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MONTREAL

COUNTER-INFORMATION

AUTONOMOUS COMMUNICATION FOR THE STRUGGLE AGAINST AUTHORITY

MTLCOUNTER-INFO.ORG aspires to provide a space for anarchists in Montreal to diffuse their ideas and actions across overlapping networks and tendencies, outside the realm of leftist or corporate media projects. We want to encourage consistent reflection, critique, and engagement with the projects of revolt and struggle happening in this city. We want this project to contribute to clarifying ideas, sharpening practices, finding common points of departure, and exploring differences in projects and initiatives.

To this end, this website will publish news, report-backs, communiqués, and other written works; and will host an archive of counter-information such as flyers, posters, publications, banners, and graffiti. We would love to see widespread contribution to this project, so please submit content!

“When we say “counter-information”, we mean information “from below”. In other words, we mean that on the one hand there exists dominant information that offers the view of authority on events – and often even shapes them. On the other hand, there are parts of the society that are competitive and hostile toward authority and that organise their own channels of information.

When we talk about counter-information during December’s events we do not by any means speak of a solid or homogeneous flow of information – quite the opposite. What gave shivers of hope to some and fear to others was the fact that the communicative explosion – mirroring the explosive reality in the streets – was uncontrollable, with many nodes and means of transmission, different codes, diverse transmitters and

receivers. Groups and collectives would publish posters, distribute brochures, use public address systems to inform people of current affairs in crowded public locations, and spray paint messages in the streets.

Overall, in December the entire spectrum of communication mediums was utilised (banners, slogans, stencils, texts, communiqués) in initiatives and actions that were “transplanted” with much creativity from the streets to many aspects of public life – schools, radio stations, theatres, the Acropolis, and so on. There exists, of course, a common denominator in all the examples above: unmediated communication.”

- THE (REVOLT) MEDIUM IS THE MESSAGE: COUNTER- INFORMATION AND THE 2008 REVOLT IN GREECE

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Montreal Counter-info is not a political organization. We do not organize protests, demonstrations, or other actions, although we do give space for various groups to report, build, and create capacity for various actions as they relate to social manifestations, struggles, and movements.

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June 11th, International Day of Solidarity with Marius Mason & All Long-Term Anarchist Prisoners, is less than a month away. Montreal will be participating by having a board-game night featuring an Earth Liberation Front edition of Clue! (June 11, La Deferle, 7 pm)

Forest Friends: Get (A) Clue! is a game where players try to figure out the three main facts of an attack against Industrial Civilization: the attacker (animal), the location of the attack, and the weapon used in the attack. We do this so that the animal can be celebrated by all of their fellow forest friends (because there are no forest cops who want to imprison these comrades for their brave actions in this imaginary world).

Rather than the library, you’ve got Vail Mountain Ski Resort. Rather than the dagger, you’ve got gasoline and matches. Find the boardgame, rulebook, characters, cards, ELF action location descriptions, and play sheets in the centre-fold!



Forest Friends: Get (A) Clue!, an Earth Liberation Front boardgame, is included in the centre-fold!



“Cops Protect Fascists”

AS THE FAR-RIGHT ATTEMPTED TO MOBILIZE DEMONSTRATIONS all over North America on March 4th, anti-fascists came out in force to oppose them. In Montreal, the far-right organized under the banner of La Meute (The Wolf Pack), an anti-Muslim group which was founded by a former soldier in the Canadian army.

Anti-fascists attempted to shut the far-right down, but faced down with an extremely determined police force who were intent on allowing the fascists to march. This was the first time that a far-right organization has been able to hold the streets in Montreal in years.

ASSESSMENT

It's essential to be brutally honest: Today's mobilization was a tactical failure by anti-racists and

anti-fascists in Montreal. It wasn't enough for us to be on the streets or to be more numerous than racists; we needed to minimally prevent the Islamophobic racists from marching and attempt to shut them down. However, more than 100 racist demonstrators, surrounded by cops, succeeded in marching from near City Hall to Berri Square, and we were unable to stop them. This is simply unacceptable, and a huge failure.

For the past two years, despite the recent rise of anti-immigrant, racist groups, we have prevented the far-right from marching or demonstrating publicly, or confronted them with some success (eg: failed Pégida demonstrations in St-Michel and Villerey; failed JDL mobilizations and events in Montreal; preventing the anti-immigrant, racist Marche du Silence; actively confronting Marine LePen's visit to

Montreal). Today, the racist far-right succeeded in marching on Montreal's streets, and there's no way to sugar-coat that reality.

Speaking with comrades afterwards, and reflecting personally, there were several immediate reasons for our collective failure, in my opinion:

i) When our 400 strong contingent was separated from the racist demonstration and there was essentially a 45-minute period where we were on one side and their 100+ demo was on the other, a critical mass of our main demo (perhaps at least 50 to 100 people) should have moved on side streets to the other side, to box-in the racists. It would have been harder for the cops to push through us to allow a racist march than for us to get through riot cops (which we weren't able to do). To be fair, people were talking about this, some individuals did move, but it never happened in an effective, decisive way.

ii) Our anti-racist demonstration should have been much larger. We were no more than 400 people at the high point, and we should have been at least 1000 people. Please, take calls to confront fascists and racists seriously, change plans if necessary, and show up (if you have the ability to do so), or play just-as-necessary support roles to allow other people to show up.

iii) Show up on time when confronting racists; we were 400 people at the high point, but likely only 200 at 11:30am. There were already racists present, and we could have perhaps coordinated a break into two anti-racist demos, to box-in the racists, if more people were present earlier.

iv) The racist, anti-immigrant, Islamophobes were mobilized and organized. They managed to gather together at least 100 people. The "Canadian Coalition of Concerned Citizens", the nebulous Islamophobic group that called the protest across Canada, was essentially taken over in Quebec by the racist La Meute group, who organize on quasi-military lines. We are way beyond the days when activist cynics would de-prioritize anti-fascist efforts as not central to organizing because only a handful of fascists would show up to the racist demos they tried to organize (our mobilizations had something to do with keeping those fascists to a handful). The racist, anti-immigrant far-right is organized and mobilized in Quebec, including in Montreal. From reports I've read and videos I've seen, these racists marched openly (albeit

in small numbers) in Quebec City and Chicoutimi today, in addition to Montreal.

v) Not only did the racist demo manage to march, surrounded by cops, from near City Hall to Berri Square, but La Meute arrived at the demo by marching from Berri Square to City Hall (coordinating their efforts with the cops). It was a tactical failure not to know about this march in advance and to do something about it.

vi) Our collective communications today was a failure. Next time, there needs to be organized, not improvised, runners and scouts, and some level of coordinated, reliable communications, part of a collective plan to surround the racists, box them-in, and then try to shut them down.

One possible positive outcome of today's failure to shut-down racists is that we can be less complacent in our anti-fascist organizing, and get better organized, meaning also to not rely on "antifa" being a subculture, but rather a central organizing priority of all groups that oppose racism and fascism. Another outcome is that we need to take the growing anti-immigrant, far-right in Quebec and Canada seriously (in case some people weren't). Another outcome is to challenge our existing organizing models, especially the reliance (by some) on total improvisation over some basic, reliable, necessary organization.

REPORT-BACK

For those who weren't there, here's a bare-bones report-back of what happened:

The callout for an anti-fascist/anti-racist counter-demo was timed for 11:30am, at least 30 minutes before the racist demo was going to start in front of Montreal City Hall. Before 11:30am, about a dozen people who were intending to protest at the racist march were present, with about 100 anti-racists present, with more arriving slowly over the next 30 minutes. There were verbal confrontations, and at least one physical confrontation, between the racists and anti-racists. The cops ended up dividing up the two groups, with the racists moved by the cops to the east of City Hall, and our larger group of anti-racists to the west. A line of cops separated us and created a buffer zone of about half a block between the racists and anti-racists.

For about 45 minutes, or more, there was chanting from our end to the other end.

During that time, the La Meute people arrived and joined the small group of racists. Their numbers increased from a few dozen to about 100 or more, waving their clearly visible wolf claw flags. A small group held up “Pégida Quebec” signs (a reference to the anti-Islam, anti-immigrant group that began in Germany, and failed at previous attempts in Montreal to demonstrate publicly).

It became clear that the racist demo began marching east on Notre-Dame towards Berri. The police line was moving back and we followed it (although in retrospect we should have just doubled back to try to block the racist demo). During this move, there were skirmishes with the riot cops. The cops deployed pepper spray and some comrades received baton blows (one individual had his teeth cracked by a baton blow; we got the badge number of the cop and will follow-up with support).

Eventually, there was seemingly a collective strategy, and that was to try to catch the racist march by running up (at one point, literally running) St-Denis street, and trying to go across a side street to Berri to confront the racists. However, both times this was attempted (that I observed) a line of riot police (and bike cops) prevented us from getting to the racist demo.

By the time we reached De Maisonneuve and St-Denis, La Meute had already arrived at Berri Square and was dispersing. The main group of anti-racists went north to try to find a way to double-back to Berri Square. I was part of a small group that stayed, and seeing that the cops were demobilizing, walked to Berri Square. There were about 50-75 La Meute people left, dispersing, so we heckled from a distance. Riot cops were present, and eventually set up a line against our small (20 people) group.

Much later (about 10 minutes later), the larger anti-racist group arrived, but everything was over. Some folks took solace in burning the signs that the racists left, and singing the Internationale, but that definitely wasn't my mindset after such a huge tactical failure.

FOR THE LIBERALS...

Here's a reminder about why the demo today was racist, Islamophobic and anti-immigrant (and not simply about M103 and free speech): The individual(s) behind the Canadian Coalition of Concerned Citizens have publicly

expressed anti-immigrant views, deliberately exaggerated the effects of motion M103 and other policies in an Islamophobic way, expressed openly their admiration for Marine Le Pen and Donald Trump, posted videos from extreme far-right groups in Eastern Europe with slogans like “Islam out” and “no more mosques,” and expressed quasi-anti-Semitic conspiracy theories about George Soros and the world order. Their Quebec-based marches have been openly supported, and organized, by far-right, anti-immigrant, anti-Muslim groups like La Meute. These groups claim to be concerned about Islam and Islamization, and not against Muslims, but when you deliberately exaggerate and repeat toxic falsehoods about Muslims and Islam, not to mention immigrants, then you're being Islamophobic and racist. Individuals associated with these groups have both committed violence and express violence against identifiable groups (those groups – Muslims, migrants, people of colour, antifa activists – do not include white liberals).

The position of the groups who mobilized for today's anti-racist counter-demonstration is that we don't provide public space in our streets and neighborhoods for racists. Today wasn't the day to “dialogue” with racists, but rather to shut them down. Some of us do dialogue with racists (many of us people of colour don't really have a choice, the “dialogue” is imposed on us) but today was about an attempted shut down. Liberal second-guessing of effective anti-fascist tactics the moment when we're trying to implement those tactics in the face of riot police, pepper spray and violent racists who have threatened us, at a demo based on clear callout to shut down fascists and racists, is incredibly counter-productive to an effective anti-racist movement. So are your condescending lessons about “diversity.” Fuck you.

Hoping this assessment and report-back is useful to people who were both present and not present at Montreal's demo. More discussions, in our organizing spaces and elsewhere, are certainly going to happen, and this is one quick day-of contribution.

– Jaggi Singh, member of *le Collectif de résistance antiraciste de Montréal (CRAM)* and *Solidarité sans frontières* (this report-back is a personal reflection)



Frontlines in the Fight Against Islamophobia

ON MARCH 4TH A SERIES OF ISLAMOPHOBIC demonstrations had been called across Canada, by a (probably one-person) group known as the Canadian Coalition of Concerned Citizens. Ostensibly the rallies were against Bill M-103, a parliamentary private member's motion condemning Islamophobia (in the wake of the massacre at a mosque in Quebec City earlier this year), which the CCCC framed as an attack on free speech¹. So the March 4th rallies were officially “for free speech, against sharia law and against globalization,” and internal guidelines specifically told people not to bring white power or openly racist signs (which of course didn't stop them from shouting “race traitor” at us as they arrived, or giving nazi salutes).

Georges Hallak, the Montreal-based Islamophobe behind the CCCC, seems to have adopted a “throw it at the wall and see if it sticks” approach, setting up facebook events across Canada for pickets and then posting asking if anybody local could bottomline the effort. Not only did this meet with some success in English Canada — in that local racists did in many cities join in and showed up on the day in question (though generally outnumbered and drowned out by antiracists) — but in Quebec the effort was taken up by the province's far-Right groups, and became an opening for the first coordinated and united far-Right “coming out” here.

Radical forces in Montreal — generally spearheaded by anarchists and Maoists — have consistently shut down every single known far-Right public gathering for over 20 years now; once again, this time these forces prepared to do what they had in the past. Despite the very cold temperatures (-20 c), about the same numbers came out as at the multiple antifascist mobilizations in 2016 (a few hundred), and some people were prepared to do things. However, what was different was that whereas in 2016 there were at most a dozen racists who showed up, this time there were over 100, with a competent and imposing security detail of their own, and coordinating with police.

Superficially in Montreal, our side held the upper hand — we were more than them, a few of their people did get smacked, a few of their signs and flags were taken by force, the police were positioned to “protect” them from us, and when some of us did outflank the police the fascists were moved away and then finally dispersed —but this was really a failure for us. The racists marched through downtown to get to the rally site; once this racist contingent got there, they were able to hold their corner (protected by cops) for over an hour, putting on an impressive display (big flags, signs, etc.). When finally the police were outflanked and some of our forces were able to get to the racists, the latter were not sent running but under police escort they marched in an orderly fashion back

¹ M-103 is an unremarkable standard politician's denunciation of racism. It is a non-binding motion calling for the problem of racism and Islamophobia to be recognized and uprooted, for studies to be done and statistics collected, and for solutions to be found, but does not actually suggest anything concrete beyond this.

to their starting point, from where they dispersed.

The above has been the goal of the far-Right for years, but those groups that tried (most recently, multiple times in 2015 and 2016, PEGIDA Quebec) have not been able to pull it off — each and every time, their forces were tiny, and they appeared as losers. Today from various reports, and from what we could see on the 4th, they feel like anything but. Given that in the past for every person who showed up on their side, there were a dozen who on social media said they would but did not (out of fear of being vastly outnumbered and humiliated or hurt), the fact that they pulled it off may mean they can do even better next time.

In Quebec City — obscenely, the city where five weeks ago a far-Rightist killed six people and seriously injured many more when he shot up a mosque — things were worse. The far-Right mobilized over 100 people; most of those who showed up were middle aged or older, and probably not the type who would have been up to a physical confrontation. However, a smaller contingent associated with the fascist group Atalante were also present, and at a certain point it looked like they might have been looking for a fight. Given the smaller number of antifascists present on the 4th, it is unclear if the police had not been there, who would have been sent running.

(To contextualize the situation in Quebec City, it should be noted that the week earlier there had been a well-attended anti-racist festival and large anti-racist demonstration; it is not a matter of there not being positive developments on the ground, just that for a variety of reasons these did not translate into a favourable balance of forces for us on the 4th.)

In Saguenay, northeast of Quebec City, there were roughly 100 racists who marched, with half as many antiracists. In smaller numbers, similar forces came together in the cities of



Trois Rivieres and Sherbrooke.

Both far-Right organizational work, and an unhealthy Islamophobic social environment, helped lay the basis for March 4th.

THE PLAYERS

The CCCC's call had been taken up throughout Quebec by La Meute ("the wolfpack"), a far-Right organization with an impressive internet presence (over 43,000 members of its zero-security facebook group) that had been biding its time waiting for the moment to stage a major public event outside of cyberreality.

Founded in 2015 by two ex-soldiers, Éric Venne (alias Eric Corvus) and Patrick Beaudry, the group's first events were in the Quebec City and Saguenay areas. In August 2016 their fliers started appearing in public places, and a few weeks later Venne and other members disrupted an information event organized by a group of volunteers planning to host a family of Syrian refugees

As is not uncommon with such groups, La Meute claim to be neither far-Right nor racist, just "against sharia law" and "radical Islam." Furthermore, and still in line with many but not all such groups, their opposition to Islam is partly justified in terms of the latter being sexist and homophobic; Venne even made a point of attending the vigil in Montreal's Gay Vil-

lage following the June 2016 massacre at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando.

La Meute's stated goal is to become a large political force within the mainstream, however it remains a far-Right group, albeit one that does not like to be described that way. In the words of its media liaison Sylvain Brouillette (aka Sylvain Maikan), "Marine Le Pen is a lot closer to us than Donald Trump." As shown on the 4th, La Meute aims to attract people ranging from conscious far-Right racists to people who sincerely do not think of themselves that way, but who are motivated by a combination of misinformation and fear about Muslims.

March 4th was an important test for La Meute; had it been trounced, this would have been a major setback. The group has been getting a lot of press based on its large facebook membership, but as we all know in and of itself that is a meaningless thing — in other words, for them, it was a "show up or shut up" situation. Smaller groups (PEGIDA Quebec, Soldiers of Odin), boneheads, and others who either don't choose to, or who don't manage to, do anything public with real numbers in Montreal, also joined in. So suddenly all of these little scenes with one person here and one person there, coalesced into something we could not shut down, under La Meute's protection. People are guessing a lot of people came in from out-

side of Montreal, which may be true, but is a bit irrelevant. Plus, as there were also rallies in other cities, outside forces in Montreal should have been less of a factor than in previous mobilizations.

And remember: outside of Montreal, antifascist protesters were actually outnumbered by the racists.

Quebec City is the province's capital; it is a smaller, far more white, and far more conservative city than Montreal. Furthermore, for years now it has been stewing in racist "talk radio" propaganda, which often singles out Muslims as some kind of threat to not only "the West" but to Quebec in particular, often in terms indistinguishable from groups like La Meute. In such a conducive setting, several far-Right groups have been able to develop.

Besides La Meute, another group active in Quebec City is the Soldiers of Odin, an international organization that first started in Finland, largely based around setting up anti-Muslim street patrols. In 2016 the group set up several chapters across Canada, including in Quebec. In January 2017 there was a shakeup in the Quebec organization, with leader Dave Tregget replaced by the Katy Latulippe, a hardliner (Tregget has since set up a new group, the Storm Alliance). According to a recent newspaper article, Latulippe "has vowed to return the Quebec branch of the Soldiers of Odin to its Finnish roots and ramp up patrols of the more Muslim areas of Quebec City. The goal, she says, is not to intimidate Muslim immigrants but rather make them aware of Quebec values."

One other noteworthy group – that was also active in Quebec City on March 4th, along with La Meute, Soldiers of Odin, and Storm Alliance – is Atalante, a third position group which includes several boneheads and former boneheads (the group has been promoted at shows of the band Legitimate Violence). Atalante is a part of the most clearly fascist and un-

selfconsciously racist tendency in the Quebec far-Right, along with groups like the Federation des Quebecois de Souche (more present in the Saguenay area) and La Bannière Noire (based in Montreal).

While small, Atalante has been busy since it was founded; over the past year it has held two public protests in Quebec City, organized a talk by Italian far-Right intellectual Gabriele Adinolfi (himself one of the founders of Third Position politics) and a public Catholic mass with the Society of Saint Pius X (a breakaway Roman Catholic sect with close ties to the far-Right internationally). As part of its third position approach, Atalante organized events providing free food and toys in working class neighbourhoods – but to "neo-French" only.

On the 4th in Quebec City, whereas La Meute formed the bulk of the demo, it was Atalante who seemed at one point poised to fight with our side. That said, their relationship to the broader anti-Muslim upsurge is not without nuance: in a statement they subsequently posted to facebook they criticized the narrow focus on Islam, saying the real enemies were multiculturalism, mass immigration, and the "banksters" system, and condemning as useless any mobilization that shied away from this. In a similar vein, their banner that day was inscribed with a modified quote from Marx: "Immigration — The Reserve Army of Capital." (This is not the first time Atalante has made a point of criticizing less ideological racists – recently, they also leafleted a book launch of mainstream Islamophobic journalist Mathieu Bock-Côté, urging a more radical approach.)

SOCIAL CONTEXT

Beyond the involvement and organizational work of specific far-Right groups, there are broader social factors behind the stark difference in how March 4th played out in Quebec and in English Canada. Islamo-

phobia and xenophobia in general are less contested in the public arena in Quebec than elsewhere in Canada, and the left's response to racism (for generations now) has been far weaker and more incoherent than anywhere else in North America. This is because the complication of national identity and Quebec nationalism was never neutralized or resolved in a liberatory manner here. So while in many other places there is a large non-left section of the population who might be hostile to the far-Right because they see them as being somehow extremist, undemocratic, or otherwise unsavoury (for reasons we would consider not left, but which we still benefit from if only passively), in Quebec that section of the population is far more ambivalent and can swing either way depending on how things are framed. It gives the organized racists a larger pool to fish in, and more room to operate in, on the level of ideas. I.e. they are not always considered "beyond the pale."

Still, it is worth reminding readers that during the period of the New Left, the so-called "long sixties", Quebec was a progressive pole within Canada, and the Quebec nationalist movement was dominated by progressive forces. While this is not the place to go into an extended history of what went wrong, some of the roots of the problem can be traced back to this "high point", where an identification with the anti-colonial forces worldwide, led many Quebecois nationalists to dismiss the possibility of their own nation being an oppressor, or of their own movement being a vehicle of racism. It is not uncommon today to find former radicals, left-wing activists and even leaders from that generation, holding openly racist and far-Right positions. What is perhaps different from other contexts in North America, is that these individuals do not always appreciate the fact that they have switched sides.

Add to this a series of orchestrated racist surges in Quebec

over the past ten years, as a populist-nationalist right grew and seized upon Islamophobia as a way to increase its support and outflank their political opponents. Once Islamophobia proved a winning ticket, suddenly everyone wanted to have some, and several of the mainstream political parties – including social democrats and “feminists” and even “leftists” – started either engaging in or tailing anti-Muslim fearmongering, along the lines that they are terrorists or sexists or invaders intent on imposing Sharia law. If March 4th represented a significant far-Right advance, it was on a road paved by not only the mainstream right, but by some “progressives” too.

In addition to the above, the massacre on January 29th, when Alexandre Bissonnette (a far-Rightist) shot up a mosque in the Quebec City suburb of St-Foy, actually encouraged the far-Right. (The mosque had been targeted with Islamophobic vandalism multiple times before, including in June 2016 having a pig’s head left on its doorstep with a note reading “bon appetit.”)

While thousands of people came out in vigils after the massacre, and there was a lot of play in the media about Islamophobia for a few days, the aforementioned national-identity-issue in Quebec made it so that within a week not only the neonazis and fascists, but large swathes of the populist-nationalist right as well had reinterpreted the event as one where Quebec was now under attack by the “multiculturalists” and “islamists” who wanted to “exploit” the killings to clamp down on free speech, to humiliate or slander Quebec as somehow being racist, etc. – all as perfectly symbolized by the (meaningless) Bill M-103. These people sincerely feel that there is a lot of racism in Canada against Quebec, and that any talk of “islamophobia” is a smokescreen for this — and it must be said, this is a position that the left has never neutralized here, even within its own ranks.

While the January 29th massacre was condemned by almost all sections of the far-Right, it is not an exaggeration to say that many see the Quebec nation as having been the real victim. Furthermore, the attack clearly emboldened and encouraged other far-Right forces, and everyday racists, not only in Quebec but across English Canada too. It has been followed by a series of acts of vandalism against mosques, an anti-Muslim bomb threat at Concordia University in Montreal, and renewed attacks on Muslims in the media, especially on talk radio.

This is the context in which March 4th took place.

NOT JUST TRUMP

Quebec is a different nation from English Canada or the United States; while “the Trump effect” plays a part in things here, there are also internal processes at work which were leading in this direction regardless. Indeed, pointing to Trump, or to Canada’s imperialist crimes in the Middle East, as the main factor behind Islamophobia here, has become an argument mobilized by certain figures who seek to downplay or simply deny the deep roots of racism in Quebec. By blaming policies that are decided in Ottawa and Washington DC, such arguments leave Quebec once again the innocent victim, free of all blame.

There are many examples of this, but the most outrageous one is probably the article *The New World Order Hits Quebec City* by Robin Philpot, a long time anglophone apologist for racism in Quebec (as early as 1991, Philpot was writing that the Mohawk Warrior Society in its conflict with the Quebec State was merely acting as a catpaw for either the CIA or RCMP). Philpot’s “New World Order” article, which first appeared on the Montreal-based Global Research website and was subsequently reposted on Counterpunch, essentially argues that the January 29th massacre was a result of global imperialism, not

of any particular problem with Islamophobia here. Indeed, covering up numerous mass-based Islamophobic mobilizations in Quebec, Philpot argues that the province cannot be Islamophobic because ... there were large antiwar demonstrations here in 2003!

That such arguments lead nowhere can be shown by the simple fact that they fail to predict or explain things like March 4th.

In order to understand things, Quebec needs to be viewed as a distinct nation, but also as one which is embedded within and largely sees itself as belonging to the broader 21st century supra-national identities of “whiteness” and “the West” – not only in terms of the white West’s crimes abroad, but also in terms of social relations “at home.” This makes Quebec in some ways the same, in some ways different from other purportedly “white” “Western” societies. For instance, in terms of the groups discussed here, many of the intellectual reference points are different (i.e. more European, more hardcore Catholic), and even when they are shared (i.e. the European New Right which also impacted the American alt-right) they play a different role because they came here untranslated and through different channels.

The “strategic quality” of a far-Right breakthrough here, for those of you in the U.S., would be difficult to measure, and might not be much. On the other hand, as recent events have shown, any place these people can advance significantly, can constitute an inspiration or a leverage-point for their ilk elsewhere.

One way or another, what is now on the agenda for those of us in Quebec is to determine the meaning of recent events. For antifascists and other progressive forces, the priority is clear: building on our positions of strength, reaching out to new allies, and making sure that something like March 4th does not happen again.



March 15 in Montreal: Police Attacked, Kettle Broken

A COUPLE HUNDRED PEOPLE GATHERED YESTERDAY EVENING at Place Valois in Hochelaga for the 20th annual edition of the Demonstration Against Police Brutality, organized by the Collective Opposed to Police Brutality (COBP). It was the day after the largest snowstorm of the year in Montreal, and the mounds of snow lining the streets meant obstacles for both demonstrators and the cops. Refusing the protest framework demanding less brutal police, we carried with us the memory of March fifteenth past and their legacy of anti-police revolt. Also, rocks.

The words of a report-back from the last March 15 in Hochelaga seven years ago still ring true:

"We went to that demonstration intending to attack the police. Apart from all the weapons we brought, we carried with us a desire to no longer see a single cop walk the streets the next day; at least without a limp, a headache and a feeling of fear that no overtime pay could reconcile. We went out into the streets to hit them as if we could actually smack them the fuck out of our lives, with no guilt, remorse or shame about it. While acknowledging that we have yet to realize the depth of our desires (cops aren't yet running for their lives), we can still move our lives and projects in that direction."

- *Measuring the Meaning of a March, in March, in Montreal*

REPORT-BACK

After a speech by the COBP, the crowd set off west down Ontario Street, about a third of which was masked. A dozen black flags and a couple reinforced banners could be seen near the front of the demo, in addition to a leading COBP banner. There were no police marching alongside the demo, as they kept out of projectile range from all directions, and were likely also dissuaded by snow conditions. While some police followed along parallel streets, apparently at least some of the riot squad had to take the metro, possibly due to the storm disrupting their original transport plans. Some rocks were distributed and additional projectiles sought along Ontario, though without much success, as everything was covered in snow.

We rapidly and uneventfully crossed Centre-Sud and reached the eastern edge of the downtown core, a firework set off above us to announce our arrival in comfortable and well-known terrain. Individuals in the bloc asked the front banner to slow down several times; it felt like the demo was running after itself, with no good reason to be. This made it very difficult



for people running late to join, or the demo to stay tight. We would like to see future demos slow down, or even stop, when there isn't an immediate threat from police – allowing more smashing, graffing, wheatpasting, barricading, dancing!

Approaching the area around the Montreal police (SPVM) headquarters on Saint-Urbain Street, police in cruisers and on bikes ahead of the demo were attacked with mortar fireworks. As the crowd amassed around the intersection of Ontario and Saint-Urbain, more fireworks were shot at the police mobilizing to defend their headquarters, then at half a dozen police on horseback approaching from the east. “Get those animals off those horses” almost came true as the horses bucked in fear, causing the horse squad to call it quits for the night.

Rather than congregate at the police headquarters and allow the cops to move in, we continued west on Maisonneuve. A few blocks later, more fireworks were shot at cops ahead of us. A photographer tracking and filming a member of the bloc from a close distance had his camera knocked from his hand, prompting a more general confrontation with media at the

front of the march. Rocks and snowballs were thrown at a mainstream media cameraperson, who was then charged with a reinforced banner and knocked to the ground, while his hired goon was beaten with flagpoles from behind the banner.

A lone police cruiser was spotted to our left, parked on Union Street. A crowd quickly swarmed and thoroughly smashed it. On the same block, heading south now, display windows of the Bay department store (one of the oldest colonial businesses of Canada) were smashed and tagged with graffiti. After about fifteen minutes of a determined energy translating into conflictual action amongst the hundred-and-fifty-strong crowd, the cops executed an effective dispersal and kettling maneuver. Riot police lines ran up both sides of the demo, while bike cops chased and closed off exits from behind. Many dispersed on side streets ahead of the cops, but a few dozen people were fed east on Sainte-Catherine into a trap at Place-des-Arts, as more riot cops emerged from Saint-Urbain and blocked off the only remaining exit route.

This never should have been allowed to happen; our strength is on small streets that



give police less mobility, so of course they funneled us towards the most open space downtown. Turning west on St. Catherine against traffic, and offensively attacking the vulnerable bike police who succeeded in intimidating us towards Place-des-Arts, would have at least allowed for a better dispersal.

Instead, hearts sank as the cops quickly tightened the kettle of thirty people against a side of a Place-des-Arts building. But with shouts of “On force!” (“Let’s push!”) and an inspiring confidence and swiftness, before secondary cop lines could form, those kettled pushed against the riot cops blocking the sidewalk from the east and broke free. More riot police tried to block off the new exit routes, but there weren’t enough of them, as people raced through snow banks and snow-covered parking lots, for the most part getting away. Unfortunately, around ten people reportedly ended up in a new kettle that formed in the parking lot outside the SPVM headquarters. They had backpacks seized and were presumably photographed, but were let go without any tickets or charges. The demo ended with no arrests.

TACTICAL CREATIVITY

For combatting the police’s inevitable dispersal strategy, with some planning ahead, a reinforced banner crew could have moved to one of the sidewalks to block or at least delay flanking police lines from getting in position (perhaps accompanied by fire-extinguishers that could be discharged to slow their advance). Throwing projectiles at the flanking cop lines has proven ineffective, as most of the crowd is moving too quickly to fight in cohesive units, making it difficult to throw enough rocks to have an impact on police movements. Let’s also bring the lesson into the future that mortar fireworks were somewhat successful in keeping police at a distance, especially in a terrain where more conventional projectiles were hard to scavenge.

In recent years, the prospect that the black bloc could take time and space away from the police on March 15th has felt remote, so yesterday was definitely inspiring. On one of the two days of the year (the other being May Day) that police prepare for year-round, we were still able to significantly evade police controls, and get conflictual with confidence. This speaks to how we should prepare for de-

mos throughout the year with more confidence in what could be possible. It's clear that we can bring conflict to the streets in a way that doesn't signal the end of the demo, as we've come to expect, but rather the start of something.

We're also left with some strategic questions in relation to demos that we'd appreciate a conversation around. When the police are intentionally and constantly keeping their distance from the demo, when and how should attempts be made to seek out confrontation with them? What other goals do we have in such situations? How can we use the space and time we have in these moments to better prepare for the eventual police attack?

LET'S NOT GIVE THE POLICE EVIDENCE!

A note to the independent journalists of the city: it can be hard to distinguish you from mass-media, who generate incriminating evidence that they readily hand over to police (and who we are going to attack at every chance we get). Distinguish yourself by your behaviour – only film from a distance, and don't film the attackers themselves, only the attackers' targets. Despite whatever good intentions you likely have, if you film people doing crime, it can and will be used to solidify evidence against them (even when wearing a mask, other clothing items or facial features are regularly used by police to identify suspects). You don't wanna be that guy that actively endangers demonstrators by exposing them to police violence, so please take this seriously.

Two more things: never film at the starting point or in the first fifteen minutes of a demo, to allow everyone who plans to wear a mask to have an opportunity to put it on safely. And before publishing videos, always blur the bodies of people who are masked. Check out this tutorial¹ if you're not sure how.

We're encouraged that Document Everything's coverage of the demonstration uses all of these techniques; individuals in the bloc are blurred, and the targets of actions are filmed rather than the people attacking them. During the swarming of the police car, the screen cuts to black and we only hear the sounds of destruction. 99% Media's coverage also blurred individuals smashing the cruiser, but we'd like to critique that they released High-Definition close-up footage of unblurred masked individuals shooting fireworks at cops – no-one's bloc attire is perfect, and footage like this can put

people in a jail cell.

Unfortunately, Document Everything, subMedia, and a few other independent journalists who are clearly on our side were attacked by the bloc – we'd like to see people in the bloc be less indiscriminate towards anyone with a camera. Let's paint and smash the cameras of any mass media without hesitation, but let's also take the time to explain to independent media what practices endanger us. Conversely, Maxime Deland (whose incriminating photos were later published by TVA Nouvelles, and who seems to be the mass media's go-to photographer for confrontational demonstrations) went unnoticed within the bloc because he looked like independent media – here's his face for next time².

AGAINST POLICE, NOT THEIR BRUTALITY

We're thrilled that this year the COBP decided to stop using the failed strategy of denouncing the most egregious behavior of the police, and instead called for decentralized direct actions against them, while expressing inspiration by several attacks on police and surveillance over the last year. The COBP explicitly supported the conflict with the police in their communique the day after the demo:

"We applaud all the autonomous groups that mobilized for March 15th, and that get organized all year long to build a balance of power against the SPVM and all police forces... We witnessed a proactive March 15, with diversified, offensive, and effective actions... We salute the way in which militants fight the police state, and this despite the violence of its response."

We'd like to see this taken one step further by next year's demo being called as against police, period. This year the itinerary was chosen based on the locations of past police murders, and a symbolic acknowledgment of the struggle against gentrification in Hochelaga. Walking through the residential streets of Centre-Sud for a half hour to meet this symbolic goal of starting in Hochelaga didn't feel worthwhile to us. We think for future years it makes more sense to prioritize routes that give us fighting advantages, because revolt is the best form of memory.

¹ On Youtube: How To Blur Out Faces in Adobe Premiere CS6 [ReelRebel Ep.#47]

² Check out the online article.



Anti-gentrification Vandalism in Saint-Henri

ON MARCH 15, 2017, A DOZEN OR SO CONDO owners in Saint-Henri dug their cars out from under the biggest snowfall of the winter, only to learn that their tires had been slashed while they slept.

We carried out this simple action on the eve of the 20th annual Protest Against Police Brutality, in Hochelaga, to emphasize that the struggle against policing and the struggle against gentrification are one and the same: the creation of a world hostile to social control and all forms of domination.

It required minimal planning and could have been done at any of dozens of locations in the neighbourhood.

Through acting, we reflected on tactical choices in the targeting of individual (if random) yuppies and rich people in the context of anti-gentrification activity. Damaging luxury cars is often named as a desirable way of doing so. It was apparent that a bit under half

the cars in the condo parking lots we visited were of luxury brands. We slashed tires of all the cars. Many yuppies decide to display their wealth by other means than a BMW or Mercedes. Regardless of their consumer choices, it's worthwhile to make them feel unsafe in the neighbourhood by damaging their property. And targeting all condo owners' or yuppies' vehicles may make it harder for the cops to catch people in the act, as they will attempt to do if the practice continues to spread, and harder for owners to secure their vehicles, in indoor parking for instance. However, it may be warranted to focus on luxury cars for forms of vandalism that are more visible to passers-by than slashed tires, in the interest of actions being intelligible to neighbors and people on the street.

Fuck the police, long live de-gentrification!

Revolt in the Youth Center of Val-Du-Lac

ON THE NIGHT OF MARCH 21, AT AROUND 10:30, SIX teenagers at the youth center in Val-Du-Lac, near Sherbrooke, decided to revolt against the authorities of the establishment. They threatened to smash everything inside and refused to collaborate with the intervention team at the center. Unsurprisingly, the institution called the cops. The six teenagers resisted their arrest, and will be charged with illegal as-

sembly, assault on an agent, harassment, making threats, and obstruction of police work.

It's heartwarming to see acts of resistance faced with these institutions which are put in place to break these youth, both physically and mentally, and which try to reinsert them into society.

*Solidarity!
-anarchists*



Enbridge Line 3: The Feeblest Head of the Hydra

I STARTED RESEARCHING THIS ARTICLE WHILE AT STANDING Rock, after learning that Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau had approved a \$7.5 billion pipeline project to replace Line 3. At the time, I didn't even know such a proposal was on the table. In so-called Canada, the Kinder Morgan and Energy East pipelines have gotten the lion's share of media attention.

My first thought when I saw the map of the pipeline route was that it seemed calculated to run through areas where the environmental movement is weakest and where anti-oil activism would be most unpopular. My second thought was to ask myself what I could do to help stop it. I think that in more hostile political climates it's even more important that local organizers know that they have the support of a broader movement.

By the time I'd read a few articles I was excited about the possibilities of this campaign. Basically, Line 3 is an aging pipeline that has reached the end of its life-span. You could also

call it a ticking time bomb. My point here is that if the Line 3 replacement project is stopped, and if Line 3 is taken off-line, then for the first time in the history of the anti-pipeline movement, we won't simply be stopping them from expanding their capacity, we'll actually be reducing it. We'll be turning the tide.

WHAT IS LINE 3?

Enbridge's Line 3 Replacement Project is a \$7.5-billion-dollar project, slated to run southeast from Hardisty, Alberta (near Edmonton), through Saskatchewan, Manitoba, North Dakota, and Minnesota to Superior, Wisconsin, on the western tip of Lake Superior. The original 34-inch pipeline was built in 1968. The new pipeline would be 36 inches and could carry 760,000 barrels per day (bpd).

This project would be the most expensive in Enbridge's history. The line is currently transporting about 390,000 bpd, far below its

maximum throughput of 760,000 bpd. Its flow has been restricted for safety reasons.

Bizarrely, in this case Enbridge wants to convince regulators how unsafe Line 3 is. According to expert testimony the company provided to Minnesota's Public Utilities Commission, the corrosion and cracking is so extensive that further use could cause calamitous leaks.

How bad is it? Enbridge says that half of the joints are corroding, and that it has five times more stress cracks per mile than other pipelines in the same corridor. It was originally made with defective steel and the welding was done with outdated technology. One worker called keeping it safe "a game of whack-a-mole."

According to Enbridge, "Approximately 4,000 integrity digs [invasive pipeline inspections] in the US alone are currently forecasted for Line 3 over the next 15 years to maintain its current level of operation. This would result in year-after-year impacts to landowners and the environment. On average, 10-15 digs are forecasted per mile on Line 3 if it is not replaced..."

Enbridge is staring down the clock right now, as the US Justice Department ordered the company back in July to replace the entire pipeline by December 2017 or commit to substantial safety upgrades to the existing line. That decree is part of a settlement the company reached after a massive 2010 spill of 3.8 million litres (around 80,000 gallons) of oil into Michigan's Kalamazoo River.

Although Enbridge is replacing Line 3 because they have to, they're also looking to slip something past the public. Not only does the proposed "replacement" up the capacity of the pipeline, it also would allow it to transport tar sands. Currently, Line 3 carries "light" crude oil—which is largely drawn from Western Canada's conventional oilfields—but a completed Line 3 replacement would allow Enbridge to carry diluted bitumen across the border. This project hasn't had to jump the political hurdles of other border-crossing tar sands pipelines, like the Keystone XL, and already has a presidential permit.

The new line would run parallel to the existing Line 3 for most of its route, but would take a different route for the final 300 kilometres (around 185 miles) between Clearbrook, Minnesota, and Superior, Wisconsin. And, oh yeah, the original pipeline would be decommissioned and left in the ground.

So, let's recap. This "replacement" doubles the capacity for Line 3, changes the product to be shipped, follows a different route, and the pipeline that it will "replace" will remain in the ground. Don't you love living in the age of persuasion?

Honor the Earth, an indigenous-led NGO based in Minnesota, ain't having it. From their website: "Enbridge wants to simply abandon its existing Line 3 pipeline and walk away from it, because it has over 900 "structural anomalies," and build a brand new line in this new corridor. If this new corridor is established, we expect Enbridge to propose building even more pipelines in it. We cannot allow that."

RESISTANCE IN MINNESOTA

Thanks to the amazing work of Honor the Earth and other activists in Minnesota, things are looking good for the campaign against Line 3. Here's a breakdown:

The conservationist group Friends of the Headwaters was formed to divert Line 3 from northern Minnesota's wild rice lakes. They proposed a longer pipeline that would carve further south through agricultural lands. State law requires pipeline companies to submit a simple environmental review of proposed projects. Three years ago, when Enbridge first brought up the Line 3 replacement, they intended to study their chosen site only. Friends of the Headwaters insisted that they also study feasible routes outside the Mississippi River Headwaters area.

A lengthy lawsuit ensued, and in December of 2015 the Minnesota Supreme Court sided with environmentalists. Enbridge was ordered to complete a more comprehensive assessment, including alternate routes.

Minnesota is currently writing its Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Line 3, after months of battle over what the study would include and who would perform the analyses. The draft EIS is scheduled for April 2017 and the public will be able to comment at public hearings. A final permit decision is expected in spring of 2018.

As soon as Minnesota's Environmental Impact Statement is released in April, the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy plans to continue fighting Line 3 in court. So, given all of these factors, for sure Enbridge will fail to meet the project's December 2017

deadline. It will be interesting to see what happens.

Let's be real, though. There's a shit-ton of money at stake here. I find it hard to imagine regulators taking a 390,000 bpd pipeline off-line. I'm not aware of a major pipeline ever having been taken off-line because it is old and unsafe. One example of such a pipeline is the TransNorthern pipeline in Eastern Canada. Back in November, a trio of Quebecois women shut down this pipeline through a lockdown action. They did so to bring attention to the fact that even members of the National Energy Board (NEB) have recommended that this pipeline, which was built in the 1950s, be decommissioned. TransNorthern continues to operate despite its inability to comply with the improvements the NEB ordered the company to make.

It would be great if Line 3 were shut down by the state of Minnesota, but equally possible is that Line 3 will spill, and that when it does an army of pundits will pin the blame on environmentalists for delaying Line 3's replacement. Remember Lac Megantic? An oil train blew up a town in Quebec, killing 47 people, and the next day media spin doctors were using the disaster to argue for pipelines, since oil-by-rail obviously isn't safe. These bastards have no shame.

Which brings us to a reality that we will probably have to deal with in the near future. As pipeline infrastructure ages, the public will be presented with a new choice—shiny new pipelines or old, rusted-out, leaky ones. This is a classic double bind, a false choice designed to force acceptance of something undesired. You know, like democracy. Perversely, environmentalists may stand accused of causing oil spills. Activists will reject this logic, but it may be seductive to centrists and pre-fabricated-thought-thinkers. It might be wise to think of a counter-narrative to this.

The reality remains that Line 3 might spill before it gets shut down. My guess would be that Enbridge will get an extension beyond December 2017 and continue operating. And it's certain that other pipelines will rupture.

A NEW APPROACH

What if, instead of occupying to stop a pipeline from being built, land defenders used the event

of an oil spill to shut down a pipeline? Though it's probably undesirable to occupy the site of a spill, this could be accomplished by occupying a site of critical importance for the functioning of the line, such as a pumping station or valve, and preventing workers from accessing it. There would be several advantages to this strategy.

First, when there is an oil spill, a pipeline is already shut down. Though a slew of recent direct actions targeting valves have shown that it is certainly possible to autonomously shut down pipelines safely, it would be easier and less psychologically taxing to keep a pipeline off-line than to shut one down.

Second, an oil spill packs an emotional punch. I maintain that it is emotion, not rational thought, that inspires action. To most people, the petroleum economy is so normal that it takes a change in consciousness to interrupt their acceptance of it. It provides a moment where anti-pipeline direct action will be broadly understood, drawing sympathizers and supporters out of the woodwork. Artful anarchist propaganda makes radical ideas seem like common sense, and this argument sort of makes itself: If a pipeline is disaster-prone, it should be shut down.

Third, if we're shutting down active pipelines, we're not merely stopping the expansion of the oil and gas industry, we're forcing its shrinkage. We're seizing the initiative away from the capitalists. We are busting the operative myth of statecraft—that we do not have a choice.

Fourth, this switches the focus away from the sort of thinking that presents one issue as the be-all and end-all of ecological activism. There are over 200,000 miles of pipelines criss-crossing Turtle Island. There is a potential front-line just about everywhere. This shifts focus closer to home, and also ideally would lead to situations where the tactic becomes normalized, because it is happening all over the place.

Lastly, everything that we can do to increase the political and economic risk of pipeline ruptures to corporations is good. If spills come with higher consequences for companies, they will have more incentive to prevent them. Some famous squatting graffiti in Spain read EVICTIONS = RIOTS. In two years, could we say OIL SPILLS = OCCUPATIONS?

FROM TEMPORARY AUTONOMOUS ZONES TO PERMANENT AUTONOMOUS ZONES

I am hoping that the Line 3 campaign leads to something akin to the resistance at Standing Rock, but which draws on some of the lessons of that fight. It's long been my belief that resistance to industrial capitalism should go hand-in-hand with the creation of autonomous communities able to survive and thrive independent of the fossil fuel economy, and that blockades provide a moment where the impossible suddenly becomes possible, where we can strike at the heart of capitalism by collectively defying the illusion of property that holds the whole system in place.

My political goal is the creation of a federation of autonomous communes able to meet their own needs independent of the fossil fuel economy.

For that reason, I went to Standing Rock in hopes that others felt similarly, and there was a will amongst many people to reclaim treaty land and to create a permanent autonomous community on the site. Alas, the site wasn't ideal, both because the Oceti Sakowin/Oceti Oyate camp was on a floodplain, and because it was on a sacred burial ground.

Some settlers will feel uncomfortable with the whole notion of approaching moments of opportunity created by indigenous-led resistance campaigns with any agenda at all. Aren't non-native allies supposed to take direction from native people? To this, I'll reply with a story.

Unbeknownst to most people, after the anti-fracking movement in Mik'mak'i (in so-called New Brunswick) was successful and most people went home, the occupation continued. There was a small group of extremely committed people who tried to do exactly what I am advocating here—to turn a resistance camp into a permanent eco-community. Some of those people were native, some Acadian (descendants of French colonists who settled in the area in the 17th and 18th centuries), and some settler. They made it through the winter and the spring. My partner and I were there in the spring and we started a garden with the help of a Mi'kmaq elder. It was a beautiful moment, in a beautiful place. A beautiful dream.

The local support was overwhelmingly evident, if passive. When the camp needed money, they'd simply do a road block fundraiser,

allowing cars to pass one at a time and asking for a toll. Most people, native and settler, would donate. One day, in the weirdest busking experience of my life, my partner and I added a fire show to the whole bizarre spectacle. I remember thinking, Goddamn I love this corner of the Maritimes—where else in the world would this even make sense?

In the end, the dream was given up because of interpersonal conflicts, but by that time it had already stopped advancing because the occupiers didn't have the know-how or the resources to build permanent structures. They didn't feel that other people, who had been so active in the camp when it was the place to be, cared enough to help them build their dreamed-of community. To them it was the natural next step, and it hurt them that others couldn't see that. It still saddens me that that dream remains unrealized, and in my memory it will go down as a missed opportunity that strengthens my resolve to be prepared for the next moment of unforeseeable potential.

As a side note, some of the Acadians who were involved in that did go on to start a land project in the woods of Mi'kmaq'i, which they started in large part to acquire the skills that would have allowed them to succeed in the first place. That place, located within the legendary Cocagne vortex, is, to me, one enduring legacy of the resistance at Elsipogtog.

Also, realistically, most people who come to a front line aren't going to decide to live there long-term. For the revolutionary movement that I envision to emerge, folks would have to be willing to actually continue to live in a liberated zone after all the action has died down. This part of the theory's untested. Do enough people actually want to live in off-grid communities throughout the four seasons?

Well, surely when the crisis deepens and matters of survival become much more pronounced, we'll do what we need to do. That's the best hope I've got; that we will succeed where so many previous generations of radicals haven't, not because we're smarter or braver, but because we have to. The survival instinct is a powerful thing.

As the ideologies of liberal democracy and infinite growth show themselves to be the shams that they are, more and more people are going to be looking for answers. I don't have many answers, but I see the creation of autonomous zones as a realistic goal. We can start now.

Standing Rock is an autonomous zone. The ZADs in France are autonomous zones. Such liberated territories give us opportunities to learn, to experiment, to put ideas into practice, to make connections based on shared values, and to inspire ourselves and others through direct experience. It's only through experimentation, through trial and error, through blood, sweat, and tears that we'll learn how to be free. Standing Rock provided thousands of people with hands-on experience in a laboratory of freedom. Such experiences are transformational, and are preparing us for what is to come.

RAPID RESPONSE

My goal is to connect the current political moment with the vision that many eco-anarchists hold—that is, the creation of interdependent autonomous communes able to survive and thrive independent of the fossil fuel economy.

So, let's start thinking about how we might get to that point. What would it take?

At Standing Rock I put a ton of energy building and winterizing shelters, as did many other people. Many shelters were later abandoned and had to be cleaned up. I think that it would make a lot of sense for front-liners to think about acquiring and building mobile homes and various structures that are relatively easy to set up, tear down, and transport. The Standing Rock model is a game-changer, but there's a lot of room for improvement, too.

When I was at Standing Rock, there was a lack of strategic action undertaken. Many people would probably see this as being due to a lack of leadership, but I see it as a lack of coherent affinity groups. An action plan requires a group to carry it out, and the more elaborate the plan, the better coordinated the group needs to be. A sophistication exercise involving diversion and multiple flanks, such as what would be required to take a heavily guarded site, such as the drill site at Standing Rock, would require multiple teams sharing a certain level of training and confidence.

So when I think about the future, I imagine affinity groups comprised of full-time activists for whom the activities of the group are their primary focus in life. How can we make it more realistic for more people to be able to do this?

We need bases. I think that we need a combination of urban collective houses and

rural land projects that eco-anarchists can use to launch actions from. We need a culture of people who see revolution as their calling in life, their vocation. That's what I think it will take for this movement to become revolutionary.

WHERE ARE WE GOING AS A MOVEMENT?

Back to Line 3. Look, it's a pipeline. You're against it, I'm against it, and we can stop it. To me, the more interesting question is: What will be achieved by victory? Of course the land and the water will be defended, and that is enough reason to fight—but all of these pipelines, mines, prisons, and schools are but the visible, manifest symptoms of a disease called capitalism. So long as we are dependent on capitalism for our means, we'll still be biting the hand that feeds us.

The environmental movement is not inherently revolutionary. What can we as anarchists do to nurture the revolutionary tendencies it contains? I'm not interested in making capitalism more sustainable; in helping the machine perfect our enslavement. The fact that it is unsustainable may be humanity's last chance for liberty. I don't want to spend the rest of my life fighting different heads of the Hydra unless at the end of the day we've fundamentally transformed the way that we live.

So I ask: Where are we going as a movement? I ask, because if we want to make it somewhere, we'd better have a clear idea of where we're headed. What vision do we have to offer? What can we invite others to believe in along with us? What spirit can we summon forth into the collective consciousness? What songs can we sing with our whole hearts when we're on the front lines?

Nothing's more powerful than an idea whose time has come. Look at Standing Rock. Who could have imagined such a thing just a short time ago? Who would have taken this article seriously if I wrote it a year ago? Our movement is growing, it is expanding, it is stronger and stronger by the day. We are winning the hearts and minds of more and more people, and bigger and bigger goals are becoming more and more attainable. It's time to articulate a program of revolutionary social change that sees resistance to pipelines as a starting point.



Montreal Antifa Prevails: Would You Like A Beating With Your Happy Meal?

ON MARCH 25, 2017, APPROXIMATELY 200 PEOPLE responded to a call to confront far-right groups planning to disrupt a day of anti-racist/anti-fascist workshops in Montreal. The call was made after a Facebook event calling to shut down the “terrorist workshop” surfaced. The event was made by the Canadian Coalition of Concerned Citizens (CCCC), the same group that called for the anti-immigrant March 4th demonstrations which occurred all across Canada. On that day, fascist group La Meute was able to take the streets of Montreal for the first time.

At around 9am, folks began to gather in front of the Hall Building of Concordia University’s downtown campus, where the workshop was to be held. The crowd was a mixture of students, anti-fascists, and anarchists, close to half of which had faces covered. It was a cold morning and drinking coffee without taking off our masks was proving more difficult than usual, but the very real threat of another far-right mobilization similar to that of March 4th

kept us vigilant.

After about 45 minutes, a grey mini-van pulled up next to the crowd. From it emerged Georges Hallak, leader and seemingly the only member of CCCC. With a shit-eating grin and a Canadian flag affixed to a hockey stick (fucking Canadians...), he began to walk towards the crowd, making it just a few steps before his face met a barrage of fists. Police quickly made their way over, put Hallak in handcuffs, and stuffed him inside a cruiser.

The crowd cackled and cheered, equally excited and in disbelief of the scene that had transpired (seriously, a Canadian flag glued to a hockey stick...what the fuck?). To make matters even more ridiculous, it turned out that Hallak had actually been livestreaming on Facebook while all of this happened. The video of his swift demise lives on in our hearts and our hard-drives. The mood was thus set: it appeared that the crowd was feeling confrontational.

Ten minutes later, a lone skinhead materialized across the street. Clad in camo pants,

1 Within a few racist skinhead circles, red braces have to be “earned” by some violent act such as attacking a perceived enemy of the white race. However, some skinheads wear red not because they have committed an act of violence but simply because it is part of their subculture.

some seriously tacky sunglasses, and “red braces”¹ (suspenders), the man waddled around, talked to cops, and hid behind a police cruiser, seemingly confused as to where the rest of his friends were. A few projectiles were thrown in his direction but the crowd did not engage with him further. Eventually a small group of masked individuals approached and pushed him to the ground (note: Doc Marten’s have terrible grip and don’t fare very well in the snow). After having gotten a few punches in, the scuffle was broken up by police, who pushed the masked individuals back into the crowd.

Amidst the excitement, we failed to notice that the driver of the mini-van had actually parked half a block from the demonstration. After confirming that this was in fact the same vehicle, the crowd approached it just a few seconds before it drove off. A volley of rocks pelted the speeding vehicle, though we were not able to catch up to it.

In Hallak’s livestream, he mentions having coordinated with Soldiers of Odin (SOO), an anti-immigrant vigilante group. SOO was formed in Finland in 2015 but has since established chapters in dozens of cities across Canada. Shortly after Hallak’s arrest, about twenty members of SOO were spotted in front of a McDonald’s a block away from the demonstration. A couple dozen people clad in masks broke off from the main crowd in an effort to confront them but police were everywhere.

Having regrouped, SOO marched towards the demonstration, making it just half-a-block before being met by an angry group of militants. Police at first prevented the two sides from clashing, but a small group used an alleyway to their advantage and was able to pelt the SOO group with eggs and chunks of ice. SOO pitifully made their way back to the McDonald’s and dispersed.

At some point during these initial confrontations, police were able to isolate one anti-fascist and beat and arrest him; he was later released with a ticket. The next couple hours saw many demonstrators head into the Hall Building to attend the morning’s workshop undisturbed, while a couple of hilarious events transpired outside.

Two SOO members were spotted eating cheeseburgers inside the McDonald’s. A small group of masked individuals entered the Golden Arches and attempted to confront them, but an incredibly awkward conversation broke

out between the two groups instead. We stood around awkwardly while some people, presumably interested in the new all-day breakfast options, wondered if we were in line. The two men became increasingly cantankerous, and we decided reinforcements would be helpful. Soon, a crowd of twenty arrived from a block over and pummeled one of the SOO members with eggs and fists. When a pickup truck for them to flee in arrived on the corner, another member was beaten to the ground and the vehicle had a window broken with a well-placed rock.

Hallak’s mini-van, parked outside of the police station by his driver who was seemingly wanting to check up on him, was given a thorough redecoration (just in time for spring!). Police attempted to usher Hallak into the vehicle but were forced to stuff him back into a police cruiser when a small confrontational crowd emerged. The mini-van and cruiser drove off, not to be seen again.

After another hour and no sight of racists, demonstrators dispersed. The morning was eventful and filled with fun activities, a welcome morale boost after our failures on March 4th. However, we find it important to point out some areas that could use improvement.

Although the racists were definitely outnumbered and outmaneuvered, they were still able to assemble, even if only on the sidewalk. This itself can be seen as a victory for them. Their ability to take the streets will only serve to galvanize their ranks and provide opportunities for them to conduct outreach and recruit potential members. A no-platform approach works best if we make it absolutely impossible for them to show up in numbers.

The groups that show up to these events (CCCC, Soldiers of Odin, La Meute) have very public web presences. Online surveillance can help us glean crucial info in terms of their tactics and logistical capacity. These people’s faces and full names are all over Facebook.

These demonstrations can consist of a lot of downtime. We sometimes wait for hours before any sign of the enemy arises. Let’s use this time to form informal assemblies or spokes-councils in which we can share ideas and discuss strategies in order to be more cohesive in the streets.



4:20 - Against Legalization and Criminalization Alike

THE TEXT THAT FOLLOWS IS PART OF A ZINE THAT WAS handed out at 4:20 this year in Montreal, along with two other texts that were posted to anarchistnews.org recently (*A Lament for Criminality* and *Psychonauts Can Also Be Pirates: How to Do Drugs and Get Free*). A report-back from the event will soon follow with a pdf of the zine for others to hand out elsewhere at similar events.

I approach the “issue” of weed legalization, and the spaces it inhabits with two main things in mind:

Perhaps in our desire to show the seriousness of our positions (or because we think we’re too cool?), it seems we have abandoned non punk, queer, or hipster alternative spaces to the right wing and liberals. These spaces are dominated by people we have no affinity with as anarchists, but are participated in by all sorts of (at least mildly) rebellious youth who are hostile to certain aspects of law and order, and don’t take “cannabis culture” on as the stupid identity it usually is. As an iconoclastic weirdo who tends to get along with lots of people, but never really fits in anywhere in particular, I

hate the tendency of anarchists to voluntarily pigeonhole ourselves.

I’ve always been disgusted by the racist and anti-working class prejudiced elements of the right-wing of the weed legalization movement which is largely dominant where I come from: Vancouver. I want to intervene in these spaces to show other potential rebels that there are non-reformist paths to take, and that we should not be striving for legitimacy in the systems which feed our misery and alienation.

In honour of all the old friends and acquaintances who are dying at a horribly tragic rate in the fentanyl epidemic in the Lower Mainland in BC, that neither the right-wing of the weed legalization movement, nor the left-wing of those focused on harm reduction can adequately address. What is needed is an all-out assault on both the state and the bosses who have left us all totally disempowered and isolated, towards a free and creative individuality based in rebellious communities that the neoliberal world intends to destroy and erase.

– Llund (*Wreck/ Black Banner Distro*)

The “Drug War” Didn’t Start, And

A war has been raging for over a millennium. A lot can be said about this war, but generally we can sum this up as the consolidation of force, resources and legitimacy through the dispossession and commodification of humanity and the earth. We can call this war the state. This war initially only affected small parts of the world, around the territories controlled by various empires such as the Incas or Egyptians. But by now, after over five hundred years of capitalist globalization, this war effects nearly the entire earth, with only small pockets such as in Papua and the Amazon rainforest remaining out of reach. Consistent waves of domination and exploitation have brought greater levels of wealth and control to the powerful and greater tragedy to the dispossessed. Through these processes, people have been enslaved or otherwise exploited, genocides have been carried out, and whole ecosystems have been reduced to their chemical components.

But what does this all have to do with the “drug war”?

Since this war has always been about dominating people, cultures, animals and the environments they inhabit, it has also been about controlling peoples thoughts, what they can do with themselves, and what they can put in their bodies.

For example, during the middle ages, elements within european society, primarily peasants, had retained certain aspects of their pagan, pre-christian cultures. These cultures emphasized a strong connection to nature and sexuality, less rigid gender roles, queer sexuality, women’s control over their own pregnancies, and the taking of medicinal herbs and psychoactive drugs for spiritual purposes. In order to gain more control over their rebellious populations, European states carried out military campaigns, branded as Crusades, and Inquisitions that went on for hundreds of years. People who engaged, or were rumored to have engaged in these kinds of behaviors, were tried as “witches” and “heretics” with many people, especially women, being tortured into confession and burned at the stake. In many cases the cost of running the inquisitions was paid for by the accused, who’s property was seized and divided between the judges and accusers.

At the time, there was also free land that belonged to no one, and was shared by all the peasants of the local areas, referred to as “the commons”. This land was used for harvesting herbs and cultural practices separated from the church (of which there was only one you were allowed to belong to at the time). The commons were gradually swallowed up by the privatization of land during the Crusades and Inquisitions.

We can see parallels to this history in the legacy of colonization here in the place we call “Canada”. Native people’s languages and cultures, which also had strong connections to the land and the wild plant-life upon it, were made illegal, with native children being forced into religious schools, and taught to hate themselves and their cultures. This all coincided with a massive dispossession of land from native peoples, by state and private landowners, as well as through the creation of Parks – that is, places where people could visit and observe a wilderness from which they had been alienated, but where they would be forbidden to live as a part of the land.

Looking specifically at the “issue” of marijuana, we can see that along with opium and cocaine, the laws that first criminalized its use were part of a racist narrative targeting Chinese, Mexican and Black people in the United States, with the same logic being applied throughout much of the British colonial empire. A key element of this racist narrative, was a paranoia that white youth were being coaxed into interracial relationships through use of these drugs, which was seen as an attack on white-supremacy.

The “drug war” has never been a purely local issue and has until today played an important role in capitalist globalization. The “drug war” is an important fixture of modern capitalism, and fills prisons locally, disproportionately with people of colour. In the United States, the flooding of crack and heroin into poor neighborhoods is part of a well documented government strategy to repress rebellious social movements.

In places like Mexico, where the government is often referred to as the “narco-state”, the “drug war” plays an important role in terrorizing workers and peasants. Paramilitary or-

Wont End, With Weed Prohibition

ganizations play a role in a process started by the North American Free Trade Agreement that dispossesses indigenous people of their collectively worked lands to open them up for the growing of Coca to produce cocaine, as well as legal crops like Avocados for the global capitalist market. This has a triple effect of producing profits for capitalists, keeping workers and peasants obedient through fear, and repressing, delegitimizing and denying resources of rebellious social movements.

This is a dire situation, and it is sad to see the response it gets from the weed legalization movement here in Canada. While it is true that we are up against a vast enemy, and this enemy can only be attacked in parts, the reformist tunnel-vision being pushed by the likes of Marc and Jodie Emery will only strengthen the system we need to oppose. We can't effectively address only one minuscule aspect of this war, because the monster we are fighting will continue on its path of misery and destruction from other angles.

If the weed legalization movement is successful in its meager goals, this will only mean greater profits for liquor and pharmaceutical corporations, and a few small business owners (like Marc Emery). The rest of us will lose the opportunity for tax free income, our weed can be regulated and filled with more chemicals that it already might be, harvesting the infinite variety of other wild medicinal herbs will become more precarious as the land continues to be plundered and poisoned by industry, and the carceral system will always find more reasons to kill and imprison people of colour, as well as poor or working class people, in the same ways it always has. In fighting prohibition it is important that we question the notion of legality itself.

It's important to point out that along with preventing a broader analysis of the problem itself, the weed legalization movement distracts us by emphasizing pacifism and ineffective lesser-evilism in favour of various political parties during election time, to attain its goals. Sadly, it also emphasizes solidarity towards only "non-violent" drug offenders (meaning white middle class business owners), and we are unable to practice an expansive solidarity through action

– one that considers those who are not perfect innocent angels, those who might have trouble surviving in this world for a million reasons – that could actually address the problem.

The drug war was never about some mysterious hatred for one silly plant, but as I've explained, it is a fundamental way that the powerful have ruled over us for centuries. With this in mind we can understand that the very idea of a respectable legitimate politics reinforces prohibition. Borders reinforce prohibition. Racism reinforces prohibition. Sexism reinforces prohibition. Prison reinforces prohibition. Property reinforces prohibition, and the very notion of Nation-States reinforces prohibition.

Yes, it is important to fight against the absurdity that is the possibility of being kidnapped by armed police for lighting a plant on fire. But it is also important to break and help others break all the other absurd laws too.

This war that is the state has never been a complete victory and defeat. Historical resistance to domination has included communities of escaped slaves (known as maroons) that organized and attacked their former masters, Native communities engaging in long-term struggles against colonizers; women, queer and trans people self-organizing to defend themselves against attacks and living joyful lives on the margins of a society that wants to destroy them; youth and counter-cultures taking their freedom into their own hands, women taking control of their own bodies and refusing the logic of patriarchy, workers sabotaging machinery that deepened their subjugation under the economy, and a multitude of other forms.

This resistance continues in many forms today. It is important to help people crossing borders illegally. It is important to fight against the prison system. And it is important to break and spread a disrespect for property laws that keep us from housing ourselves, and keep us grinding away at our jobs. It is important because the lives and self-respect of ourselves and all others are at stake.

Total war against the market and hierarchy!

Free weed, free lives and free lands for all!

Police Protect Far-Right Demo From Antifascists

ON APRIL 26TH, THE FAR RIGHT IN MONTREAL was able to take the streets, with the supposed aim to protest against the Liberal government. They left out their affiliations out of their call-out, and successfully attracted a sizeable crowd, who were none the wiser about the politics of the organizers.

They also left their flags and insignias home, and favored Quebec flags, and in a bizarre instance, one person flew the indigenous unity flag, popularly known as the “warrior flag” Taking inspiration from recent events in

the US, the proto-fascist elements within the protests were ready to fight.

Some wore masks, body armor, and helmets and even brandished sticks. Their security marshals wore armbands, and they had scouts through the perimeter of the protest. Anarchist and anti-fascists were blocked by a large presence of riot cops, and comrades were not able to get close enough to the protesters. The police protected the protesters as they freely marched through downtown.



Business Invasion: A Tactic to Fight Gentrification?

THIS WINTER, I VISITED NEW YORK CITY, WHERE I ATTENDED a really inspiring Black Lives Matter demonstration called the People's Monday March. They employed a tactic I'll call Business Invasion, which allows a small number of people to deliver a political message in a way that cannot be ignored.

The day after that action, I wrote a reportback, which forms the first half of this article. The second half is reflections on how this tactic could be used by anarchists to fight gentrification in Montreal.

I'm sure that this tactic could be adapted in other ways than the one I'm suggesting here, so I hope that this article catalyzes some brainstorming.

REPORTBACK FROM PEOPLE'S MONDAY MARCH - FEBRUARY 9TH, 2017

I tend to judge the success of a protest by the feeling that the group comes out of it with. Do we come out of it feeling like we were going through the motions, or do we come out of it feeling rared up to fight the power? In the case of this demo in NYC, it was definitely the latter.

The People's Monday march has been going for over two years. It is organized by a multiracial POC-led group called NYC Shut It Down. It has been held every Monday for over two years, formed out of a desire to maintain movement energy generated by the 2014 unrest following the police murder of Eric Garner. Each march memorializes a different victim of police murder. The first one was held on February 9th, 2015, and I'm told there has been one every single Monday ever since, without fail, no matter the weather. Initially, every People's Monday march began at Grand Cen-

tral Station, but over time organizers chose to start holding it in different parts of the city. Sometimes they will go to Brooklyn, Harlem, Queens, etc... and bring street demos with a militant vibe to neighborhoods where protests are rarely held. Part of the thinking behind this is to bring people from the neighborhood into the streets, which apparently has been successful.

I attended the People's Monday march on March 13th. At 7 p.m. a group of around 30 people gathered in Washington Square park in the middle of Manhattan. The march was unpermitted and the route was not pre-announced, but that didn't stop the group from immediately seizing the busy streets. Throughout the march, NYC Shut It Down showed their courage and confidence in their own power by not only disobeying police orders, but also antagonizing the police by yelling insults at them from close range. Keep in mind there wasn't a large crowd to melt back into if a juiced-up cop started 'roid-raging. These motherfuckers got gonads.

The real reason that I'm taking the time to write this reportback, though, is because this group did something that I haven't participated in before, which I think could be a useful tactic in many instances. The group invaded first a bar, then a fancy restaurant, then a Whole Foods grocery store with a huge check-out line.

The purpose of going into these places was to force a captive audience to listen to a political message. For this, they used the Occupy Mic-Check tactic. One spokesperson would speak at the top of their voice, and then everyone else would repeat their words as loudly as possible. In this case, the message was as follows (almost verbatim):

"We are here today because Black Lives

Matter! We are here today because Black Women Matter! We are here today to remember Denise Hawkins, murdered by police!

Fact 1: Denise Hawkins was an 18-year old black woman from Rochester, New York. Her high school principal said “they never saw her not smiling.” Denise had an 18-month son with her husband, Lewis Hawkins, at the time of her murder.

Fact 2: Her father forced Denise to marry Lewis after she became pregnant. Lewis was abusive and she tried to leave Lewis three times before she was killed. Police had been called before, but they never helped Denise.

Fact 3: On November 11, 1975, Denise and her family were at her cousin’s house for dinner when she and Lewis started arguing. Her cousin called the police.

Fact 4: Denise was holding a knife when Lewis chased her out of the apartment with a chair, threatening to kill her. Seconds after she fled the apartment Officer Michael Leach, who was standing outside, shot in the chest, killing her.

Fact 5: Officer Leach claimed he was trapped in a corner unable to move away from Denise and feared for his life, a story disproven by forensic evidence. Officer Leach made a similar claim in 2012 when he murdered his own son. No officer was charged with any crime in the murder of Denise Hawkins.

This is not an isolated incident. In the past 15 years, the NYPD has murdered over 300 people. Of these, over 80% has been black or brown. Of these murders, there have been four indictments, resulting in a total of two convictions, with an end result of ZERO JAIL TIME. If you believe that BLACK LIVES MATTER, we ask that you raise your fist in solidarity.”

In each location, quite a few people present did raise their fists, and the protesters exited the premises, chanting, in one case to applause. It felt validating for more than one reason – on one hand, it felt nice to be supported by members of the public, and on the other hand, it felt good to get in the faces of people who aren’t sympathizers... to force them to listen. In the age of the echo chamber, where social media algorithms allow people to insulate themselves within bubbles filled with like-minded voices, we gotta find creative ways of rupturing them bubbles. Nowadays, when it feels like many liberals believe that the media

portrayal of reality is more important than reality itself, it was intensely satisfying to participate in something where the desired result did not happen in the digital landscape but on a human level. This is unmediated propaganda. Dare I call it propaganda of the deed?

So mad respect to the People’s Monday organizers NYC Shut It Down, for showing me what consistency looks like. And let’s be real, if we can’t be consistent, what can we hope to accomplish? Since 2014, every single Monday, rain or shine, they’ve been holding it the fuck down. What can we learn from them? Be bold. Be defiant. Have a specific message. Be loud. Be proud. Have fun. Say it like you mean it. And make it social – after People’s Monday, comrades gather to socialize in a neighborhood restaurant.

I’m told that in the past, the People’s Monday march has occasionally led to clashes with police, but apparently property destruction is not part of the culture. Perhaps smashing windows and slashing tires is viewed as counterproductive, because I’m sure that it’s neither due to moral objection or lack of courage. If the point of militant protest is to deliver a message in a way that can’t and won’t be ignored, they achieve that, perhaps to a greater extent than is achieved by smashing windows.

The People’s March does very much have a ritualistic element to it... which I mean in a good way. As such, every march ends with Asata’s prayer, with all participants joining hands and chanting together: “It is our duty to fight for our freedom. It is our duty to win. We must love and protect each other. We have nothing to lose but our chains.”

I think a weekly ritual could serve the purpose of movement-building well. Public events give people an opportunity to meet each other, but we all know that activists are slow to bestow trust. People need to get familiar with each other before they can work together. A smaller group makes it easier for folks to get to know each other.

Also, I really like actions that are demanding justice on autonomous terms rather than reacting to an injustice. I think it’s a mistake to view outlying incidents such as police murders as the actual problem, rather than symptomatic of a more deeply oppressive normalcy (i.e. self-policing, surveillance, prison slavery, wage slavery, patriarchy, and the list goes on). Rage at the abuse of power can conceal the heart’s true

rage, the rage born of the heart's desire for freedom – the rage against oppressive power itself.

A TACTIC TO FIGHT GENTRIFICATION?

I said at the beginning of this article that I thought that this tactic could be interesting in the struggle against gentrification in Montreal. Here's what I mean: if anarchists in a given neighbourhood, say St. Henri or Hochelaga, made a habit of invading gentrifying businesses. Perhaps this could be on a weekly basis, especially at first, to popularize the tactic, but if the idea catches on, maybe it could be used in a more impromptu way. For example, if a bunch of anarchists are in the same place at the same time, say for a show, event, demonstration, etc., maybe an Invasion could occur almost spontaneously. If we can have fun with it, perhaps by incorporating bizarre attention-getting activities, perhaps invading boutiques could become something of a sport. Come to think of it, the Montreal Anarchist Bookfair is coming up...

When I imagine this, I'm not thinking about invading a pretentious cafe or trendy bar and yelling "Fuck you, Yuppies!" That sort of approach is more likely to make people defensive than catalyze critical thought. I think it's better to meet people where they're at. Let's not assume that gentrifying customers are aware of the consequences of their consumption. Let's not tell them "get the fuck out", but instead explain how the process of gentrification works, what role they play in it, and why we oppose it. It is likely that customers attracted by the trendiness of an area have a certain appreciation of what makes a neighbourhood special. If they could understand that they are slowly poisoning the well that they want to drink from, perhaps they'll change certain habits.

I think it would be preferable, actually, to amuse customers rather than insult them. In entertainment, there is a natural affinity between performer and spectator. This is a relationship dynamic that is culturally understood, something that consumers are comfortable with. The ideal would be to make the patrons laugh. When someone laughs, they drop their guard. They become receptive.

The mood of the People's Monday March was sombre and resolute, as was appropriate, given that it is meant to mourn and honour the dead, as well as protesting the racist violence of

the police. I think that anti-gentrification Invasions could afford to be more light-hearted and irreverent in their approach.

The fact is that urban consumers have lots of choices when they're deciding where they're going to spend their money. If enough people can be persuaded not to frequent a particular business, it may have to close. Let's keep in mind that in the earlier phases of gentrification, it is often independent businesses that are opening up shop. Likely, they are not turning a profit in their first year, or maybe even their first few years. Even if they are owned by someone with deep pockets, if they aren't profitable, the owner will eventually have to close them down. Maybe it would be wise to target specific businesses rather than Gentrification, which can be seen as immutable force.

Also, for hipster venues, remember being "cool" is part of their business model. Try thinking about what is cool for a hipster or yuppie. What you can do to undermine that? If activists can make a venue uncool in the minds of its target demographic, its bottom line will take a hit.

A successful campaign to shut down a business could also ward off would-be gentrifiers, as word could get around about this kind of thing – maybe forcing one boutique to close would keep three new ones from opening up.

Of course, this tactic doesn't directly address the bigger problem – condos, speculation, raising property values and rents, etc. I offer these thoughts knowing full well that effectively fighting gentrification will require a prolonged, multi-pronged effort from deeply-committed community members.

That said, to be successful, a movement must conduct itself as its goals are attainable. "Fighting Gentrification" is not a strategy. A movement needs attainable goals – goals that are measurable. Shutting down a specific business is certainly possible – and shame on you if you doubt me! How are we going to smash the state if we can't even smash a yuppie boutique?

To render victory imaginable, there's no better propaganda than victory. The small triumph of shutting down one hipster bar, dog spa, or luxury shop will give participants in anti-gentrification struggles a taste of their own power.



May Day in Montreal: Some Critical Reflections

DESPITE A SIZABLE TURNOUT ON A RAINY DAY, MAY DAY in Montreal left many feeling like the police succeeded in keeping our celebrations tame and orderly. The anti-capitalist demonstration started in two locations: a downtown contingent organized by CLAC (Convergence of Anti-Capitalist Struggles), and an anti-fascist, anti-borders contingent which would join the downtown one from the east. This was organized in part to avoid demonstrating alongside the PCR, authoritarian communists that CLAC persists in organizing with.

The downtown contingent saw clashes between the PCR and the police after a bank was vandalized with paint bombs, leading to an arrest of one of their militants. The east contingent had at least one hundred anarchists wearing masks, some of whom carried black flags. People seemed to be waiting to join the demonstration downtown before popping shit off, but unfortunately, before this could happen police flanked both sides of the demo. Once the demonstrations merged downtown, this flanking was deployed to a degree not yet seen in Montreal. Nearly 100 cops walked on each side of the crowd, so that along nearly its entire length at least one sidewalk was held by cops.

An atmosphere of vulnerability to these police tactics prevailed until the demonstration fizzled out hours later. It deterred major property destruction and attacks on police, without cops even having to crack down. At any given time, police on either side were ready to intervene, and the demonstration had neither side-banners nor enough density to be able to defend against the police attacks that would likely follow any unlawful action. Apart from a few luxury car windows being smashed, the tension never materialized into collective action.

The police have all year (and large budgets) to prepare for annual rituals of revolt that Montreal anarchists have been cultivating, such as May Day and March 15. The defeat of this year's May Day reaffirmed that we should be experimenting with demonstrations (spread through word-of-mouth or social media) that don't give police as much time to prepare. However, we don't want to abandon these annual rituals either. Like December 6th in Athens, May Day in many cities, and the Day of the Combatant Youth in Chile, annual rituals of anarchist rioting can still serve us. There are many people who will only be in the streets with us on May Day when there's no



May Day in Berlin this year, where side-banners are used in succession to defend against police flanking.

major social movement. Interacting with them, and preparing for moments of generalized social rupture when we will have to sometimes engage with a highly prepared and mobilized police force, make these traditions worthwhile.

It's impressive how many anarchists came out on a rainy May Day, seemingly in affinity groups. Here are two proposals for how this significant potential could adapt to the recent development in policing tactics:

1. WE NEED TO START ACTING LIKE A BLOC, NOT JUST WEARING BLACK

As anarchists donning the black mask, we need to get better at staying together as a bloc. Our default is to be scattered through the crowd in affinity groups, or even alone. Although this is likely due to the social barriers of people not knowing each other, we need to start to overcome these to form effective black blocs rather than sparse clusters throughout the demonstration.

We need our own side-banners to help delineate and defend this bloc. Without side-banners, we have nothing to prevent police from easily cutting into the crowd to make targeted arrests. Side-banners also help to obscure police vision on who is doing what. They are a mobile barricade, and we need to start prioritizing their deployment.

As for where to position the bloc, we think it makes the most sense to copy the 'Cortège de tête' from our comrades in France, who

during the Loi Travail revolts always had the combative section of the demonstration at the front. If you're there to participate in the bloc, you know that you can always find it at the front. Although in the past, hanging back has meant that smaller groups receive less police attention and can more easily act, now that the police are lining the entirety of the demo this just leaves those smaller groups isolated.

2. A QUI LE TROTTOIR? - TAKING THE SIDEWALKS

Let's refuse to allow ourselves to be pre-emptively kettled by police flanking us on the sidewalks. This could be accomplished by building a culture of consistently taking the sidewalks whenever we take the streets, before police can fill them. Past attempts to make this happen have always remained small and police have managed to push through. This is where reinforced banners and combative flagpoles could come in handy. If police try to take the sidewalks back from us, a team anchored by a reinforced banner could block their passage and make them vulnerable to projectiles thrown from behind the sidewalk and street banners.

Although many of us who show up for these moments don't have organizing relationships outside of them, if we make efforts to prepare within our affinity groups in ways that will sync with the efforts of others, our rituals could take on a renewed force.

See you at the (mobile) barricades!



Hey There Yuppies!

ON THE NIGHT OF MAY 19, WE DECIDED TO COME TOGETHER to attack the restaurant and bar Ludger, the offices of Projet Montréal, and the IGA supermarket in Saint-Henri.

If we attacked Ludger, it's not only to denounce the over-priced meals that they serve, but to attack the way of life of young professional yuppies who invade popular neighbourhoods with their cash, and contribute to the exclusion of the poor in the neighbourhood.

If we attacked the office of Projet Montréal it's not only for their role in the gentrification of the neighbourhood in advancing the argument of social mixity (*mixité*) and favoring the establishment of new businesses and condo projects. We attacked the office because it's the entire political world that we want to attack. We refuse to be represented and directed by someone else, whether a Prime Minister or a borough councillor. We are masters of our own lives.

If we attacked the IGA it's not only because the food is too expensive, but because we

believe that eating well shouldn't be a luxury, but something that's free and accessible to everybody. In this neighbourhood, some people are hungry and we don't want to be sorry observers of the situation.

We're very aware that the targets that were attacked aren't large capitalist institutions. However, these businesses are the reflection, at the smallest scale, of a world that always favors the wealthiest over the poorest, who are always subject to further misery. This is why we wanted to reverse the order of things for an instant, and have it understood that though shuffling through each day we can also bite. We want rich lives, not the lives of the rich.

We were happy the morning after to read in the news that other businesses had been attacked the same night in Verdun.

P.S. Hope we didn't disturb your little Friday night dinner too much.

Des insoumi-ses (ungovernables)



You're Also Staying In "Montreal" This Summer?

BUT WHERE DO WE GO WHEN WE STAY IN THE CITY? In parks? On friend's balconies? What to do when we don't want to resign ourselves to metro-work-sleep or the leisure of city festivals or the 375th anniversary celebrating the colonization of the island? Or to the summer that passes dully while drinking beers in parks? What to do with summer's potential and the sudden opening of spaces under the sun and warm nights? Hibernation is over. I want for life to be a journey even if I stay here. I want to do unauthorized camping, not just in the woods or on the road to Gaspésie. I want a presence that carves out a place in diverse spaces so as to nourish friendships, creative relations of mutual aid and our rebellions. Being together with the city

as a terrain to occupy (all the while occupying ourselves with not allowing the city to celebrate its colonial occupation too much), to disturb the limits imposed by the fencing, the bans on loitering and the well-tended grass. To occupy and care for buildings, alleys, and wastelands, without asking permission.

So... What's the plan?

It looks promising!



A RECIPE FOR NOCTURNAL DIRECT ACTIONS!

"Direct action, simply put, means cutting out the middleman: solving problems yourself rather than petitioning the authorities or relying on external institutions. Any action that sidesteps regulations and representation to accomplish goals directly is direct action - it includes everything from blockading airports to helping refugees escape to safety and organizing programs to liberate your community from reliance on capitalism."

- *A Step-by-Step Guide to Direct Action: What It Is, What It's Good for, How It Works*


We believe that the greatest barriers to participating in direct actions are social ones: finding comrades to build affinity groups takes time, patience, and trust (see

How to Form an Affinity Group: The Essential Building Block of Anarchist Organization, available on crimethinc.com). This recipe assumes that you already have people who you can get mischievous with.

Before we had ever done a night-time direct action, we felt hesitant to begin. We had no one to teach us the basics, and feared making stupid, easily preventable mistakes. For that reason, we want to share several logistical tips that we feel may be helpful in carrying out these actions.

Legal disclaimer: All information contained in this publication is for educational purposes only, and does not condone or encourage any illegal activity.

1. THE SECRET IS TO BEGIN



First, you need to choose the target of your direct action and what tactic you will use. Although this could vary widely, for this recipe we'll use the classic example of smashing out the windows of a gentrifying business in an urban neighbourhood.

Think about what the action will communicate to people you've never met - from possible accomplices to the most passive citizen. What possibilities might this communication open up? For example, the numerous smashings of luxury businesses in Hochelaga and St. Henri over the past years have communicated a resistance to gentrification, have

spread signals of disorder (see *Signals of Disorder: Sowing Anarchy in the Metropolis*) that visibilize how anarchists are fighting back against social control, and in some cases, have contributed to such businesses having to close up shop.



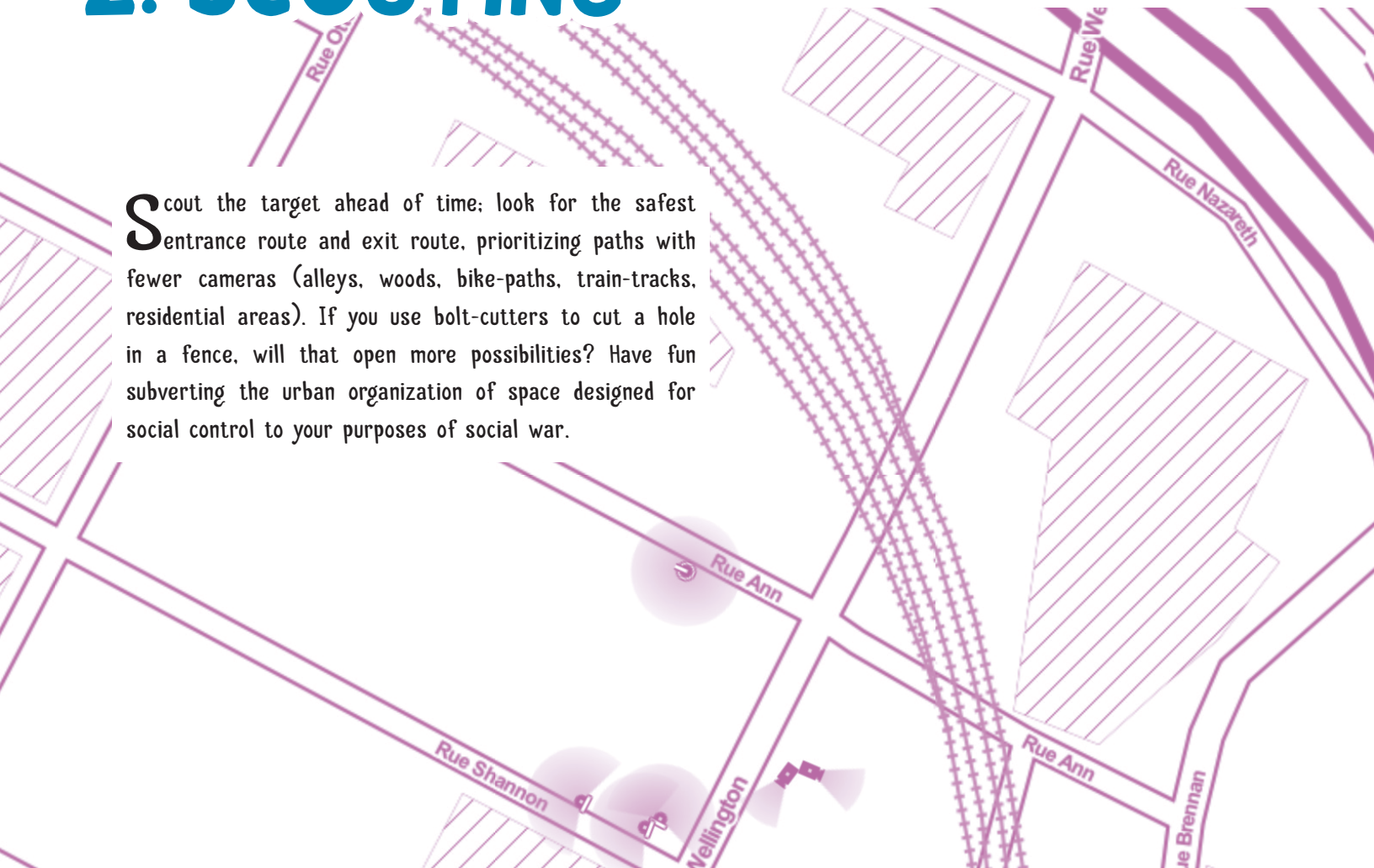
There are introductions to 'security culture' available elsewhere (see *What is Security Culture?*, available on crimethinc.com), but here we'll just say to do all of your planning in person, with people you trust, outside of houses and with no phones present (both being vulnerable to police surveillance).



When we started getting our hands dirty, we found it helpful to first get comfortable with less risky activities like graffiti or wheatpasting posters, practicing the same communication habits we would later apply in attacks. This helps us become acquainted and feel more comfortable with our ability to act in stressful conditions (encounters with police, evasion, etc.) and our relationships with each other.

2. SCOUTING

Scout the target ahead of time; look for the safest entrance route and exit route, prioritizing paths with fewer cameras (alleys, woods, bike-paths, train-tracks, residential areas). If you use bolt-cutters to cut a hole in a fence, will that open more possibilities? Have fun subverting the urban organization of space designed for social control to your purposes of social war.



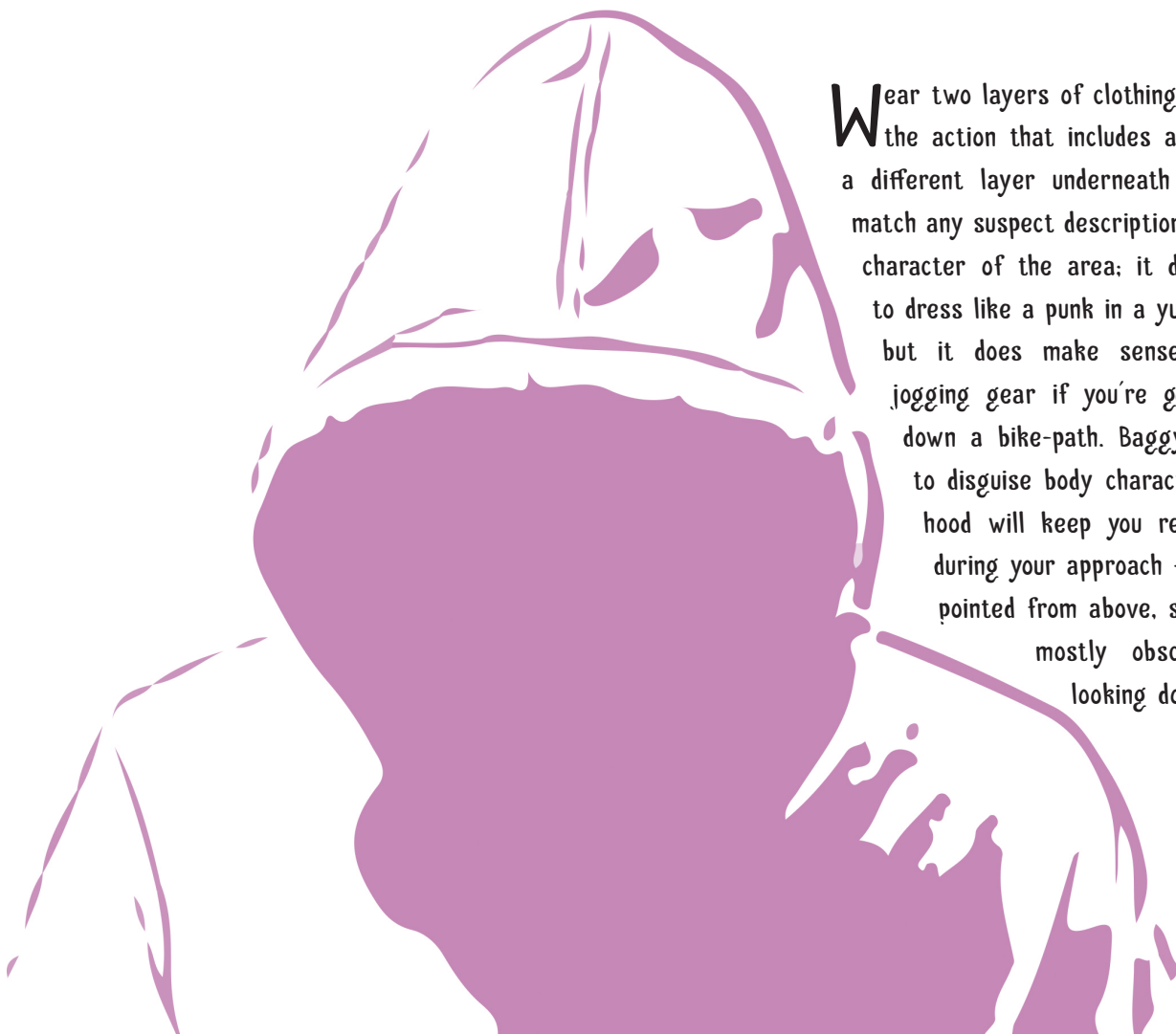
Be discrete; don't point at the cameras you want to smash, or walk in circles around the target. Decide where to position lookouts (if you think you need them), posted up smoking at bus stops that aren't on camera, for instance. How will they be communicating with those doing the direct action: hand signals, inconspicuous shouts of random names to signify different situations, walkie-talkies, flashlights, burner phones (see *Burner Phone Best Practices*, available on crimethinc.com)?

It helps to know what the traffic patterns are like at the time you'll be acting. How busy is foot traffic? Where is the closest police station, and what are the most patrolled

streets? Doing the action on a rainy night at 3 am means there will be fewer witnesses, but also fewer people to blend in with afterwards when police might be combing the area, so sometimes closer to midnight will make more sense. Once you've gained confidence in nocturnal actions, maybe you'll want to experiment with day-time actions that are more visible to passersby and thus harder for the authorities to invisibilize, like the looting of the yuppie grocery store in St. Henri last year. Leave at least a week or two between scouting your target and the action because that's the average amount of time it takes for surveillance footage to be overwritten.

3. FASHION DECISIONS! (AND OTHER PREP)

Wear two layers of clothing: a casual layer for the action that includes a hood and hat, and a different layer underneath so that you don't match any suspect descriptions. Blend in with the character of the area; it doesn't make sense to dress like a punk in a yuppie neighbourhood, but it does make sense to be in flashy jogging gear if you're going to be running down a bike-path. Baggy clothing can help to disguise body characteristics. A hat and hood will keep you relatively anonymous during your approach - most cameras are pointed from above, so your face will be mostly obscured when you're looking down.



THIS IS IT ...
TIME TO PULL
DOWN THE
BALACLAVAS..



You can pull up a full mask for the last few blocks and the action itself (see *Quick Tip: How to Mask Up*, available on [sub.media](#)). Depending on the terrain and where cameras are located, you may afford to wait until right before the action to mask up to avoid arousing suspicion preemptively.

Expect to be seen on camera during the action. Don't get too paranoid about cameras in the surrounding area - a standard CCTV camera has poor resolution in the dark, if police even bother to get the footage before it's overwritten automatically. All surfaces of any tools you'll be using should be thoroughly wiped with rubbing alcohol ahead of time to remove fingerprints, and cotton gloves should be used during the action (leather and nylon will retain your fingerprints on the inside). Do not take your cell phone, or if you must, remove the battery; it geo-locates even when powered off.



Make a plan in case a good citizen intervenes, or starts following you to call the police. Dog-mace has worked wonders for us, but if that feels too intense as an immediate response, being verbally confronted by a masked group is enough to deter most people.



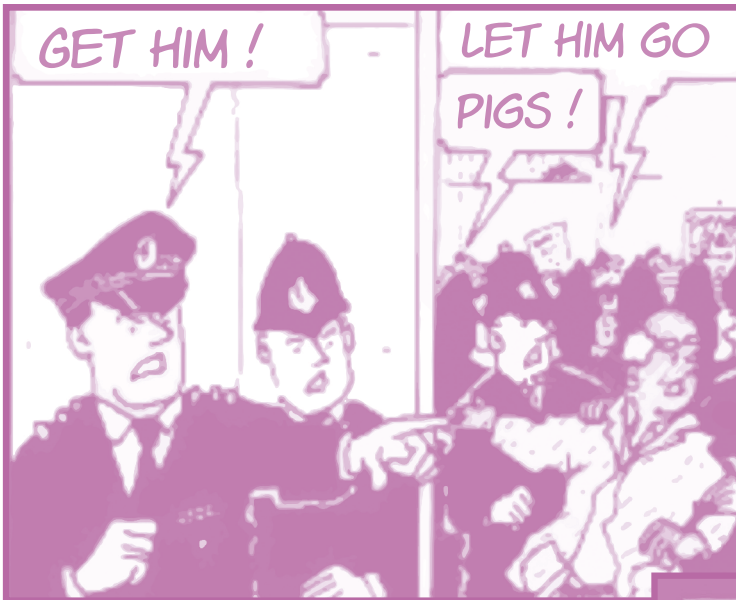
4. IT'S WITCHING HOUR

Once lookouts are in their locations and they give the agreed upon starting signal, take a final glance around, and go for it! For breaking the windows of a gentrifying business, bring enough rocks for several windows, aim for the bottom corners, and make sure you're finished up within, say, thirty seconds of the first crashing glass pane.

If you also want to put glue in the locks, paint-bomb the sign (see *Paint bombs: light bulbs filled with paint*, available on mtlcounter-info.org), pull down the cameras (see the tips in *Camover Montreal*, available on mtlcounter-info.org), write a graffiti message (in blocky ALLCAPS to hide hand-style particularities), or anything else that's relatively quiet, do this before you make a kerfuffle breaking the windows, or plan for an extra friend to do it simultaneously.

Ditch everything including your top layer of clothing at the soonest appropriate place along your exit route - cops have lights that will reveal glass shards on clothing (more of a problem if you use hammers than rocks). Find creative hiding spots ahead of time to ditch anything you don't want found, but as long as your materials and clothing are free of fingerprints it shouldn't matter. The exception to this is arson tactics, where DNA forensics are more likely to be used, in which case you may want to take everything with you in a backpack and dispose of it farther away.¹





Ideally, even if you are detained by police on your way out, you'll have nothing on you that they can use to connect you to the crime. Know your story of why you're in the neighbourhood, or be ready to remain silent because if they find evidence to contradict your story, it can be used against you in court, while your silence can't be held against you. When arrested in Quebec, you only have to give the police three pieces of information: your name, date of birth, and address (this may differ in other places; it may be useful to be knowledgeable of local laws before carrying out any illegal action).

Once you're arrested, saying anything else will do more harm than good. After providing the above three pieces of information, you can repeat the following phrase: "I have nothing more to say. I want to speak to a lawyer". (If things go south, check out *How to Survive a Felony Trial: Keeping Your Head up through the Worst of It*, available on crimethinc.com. In Montreal, get in touch with the Contempt of Court collective [outrageautribunal.net] for help with legal representation.)



A typical police response (if there even is one - often times vandalism is only discovered the next morning) will involve police first going to the scene of the crime, maybe taking the time to ask possible witnesses if they saw anything, then driving around the surrounding streets looking for possible suspects. If you get out of the immediate area quickly, you'll avoid all of this. Hiding can be a viable option if something goes awry and leaving as planned looks risky - backyards, corners of driveways, rooftops, bushes, etc. can all be helpful in waiting it out.

5. SWEET DREAMS!

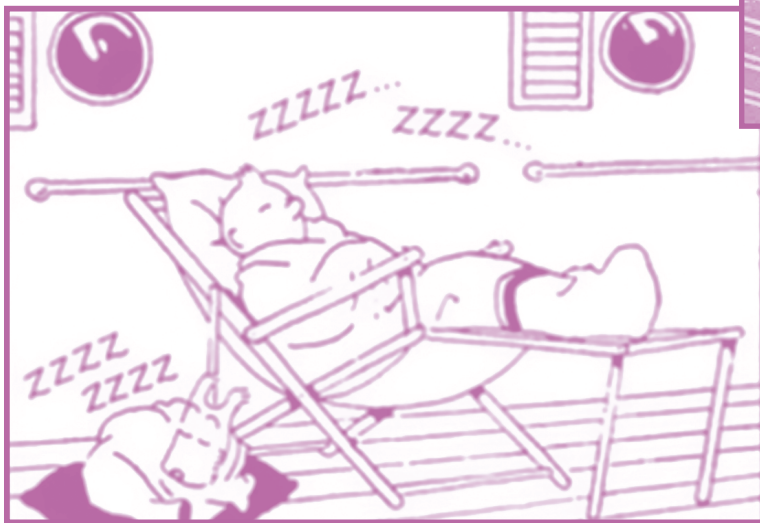
Consider using a bike to get out of the area quickly - you can have it locked a short jog away. Bikes can be disguised with new handlebars and saddles, black hockey-tape on the frame, removing identifying features, or an all-black paint job.

It's best to avoid using cars if possible – a license plate is far easier to identify than a hooded figure on a bike. But if you must because the location is too difficult to get to otherwise, be careful. You could park a bike-ride away in an area that's not on camera. Be dressed totally normally when entering the car. Take back roads and know your way around. Don't use cars that may be already known to police, in case they have been tagged with a GPS surveillance device, and don't use a rental (in part why Roger Clement got caught for arsoning an RBC branch against the Vancouver Olympics).



Rest well knowing that you've fucked up a small part of this fucked up world.

Check out *How to safely submit communiques* on mtlcounter-info.org if you want to claim the action! Also check out the *How-to* page on mtlcounter-info.org for more direct action guides: blocking trains, shutting down pipelines, demonstrations, riots, and more!



1. A note on DNA forensics: a basic principle is to never touch (or otherwise contaminate with hair, sweat, skin cells, dandruff, saliva, etc.) anything you'll be leaving behind, because unlike fingerprints, DNA can't be scrubbed off. Surgical gloves (sold at many drugstores) used with 'sterile technique' (learned on youtube) can allow you to manipulate materials without contaminating them once they leave their packaging. This should be accompanied by securing hair under a tight-fitting hat or swimming cap, a surgical mask to prevent airborne saliva, and wearing a long-sleeved shirt you've never worn that goes under your gloves (or even better, painter's coveralls used for mold and asbestos removal). Work on a raised surface so that you don't have to be bent over your materials. Have a second person (taking the same precautions) drop materials out of their packaging and onto your 'sterile field' (you can use a newly opened shower curtain, for instance), so that once you're sterile you don't contaminate your gloves with packaging you may have touched. To transport your materials, seal them in a garbage bag.



WHILE PEOPLE CAN PARTICIPATE IN DEMOS WITH THEIR CREW, sometimes it makes sense for crews to act together in a contingent or a bloc. The form chosen should fit the context. Here is a collection of tips for acting within demos – some are applicable more broadly, others are more specific to a bloc.

The way a demo moves can determine its outcome. While there are situations where moving quickly can be strategic, running blindly in a panic is the worst thing people can do. The police often attempt to disperse rowdy demos, and being able to hold our ground, not panic, and fight back is crucial.

A snake march—weaving up and down different streets and changing direction often and unpredictably (but strategically) – is a good way for spontaneous demos to evade police. Marching against traffic on one-way streets makes it difficult for the police to control the march.

It is important to pay attention to what's happening around you. Stay aware of your surroundings. Notice any police lines that are being reinforced. Kettling is another tactic police use in mass arrests wherein they try to surround a demo from all sides, either in a street between intersections, or inside an intersection. This is why, if the demo is large enough, it should always try to hold two intersections at a time to leave an alternate route open.

Structures for quick communication

need to be developed. People can spread messages and plans quickly by going from crew to crew.

Never take photos of anything that can be incriminating. If putting media online, black out faces – police routinely use footage posted online as evidence. Placards, banners, and paint can be used to block unfriendly cameras.

Don't come to a demo as a passive observer, hoping others have a plan. Come prepared to participate actively and have your own goals and plans.

The purpose of the bloc as a tactic is to have everyone look as similar as possible, so that no single individual can be identified within the anonymous mass. Blocs are not necessary for acting in the street – people can also self-organize into contingents, or act as individuals – but they can help to keep everybody safer. If only some people within a bloc take these precautions, the cops can more easily spot and target individuals and groups, which is dangerous both for those who are acting within the bloc and for those who are not. Those who make the effort to stay anonymous can draw extra police attention; those who don't can be more easily identified, which can make them easier targets. Neither of these situations is desirable.

If you're going to wear a mask, keep it on at all appropriate times. If you are captured on camera or witnessed at any point with your mask off, you can thereafter be easily identified

with it on. Don't just cover your face. Bandanas are popular and convenient, but they don't conceal enough. Cover your head completely so your hair cannot be seen – especially if it's distinctive. In a bloc, you can do this by wearing a ski mask or making a mask out of a t-shirt – stretch the neck hole across your eyes and tie the sleeves behind your head, with the rest of the shirt covering your head and shoulders.

Be extremely conscientious about where and when you change into and out of your mask and other anonymizing clothing; there should be no cameras or hostile witnesses. If possible, explore the area in advance to find appropriate spaces for changing. Remember that police are especially likely to target masked individuals who are not in a crowd that is similarly dressed.

Wear different outfits layered one upon the other. Ideally, you should have one outfit for getting to the site of the action without attracting attention, your anonymous gear for the action itself, and then another outfit underneath so you can look like a good citizen as you exit the area.

Do not march in a bloc wearing your regular clothing, especially if it's distinctive. Cops may be stupid, but they can probably match the pictures of the masked-up person with the purple polka-dotted pants to pictures of the same person in the same outfit minus the mask – even if the pictures were taken on different days.

Backpacks and shoes are also used to identify people from demos. Rather than using the same ones you wear in everyday life, use different ones. Consider covering shoes with large socks if appropriate.

Cover or remove anything that can identify you: patches, piercings, and tattoos.

If possible, cover your eyes with goggles to protect from pepper spray or tear gas. If you wear glasses, wear non-descript ones. Contact lenses are not recommended in situations where you may come into contact with chemical weapons. If in winter your glasses fog up with a mask, you can wear contacts but have goggles on hand.

Be careful not to leave fingerprints. Wear cloth gloves—leather and latex can retain fingerprints and even pass them on to objects you touch. Wipe down tools and other items with rubbing alcohol in advance to clean fingerprints off them – you never know what might

get lost in the chaos.

Banners along the sides and front of a bloc can function to obscure surveillance, and can also help to protect people from being snatched by police.

Placards and flags made with heavy wood can be used for self-defense in a pinch (and are longer than batons!). Barricades, fireworks, paint bombs, fire extinguishers, rocks, and other creative means can keep enemies at a distance.

Knowing the terrain can be invaluable.

- where are there barricade materials, action targets, and stash spots for tools to be picked up during the demo?

- where are there alleys, backyards, hiding spots, crowded areas, cameras, and public transit locations for dispersal?

Do not let any of this give you a false sense of security. Be careful. Assess your relationship to risk honestly. Make sure you know and trust the people you're working with, especially when it comes to high-risk activities. Practice security awareness at all times. Know and assert your legal rights when dealing with police. Doing so may not make things better, but failing to do so will certainly make them worse.

PAINT BOMBS: LIGHT BULBS FILLED WITH PAINT

First, put on your cloth gloves. This will keep your fingertips (and the paint bombs) clean. You should work on a soft surface (like a fold towel) to protect your bulb.

1. First, use needle-nose pliers to cut off the metal fitting. You can either cut two vertical slits in the fitting and wiggle it off, or simply cut around the entire thing.

2. Next, remove the glass tube and filament from inside the bulb. If they haven't already broken in the process of cutting off the fitting, try gently poking them from the bottom with a screwdriver.

3. Fill the bulb with paint (use a funnel or dish soap bottle and add some water if the paint is thick), seal the hole with paper, clay or similar, and seal with electrical tape or melted wax. Mixing indoor and outdoor paint makes it much more difficult to remove.

4. Wipe down the bulb with rubbing alcohol to remove any prints.



JUNE 11th

international day of solidarity
with Marius Mason &
all long-term
anarchist prisoners

Communication Is A *Weapon*

BY NOW IT IS A PLATITUDE TO SPEAK OF THE ISOLATION AND silence that prisons strive to impose. Every week another one of our imprisoned friends tells us that their mail is getting fucked with, the phones on their unit are “broken,” or that our publications are being rejected with no recourse.

For us, one of the most exciting elements of June 11, 2016 was the proliferation of words and ideas shared between and from anarchist prisoners. Along with spreading material solidarity internationally and keeping the names of our comrades on our lips, our contribution to facilitating that communication is one of our

most important tasks. While the starting point of our project was support for Marius Mason and Eric McDavid (the first of whom remains imprisoned in an extremely restrictive unit, while the latter has been freed!), it has been through a spreading web of communications that we have expanded the scope of our project to solidarity with long-term anarchist prisoners around the world. This year, we are seeking to emphasize this communication.

Maintaining communication is a lifeline for those caught in the snares of state repression or locked in its dungeons. Prisons function to isolate those held within these dungeons, to remove them from human community, and to break their will. Receiving letters and publications, being able to connect with individuals outside of the walls, and being able to call upon the solidarity of comrades on the outside are all vitally important to retaining dignity in dehumanizing conditions. When Chelsea Manning attempted suicide, communication enabled her and those close to her to mobilize and act. For prisoners who seem to live under a microscope due to their rebellious activities, a constant stream of letters shows their tormentors that they have friends on the outside and that there will be consequences for any action taken against them. Throughout the September 9th US prison strike, the relationships built over years made it possible to know of work strikes and rebellions happening in prisons all over the country, allowing supporters to organize counter-repressive action.

We must not, however, confuse actual communication with the absentminded chatter of liberal democracy. In totalitarian societies, speaking out can be subversive to systems of power; in liberal democracies it strengthens them. History textbooks teach us to speak truth to power, allowing power to better understand our frustrations so it can then maneuver to undermine us – either by regurgitating and disfiguring our criticisms as popular appeals or otherwise attempting to sell them back to us through edgy marketing campaigns. The more we tell power what we're mad about, the better the chance they can manipulate us. Ranting on the internet is a microcosm of the pressure valve function of free speech in neutralizing social unrest. We are encouraged to say whatever we want, as long as we don't actually do anything about it. Free speech becomes a fetish. For people who have never experienced a mo-

ment of freedom in their entire lives, freedom of speech is taken for freedom itself.

When direct action actually does take place, it either is castigated as coming from “outsiders,” or framed to fit into democratic rhetoric around speech. After the uprising against police in Ferguson, Missouri, Martin Luther King Jr.'s quote that “riots are the language of the unheard” went viral because it was a way to frame the uprising as revolving around freedom of speech, as if the silencing of Ferguson residents' voices is what caused the riots, or that their rioting was intended only to amplify their voices.

When we speak of communication, we are not talking about “freedom of information” – media attention and generalized knowledge of the horrific practices and conditions inside prisons will never result in public outrage, nor will they cause a wave of shame that will wash over the authorities and affect them to the point where they'll change what they're doing. While trying to bring attention to issues sometimes has its place, we don't expect anything from the authorities (or the “public”) and we know all too well that, especially in democracies, public opinion usually does very little to affect the policies or practices of the state. We're talking about something different: that finding and speaking with our comrades is vital to attacking power and living full lives.

Within liberal democracies, prison functions to isolate those who do not take the bait of the democratic illusion. We amplify the stories of those anarchists serving time in prison who have chosen active revolt against any regime of power rather than played into democracy's games. In February 2017, Eric King received sanctions – including loss of phone, visits, and commissary; increase in security level; and loss of “good time” – for writing poems and drawing cartoons depicting violence towards the Bureau of Prisons and the government in general. In early 2017, Sean Swain went on a successful 50-day hunger strike demanding the restoration of his email and phone communications, which had been cut off years ago due to his alleged threats of outside direct action against prison officials. In 2014, Bill Dunne received a 15-year “hit” to his parole, with the parole commission citing his “continued association and affiliation with anarchist organizations” as evidence he “still harbor[ed] anti-authoritarian views that are not compatible with the welfare

of society.” Marius Mason is currently being held in the intensely-restrictive federal prison in Carswell, Texas, which surveils and controls his communication with the outside world and imposes harsh limits to his ability to connect with struggles on the outside. The comrades arrested in Italy under Operation Scripta Manent have seen their mail restricted, including a permanent seizure of all material from Croce Nera Anarchica [Anarchist Black Cross].

Despite the state’s best attempts to fetter our comrades’ tongues, imprisoned anarchists continue to contribute to struggles inside and outside of prison. Sean Swain’s Final Straw segments, Marius’ art and poetry, Jeremy Hammond’s incendiary tweets, and prison writings crossing borders and oceans show the innumerable and diverse forms communication can take in the belly of the beast.

That said, we want to share specific news of Marius’ struggles on the inside. This year was filled with new heartbreak as the Bureau of Prisons developed means of isolating him further. Beginning last summer, Marius began to see huge gaps in the mail he received, sometime going weeks without personal mail, with movement newsletters even more scarce. It was finally revealed via a phone call with a friend that FMC Carswell had been cutting off all communication about the National Prison Strike and thus any personal mail mentioning the strike was destroyed.

Even with these more obvious events Marius is going into his 10th year of incarceration, friendships and supports on the outside have been pushed to their limit, consistently thwarted in their attempts to get mail past Carswell’s complex and unexplained regulations. Aside from the few close friends and immediate family he has left, Marius receives very little mail. Mail is his lifeline to the outside world. He needs supporters to recommit to correspondence, and to visits, for those of us who knew him before his arrest (a requirement of the BOP). Know that letters which mention political actions will not make it through the tight censorship.

On the outside, new projects which seek to break down the barriers imposed by prison have flourished. Comrades all over the US and elsewhere have started publishing prison newsletters, giving wings to the ideas of our imprisoned comrades, enabling them to spread seeds in the “free world” and in the prison

cells. Individual support websites, counter-information websites, zines collecting prisoners’ writings, the Certain Days calendar, the new Black Bridge website, and other efforts keep our comrades behind bars connected with us, and us connected with them – through creative expression, mutual contribution to theory, and strategizing for continuation of struggle.

This extends also to the realm of action, with solidarity rooting itself in the spirit of combative, internationalist struggle against prison and its world. Following the arrest of Pola Roupas and Konstantina Athanasopoulou and the detainment of Pola’s six-year-old child Lambros-Viktoras, diverse and combative actions took place, resulting in Lambros-Viktoras’ grand-mother gaining custody of her grandchild. The actions taken all over the world in solidarity with the US prison strike in September 2016 offer a clear vision of how words and deeds can mix in the cauldron of revolt. We also want to mention the upcoming Fight Toxic Prisons convergence in Texas, drawing the important connections between ecological devastation and prison society and rooting both in active solidarity with imprisoned comrades.

This year we challenge ourselves to weaponize our words and gestures to one another, to give them teeth. Let’s find ways to fight the censorship of those sending messages from the inside, and those sending strength and support from the outside. Let us not be satisfied with merely expressing our desires and ideas to whoever is listening, but really live them, and develop them together. The state wishes to crush our comrades by separating them from communities of struggle. We will not let it succeed!

HOW TO SAFELY SUBMIT COMMUNIQUE TO MTLCOUNTER-INFO.ORG

WE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO summarize a basic technique to anonymously submit communiques, using the Tails operating system.

Tails is a computer operating system designed with security in mind, which can boot off a USB or CD, from any computer. After shutting down Tails and ejecting the USB or CD, the computer can start again with its usual operating system. Tails is designed to leave no trace on the computer by not interacting with the hard-disk, and only using the RAM for memory (which is automatically erased when Tails shuts down). In addition, it forces every internet connection to go through the **Tor network**ⁱ, so is much safer than using just a Tor browser on your normal operating system.

IP and MAC addresses:

Every internet connection has a specific **IP address**ⁱⁱ that can be logged by websites that are visited, and which reveals the connection that was used. An IP address can be traced to the internet subscriber it's assigned to, whether an

individual or a business like a café.

Every computer has a **MAC address**ⁱⁱⁱ, which can identify the specific computer that connected to a site via the IP address.

Tails automatically conceals the IP address by using the TOR network, and automatically gives the user a fake MAC address upon starting.

i. *TOR is a network of proxies run by volunteers with the explicit purpose of maintaining anonymity online. With TOR, your connection goes through three proxies. You connect to TOR and each of the three proxies (nodes) you access encrypts your data. No individual node can know both what you are connected to and who you are. The third node decrypts the data and accesses the website, sending the information back through the proxies in encrypted form.*

ii. *An Internal Protocol address is a string of numbers that allows you to send and retrieve data over an internet connection (for example, 78.125.1.209). This*

number identifies the location, Internet service provider, and technical details of your connection. It is comparable to a house's street address. An unobscured IP will lead investigators directly to your connection.

iii. *The Media Access Controller address specifically identifies your computer. If you access the internet, the router may log your MAC address and maintain that log. If investigators were to read the logs of a router you accessed (say, a public wifi from which a communiqué was sent), and then compare that address with the MAC address of your computer's wireless card (say, confiscated in a raid), you'd be connected to your activity while using that router's connection. If the MAC address is not changed, there is the possibility of your activity being traced back to you if investigators are persistent or lucky enough.*



1 Download and install Tails

Tails can be downloaded at tails.boum.org. See 'Tails Installation Assistant' on the site for instructions on how to download and verify the file, install it on a USB or CD, and boot it on your computer.

2 Boot Tails

Depending on how risky your activity is, it might be best to use a computer that isn't connected to your identity (in case Tails, for whatever reason, does leave a trace). This could be a public computer out of sight of surveillance cameras, or a laptop used specifically for this purpose.

If you start the computer with the USB plugged in, and Tails doesn't start automatically, you might have to access the 'boot menu' of your computer. On most computers, you can press a boot menu key to display a list of possible devices to start from (identify the potential boot

menu keys for the computer depending on the computer manufacturer in the list below). In the boot menu, choose your USB. For troubleshooting, see 'Start Tails' at tails.boum.org. You may need to edit the BIOS settings.

3 Connect to internet

If using a laptop, you can access many wifi networks with prior knowledge of the password from outside the building, even at night if they leave the wifi on. Use wifi that doesn't have a 'captive portal' (that makes you accept terms and conditions).

4 Submit Communique

Open TOR browser, and verify TOR is functional by going to check.torproject.org. Change your TOR 'Privacy and Security Settings' from low (default) to high. Visit <https://mtlcounter-info.org/add-content/> to send us your communiqué! If submitting any images, video, etc., remove identifying information (meta-

data) with the Metadata Anonymization Toolkit (MAT) on Tails.

More In-depth Resources:

- Surveillance Self-Defense: Tips, Tools and How-tos for Safer Online Communications

Manufacturer	Key
Acer	Esc, F12, F9
Asus	Esc, F8
Dell	F12
Fujitsu	F12, Esc
HP	Esc, F9
Lenovo	F12,
Novo,	F8, F10
Samsung	Esc, F12, F2
Sony	F11, Esc, F10
Toshiba	F12

What the fuck is anarchism?



Anarchists oppose all forms of oppressive power. We strive for a world based on self-determination and mutual aid. As the world veers towards tyranny, only grassroots direct action can keep our communities safe. If you're ready to take action without waiting for orders, you're one of us.

Anarchists look reality in the face and desire its complete transformation: the elimination of exploitation and domination. Anarchists are among the only ones offering a clear vision of another way of living. In organizing networks and community spaces around the world, we come together to assist each other in meeting basic needs and building the collective capacity for self-defense. In neighborhoods, workplaces, and schools, anarchists are fighting gentrification, the violence of the police, and exploitation while creating inclusive alternative infrastructures for survival. Across bioregions, we are organizing to protect our drinking water and the earth we all depend on for life.

Anarchism in Montreal:

For a basic introduction to anarchist values, you can check out "To Change Everything, an anarchist appeal", as well as other introductory texts at [MILLEFOLIUM](http://MILLEFOLIUM.NOBLOGS.ORG), a local anarchist zine project.

MILLEFOLIUM.NOBLOGS.ORG

MONTREAL COUNTER-INFORMATION is a local website that publishes news and analysis about anarchist struggles in Montreal. It also hosts an archive of counter-information such as flyers, posters, publications, banners, and graffiti. It has a page with upcoming Montreal events, as well as 'how-to' guides for anyone who wants to learn skills for direct action.

LA DEFERLE is a Montreal anarchist social space in the neighbourhood of Hochelaga. **L'INSOUMISE** is an anarchist bookstore downtown.

AU1407.ORG / INSOUMISE.WORDPRESS.COM

If you want to learn more about anarchism across North America, you can visit these websites:

CRIMETHINC.COM - anarchist analyses and introductory resources

ITSGOINGDOWN.ORG - anarchist activity across North America

SUB.MEDIA - video coverage of anarchism

Anarchists see the imposition of racism, class society, nationality, gender and patriarchy all playing parts in creating a world where a few own everything and the rest are forced to work for them in order to survive. A world that is also held in place by institutions of direct control in the form of police and prisons.

Anarchists recognize the one-two punch of the right and left wings of the state. The right-handed uppercut of market capitalism and the strong left hook that more government offers have taken turns pummeling people and the earth for hundreds of years. Anarchists are those who have had enough of it all.

Naturally anarchists are decried as dangerous by cops, politicians, and the rich, and rightly so, because if anarchists had their way those roles would no longer exist. While we're told to grow up, to quiet our rage, to check another ballot, wait another decade for change, our limbs and minds grow weary. Our dreams and desires yearn to overflow, for something different.

Anarchism means destroying the forces that seek to keep us on our knees, as much as it means finding your friends, lovers, families and communities to have each others' backs, with unbounded rage and joy. The riot that spills into the streets with dancing and laughter, the potluck that leaves everyone fed, the social center filled with books and ideas, the friendships based in affinity and unconditional solidarity, the window smashed to let in the light from outside.

In a world full of alienation and apathy, anarchists are willing to act in accordance with their ideas. Anarchists are among those who would set fire to a bulldozer or a new luxury home rather than let a forest be cut down, who would rather hear the sound of shattering glass than a politician's speech. Deserting and disobeying all the rules written against us, by squatting and stealing for our survival, and rejecting the roles we're assigned, as good worker, good student, good citizen, good woman or man. Rewriting the usual endings; by supporting prisoners rather than letting them disappear in isolation, by beating up rapists and homophobes rather than suffering their violence, by creating forms of love that only strengthen us rather than containing and limiting us. Taking control over our surroundings by painting graffiti on the walls or occupying space and planting gardens.

By arming ourselves with the ability to create a new world and destroy the one that has been imposed on us.