

SEATTLE'S ANARCHIST PAPER

# *Tides of Flame*

joy • freedom • rebellion

joy  
to the  
world

*issue 12 ~ mid december 2011*

SEATTLE PORT SHUTDOWN • X-MAS RETAIL HELL • REVIEW: UNDERGROUND REVERIE'S HAUNTING BEATS • THE FIRST DAYS OF TEAR GAS • THE SACRED LAW OF PRIVATE PROPERTY • A NAUGHTY HOLIDAY HOW-TO • AND MORE!

ABOUT

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*Tides of Flame* is a biweekly periodical which is part of an ongoing project of anarchist analysis and practice within the Puget Sound area.

We strive to live lives of joy, freedom, and rebellion, and for this, we are criminals.



*Who will revive the  
violent whirlpools  
of flame  
if not us and those  
that we consider  
brothers?*

**Come!**

*New friends:  
this will please you.  
We will never work,  
oh tides of flame!*

**This world  
will explode.**

~ A. Rimbaud

the Port Shutdown was a

*Wild Success!!*



**B**uilding off of the success of the November 2nd Oakland General Strike, elements within the Occupy Movement planned a shutdown of all major west coast ports on Monday, December 12th. Just as the General Strike showed the world what people in the movement are capable of, the Port Shutdown served as another example of this movement's power and potential. In the span of a month, the movement has re-energized itself and focused its energy on a specific target: the central nodes of capitalist distribution.

The Port of Seattle, specifically Terminal 18 on Harbor Island, is largely run by a corporation called SSA Marine. Goldman Sachs owns 51% of this company and extracts massive profits from the constant flow of commodities entering the ports run by SSA Marine. And if that wasn't enough, SSA has also been accused of union-busting by immigrant port truckers working in Los Angeles and is a major player behind the ecologically disastrous Gateway Pacific Coal Terminal project in Bellingham, WA. For all of these reasons, Harbor Island was chosen as the first priority of the Port of Seattle shutdown.

The march to the port left Westlake Plaza and proceeded down 2nd Avenue. The Seattle Police Museum

was paint-bombed as the march passed it. Further along, after the march had turned onto 4th, a Bank of America and a Wells Fargo were paint-bombed and tagged. After arriving at the fishing pier near the entrances to Harbor Island, the mass of people split up and began blocking the strategic choke points into the port. At the entrance of Klickitat Avenue, the main road into the island, people erected a large barricade made from assorted construction and industrial debris from nearby lots. There was no argument about such an effort, and everyone threw themselves into the objective of stopping all incoming workers and cargo. It was extremely refreshing to see hundreds of people intentionally and actively blocking a central node in the capitalist network.

The media has tried to make a big deal of the objects thrown at the police, but those things were inevitable, being nothing more than the defensive instincts of people who are losing their fear of capitalism and its police. The crowd held their ground for as long as possible, given their massive tactical disadvantages: being in the middle of nowhere, facing off against people with guns, not having horses, etc. The police threw two flash-bang grenades into the

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## My So-Called Life

*An irregular column detailing the misery, banality, and absurdity of everyday life in capitalist society.*

### HOLIDAY RETAIL HELL

I work in a corporate bookstore. I just marked my three-year anniversary with the company, and it's beginning to wear on me. It's the Wednesday before Black Friday, and in corporate-land, that means that Christmas—excuse me, the holidays—are starting.

My fourth holiday season in retail. The past few years have been bearable; my former manager hated Christmas. But now we have a new manager, and on this day she wastes no time in transforming the purgatory of the holidays into a whole new circle of hell.

I work in the music department, and one of my duties is choosing the CDs that play in the store. I've got a good rotation lined up, but I'm only a few hours into my shift when my department phone rings. It's my manager.

Apparently, I am to play nothing but Christmas music for the rest of December.

With a little more incredulity than is professional, I say, "...Really?"

"Really," she says.

"...Okay." I hang up, and pull out the selection. Josh Groban, Mannheim Steamroller, Il Divo... fuck.

It's not just that the music is horrible. It's the principle of the thing. You can call Christmas carols "holiday music," but a wolf in sheep's clothing is still a wolf. And cultural Christianity is still Christianity.

I call my manager into the department to tell her that. "It's offensive," I say. "We have customers and employees who aren't Christian."

"I understand, but holiday music makes people want to buy stuff, so that's what we're going to play," she tells me.

"I know," I reply. "I just wanted my voice to be heard."

"Okay!" she says and walks away.



I'm annoyed, but I let it go. But on Black Friday, the issue resurfaces. One of my assistant managers asks me about it. So I tell her what happened and what was said. She repeats our store manager's line about holiday music as money-spending motivator and leaves. I think that's the end of it, but later on she comes back with yet another assistant manager. They take me down to the manager's office and ask me to recount what happened.

By this time I'm irritated again, and I ask, "Am I in trouble? Because I stand behind what I said. There was nothing wrong with that."

"No! Clean slate," they tell me.

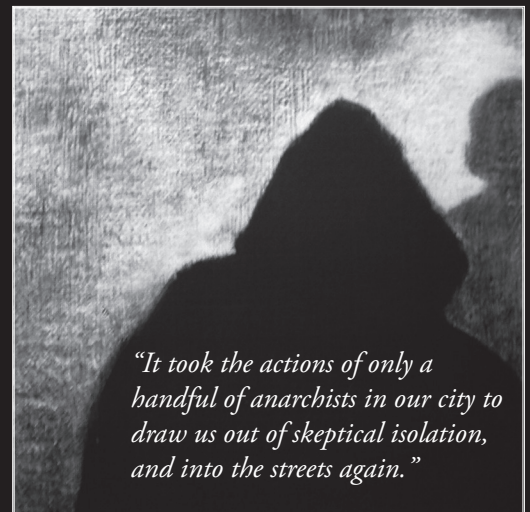
"...Okay..." Thankfully it's the end of my shift, and I leave the store to the cheery sound of the third cover of "Santa Baby" I've heard that day. I call my mom when I get home and rant for awhile and then ask her advice. "I think, honey, that you'll get that kind of reaction in a corporate environment," she says. "Maybe it's time to look for a new job."

I know she's right. I'm partly surprised that I got so much backlash for objecting to Christmas carols. They're just songs. What's the big deal? Maybe it's a silly issue to argue, but I feel slightly saner by pushing back just a little. And I know they're not just songs. They're symbolic of the casual way in which the white, middle-class, Christian norm blankets us all here in the U.S. As my manager says, "The kind of people who shop here want to hear Christmas music."

Merry Christmas—I mean, Happy Holidays. Welcome to capitalism, how can I help you? 🦋

## ▶ review: *Underground Reverie*

Underground Reverie's debut four-track album is throbbing, haunting, and completely amazing. Samples from helicopters, owl-like flutes, various films (including *Network*), and eerie old songs flesh out a skeleton of delicate electronic beats. The music is as much about the horrors of civilization as it is about the raw beauty of struggle. In the liner notes, UR reflects on anarchist praxis and encourages us to keep fighting.



*"It took the actions of only a handful of anarchists in our city to draw us out of skeptical isolation, and into the streets again."*

The CD will soon be available at [crimethinc.com](http://crimethinc.com). The funds will go directly to benefit those arrested at the inspiring November 12 building occupation in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Keep a look out for future live performances.

## FORGOTTEN HISTORY

# The First Days of Tear Gas

Over 90 years ago, *The Industrial Pioneer*, a small anarcho-syndicalist paper published in Chicago, released an article titled “Poison the Women Gently: Army’s New Code of Chivalry.” At the time that this article was written, the United States government was in the midst of its war against organized labor and the anarchist movement. Sacco and Vanzetti were in jail awaiting execution, anarchist bombs were exploding on judges front doors, J. Edgar Hoover was cutting his teeth on crushing political subversion, and the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) fought to maintain its existence amidst deportations, incarcerations and assassinations. This article, published in a paper much like this one, will be republished verbatim and we are confident it will speak for itself.

Major General Amos A. Fries, the U.S. army’s official poisoner, or as he is more politely entitled by those who believe in poisoning strikers and radicals, “Chief of the Chemical Warfare Service,” writes to the public press of New York City to say, “If possible, consideration should be given to women and children (when gassing them with poison gas) so as to cause them no undue injury. Isn’t that sensible, humane, and even gallant? Would you teach a policeman to use the same vicious blow with a club on the head of a child or a woman as he would on a desperate armed man? Again, we think there is but one answer to the question.”

General Fries was defending himself against a certain amount of rather shocked criticism, evoked among a certain section of the bourgeois press, because of statements in his book of instructions to subordinate poisoners, officers and gentlemen of the U.S. Army, as to the best way to protect the profits of coal mine owners, factory owners, etc., by dispersing with clouds of deadly (or perhaps merely injurious) gasses, any mass picketing, or by the same means breaking up meetings held in rooms on the third stories of buildings, which previous information might have led the officer in charge of the protection of profits in that locality to believe were for the purpose of calling strikes, etc.

Some naive liberals somehow got the idea that it was barbarous and inhumane to gas crowds of women and children, especially miners’ wives, and offspring, most probably, with the sort of poison

clouds that rotted out the lungs of the soldiers in France.

They quoted from the general’s text book on “Provisional Instructions for the Control of Mobs by Chemical Warfare,” that statement about, if possible, not inflicting undue injury on women and children. They commented adversely upon it, and the general came right back at them; the general declares absolutely that it is “sensible, humane, and even gallant” to shoot the kids full of poison gas, just as sensible, humane and gallant as it is for a cop to slightly fracture their skulls, instead of trying to “tear their damn cans off,” as is the custom when subduing male strikers—and, of course, nothing could be more gallant in the treatment of women and children than that.

In this article to the public, General Fries tells how:

*An officer of the Chemical Warfare Service, with tear gases, was sent to the Mingo mine fields some four years ago. It is to the credit of the War Department that he was sent there. Had any force been necessary, tear gases would have been used and any dangerous situations arising from excited, armed men’ would have been avoided without bloodshed or destruction of property. How can the words “barbarous” and “uncivilized” be applied to such materials? If preserving law and order by the mildest means ever known to man is to be considered barbarous, then how can civilization endure?*

Ah, how indeed? Remember Engels’ conclusion, based on long study of various ruling class utterances, that every ruling class, throughout history,

has identified its interests with those of the whole world, has considered itself synonymous with culture, civilization, learning, and all things desirable. Each of them was certain that if it passed, the torch of progress, or of civilization or whatever they considered desirable, would be extinguished. It is a natural

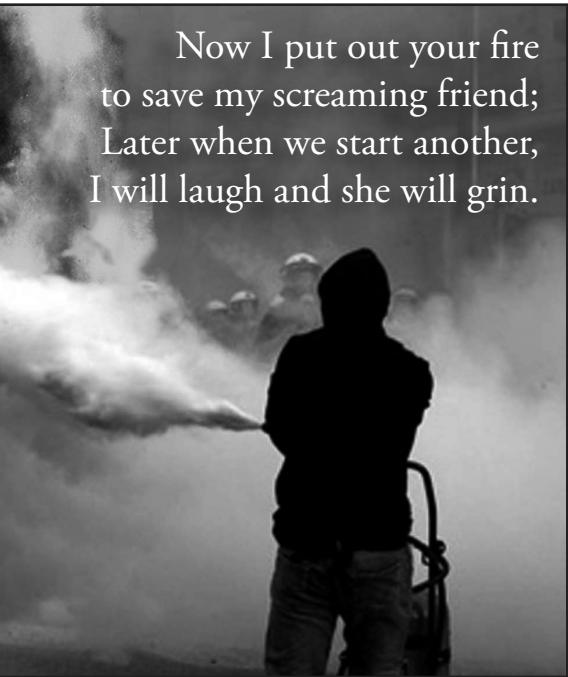


sort of a feeling, however false history has proved to be—in the case of General Fries, the official poisoner for American capitalism, we can understand how he, regarding as he does the proper development of the gentle art of gassing men for profit, should look with grave distrust on any group of men or any proposition, which proposes to stop him. Indeed at the close of his newspaper article he tells in the plainest of words what he regards as progress:

# The Sacred Law of Private Property

Once upon a time, long, long ago, land was not property. It was simply land. At its edges it met the sea. It was a soft, wet rug of leaves underfoot; it was snow-capped and loomed high above the grassy plains. Water wandered through it, sometimes rushing and plunging off cliffs. Animals lived on the land and water, exchanging energy with them in seemingly endless cycles of life and death, creation and destruction. Some of these animals were humans.

Today, after centuries of brutal warfare, *land* has been transformed into *property*. It is bought and sold, exca-



Now I put out your fire  
to save my screaming friend;  
Later when we start another,  
I will laugh and she will grin.

vated, blown-up, built-upon, paved, and irrigated. A few square feet over here is more expensive than an acre over there. Some of it is called “Super Fund Site,” some is “nature preserve”; other parcels are called malls, schools, roads, farms, and houses. It’s all called property. Some of it is called “public property” but people are not really free to use it however they’d like.

“Public property” is really “state property” and the laws of the state de-

lineate its proper use. Sometimes this means: no camping, singing, sleeping, blowing bubbles, writing with chalk, sitting on the ground, gardening, panhandling, smoking, or drinking alcohol. What is and is not allowed can change on a whim and is usually influenced by the desires of the wealthiest businesses and residents nearby.

In general, one must pay to inhabit the space one inhabits. Most exceptions to this rule are illegal and precarious. All liberated or reclaimed space, be it urban or rural, is hemmed in on all sides by private property. The people who occupy these spaces are under constant threat of violent eviction and imprisonment by the faithful servants of the owning class, the guardians of private property: the police and military forces. Yet land struggles, slum rebellions, and housing occupations erupt and persist every day across the world. They persist because people’s freedom and dignity depend on their unmediated access to their most basic means of survival: their home, the earth.

From medieval heretical sects to present-day indigenous land struggles across the world, instances of the dispossessed fighting like hell for a free life are countless. And when fighting has not been an option, people have struggled to retain the memory of freedom, passing traditional wisdom and “old wive’s tales” to their children in secret, hoping that one day, the strength will come. In response, the elites have formed various state and proto-state institutions to criminalize the dispossessed and their traditions, to kill those who resist, and to steal whatever they can as fast as possible. Just as there can be no plantation without its slave-catchers and Fugitive Slave Acts, there can be no private property without the law that protects it, the police that enforce that law, the courts that sentence the lawbreakers, and the prisons that contain them.

All over the world and throughout history, people have attempted to create autonomous, egalitarian communities where land is held in common. Whenever this way of life existed before imperial/capitalist invasion, many people fiercely defended what they had in an attempt to avoid the imposition of waged labor or total annihilation. We are told that domination is human nature, but it seems that the urge to struggle against domination is its inseparable, enduring twin.

In Europe, the transition to capitalism saw peasants battling the nascent capitalist class over the enclosure of common lands. Many of these rebels were accused of evil sorcery, and hundreds of thousands of accused witches (mostly women) were murdered in a misogynistic killing spree that spanned two centuries. “[The killings] spread fear, destroyed networks and resistance and did not stop until the population was sufficiently subordinated and the emerging state, capitalist social relations and church had got its claws into the lives and psyches of the people.”\* Later, after the Black Plague, a significant labor shortage occurred, which, coupled with a glut of unoccupied land, led to unprecedented peasant power and better living conditions for the lower classes. This caused a crisis in accumulation for the rich, who then turned their eyes towards the land they arrogantly called the “New World.”

Conquest and European colonial expansion occurred in direct response to this crisis. Conquistadors and “explorers” brought to the Americas their own conception of land: as an abundant re-

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\*To learn more about the witch trials, patriarchy, and the birth of capitalism, check out “Burning Women” at [zinelibrary.info](http://zinelibrary.info) or *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation* by Silvia Federici.

## Property

◀ CONTINUED FROM PG. 5

source to be exploited and a source of capital to be accumulated. The ensuing war on native people was necessary for the privatization of the land, just as the centuries of war against the European peasantry were necessary to ultimately enclose the commons and push the poor into wage labor.

In the Americas, indigenous ways of life were incompatible with the invaders' desires for greater and greater wealth. Thus, the threat they represented had to be eliminated—first through mass murder, then through cultural genocide and assimilation. This giant land theft project, along with the enslavement of African people and the indentured servitude of poor Europeans, is what this country is built upon. Every nation has a similar history, and though the methods may have evolved, the process of enclosure continues to this day.

Private property is the foundation of capitalism's class system and the state apparatus that protects it. It is upon this foundation that wage slavery and the entire network of domination find their foothold. Our minds have been colonized for so long that many people accept private property as sacred law, believing it to be the safest harbor for personal freedom. But they are wrong.

To be clear, we are not opposed to personal property, to having *personal possessions*. We don't want to share your underwear or your toothbrush. We do want the freedom to choose where and with whom we live, we want free access to what we need to survive, and, most importantly, we don't want our choices to be dictated by the laws of the market or the state. Put simply, we don't want bosses, cops, prisons, banks, or landlords.

Throughout the history of the United States, the elites have bought off rebels and uncontrollable workers by giving them access to the fruits of plunder—land in the west, a place at the table, pineapples, bananas, the right to vote

for their own masters. And when those fruits were rejected and rebels forged bonds of solidarity and multiracial alliances, the hangman climbed the scaffold and the prison cell doors slammed shut.

But they could never snuff us all out.

It seems that something new is happening at last, after these long years of heartbreak, half-measures, and defeat. More and more landless folk are going on the offensive, taking back what has been stolen from us. The roles the police and politicians play in protecting the interests of the rich are becoming clearer by the day. The state is dropping the pretense of taking care of even the middle class, and greater numbers of people are being forced to rely on one another. As such, the idea of stealing back one's life is catching and spreading like wildfire. May we see the proliferation of free spaces ungoverned by the laws of state and capitalism and ever more daring acts of sabotage and self-defense! 🐉

## Tear Gas

◀ CONTINUED FROM PG. 4

*I am quoting facts, not fancies. I am giving the truth and not propaganda. Our records are open to any man who will examine them. If he be honest he cannot but decide with us that the world needs gas more than any other one thing to preserve law and order with the least damage possible to human beings or to property.*

Probably his underlings are in substantial accord with him, and none of them, despite an occasional reference to “defending our beloved country from foreign aggression” have any doubt at all about whom they are going to gas. Another hearty believer in poison for women and children, one Henry Fry, a major in the Chemical Warfare Reserves, rushes into print, with a letter to a newspaper in New York, in which he says exactly what poison gas is good for. Remember in reading his explanation, that the bourgeoisie do not distinguish one sort of radical from another, and when he says “Communist”

he is as likely as not to mean “I.W.W.” Here are the concluding remarks from his little speech:

*With Communism seeking a foothold in America, both by its direct agencies and through the use of various side-line activities, the American people would be foolish to discard a weapon that may be badly needed against the Red menace.*

In instructing his officers how to use war gas for riot duty, General Fries is merely carrying out a routine detail of his office as Chief of the Chemical Warfare Service. Criticism of his instructions because he happens to be a gas officer are misleading. Every department has its own riot tactics, including the Regular Army, National Guard and, here at home, the New York Police Department. The New York police force has its gas section, which is instructed in the use of gas as, a riot weapon.

*The Bolshevik, the Communist and the radicals generally--ranging from light crimson down to delicate pink--would like to see chemical warfare eliminated, but it is here to stay and the day may come when it will prove to be the salvation of the United States.* 🐉

## NEW YEAR'S EVE NOISE DEMONSTRATION

### King County Juvenile Detention Center

1211 E Alder St

December 31, 8PM

Noise demos are a traditional way of expressing solidarity with people imprisoned during the New Year, a way of remembering those held captive by the state. A noise demo breaks the isolation and alienation of the cells our enemies create and reminds those on the inside that we haven't forgotten about them.

This is in response to an international call for actions against jails, prisons, and detention centers. Wear black clothing and bring things to make noise. *Lots of noise.*

## Port Shutdown

◀ CONTINUED FROM PG. 2

crowd, effectively dispersing it.

As you may remember from a previous ToF article, the company that originally gave the SPD the money to keep the horse units active is Expeditors International, a company that takes care of the logistics that facilitate the flow of commodities from across the world through the Port of Seattle. It is not a coincidence that these same horses trampled several blockaders when the police rode them into the crowd that evening.

While this fight was going on, another group of 200 people had moved into West Seattle to blockade Terminal 5. By the end of the night, ILWU had instructed its workers to go home due to unsafe working conditions, and the normal night shift of the two terminals was canceled. However, SSA Marine and Eagle Marine Services have decided not to pay the workers, utilizing loopholes in their contracts with ILWU. In response to this, a small group of people picketed in front of Terminal 5 on the morning of the 13th. They were met with a warm and grateful response from the workers who had lost a day's pay, defying the narrative of those who would like to present the port shutdown as a failure and an attack on the mythical 99%. Despite being dependent on the port for their wages, these workers could not help but see an attack on their contracted bosses as something worthy of support.

December 12th was the birth of a new autonomous force against the global capitalist system. Independent of unions, political parties and central leadership, this force is now ready to move forward and continue to articulate itself. After a period of gestation, what was once confined to the tactics of public camping and symbolic actions has now begun to blossom. In the sixth issue of Tides of Flame, we pledged our solidarity to the workers of the ILWU. There were a great many anarchists on the streets on December 12th, and they

## Turn those highly fragile glass Christmas tree ornaments into paint bombs!

First, put on your plastic gloves. This will keep your fingertips (and the paint bombs) clean. Next, simply remove the metal top of the ornament, fill the bulb with paint (use a funnel or dish soap bottle and add some water if the paint is thick), plug the hole with paper, clay, or similar, and seal it up with electrical tape!

During the rest of the year, when ornaments are not so easy to come by, try using **light-bulbs**. This is a slightly more complicated process, but still quite easy. You should work on a soft surface (like a folded towel) to protect your bulb.

1. First, use a carpet knife 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, seal the hole with paper, clay, or similar, and seal with electrical tape or melted wax.
4. Finally, go throw your paint bombs at something!



all helped achieve the modest objective of a shutdown and picket.

Again, this movement is fluid, autonomous, wild, and full of folks ready to join with others who want to see the demise of capitalism and hierarchical authority. The only way to end this global system is to bring it down, together. We'll see you at the barricades we'll all be standing behind one day, facing down the capitalists and fighting off their police.

Text from a demo flyer:

*Historically, the strike has been the purview of the working class, the sector of society which is both dutifully employed and overworked, hanging by the thread of the boss's favor. The power of the strike lay in the industrial workers' ability to stop production dead in its tracks. But we all know that the traditional blue collar job is a rarity these days and that the US econo-*

*my has lost much of its industrial production to the whims of global capitalism.*

*Now the working class exists most predominately as the underbelly of its former self, as the excluded class—the unemployed, underemployed, illegally employed. It no longer holds the same power as it once did to shut down the economy from the workplace. Some of our potential comrades still work in the old world of production: longshoremen, port truck workers, and others. The rest of us exist outside of that world, and indeed, some of us always have. Our workplace has become the place of precarity—we occupy the streets because we have no workplace to occupy.*

*We are the face of the crisis of capitalism. When we blockade the ports and staunch the flow of capital, we do it from the outside, as displaced people, no longer as workers but as those excluded from this system, as those who have no hope in the economy, no hope in capitalism.*

*When we shut down the port, we dream of the day we shut down the entire system with its jobs and its economy of suffering. 🐦*

## FUGITIVE FATHER & CHILD WANT TO ICE SKATE, TRIGGER POLICE INVASION

CAPITOL HILL - On December 14th, a fugitive named Donald Vasser attempted go with his child on a school outing from Lowell Elementary to the new ice-skating rink in Cal Anderson Park. Another parent snitched him out to the police, causing him to flee. This in turn caused the over-reactive and psychotic SPD to begin combing the neighborhood with assault rifles and dogs, looking for him. He was described by the police as a "high violent" [sic] fugitive and a "very bad man." However, the crime he was on the run from consisted of nothing more than having alcohol in his house while on probation for a drug offense. Unfortunately,

Vasser turned himself in later that night. The stupidity of the police and the judicial system should be patently obvious by now. However, in case you are still on the fence, we offer you this disgusting display of force as one more nail in the coffin of the SPD. 🐦

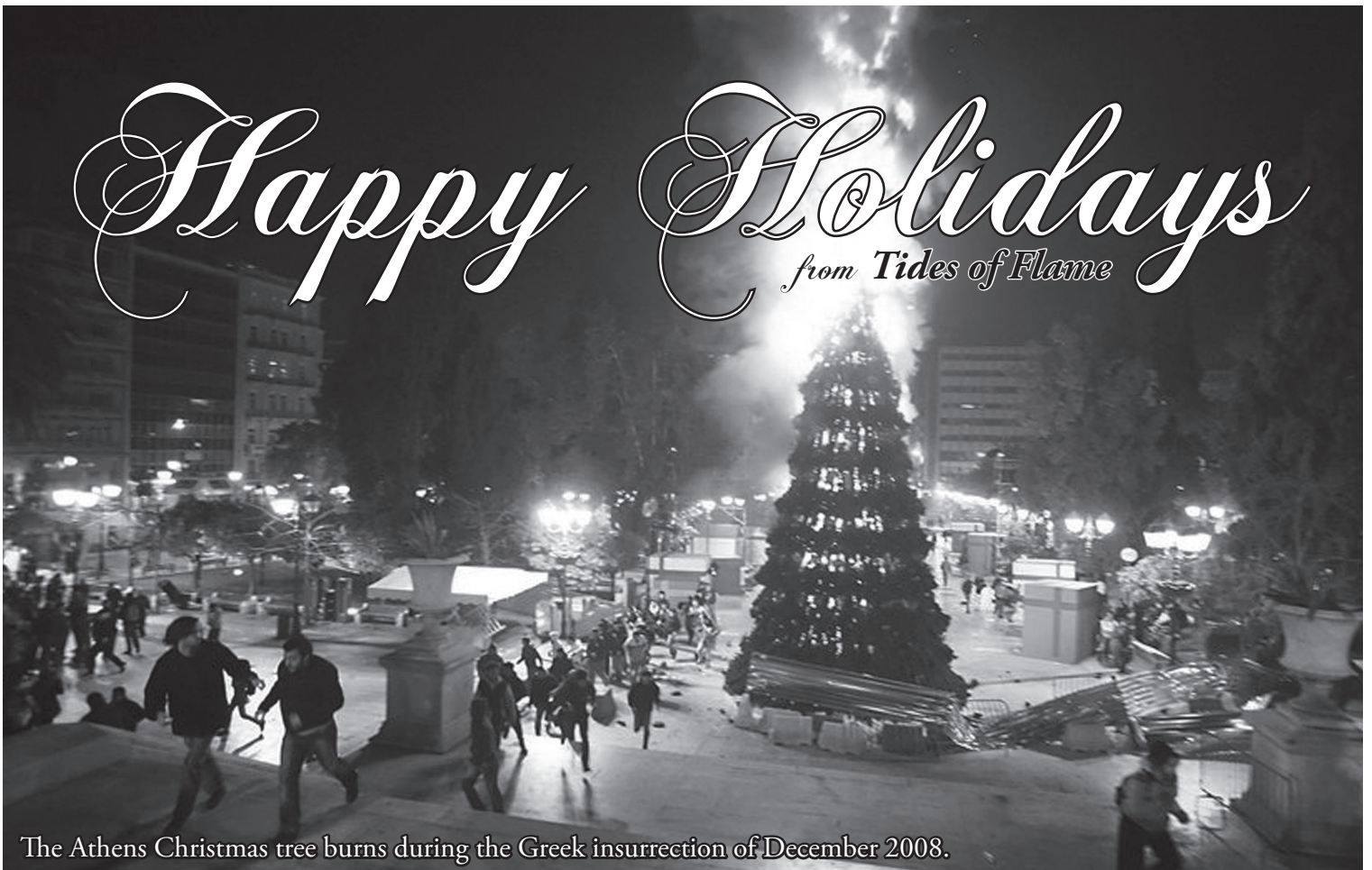
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## WILD ELK TO BE SLAUGHTERED TO SAVE GOLF COURSE GRASS AND FLAG POLES

SNOQUALIMIE - The Snoqualmie Ridge golf course has been having trouble with the wildlife that borders its sterile and boring fairway. Elk have been walking on the grass at night, leaving large muddy holes that have to be filled by the hired help. As if to add insult to injury, the majestic elk have been snapping flag

poles in half with their strong jaws. After having tagged, trapped and shot flares at these amazing animals, the managers of the golf course have reached the end of their patience and have just announced they will be allowing hunters to kill any elk that wander onto the grass. Every monday, when the golf course is closed, the arrogant and opportunistic hunters will slaughter a group of exceptionally humorous animals.

We would like to wish the golf course the worst of luck and we sincerely hope their managers are embezzling money and running the business into the ground. Owning a golf course is bad enough, but not even being able to take a joke from an elk shows a true lack of character. 🐦



The Athens Christmas tree burns during the Greek insurrection of December 2008.

[pugetsoundanarchists.org](http://pugetsoundanarchists.org)  
[anarchistinternational.org](http://anarchistinternational.org)  
[anarchistnews.org](http://anarchistnews.org)

[theanarchistlibrary.org](http://theanarchistlibrary.org)  
[continualwar.wordpress.com](http://continualwar.wordpress.com)  
[waronsociety.noblogs.org](http://waronsociety.noblogs.org)