics and approaches which they deem to be "old" or "boring," rather than focusing on ways to develop and better them.

It is true that, now that police have come to expect them, Black Blocs are no longer as easily made effective as they were only a few years ago. This means that it is probably not wise to bloc up and do illegal action in small demonstrations. Like with every tool, it is a matter of using the right tools for the job at hand, and Black Bloc is not always that tool. We feel that Black Blocs, as a large scale tactic, are still in their infancy in North America, and that the solution to keeping them effective is to move them to the next level. From the mob to the organized body, from the symbolic confrontation to the true direct action, from something seen primarily only at large summits, to a staple of local struggles.

If Black Blocs are moved in this direction, then they can serve to empower people, to demonstrate anarchist organizational principles in action, to move local struggles forward, and to encourage community involvement by presenting a relatively safe body from which to express one's anger and discontent (as it did in York, Pennsylvania on January 12th). Clearly, as struggle escalates, repression escalates, and police tactics adapt, successful action becomes harder to carry out. However, the solution is to adapt our tactics to the realities of our day, not to abandon them (particularly when nobody has yet proposed any sort of alternative for the street aspect of our struggle, much less a better one).

Black blocs have been around in Europe for approximately two decades now, and the reality remains the same. When they are organized well, when thought and planning are put into them, the police are still unable to contain them. The same is true in North America. When we organize as we should (Seattle, A16, the 2001 Inauguration, Quebec, for example) then we are effective, and when we don't (New York City springs to mind), we are defeated.

The Black Bloc as Fashion: "If Cops Are Looking for Kids in Black, then Anarchists Should Not Dress in Black."

On the points where we do agree, we should clearly state so. Many today do indeed seem to view the Black Bloc as a fashion statement. This is wrong, irresponsible, and above all dangerous. As we stated in our post-Quebec analysis, while it is understandable that people need to be given time to progress and learn in their militancy, the abundance of Black Bloc spectators lures others into a false sense of confidence and, in the end, endangers people. As anarchists, we need to have a clear sense of collective responsibility and accountability, to us this means accepting that being in a Black Bloc necessarily carries with it certain responsibilities and duties, and that if you choose to ignore them, you are putting comrades at risk.

This being said, we feel it is important to clear up a nuts and bolts aspect of this discussion. There is a very good reason to stick to the black outfit. Simply put, it makes it next to impossible for police to single out and snatch people for particular actions which they may have committed, unless the police are amongst the bloc and can follow at a close distance (this should also not be occurring). Any other type of dress (other colors, simply dressing normally, etc.) makes the task of the police much easier. Furthermore, one should not arrive "in bloc" at an event, and one should be adept at changing clothes rapidly. Anything short of this facilitates the work of the forces of repression, and given the stiff sentences being handed out in North America for politically motivated actions, these are advantages which we cannot afford to give.

We are not content with running around in a fashion show of people dressed in black. When we put ourselves at risk, we want to make sure we are being smart about it. While we do not agree with everything in the communiqué on tactics, we feel it is a step in the right direction, or at least in the direction which we seek to move in. This is, from the mob, to the organized body.

From the Mob to the Organized Body

Many claim that the direction some people are calling for the bloc to move in is reminiscent of an anarchist militia, and in some cases contradictory to anarchist principles of organization. This is wholly inaccurate.

While our conceptions of anarchist organization may, and indeed do, differ from those of ***Willful Disobedience***, they are in no way unanarchistic. Furthermore, we draw plentifully from the organizational structures of anarchist organizations of the past, such as the FAI and CNT in Spain and the Makhnovists in the Ukraine, to name but a few examples.

To us, immediately revocable delegates, federalism, direct democracy, and collective responsibility are basic principles of anarchist organization, and the pillars of the future society which we seek to create (along with communism of course). Thus, moving the bloc in this direction to us is merely a way of bringing the inner workings of the Black

Bloc in line with the shape which we hope to see the world which we create take. This is no way represents a militarization, but rather a next step forward in building and developing our structures and tactics.

Furthermore, we most certainly do not view the Black Bloc as an "anarchist militia." To us an anarchist militia would be a permanent structure with an area of activity significantly different from that of the Black Bloc. While we certainly don't think that an anarchist militia would be a bad idea, we do think that it is, unfortunately, something that we are nowhere near being ready for.

All this said, we view with concern some of the claims made in the ***Willful Disobedience*** letter, particularly regarding the linking of democratic, popularly controlled delegation with traditional bourgeois and hierarchical methods of organization. As we stated earlier, these are to us basic tenets of anarchist organization, and pillars of the society we seek to live in. To us, what is indeed hierarchical and anti-anarchistic is what often happens at Black Blocs when there is a lack of a process through which to make decisions, which is that the loudest voices wield the most power (tyranny of structurelessness), and the democratic process is completely thrown aside.

It seems apparent that our vision of anarchism is fundamentally different from that of ***Willful Disobedience***. In opposition to our beliefs outlines above, ***Willful Disobedience*** states that "the central aim of anarchist struggle is the subversion of existence, [and] the reappropriation of life by each of us as individuals." With all due respect, it is difficult to even fathom what that exactly is supposed to mean. However, in the tradition of ascribing to those we disagree with the most logical interpretation of their argument as possible, it seems safe to say that for ***Willful Disobedience*** anarchism is a process of individual liberation from the constrains of hierarchical society. In the tradition of other individualist anarchists, they emphasize these ideas of individual autonomy and liberty to the detriment of other anarchist principles, such as collective responsibility and free association. We, as anarcho-communists, question the possibility of individual freedom without a social context. Furthermore, while Willful Disobedience may perhaps find it possible to attain their personal freedom from all forms of oppression through a strictly individualist understanding of anarchist struggle, we are still left wondering what kind of world their revolution would leave us with.

To those who accuse of "militarizing" the Black Bloc, or thinking only in terms of strategy, we say again (and this cannot be said enough) that our organizing on the streets is meant to reflect the shape of the society we seek to create. As anarcho-communists this society is based on federalism, direct democracy, voluntary association, democratic delegation, and communism. This is the direction we aim to see North American Black Blocs move in. Thus, the aim is not only to improve performance on a purely tactical level, but to bring the Black Blocs in line with how we seek to see society operate.

From Symbolic Confrontation...To Direct Action

Those who are familiar with Barricada will know that we believe that in order to defeat capital and the state we must attack it on all fronts and with the use of a variety of tactics that complement each other. Thus, we believe that symbolic confrontation, which consists of the majority (though not all) of what occurs at large summits and similar events, certainly has it's place and it's purpose. We have repeatedly outlined what we feel these to be and will not do so again now. However, we also certainly feel that in order to be effective as a movement with a relevance to the day to day lives of people, we need to focus more on building dual power in workplaces and communities. We feel it is a false dichotomy to pit Black Bloc activity against community and workplace based struggle. Indeed, the Black Bloc can be a very valuable tool to bring militancy to community and workplace struggles by carrying out direct actions related to the struggle at hand.

Yet, effective and concerted direct action on a mass level often requires precision and planning, as it is not enough to simply lash out against any manifestation of the state and capital (as it is for symbolic action), but rather it is a matter of striking directly those who are the enemies in the struggle in question. To do this, in any sort of effective and coherent manner, the Black Bloc cannot be a mob of people running in any direction that is either away from police or where the person with the loudest voice is yelling. Because we seek to see militant tactics become a more frequently used tool in grassroots struggles, and precisely because we would like the Black Bloc to serve as a link between communities and militant, direct action oriented, anarchists, is why we urge for better organization and planning. It is not with the intention of becoming any sort of elite and militaristic entity, but rather with the intention of making the tactic effective and relevant to struggles that build a revolutionary dual power. The current mob is not capable of doing this.

In Conclusion...

We hope that we have undertaken this discussion in a comradely and friendly manner, despite the very strong differences of opinion that exist. When we do indeed speak vehemently against certain ideas, opinions, and tendencies, it is not out of bad faith, but rather because we quite often see or hear our ideas being misrepresented and our motives questioned.

We believe firmly that struggles that choose morality over tactics and fail to face the enemy head on are doomed to failure. To us, the existence of Black Blocs, and the spirit that they embody, has allowed many a movement and struggle to break the death-grip of legality and truly fight on it's own terms. Furthermore, we feel there is a very strong potential inherent in Black Bloc activity to sow seeds of effective anarchist organization for the future, while at the same time securing concrete gains and victories for our movement. However, this is accomplished by breaking out of

the mob mentality and format and becoming an organized body that can think and act coherently, quickly, and above all, democratically and tactically. The move from symbolic confrontation to direct action will not come easily, and it will certainly require organization; organization which is more efficient tactically, completely in line with anarchist principles, and conducive to individual liberty.

Has The Black Bloc Tactic Reached The End of Its Usefulness?
by Severino, Barricada Collective (NEFAC-Boston), 11-18-2002

As class struggle anarchists who recognize the importance of a diversity of tactics in order to attack Capital, the State, and oppression in an effective manner, we see the Black Bloc as an important tool of struggle. Only one tool among many, but an important one nonetheless. However, this by no means implies that we feel it to be in any way above criticism. Indeed, we are very troubled by how Black Blocs often operate, the manner in which actions are sometimes carried out, and the direction that some Black Bloc elements seem to want to head in. It is for this reason that we were glad to see the text by our comrades from the Workers Solidarity Movement (WSM). Particularly refreshing was the fact that, unlike many other texts critical of the Black Bloc, this one was clearly written in a comradely, honest, and constructive fashion. This is the only way in which an effective and useful dialogue on the subject can be had, and our response is with the same spirit and intentions in mind. With that said, we do in fact have several important disagreements with the WSM text, and will attempt to clarify some of our positions in this writing.

The Black Bloc And Militant Tactics In Anti-globalization Protests

This is the first question posed by the WSM article, and it is a question (and sometimes assertion) that we are starting to hear quite often in some anarchist circles. The reasoning behind it tends to vary, involving anything from the symbolic nature of the confrontations Black Blocs often engage in, to issues about whether or not it can serve as a tool to encourage empowerment, self-organization and the construction of dual power. In the case of the WSM text, the argument is centered to a large extent around the issue of constantly heightened security and enlarged police presence at large summit type events, which hinders the ability of the Black Bloc to act in an effective manner. In our opinion, this argument is flawed on two important levels.

The first, is that it places all the responsibility for the failure, or at least controversial nature, of several recent Black Blocs on the actions of the police. To us, while indeed greater preparation and numbers on behalf of the police are part of the problem, they are actually a much lesser concern than the role played by the opportunist, reformist, and moralist tendencies in the "movement" in isolating the Black Bloc, and the tactical consequences for us of their actions.

In both Quebec City and Prague, resounding successes in our opinion, the police knew to expect a Black Bloc, often made reference to how dangerous it was in the press, and tried to stop Black Bloc participants from arriving. There was no element of surprise, just as in Genoa. However, the difference between those two mobilizations and Genoa, was not the police, but rather the relationship between militant anarchists in the Black Bloc and the larger organizing groups.

In Prague and Quebec City, through INPEG and CLAC respectively, the space of activists choosing to use militant tactics was respected, allowing for mutual cooperation and coordination in the days before the action. In both cases this took the shape of different zones for particular types of action or levels of risk, thus allowing all tactics to work together effectively and complement each other, while lessening internal strife. However, when organizers try to isolate Black Bloc anarchists in order to gain favor with the press, politicians, and cops problems will inevitably arise, hindering the ability of all involved to act in an effective and respectful manner.

This is exactly what occurred in Genoa with the actions of the Social Forum. The GSF divided the entire eastern part of the city (the only part reasonably accessible to demonstrators) into three blocs for the main day of action, July 20th. These were the Network for Global Rights, composed of some moderate social centers and grassroots trade unions; the civil disobedience bloc, composed of Ya Basta!, the Communist youth, and a few others; and the pacifist/White hands bloc, primarily composed of Lilliput network people. All these blocs were within the GSF structure and had agreed to a "no sticks, no stones, no fire" clause. A space for those with militant tactics was nowhere to be found. What was implied? That we should go elsewhere. When asked why this was, GSF people responded with the very shaky excuse that, since anarchists were not in the GSF, they were simply not taken into account. Furthermore, when anarchists began meeting, to address the problem and begin effectively organizing, in Carlini stadium (Ya Basta! headquarters) it was immediately made clear by the Ya Basta! people in charge that they would have to go somewhere else. Finally, to top it all off, even though the GSF claimed to respect and desire to work with groups and people who chose to go outside of its structure, only a few hours after the posters for the International Genoa Offensive (i.e. Black Bloc) had been put up at the convergence center, people wearing GSF staff passes could be seen taking them down. There was no co-ordination, no respect, and no solidarity.

Despite this, Black Bloc participants did manage to coalesce and hold several mass meetings beforehand. However, since the GSF refused to co-ordinate efforts, or even accept the Black Bloc as a legitimate section of the mobilization, choosing instead to

defame and slander, on the day itself people with very differing tactics found themselves in the same geographic locations and the inevitable problems ensued, with Black Bloc members being accused of being police officers, being the tool of the police to justify repression, mindless hooligans, Nazis, etc.

All this was not a simple accident, but rather the logical conclusion of the relationship between the reformist and authoritarian sections of the anti-globalization "movement," in this case exemplified by Ya Basta! and ATTAC (under the umbrella of the Genoa Social Forum), and the revolutionary anarchist movement.

The fact is, these reformists and opportunists are merely using the anti-globalization "movement" as a vehicle to increase their power and influence and gain their so badly desired "seat at the table" of global capitalism. At one point they needed anarchists and direct action as a tool to gain attention in the media and assert themselves as part of the debate on the globalization of Capital. With this achieved, the relationship between them and us has radically changed, and it is this that has made the difference at the large mobilizations, not the role of the police.

We, as anarchists, are not interested in watered down demonstrations, false declarations of war, or ritualistic spectacles. We are not interested in, and believe there to be no such thing as, common ground for dialogue with the rulers and exploiters of the world. Likewise, we have no interest in political maneuvers and schemes. We are indeed an "ungovernable force," content with nothing less than a total social revolution with the aim of creating a new society based on the principles of mutual aid, workers self-management, decentralization, direct democracy, freedom, and communism.

As such, we are a danger to the reformists and opportunists. We are a bad influence on their drones, we ruin their parties, destroy their spectacles and rituals, we expose realities which they seek to hide, and most importantly, by truly confronting the State and capitalism we make their phony "wars" all the more real everyday. The politicians and reformists in the anti-globalization "movement" realize this, and have for this reason begun treating us as their enemies, never hesitating to try to isolate us, hand us over to the police, or send their "pacifist thugs" to physically attack anarchists. Furthermore, a massive whitewashing of history has begun which intends to sell the lie that the anti-globalization "movement" has grown despite the negative influences of militant anarchists, when in fact it has grown precisely because of us.

In light of all this many comrades are starting to see "anti-globalization politicians" as the enemies that they are, but their suggested solution to the problem is simply to withdraw from the anti-globalization struggle, and particularly the mass mobilizations. We feel that this approach is both incorrect and dangerous, as it would only serve to further isolate anarchists and anti-authoritarians, while at the same time leaving the road wide open for the total co-optation of the tide of discontent with capitalism that is currently sweeping much of the world. In opposition to this, we suggest a battle against these elements within the framework of the anti-globalization "movement" on multiple fronts, which include the following:

- Combating the constant attempts of whitewashing history which seek to attribute the emergence and influence of the international movement of resistance to capital to the work of the mainstream NGOs and political parties.

- Constantly denouncing through propaganda and example those who seek to manipulate the popular rejection of the current system in order to benefit their own ambitions of power. We must make clear that reformists, the vast majority of NGOs, mainstream trade unions, and "institutionalized oppositions' are enemies, not only of anarchists, but of all those who struggle for the creation of a radically different world.

- Clearly denouncing all those who seek to reign-in and institutionalize the growing tide of resistance and vigorously work to expose as the enemies that they are all those who seek to "dialogue" and/or "find common ground with" the exploiters of the world (for example those planning to "debate" with the IMF). There is no debate to be had, and no possible common ground. Only total rejection and war.

- Constantly go where they go. We must ruin their parties, crash their debates, and turn their futile attempts to appeal to power into insurrectionary events where people are encouraged to think and act autonomously, thus freeing themselves from the chains, if not yet of Capital and the State, at least of the reformist party/NGO apparatus. This way we simultaneously present alternatives (be it by speaking at their events, radicalizing a demo, breaking a window, or simply distributing a flier) and avoid the political and tactical trap of isolation which they place for us in order to discredit us and leave us open to state repression.

- Making clear that, while Black Blocs and other forms of mass militant confrontation are important aspects of the anarchist struggle, they are certainly not the only ones. Anarchists, and anarchist influences, are everywhere in the resistance (as medics, in Indymedia, in non-violent civil disobedience, as cooks, and everywhere else) and anarchists accept and embrace people of all tactical outlooks (as long as they are respectful of others).

- Most importantly, we must build, develop, and coherently present the anarchist alternatives to the project of the parties, NGOs, and reformist unions by continuing to develop the anarchist culture of resistance and self-management. From autonomous collectives of struggle on particular issues, to squats, to co-operatives, revolutionary unions, federations, community power organizations, and all other projects which serve to render the NGO/party/boss/union/State/Capital apparatus irrelevant while at the same time building anarchist alternatives.

In order to be successful in this task, we will need all the tools and tactics available to us, and this very much includes the Black Bloc. Clearly, there are reforms that need to be made in the Black Bloc if we are to heighten it's effectiveness and defend against

some of the problems that are beginning to arise (infiltration, contradictory actions, etc.), but that is a different article altogether.

The Black Bloc Beyond Anti-globalization Protest

The second level on which we find the arguments made in the WSM text flawed is that of what context Black Blocs are viewed as operating, and being effective, in. The analysis of Black Blocs in the WSM text seems to be centered wholly around the anti-globalization "movement," something which to us (and we know that the WSM agrees), should only represent one part of the anarchist struggle. We believe that the Black Bloc should be a tactic that transcends struggles. In fact, we feel the largest potential for future Black Bloc lies precisely in not being limited to summits, but becoming a regular staple of community and workplace struggles, adding an often much needed militancy and power to such conflicts.

The Black Bloc carries enormous potential as a tool that, rather than being limited to primarily symbolic action around mass convergences, is used to reinforce class struggle at the grassroots level. Indeed, this is not something unheard of, as, for example, the historical significance of the role of Black Blocs and street-fighting in the struggles for housing, against gentrification, and against street-level fascism in Europe (primarily, but not limited to, the Netherlands, Germany, and Italy) and in struggles in South Korea (not waged by anarchists, but in terms of tactics, clearly Black Blocs) cannot be denied. Other recent examples include the tactics employed by the Anti-Expulsions Collective in Paris during the immigrants struggle of '97-98, which included storming police offices, using mass militant action to stop trains being used to deport immigrants, and inflicting massive damages on hotels used as temporary immigrant detentions centers, or the Black Bloc in the U.S. which recently took action against Taco Bell in solidarity with workers struggling for union recognition.

These are all clear examples of Black Blocs, or at the very least Black Bloc tactics, being used to reinforce class struggle through the use of methods and tactics that other people, for a variety of reasons, are either unwilling or unable to use. This by no means is to imply that other tactics cannot be as, or more, militant. Nor are we arguing that Black Blocs are any sort of vanguard of struggle. Clearly, this would be an exceedingly narrow conception of militant struggle. We see them rather as an appendage to struggles that, because of its militant and anonymous character, can at times be used to advance and intensify struggles.

Revolutionary Cells?

The WSM text, in our opinion, presents us with a false dichotomy by pitting effective and organized direct action against mass actions of a participatory nature. As anarchists, we believe firmly in the ability of people to take mass militant action in a

fashion which is simultaneously effective and participatory, democratic and decentralized.

Again, drawing from our experiences in the anti-globalization "movement," we can see examples of instances where, despite all the harassment from the forces of repression (both the state's and the anti-globalization "movements"), many hundreds of militant anarchists were able to come together and organize their actions in a participatory and democratic manner via general assemblies. This was the case in Prague, Gothenburg, and Genoa, to give some recent examples, where the black (or blue as the case may be) blocks were organized in an open manner with very broad (as far the anarchist movement goes) participation and involvement.

This said, we do agree that the real victory lies not in the "military" feat of shutting down this or that summit or gathering of the rich, but rather in forcing them to cower behind thousands of armed thugs, denying them legitimacy, and bringing forward the contradictions that exist in class society. We further agree that the most important and significant aspect of mass mobilizations lies in the large scale experiences of self-management and direct democracy that they provide, not only for us as anarchists, but for those who believe these ideas to be dreams unworkable in reality. So indeed, we must strive to maintain that character of participation and anti-authoritarian democracy. However, again, to us, it is the stifling influence of the political elites that seek to build their future on the back of "anti-globalization" (the ATTACs, Ya Basta!s, and Bonos of the world) that is killing that spirit, not Black Blocs or militant confrontation.

All this having been said, we do believe that there are also times when other tactics and methods of organization are warranted, because of the risks involved or other security concerns. We firmly believe that actions of this sort can still be very much positive in the advancement of anarchist and anti-authoritarian ideas when organized with a strong regard for security culture, via networks of trusted affinity groups, and in line with anarchist principles of voluntary association. The critical difference between anarchists organizing in this fashion and Marxist-Leninists is the conception that the particular groups has of itself. Evidently, Marxist-Leninists see armed or underground formations as revolutionary vanguards. On the other hand, anarchist or anti-authoritarian influenced groupings try to serve as appendages to struggles, to complement them through other means, much like the Autonomous Commandos of the Basque country, who carried out actions to aid striking workers or against the forces of repression, or Direct Action and the Wimmins Fire Brigade in Canada, who also sought to advance ongoing struggles by bringing attention to them, while at the same time radicalizing their character.

In Conclusion

We are indeed opposed to the fetishization of the Black Bloc, which leads, among other things, to the phenomenon of Black Bloc spectators as well as "Black Bloc as fashion." We further agree that the Black Bloc, being but one tool of many available

to us, is not appropriate for all circumstances. Indeed, for it to remain effective, it is imperative that it be used intelligently. Also, like the WSM, we see some serious problems developing within the Black Bloc tactic that merit serious attention and open discussion.

However, while we cannot stress enough that we are open to discussions of militant tactics and strategy, we feel that discussion around the issue is often tackled from an exceedingly narrow and short-sighted perspective. This often leads to an analysis that we deem to be significantly problematic and that could have important consequences for anarchism as a serious political movement.

First, this analysis views Black Blocs solely within the context of the anti-globalization struggle, and more precisely, the mass convergences that often come with it. To us, these mainly provide outlets for symbolic action, while the greatest strength of Black Blocs, when used appropriately and organized effectively, is real direct action used to advance day to day class struggle, in the form of strikes, housing occupations, anti-fascist struggles, immigrants rights struggles, etc., all of which are fronts on which the Black Bloc tactic has already proven it's efficiency and value.

Furthermore, this line of thinking places a dichotomy between effective militant action and participatory and directly democratic forms of self-managed struggle and organization. This is dangerous in that it threatens to dissuade anarchists from using what is very likely our most powerful weapon; our disregard for legality and our willingness to engage in militant mass confrontations, coupled with confidence in the ability of people to organize themselves to take back power and control over their lives.

Finally, by identifying the battle between police and militant elements as the prime motivation for the increasing difficulty of revolutionary anarchists to find a place for themselves in the anti-globalization "movement," this outlook ignores the quite blatant reality of a "movement" being rapidly hijacked. A "movement" being hijacked by power seeking reformists and opportunists, who need to isolate and discredit revolutionaries and all those who maintain that a profound change in society is not only desirable, but possible and viable, in order to harness the growing power of the anti-globalization backlash. These are the Lenins, Trotskys, and Stalins of our day, willing and able to persecute, betray, discredit, and isolate anarchists in order to advance their ends. Movement criticism and analysis are indeed important things, but this is a case where looking inwards by placing responsibility for the State's escalation of repression on militant tactics risks making us blind to the challenges we face from within the "united front" of anti-capitalist groups. This has been one of the most painful lesson of anarchist history, and if we are truly striving for an authentic anti-authoritarian revolution, rather than another change of masters, we should endeavor to not make the same mistake again.

Defeating Mass Arrests
V Formations & Police Lines
By Luke, October 2002

This writing concerns a tactic that can be used for defeating mass arrest attempts by breaking through police lines. The basic idea is that there are security contingents stationed throughout the crowd in full armor and full equipment for breaking through police lines, plus scouts several blocks away reporting cop movements. Obviously, we have not been able to consistently rely on other groups appearing to relieve the siege like Votermarch did in the Counterinaugural!

The idea for the security contingents is based on last year's (S29) mass breakout by 30 equipped people from the police encirclement in Murrow Park. They were in full pads with trash can lid shields and bats, they found a thin spot and smashed through. Had the crowd followed through, and especially if two more such units provided flank security, the encirclement would have been defeated. The security contingents should be on EVERY block of the protests and should include at least ten fully armored protestors for the spearhead. If police close a trap and no peaceful way out exists, the contingent forms a wedge with the more lightly armored people filling in the V, and charges the police line like on S29/2001. The crowd follows IMMEDIATELY to exploit the hole and drive the spearhead through if resistance is especially severe. Each member of the contingent should be wearing his/her gas mask as well as helmet and armor during the charge, but should conceal this gear during peaceful times to reduce identification/neutralization risks.

The scouts report on the presence of buses, motorbikes, and blocking units so the crowd can maneuver to avoid being boxed in and preemptively block streets the riot cops are approaching on while the whole group escapes. In general, the crowd refuses to enter areas surrounded on three sides and if the cops are on two sides uses caution and deploys the security units in the REAR to secure escape routes, like we did in Atlanta during the 1988 Democratic National Convention anti-Klan rally. In that action we had to deploy down a long alley to engage the KKK, so we left a sizable group to hold the opening of the alley to avoid being trapped between cops and Klan. Since the presence of the spearhead units causes it to require several times as many cops to encircle a group, so as to avoid thin spots, it creates a disincentive on their part to try to encircle any one group while others are still out there to benefit from the reduced police presence OUTSIDE the box. They will not always be able to put a triple line around one large group, and may not even attempt it if it means the possibility of allowing one group to score a physical victory over a mass arrest attempt, and all the others a free hand to engage in offensive action.

It's much easier to defeat mass arrests than to get back out afterwards. Shields and gas masks are less expensive than lawyers, as well.

The Black Bloc Papers: an Afterward by Xavier Massot

The times are calling, and have been for a while, for a change in the running of human affairs. This is common knowledge, and no argument can undo this obvious conclusion. The only point against active protest is the desire for survival and safety on the part of those who would risk change, but this is a boring and ultimately futile and self-deceptive avenue, selfish and used up. It is true that the young have more life to live and that old have other things to worry about, but the space will get filled. It always gets filled, with an endless supply of woes to prod people to action.

The Black Bloc has continued a long tradition of resisting, of standing firm for the benefit of generations to come. A stand is something to take without fear, or at least without flinching. Think back to all the movements that you have felt empathy for. Take that feeling into account, look at your surroundings, take stock of those around you as best you can and let go. No individual can make a mess so big that it cannot be cleaned up. That is the way it should be.

Gears are grinding and fuck power and let yourself go a little in whatever direction may seem fitting. Remember your position, remember that your power is finite lest it overgrows and devours more than it needs. We just have to take back all the shit that's being held in surplus or under the guise of false economic gods and use it the way we should-to help each other get through life without it sucking any more ass than it has to.

The struggle will always be with us, it always has, but it need not continually mean defeat. The reality of peoples' problems cannot be denied; what should be is the systems which harvest the growth of their discontent and feed it to the next poor fool in line. It is only through direct concrete action that we will be able to break this centuries-long cycle of oppression. That is our goal, and intention.

Personally, Europe was my origin. I was born and then lived there for more then ten years. I could talk your ear off about a people in the heart of that continent whose language was destroyed and whose essence has been beaten and scattered in the name of progress and Capitalism. I could continue to tell you how I belong to that tribe of humanity. But this is a book mainly for Americans and they already understand because their displacement is their strength and the cause of their success and embarrassment. Even so, it deserves mention that such displacement always seems to translate into more displacement, confusion, resentment, etc. And more often than not these feelings obscure the actual in the distortion of blind anger. This is not to say that such feelings are not legitimate, it's only to say that they are often misguided. For example, the white man is no devil, no more than any other man. However, this common gripe also has some legitimacy and its related offenders must be stopped. The trouble is that the enemy is not only located outside. The truth, and therefore the enemy, as we all know, is always partially within one's rank; within oneself. If we are to ever win, this is something that every one of us must face.

Here I would remind you that I speak as one who can get by, and is generally comfortable with myself. I have faced my shadow, and respected it, and spit on it. Still, I have a great many complaints and I am often loud about these, yet ultimately, like most of us, I await an answer patiently.

The blood boils and ultimately cools down. The boiling blood is not something one forgets, it is important-it matters. What matters about this memory is that it is a key to wisdom, a way of getting away with knowing yourself. Certainly, all those pig-fucking politicians must be rotated over a flame while we drink and screw on the beach of nowhere, but this must all be done for some better reason than simple revenge for the humiliations of daily life. The Black Bloc is necessary, it is a truth. It shows an ability which cannot be denied. There have been too many stories that end poorly, something has to give. What gives? Well we are going to find out one way or another aren't we? Yes, we will.

I vote that we destroy all the fake obvious and go for the real obvious and find out what people are made of in this stinking day and age. What now? More protest, more cops, an eternal enemy being fought forever? We shall see. I don't see a future in global-capitalism. It has done too much damage to continue for much longer. People are getting tired of feeling lost.

As I write this, Anarchist revolutionaries have already made public ceremonial calls for a Black Bloc to gather at numerous demonstrations across the continent this summer and fall. Maybe it will be at one of those that a situation will arise which will answer some of my concerns in a more complete way. Maybe I will see some of you there. Time will tell, and we, as humans, will do what we do.

It is dawn here in the woods of northern New England. I'm gonna go to sleep and hopefully dream of nicer things than the ridiculous mess which is choking the human race's potential for greatness-justice for starters.

SOLIDARITY

-X

Vermont, Spring 2001

Appendix
CALL FOR A LARGE ANARCHIST PRESENCE AT THE APRIL 24, 1999 MILLIONS FOR MUMIA MARCH IN PHILADELPHIA, PA

Some of us are calling for an anarchist 'Black Bloc' to march at the Mumia rally in Philadelphia on 4.24.1999.

One of us came up with possible slogans (SUGGESTED only):
1) "Unlock Mumia Or Lock Up The System!"
2) "Start A New Trial Or Stop Up The System!"
3) "Overturn the Conviction or Overturn the System!"

We hope an assembly area will be suggested by Philly anarchists and that we will march together and hang together for most or all of the event.

Those of us making this call are a few anarchists who used to be in Love and Rage. We call on all anarchists to get involved (anarchist-syndicalists, anarchist-communists, anarchist-individualists, anarcho-punks, eco-anarchists, social anarchists, anarcho pacifists, libertarian socialists, libertarian communists, council communists, libertarian municipalists and non-hyphenated anarchists!)

We call on you to really try to get other anarchists to come out, especially those who usually don't get out to demos often, those who haven't been to one in a while or those who have never been to one!

We call on anarchists from the northeast, mid-Atlantic, southeast, mid-west, eastern Canada, (even overseas!) to attend. We call on anarchists at the San Francisco march, and other west coast cities, to hold Black Blocs there too.

Come out on April 24th! Free Mumia!
Any other/better ideas? You don't like it?

Contact us at:
email: jmcintosh@wvwise.org
or post:
Black Bloc c/o
PO Box 563
Morgantown, WV 26507

Acknowledgement
A note from those who put this book together

Writing this book was a bizarre process. Here is a list of hats-offs to those people and things which helped in bringing my portion to fruition, both directly and indirectly.
—X

Mama y Papa—because you always have to thank those people
Rock-N-Roll music—for making life better
The Cocked family—for drinking more than anyone
Ever Bean town and the Mass-holes—for inspiration
The Twitch—for twitching
BS—for Buber, Heidegger, and the whirling dervishes jon-for being older
MP—for jumping on tables
German girl—for the niceness lil'orphan annie-for false affirmations
Fat Dog and co.—for making puppies and going to jail SMZ-for the memories
Lady—for being a trooper
BoB—for truth, justice, and beauty Hellen-for no dancing the Guv'nor-for doing his job
C+C—for coordinating in a central location Risteard-for that Oi Polloi record
Idget—for talkin kind of dumb sometimes Jim Beam—for seeing us through and Satan—for giving me the chickenpox the morning after my first communion.

There are certainly some M.I.A's in this list, but hey, what can you do?

David thanks:

- all those who have taken action within the Black Bloc.
- the Earth Liberation Front
- The Northeastern Federation of Anarchist-Communists
- Federation of Revolutionary Anarchist Collectives/Great Lakes Region (Great Lakes, North America)
- Anti-Rascist Action
- The Industrial Workers of The World

- Food Not Bombs
- The Independent Media Center (IMC) (website; www.indymedia.org)
- The Barricada Collective
- all those who were and are part of The Green Mountain Anarchist Collective
- the CCC
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- U.S. Condemned (for being the greatest punk band ever!
- Our Comrades throughout the Green Mountains and
- all those who continue to struggle for the working class revolution.

The Ted K Archive

The Green Mountain Anarchist Collective, Xavier Massot, David Van Deusen
The Black Bloc Papers
An Anthology of Primary Texts From The North American Anarchist Black Bloc
1988-2005 The Battle of Seattle Through The Anti-War Movement
2002

<web.archive.org/.../www.infoshop.org>
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