

PLAIN WORDS

ANARCHIST COUNTER-INFORMATION IN BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA

ISSUE TWO

MAY 2017



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PLAIN WORDS



Plain Words is a website and publication that focuses on spreading news and developing analyses of struggles in and around Bloomington, Indiana. As anarchists, we approach these struggles from an anti-state, anti-capitalist perspective. However, we aren't interested in developing a specific party line – even an anarchist one – and instead value the diverse forms resistance can take. Our anarchism is vibrant, undogmatic, and finds common cause with all others who fight for a world without the state, capital, and all structures of domination.

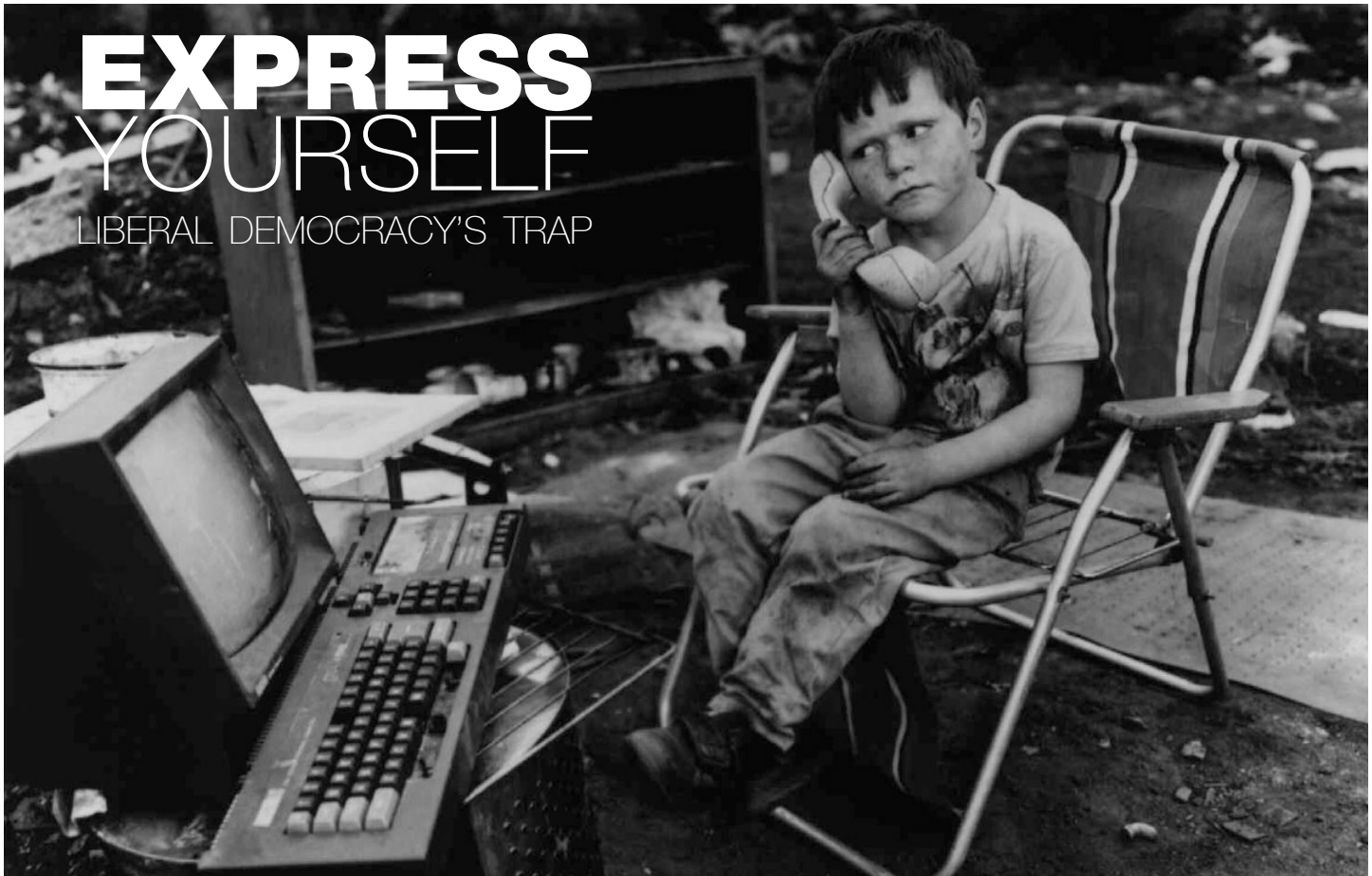
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If you have comments on or critiques of anything we've printed that you'd like us to publish, feel free to send them our way.

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EXPRESS YOURSELF

LIBERAL DEMOCRACY'S TRAP

It was the night after Darren Wilson was acquitted for the murder of Michael Brown, hundreds of people were gathered in the heart of downtown in a medium-sized Midwestern city. After arriving with some comrades, I decided I needed to do something to counter the cold. Walking through the edge of the crowd, I saw not only the usual friends and activists, but faces I didn't recognize. Some appeared angry and militant, others deeply sad, but the crowd generally seemed confident, and there was a charge in the air that I hadn't felt at a demonstration in the many years I'd lived there. Years of apathy and tame liberalism had taken their toll on my sense of optimism, but this night I sensed that things were about to change. Finally, the organizers of the burgeoning Black Lives Matter group in town called for the crowd to gather around. After a few chants, they asked us to walk to a spot in a public square to listen to speakers. Someone in the crowd yelled "Let's march!" but the organizer replied: "Yes, let's march to this spot here and listen to the speakers."

The crowd obliged, walked briefly to the space, and began listening to speeches by the organizers. At first people seemed

excited and energized if the speaker was especially moving, but that momentum began trickling away as the speeches kept coming. A Democratic Party politician was unfortunately given the megaphone, and then the floor was left open for whomever to come and say what they wanted to say. I felt restless and cold, it had been half an hour since we walked over, and I noticed that the crowd began to trickle away. Mothers, teenagers, preachers, and other folks gave impromptu speeches, talking about their experiences, and calling for more or less vague forms of change relating to policing and racism. By the time this was finished, an hour and a half passed, the crowd had halved, and there was no more energy in the air. Some people tried to force a march, but it was pathetic, consisted of only a dozen people, and quickly ended.

It seemed like in most cities resistance to policing and white supremacy was galvanized by the mass actions, highway takeovers, and riots that took place that night, but over the course of the next year, nothing like that materialized in this particular city. The chance was missed.

At rallies, demonstrations, and even illegal occupations of government

buildings in the last few years, I've witnessed or heard stories where a large number of people are mobilized and angry, potentially ready to take action in a way that could make some kind of impact. But at the moment when energy is the highest, the offensive potential of the crowd is halted to make way for speakers to give speeches. The crowd, originally ready for action, adopts a posture of passivity, receiving the information being conveyed to them by the speakers. The speaker, sometimes a vile politician but more often just an angry person, tries to convey their frustrations, anger, and sadness. The posture towards action irreversibly settles into one of speaking and listening. What's happening here?

Speaking truth...
at each other?

From the Civil Rights Movement all the way on to the Second Iraq War protests there was a frustratingly dominant tendency in activism called "speaking truth to power." What this entailed was someone not in a position of power, an "average joe," saying what they believe to politicians or businesspeople. What did they

think would come out of this? It's difficult to understand, but it was ubiquitous in social movements for half a century.

Maybe it stuck around because people thought they could change policy by changing politicians' minds, or perhaps they enjoyed the feeling of moral superiority they got from being so right against people who were obviously so wrong. More realistically it stuck around because it was ineffective and actually aided systems of control. Any situation where people air their grievances and anger to power is just giving the latter a new vocabulary to co-opt. Local politicians and bureaucrats learn how to tailor their messages to people. Police and media learn useful rhetoric to more effectively divide people during rebellious moments. On the nation-wide level, political parties and corporations have think-tanks and public relations professionals that do research and specialize in formulating the exact right thing for their clients to say. Luckily for us, speaking truth to power seems to be dead.

It has been replaced by speaking truth at each other. This tendency rightfully reacts to the reality that there are wide gulfs in experience between people, often related to race, gender, sexuality, ability, and social class. So far, so good. But in the absence of an effort to physically undermine the structural existence of the economic, political, and social system in power through action, the act of communicating becomes fetishized itself. There seems to be an informally understood idea that if those who occupy the more privileged identities hear about the hardships of those most oppressed, then the former will change their behavior, and oppression will end this way. Just like speaking truth to power, things become murky and vague when deciphering how it actually get the goods. What both forms share is that they dangerously give their users a cathartic release at vocalizing their experiences and oppressions to a crowd of people, undermining the potential for that frustration to be released through revolt and subversion.

Liberal democracy functions this way. The world we inhabit has been set in motion long before we were born, and at best we are meant to move passively through it. Our relationship to our surroundings, our daily lives, those around us, our bodies, and our futures is that of distance and alienation at best. Those in the grasp of democracy may be oppressed, controlled, dominated, and exploited in the most degrading ways possible through work, the justice system,

toxic interpersonal relationships, and a constant existential alienation, but "freedom of speech" and other civil liberties exist to appease this feeling and give the appearance of freedom. All of the anger and stress that could go into action is diverted into talk that often makes one feel slightly better after doing it. It's a pressure-release valve that lets off steam.

In order to exist globally, capitalism in its current form needs liberal democracy. In Chile, Greece, Spain, and many other formerly totalitarian countries throughout the world, this fact has been realized and they've transition away from dictatorship. Fascism and totalitarianism, while useful in certain situations and towards specific populations, largely breeds resentment and pressure that will eventually boil over, possibly disrupting the system. It's no wonder that these countries, where the state has been so intensely crushing, currently have vibrant social movements and strong anarchist and autonomist milieus.

Status updating at the void

The tendency to communicate in this way seems eerily similar to the phenomenon of posting updates to social media. Facebook, Tumblr, Twitter, and other social media platforms have created a new social tendency, that of "talking at the void." These status updates, tweets, and Tumblr posts are written for everyone and no one in particular. They mirror a politician's speech in both being performative and creating a speaker/listener dichotomy instead of fueling mutual communication. In other words, it is done as a performance meant to appeal to those passively listening, as opposed to building an ongoing conversation. If there is any back and forth, it is in "replies" consisting of very short text messages and/or emojis, sacrificing the nuance of body language and longer arguments, which are often needed to flesh out unfamiliar ideas.

In contrast, the back and forth of conversation can build understanding between people, whose idiosyncrasies, body language, anecdotes, and ways of thinking can be teased out and unravel themselves before each other. What's being communicated can be clarified by reading someone's facial expression or gestures, also making it much easier to detect each other's thoughts and intentions. However, conversation in this culture has primarily not been of a reciprocal dynamic for a long time, instead

consisting of people taking turns talking at each other. The depth of our loss goes much deeper than Facebook.

The status update breeds narcissism. When constantly being presented with a text field that reads "What's on Your Mind?," always interested in what you have to say, it makes sense that people begin thinking that what they have to say is always important, or that it is always appropriate to share. People's habits and tendencies shift towards what the status update conditions them to. Technology is not neutral, and this machine formats the way people talk and think.

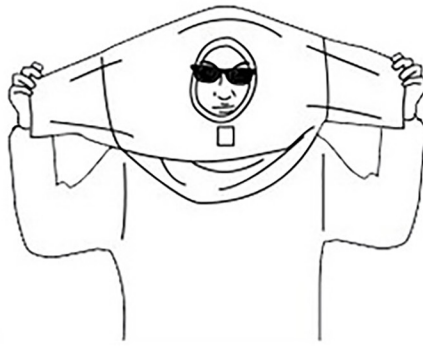
Social media gives the appearance of participation, but as cultural tropes suggesting one not "read the comments" show, these technologies are not designed to facilitate communication that is empathetic, ethically nuanced, able to convey complex ideas, or that allows people to fully understand each other. Compared to the lack of public life immediately prior to the internet's rise, these technologies give the appearance of connection, but as stated in "Anti-Oppression and the Internet," this is an illusion. Nonetheless, the damage is done: through constant use of these technologies we become accustomed to communicating in toxic ways, and by default see this form of communication as valuable. Capitalism wins, liberal democracy wins, and everyone else loses.

Conclusion

Communication is clearly valuable politically, for example the September 9, 2016 national prisoner strike would not have been possible if not for letters and phone calls that formed relationships between people inside prisons and out. Understanding other people's experiences, especially those that face oppression, largely comes from listening to them. This should not be underestimated. Neither should we create a fetish around all "action," as some actions strengthen our enemies or simply satisfy our feelings of "doing something."

The specific tendency of "speaking truth at each other" that has developed concurrently with the rise of social media is a dangerous pressure release valve that can halt our ability to attack what destroy us. Liberal democracy lays many traps for us in the realm of struggle and politics; let's keep an eye out for this one.

HOW TO MASK UP



People conceal their identities from police and media during demonstrations for many different reasons: school, employment, immigration status, Child Protective Services, right-wing vigilantes. Even if you do not engage in confrontational actions, masking up can protect the autonomy of those who do. The more masked people there are, the safer are those who are most likely to be targeted by the police. Together, we have tremendous power.

Regardless of your feelings on whether or not confrontation with the cops is tactically sound, the long history of state repression in this country conclusively demonstrates that the state will mobilize all of its power to crush any movement, peaceful or not, that poses a real threat to its hegemony. You can be sure that the police are filming during any large demonstration and moment of revolt, in addition to monitoring the feeds of those livestreaming. Those who do not have their faces covered, even if they are acting within the law, are much more likely to have attention paid to them in the future.

Directions

Bring multiple layers: one outfit to get into the area, another for the action, and something that will help you blend in when it's time to make your exit. Take out piercings; conceal tattoos. Some people choose to wear identical clothing—black hooded sweatshirts, pants, and masks—in order to be indistinguishable. Use your discretion for if this makes sense for what you're trying to do. If you choose to do it, make sure your clothes have no identifying features. Your shoes or backpack could also identify you.

To cover your face, get a t-shirt and turn it inside out. Simply put it around your head as if you were putting it on, put your face up to the collar ring, but don't push your head through it. (see above image) Tie the sleeves together behind your head to tighten the mask, and then pull the bottom of the collar up to just below your eyes, covering as much as possible. Combine with a hoodie and sunglasses to completely cover your face, but beware that glasses could fog up due to your breath. You should practice at home first to get the hang of putting it on quickly.

SABOTAGE IN MEMORY OF LAMBROS FOUNDAS

A few nights ago we sabotaged about 50 parking meters by gluing their locks, coin slots, and card readers. This was a simple act which took no specialized skill. Get some superglue, cover your face, keep your eyes peeled for cops or loyal citizens, and act.

These parking meters were targeted because they fund the Bloomington Police Department and because they force people to pay to be downtown. We hate the police and we hate gentrification and class



society, so we chose to attack them.

We act as a gesture of combative memory for Lambros Foundas, anarchist of Revolutionary Struggle killed by the forces of the Greek state on March 10, 2010. Our memory is not one of passive mourning or martyrdom, but of active struggle against

the state, capital, and domination in all of its forms. The flame of Lambros' life kept us warm as we walked through the winter night, and we will carry that flame with us in all parts of our lives, which are lived at war with this society of masters and slaves.

We send strength to all anarchist combatants held captive in the dungeons of the Greek state.

We send solidarity to all those facing the state's latest attacks against squatters, anarchists, and refugees: we are inspired by your refusal to be paralyzed.

**For Lambros
Long live anarchy**

Posted to itsgoingdown.org, March 14, 2017

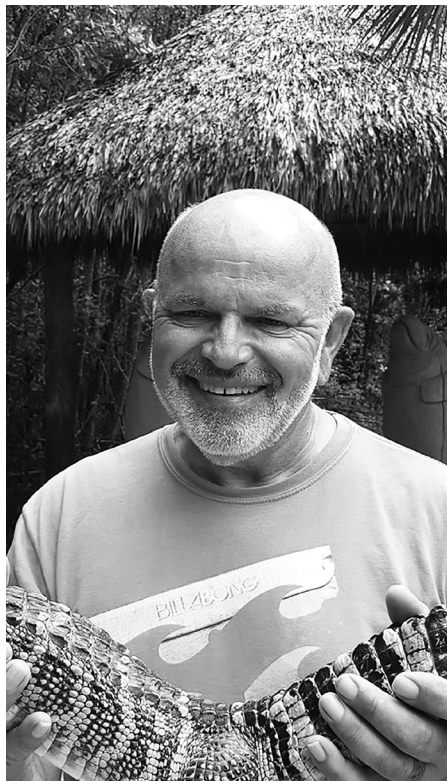
MEMORY IS A WEAPON

Last night we tagged a Duke Energy office with words "James Marker, #NoSabalTrail." This was done in memory of James Leroy Marker, who was killed by Florida police after using a high powered rifle to sabotage the Sabal Trail Pipeline. Duke Energy is heavily invested in this pipeline and is therefore complicit in James Marker's murder.

This fracked methane pipeline threatens unique ecosystems associated with the Floridan aquifer, including countless rivers, lakes and streams and the associated flora and fauna. Though this was but a small act, it serves as a reminder that pipeline resistance isn't limited to construction sites or public rallies.

**Vengeance for James Leroy Marker!
Down with the pipeline and its world!**

Posted to itsgoingdown.org, May 2, 2017



GRAFFITI IN MEMORY OF JAMES MARKER

SO WHAT

if they did rob the banks?

In March of this year, an international call for solidarity during the week of April 17-23 was made [1] for anarchists arrested for allegedly robbing banks in Aachen, Germany back in 2013 and 2014. The trial is underway as of this writing, and is expected to go on until May 22, 2017. From the call-out:

It does not come as a surprise to us that those who oppose and fight against the misery of this world forged on domination are attacked, prosecuted and punished. We are not interested in discussing about guilt or innocence, it is the language that belongs to our enemies and we refuse it. Our enemies follow the logic of separation and categorization of individuals, in order

to then have the possibility of locking up the undesirables. We share with the accused comrades an aversion to this system, and towards the prison system which perpetuates the distinction between good citizens and those who deserve to be punished.

That banks are despicable should go without saying. They stockpile wealth from the interest charged to fund corporate, state, and military projects that make this society a living hell, as well that from small loans made to individuals, meaning they get rich because others cannot afford the cost of life in exploitative societies.

Taking hostility to banks one step further, under capitalism it is not possible to simply live freely. The earth and nearly everything on it has been colonized and com-

modified, so in order to survive one must have money, and in order to get money, one must perform labor that the economy deems valuable. When at work, we forfeit our autonomy to bosses, bureaucrats, and market forces, accepting a level of domination over our minute-to-minute lives that would be jaw-droppingly dictatorial if it was a government issuing the orders instead of a manager. Our activity during this time is alien to us, it's a waste of our time, because it has no bearing on our lives except that we are given money in exchange for doing it.

Without money, the police can kick us out of our homes for not paying rent or the mortgage, and courts can send us to prison for stealing the necessities for survival. To put it another way: without money, people with guns, who can call back-up from a massively violent apparatus called "the state," can remove us from our homes, kidnap us when we try to take food and other resources, and lock us in cages for years on end. They may even kill us, largely depending on the color of our skin. Capitalism can only exist through violence and coercion.

Because we are under assault from this society all our lives, every attack on capitalism and every expropriation from its institutions is self-defense. But that's putting it lightly. All wealth in this world has been stolen, both from extracting resources from the earth and exploiting the work that people do. This has been happening for centuries, the total misery and destitution perpetuated by this system accumulating with every passing minute. As Monsieur Dupont puts it:

The structure of the world was built by the dead, they were paid in wages, and when the wages were spent and they were dead in the ground, what they had made continued to exist, these cities, roads and factories are their calcified bones. They had nothing but their wages to show for what they had done and after their deaths what they did and who they were has been cancelled out. But what they made has continued into our present, their burial and decay is our present. This is the definition of class hatred. We are no closer now to rest, to



freedom, to communism than they were, their sacrifice has bought us nothing, what they did counted for nothing, we have inherited nothing, we work as they worked, we make as they made, we are paid as they were paid. [2]

If it was possible to measure the equivalence between the amount of money a bank heist nets with all the people over generations whose opportunity to live a free life was stolen and wasted in service of the economy, then you could not rob enough banks in your whole life to come near to closing that gap.

Timeline of Solidarity Actions

A number of actions have taken place this year before and since the call, claiming solidarity with those comrades on trial:

January 17

50 parking meters were covered in paint and multiple banks had their locks glued in Leuven, Belgium. One of the banks was tagged with “Solidarity with the Accused in Aachen” next to the anarchist circle-A.

January 22

Anarchists in Den Haag, Netherlands destroyed 9 ATMs and wrote in their communique: “We are not interested in knowing whether the comrades are actually responsible for the bank robberies or not. Expropriation is an ethically just and politically legitimate practice, a method of struggle that is part of the history of all revolutionary movements.”

January 28

Two vehicles belonging to a private security company were set on fire in Barcelona, Spain. “We do not think it necessary to justify this attack on these wretched guard dogs,” the communique states, along with “Long Live Anarchy!”

February 2

Anarchists in Mexico City bombed two ATMs, completely destroying them and causing significant damage to the bank branch they were connected to. The com-

munique describing the attack and claiming solidarity with the Aachen case comrades was signed by “Night Cats & Evil Sorcerers Incendiary Cell FAI-FRI”[3]

February 9

Anarchists in Berlin, Germany committed an arson on a police station in anticipation “European Police Congress” taking place later that month. In addition to the Aachen case comrades, the communique claims solidarity with migrants risking their lives around Europe, recently arrested members of “Revolutionary Struggle”, and those rioting in Parisian suburbs after police raped a black man.

April 16

A cell of the “Informal Feminist Commando of Anti-authoritarian Action” bombed an Exxon facility in Mexico City “[b]ecause nobody is untouchable! Because we are not intimidated by the heavy silence that you have imposed on your crimes based on fear and violence, and we are not intimidated by the premiere of your Secretary of State” (note: referring to Rex Tillerson, Trump’s Secretary of State who was the CEO of ExxonMobile) as stated in their communique. They write a ruthless denunciation of all nationalisms and call to “Destroy the walls! Destroy the goods! Destroy work!”

April 16

A company that builds jails had their truck set on fire in Brussels, Belgium. A communique was posted to the internet the next day, claiming solidarity with comrades accused of robbery in Aachen.

April 18

A police station in Liege, Belgium was set on fire. The act was dedicated to comrades accused of bank robbery in Aachen, and the communique begins with “We are not soldiers. We are criminals. We have no fatherland, no higher cause, we do not follow any directions other than those of ourselves. On the other hand, we are fighting. To find our lives, explore our freedoms. We fight the misery of our lives, the oppression of morals, and the grids that imprison us.”

April 20

A bank branch was bombed in Mexico City, claimed by the “Few But Crazy Insurrectionary Cell F.A.I./F.R.I.” in solidarity with Aachen case anarchists. From the commu-

nique: “Is it necessary to explain why we attacked a bank? These shits leave people homeless, they finance military companies, companies that destroy the environment, exploiters, who chain millions with debts and false promises... They are the terrorists, they use fear with payment warnings, debt, they threaten you with eviction or to leave you with nothing. And still they will dare to say that we are the criminals, the soulless, the murderers...”

In addition to these attacks, other instances of solidarity and support are being taken up. There will be a benefit show in the UK on April 29 to raise money for them. One of the arrestees of the case wrote a letter from prison for International Day of Women’s Struggle on March 8th titled “Down with patriarchy: On the social, racist & patriarchal problems faced by women in prison.”[4] Comrades did work posting this letter onto anarchist websites, and translating it into other languages. People do regular work hosting these internationalist anarchist news sites so that people across the world can learn about each other’s actions. All of these are ways of keeping those locked up included in contemporary struggles. Doing work like this is based on a rejection of seeing imprisoned comrades as victims to do charitable work for, which is a hierarchical relationship based on moralistic pity.

For more information on the Aachen robberies case and other internationalist news, check out the following websites:

insurrectionnewsworldwide.com
325.nostate.net
actforfree.nostate.net

Notes

[1]:<https://insurrectionnewsworldwide.com/2017/03/13/germany-international-call-for-decentralized-actions-in-solidarity-with-the-comrades-accused-of-bank-robbery-in-aachen/>

[2]:<https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/monsieur-dupont-nihilist-communism>

[3]:FAI is an acronym for ‘Informal Anarchist Federation.’ It is not an organization, but a tendency within anarchist thought and action.

[4]:<http://actforfree.nostate.net/?p=26571>



FLOODGATES

The Urge to Obey, A Flight from Initiative, and Identity Politics

Traditional systems of authority are dead or dying. It matters increasingly less whether one identifies with their job, loves their country, kneels before God, or worries about tarnishing the family name. In the past, anarchists have fought to the death against these institutions, believing that if people rose up and destroyed them, humanity would be free. While these relics are decaying, it is due to many different forces, rebellion not being primary. As a result, daily life is still bound to alienation, livelihood tied to the whims of the precarious market, and obedience maintained by the threat of the justice system or the normality of habit, or both. Humanity is still submissive, but our rulers are faceless abstractions: invisible flows of capital, imagination-killing technologies, the justice system, etc. These systems have their agents in our midst: police, prison guards, CEOs, judges; but they no longer solicit respect,

they just do their jobs to keep the system running, and they are interchangeable in our minds. So we are followers without leaders, waiting to be led.

On February 22, 2017 an article was posted to the website Medium titled “Is Black Bloc a Racist Tactic in the Trump Era: Why White Activists Should Stop Wearing Masks at Protests.” Immediately below the title reads “By Nico Quintana, transgender, QPOC, Latinx activist.” The content of the essay is uninteresting, but there is something about the contemporary world that reveals itself when reading this.

The author does not want white people to wear masks during demonstrations. They do a poor job of arguing their position, but that isn’t what’s important. Similarly to how, in order to show expertise and authority, medical professionals list their degrees and certifications next to their names, and professors name their areas of

study and degrees, this author writes next to their name “transgender, QPOC, Latinx activist,” and they do so immediately before calling out white people for being racist. Whether it was a conscious decision or not, the author by listing these after their name commands an air of authority among the socially conscious readers of their essay, especially for white people who often want, more than the destruction of white supremacy, to avoid being labelled as racist.

Followers without a leader have discovered identity politics, and what we’re seeing in the contemporary period is that they now have something to lead them. The figure, a tokenized “member of (insert oppression category) community,” is seen as a legitimate source of guidance, leadership, and ultimately authority when there are so few left.

Like Communism in the mid-20th century, this ideology has constructed

itself in a way that it is not allowed to be questioned or one would be tarnished as a counter-revolutionary or “Rightist,” or in our case, charged as a racist. In the framework of ally politics, the ally is supposed to follow the leadership of the oppressed “community” and its leaders regardless of whether they agree with them or not. As anarchists and others have been saying for probably a decade now, this doesn’t even make sense; two people sharing a category of oppression does not mean they agree with each other. How racist can you be to suggest that two black people will have the same opinion on everything? Nonetheless, when someone disclaims their identity the way this author does, it’s perceived as a pronouncement to obey. Like all authority, it doesn’t matter if what they say makes sense, you are supposed to follow them either way.

What else would sate a followers’ lust for direction and guidance than authority figures that you are not allowed to disagree with? And when was the last time liberals and leftists had a system of authority that appeared to somewhat engage their morality? Finally, leaders someone with a conscience can feel good about.

People who go through certain experiences probably have knowledge about something that people who lack such experience do not. This society is violent towards people it has classified as belonging to specific groups (race, gender, sexuality, etc), and at their expense it privileges other people. How these factors plays out during moments of resistance is a complicated question, but surely listening to people who have experienced something that is relevant to the current struggle makes sense. This es-

say is not contesting these things, or arguing that oppressed people are now in positions of authority. What’s being commented on is the culture of the contemporary moment where a penchant towards respecting authority is not being satisfied by traditional routes, and has found the realm of identity politics to unleash itself. That sometimes people tap into this dynamic and use it for their own gain is to be expected.

Perhaps this partially explains why identity politics is so repulsive towards conservatives, they still believe in following God, nation, the family, and all the rest. The drives towards obedience circulating through them have never been cut off.

PROFESSOR’S OFFICE SABOTAGED

While private security and cops from three different agencies were locking down and surrounding Franklin Hall on Tuesday night in defense of “scientist” and writer Charles Murray (who spews all manner of racist, misogynist, and oppressive ideas and “research”) and hundreds of Indiana University students, faculty, and others were gathered for a protest, we went to IU professor Aurelian Craiutu’s office to glue the locks and paint an anti-racist message.

Aurelian is the head of the Tocqueville Program – part of the Political Science Department – that invited Murray to speak at IU in order to explore, he said, the “Trump phenomenon.” Whatever the reason for the invitation, we abhor it. While we have no faith in the university, we do think that public figures like Charles Murray and the institutions and people who support him should be confronted. But those confrontations do not always have to take place on terrain that is presented to us. We don’t have to wait until a profiteering racist shows up on campus...or remain within the police barricades. While public opposition can be important, there is much that can be done when one is not surrounded on all sides by



rows of police and cell phone cameras. Nor must we remain within the ideological terrain of the institutions regarding civility and the sanctity of property. Outrage at small acts of vandalism is laughable alongside the experience of so many students and others who are just now losing trust in the university that they expected to protect them. But now the interests and character of IU are made clear.

Shout out to all those who stood up against Murray, his supporters, and the massive police force assembled to protect him. Our anger didn’t subside when Murray was escorted off campus. One can move rather freely through many parts of campus. Glue is cheap. Let’s be creative.

Posted to itsgoingdown.org, April 13, 2017

A MESSAGE FROM ANARCHIST PRISONER SEAN SWAIN



TO BLOOMINGTON ZINEFEST

The ground you're standing on is liberated territory. Defend it.

Abbie Hoffman

I'd like to share a few thoughts with you about zines but, first, a brief history: Long before Al Gore invented the internet, humans were determined to communicate memory to others, first by recording events that they painted on cave walls and later by developing language and chiseling important ideas into stone tablets. Then guys in white wigs scribbled on shit with feather quills until a famous dead guy invented the ball-point pen. Somewhere in all of that, we had printing presses and typewriters and copying machines.

THEN Al Gore invented the internet.

In this era of electronic communication, zines – which hearken back to an era shortly after guys in white wigs scribbled on shit with feathers – are virtually invisible to the swivelized mind. What I mean is, zines are not “real” to the swivelized mind the same way that “global warming” is not real, or Fukushima, or species extinction, or any of a million things that swivelized people cannot accept.

To those hopelessly hypnotized by the hierarch pathology, those who still buy into the false promises of swivelization, zines cannot possibly have any value. After all, if the substance of a zine had any

validity, it wouldn't be a zine; it would be a book published by Simon & Schuster for \$29.99, sold at corporate chain stores and available at a click on Amazon.com. If a zine contained information relevant to the swivelized mind, it would be sold on audio, narrated by Morgan Freeman so swivelized stone-draggers could make practical use of their traffic jams. Zines, or any self-published writing for that matter, are as valid and legitimate to the swivelized mind as self-printed money.

So, that's awesome for us. The mind police trolling the web and surveilling your emails and staring at you from inside your television cannot think of zines as serious, cannot equate them with “real” books,

and so they often look past them the way caffeinated gentrifiers look past the homeless guy in the alley next to their favorite Starbucks.

In my own experience, I co-wrote *Last Act of the Circus Animals* with another prisoner in 2007. It's been disseminated all over the globe. In 2008, it was reviewed in the U.K. and I received mail from a reader of *Last Act* in Petersburg, Russia. I have it on good authority that *Last Act* was instrumental in the radicalization of a founding member of hacktivist group Anonymous and influenced one of the 12 original members of the Ad Busters group who organized a thing called Occupy. A member of the NATO 5 regularly reads *Last Act* to his infant son at bed time.

Last Act didn't make the ODRC's banned list until December 2016, almost a decade after it found its way into every prison in the world. In that decade, I suspect that hundreds of far less dangerous clap-trap published by Simon & Schuster and narrated by Morgan Freeman on audio made that banned list as *Last Act* continued pouring into the prisons. I'd bet money on it.

Another example: a collection of my work was printed up in zines called *Freedom: The Insight, Rage, and Fury of Political Prisoner Sean Swain*, volumes one through three, also in 2007. The following year, prison officials subjected me to 70 days of absolute terror for having written it and tried to have me sent to the super-duper-max. To date, *Freedom* still doesn't appear on the banned list.

Why? I propose we already know why. *Freedom* never made the banned list because prison officials cannot acknowledge just how dangerous and subversive this illegitimate non-book really is; they cannot bring themselves, even now, when I have more than 1297 pages of FBI files and about the same in published zines, to bestow validity to the threat that this publication poses to their fragile, silly system.

So, if you're serious about kicking a dent in this death machine that runs our swivelized McWorld, the perfect means for reaching those segments of the population that you need for allies is the zine. The homeless, the imprisoned, disillusioned vets at the VA hospital, failed suicides in group therapy – zines are the perfect weapons to smuggle under the fence, off the radar, connecting the ones who will join you to the next global dumpster-fire.

In 2012, someone managed to

arm prisoners at Mansfield Correctional with training manuals for organizing and resisting, all introduced to the prison population in zine format. The Army of the 12 Monkeys utterly destroyed the orderly operation and function of that prison. Those materials are still available online for anyone wanting to print them off and re-package them for mass distribution. You can likely access them through anarchistnews.org or maybe even seanswain.org.

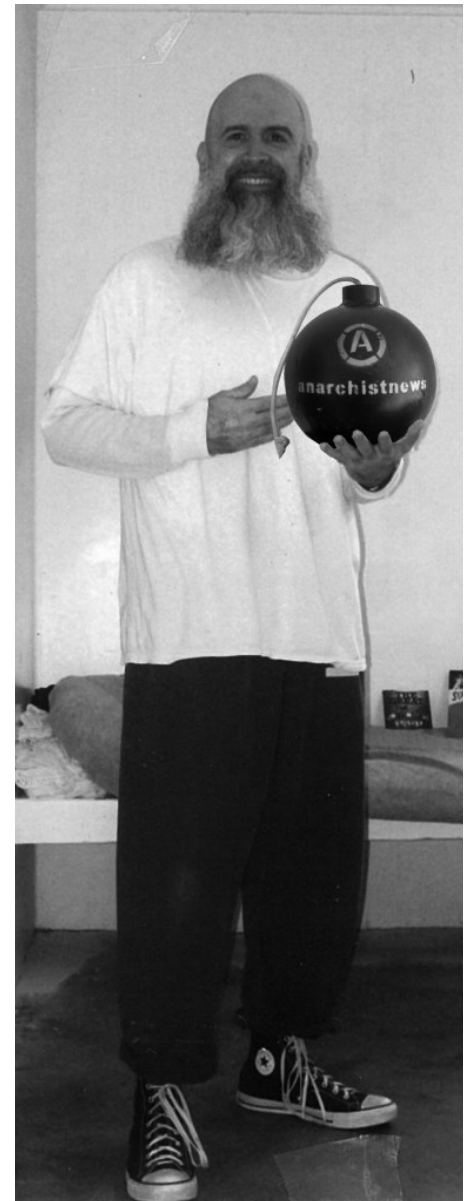
I have heard that there are multiple groups of traveler kids who canvas the country, migrating from city to city, infoshop to infoshop, funding their travels in part on the sale of 12 Monkey zines. It would seem that the organizing and resistance principles in those zines originally smuggled to prisoners have useful applications in the free world.

Go figure... the same strategies that effectively implode the prison holding me hostage are the very same strategies that will effectively implode the larger prison holding you hostage (and if you're not convinced yet that you live in an open-air prison, explain to me how you plan to scale that wall under construction on your southern border... or the corresponding wall across your northern border that will get built as soon as the Canadians realize Americans are bonkers.)

In the 1960s, Abbie Hoffman wrote that free speech wasn't really free because only the wealthy owned printing presses and that free speech would never be free until everyone had the same access. In our time, the copying machine is the printing press and free speech is closer to free. You have it within your means to publish the next insurrection, perhaps the one that really counts, the one that spreads like wildfire across a dry, open prairie. In our world, the only zine that is a total failure is the one you don't bother to print.

We've come a long way since those early cave drawings. Let's see how quickly we can zine our way back to them.

This is anarchist prisoner Sean Swain from Warren Correctional in Lebanon, Ohio. If you're reading this in a zine, you ARE the resistance...



Sean Swain is a hostage held by a lawless rogue-state calling itself "The State of Ohio." He has been held without legal conviction or sentence since 1991 for the self-defense killing of a court official's relative who broke into Sean's home and threatened his life. In fall of 2012, prisoners calling themselves the Army of the 12 Monkeys (A12M) got rowdy at Mansfield Correctional, and the prison authorities assumed "that anarchist" Sean Swain must have been behind it and threw him in supermax isolation. Sean denies any involvement or affiliation with the A12M and is in the process of suing the ODRC for targeting him based exclusively on his ideology and political speech. The State started the war. Sean Swain intends to finish it.

For more information
SEANSWAIN.ORG



FREE MARIUS MASON

Marius Mason is an anarchist, environmental and animal rights activist currently serving nearly 22 years in federal prison for acts of property damage carried out in defense of the planet. After being threatened with a life sentence in 2009 for these acts of sabotage, he pled guilty to arson charges at a Michigan State University lab researching genetically modified organisms for Monsanto, and admitted to 12 other acts of property damage. No one was physically harmed in these actions. At sentencing the judge applied a so-called “terrorism enhancement,” adding almost two years to an already extreme sentence requested by the prosecution. This is the harshest punishment of anyone convicted of environmental sabotage to date.

Marius is incarcerated in the high security Administration Unit at the Federal Medical Center Carswell in Fort Worth, Texas, a unit “designed for female inmates with histories of escapes, chronic behavior problems, repeated incidents of assaultive or predatory behavior, or other special management concerns...” (2016; FMC Carswell Information Packet). Marius did not have a record of violating prison rules. It appears he is being held in this unit because of his political beliefs and in an effort to silence him.

Marius came out to his friends, family and supporters as transgender in 2014. Previously known as “Marie Mason,” he changed his name, uses male pronouns, and embarked on a course to get a medical diagnosis that would allow him to seek gender affirming surgery and hormone therapy. The Board of Prisons (BOP) has already di-

agnosed Marius as having gender dysphoria, and has made some clothing and commissary accommodations in accordance with their established policy. Subsequently, Carswell ran a plethora of medical diagnostic tests to screen him as being healthy enough to receive the care he has requested. Finally, on September 14, 2016, Marius received his first “T” hormone shot.

Marius has a long history of activism going back to his high school years. Born in 1962, his early activism included anti-war and environmental organizing, as well as anti-nuclear work and service with the anarchist publication, the *Fifth Estate*. Marius continues to contribute to that publication today. As Marius deepened his involvement in environmental and animal rights campaigns he organized or helped organize non-violent civil disobedience direct action campaigns, including actions to protect public lands, tree-sits to protest development, and anti-fur demonstrations. Marius’ advocacy also involved much work with many conservation and human rights groups tackling issues of water grabs and poverty, while also fighting to create local spaces like community gardens. His work spans many organizations, such as Earth First!, Sweetwater Alliance, Food Not Bombs, ADAPTT (Animals Deserve Protection Today and Tomorrow); and through Anarchist Black Cross, also worked on getting books into prisons. He was active on workers’ rights issues, primarily though involvement with the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) for nearly two decades.

An accomplished artist, poet, and musician, Marius has continued to build his

artistic skills in prison. Those expressions bring solace in a place that works hard to crush and erase it. Marius’s beautiful paintings often speak to the struggles and issues that he continues to care about from inside the prison walls. Many pieces can be found on his website.

Marius has been involved in so much activism on righteous causes and has done so much good in the world, that it is especially tragic he is caged in particularly egregious conditions serving the longest sentence of any of the so-called “Green Scare” prisoners. (For more on the Green Scare, see GreenIsTheNewRed.com).

The unfairness of his sentence becomes clear when compared to those meted out to others. By contrast, a man who set an “arson for profit” fire that paralyzed a Detroit firefighter and injured six of his colleagues was sentenced to a maximum of seven years in prison, the norm for arson charges.

There is no accountability in this system of injustice. It is urgent that we work to support Marius and other political prisoners and confront outrageous prison terms.

Please let Marius and other prisoners know you care. Writing letters is one of the most important things you can do: letters are a lifeline for those inside prison walls. As a federal prisoner, he has not been able to effect his name change through legal channels, so it is important for mail to be addressed to:

**Marie (Marius) Mason
#04672-061
FMC Carswell
PO Box 27137
Ft. Worth, TX 76127**

Do not write about anything illegal. Do not affix anything to letter or envelope. Photographs and photocopies of articles are ok. Your letter and envelope must contain your first and last name when writing.

For more information
SUPPORTMARIUSMASON.ORG



BLAST FROM THE PAST

EARTH LIBERATION FRONT ATTACKS WAL-MART IN MARTINSVILLE

We present this communique from the Earth Liberation Front as a blow against forgetting. We want to keep alive the words and actions of those seeking a world in which all – humans, animals, earth – are wild and free. For a free publication of communiqués from Indiana Earth and Animal Liberation Front actions, visit plainwordsbloomington.org.

<begin communique>

10/24/2003 Martinsville, IN we visited a construction site for a new Wal-Mart store. We pulled up dozens of survey stakes, spraypainted building walls and machines. Sabotage was done to over a dozen pieces of heavy machinery and vehicles by putting sand in the fuel tanks, slashing tires, and cutting engine hoses and tubes. Before leaving we broke out 20-30 construction machine windows.

We are overwhelmed by the amount of shit society offers us. We look around us and see our lives displayed in neon lighting. In one city block there is a

McDonald's, a Chevron, a couple of banks, and a Taco Bell. Two massive car dealerships glow in the short distance, the new SUV's proudly displayed in the front. We can even see the old Wal-Mart which apparently wasn't large enough or new enough to satiate a growing population of consumers. Everything must be new, and it must be big. Even the highway passing through town isn't big enough. And there is nothing unique about this specific location. This is life in North America. This is becoming everywhere.

But what life is to be found in this? Some will have us believe that this is what should be desirable to us. Things are just large enough to keep us looking and shopping. Things are just fast enough that we never even have to leave our cars for most of our transactions, as we speed off to work. Everything is convenient and people are satisfied, and for those who might be discontent with this reality, there is plenty of television to watch.

Most people are content with this,

but we are not. We know that life does not have to be one monotonous routine played out over and over again. We know that the places we live can offer us much more than Wal-Marts and McDonalds and Chevrons. We know, because at times we have experienced a break with this reality, and know that other possibilities exist.

And how can things change really?

For us, sabotage may not be a means to change any world but our own, as an expression of our feelings toward this society. We strike for ourselves, out of our own frustrations, and rage and despair...as a means of therapy and adventure. Because to not act, or to resign oneself to such an impoverished life of working and consuming is not good enough for us. We are not content and we intended to express this.

This society offers us shit...How can we repay them?

E.L.F

<end communique>



CHRONOLOGY

2/13/17: 300 block South Liberty Drive, 9:20 p.m. Four counterfeit \$100 bills were passed at Bucceto's restaurant. The report said a man ordered \$5 in food, then paid with what turned out to be a fake \$100 bill. He then asked for change for \$300.

2900 block West Whitehall Crossing Boulevard, pigs were called to Mother Bear's Pizza shortly after the Bucceto's report and took a similar report at the pizza restaurant. Four counterfeit \$100 bills had been changed out for real cash, the report said.

2/23/17: 200 block of East 20th Street, 8:12 a.m. Thursday, a 22-year-old man reported someone broke into his car and stole

a camera bag, containing camera equipment from the Indiana University Media School.

3/09/17: 100 block of East Third Street, 2:35 p.m. Thursday, a man told pigs he hired a woman to work for his cleaning company. She did not work, and instead stole his cleaning supplies, he said.

3/10/17: A man allegedly used a large stone to break into the Monroe County Courthouse. A worker said he saw the man throw the stone repeatedly until the glass on the door shattered.

As pigs tried to take the man into custody, they said he struggled, shoved one deputy-pig, broke free and ran out of the

courthouse and toward the intersection of College and Kirkwood avenues. According to armed state thugs, the man struggled with a deputy-pig on the sidewalk, and another deputy-pig subdued the man with a Taser.

4/11/17: 3900 block of East Hagan Street, 8:56 a.m. Monday, a woman told police wood shavings had been shoved in the locks of office doors, preventing the doors from opening.

All accounts taken from capitalist media



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